TUNING IN TO TEENS

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TINT’s Philosophy

• Emotions are central for communication and connection
• Behavior problems decrease when parents/caregivers understand the teen’s emotional world and respond to their emotions
• Approaches and strategies are offered to increase connection between parent and teen
• Emotional awareness, understanding and regulation are key skills taught
• One size does not fit all – parents can choose what works for their family
• A model based on emotional intelligence and emotion coaching
What is Emotional Intelligence

The ability to **identify** and **manage** your own emotions

- Emotional awareness (rather than concealing or denying)
- Respond not react (managing strong feelings)
- Help parents to teach and support their teen to understand and express emotions in appropriate ways
What is Emotion Coaching

All parents have the capacity to Emotion Coach

- Listening
- Being supportive
- Empathizing
- Validating
- Helping teen to solve problems
- Over time, this parenting style helped to **reduce** the child’s risk for social and behavioral problems
From Child to Teen

- Dealing with new experiences with greater intensity
- Learn to mask emotions
- Struggle to regulate their emotions
- Peer relationships take center stage

If teens can understand, communicate and regulate their emotions they could respond to stressful events in a resilient way.
Adoption/Kinship Issues

• Although TINT is not specific to adoptive/kinship families, it is designed for any parent

• We recognize that adoption adds another layer of complexity to adolescence:
  • Gaining autonomy after a history of loss
  • A heightened fear of rejection and abandonment
  • Connections and loyalty to birth family
  • Behaviors relating to trauma
  • A sense of being different
Participants Reported:

• Greater acceptance of their own emotions
• The importance of managing their own anger
• Being less reactive and more empathetic with their teen's emotional expression
• Listening openly with acceptance
• Teens talking more about issues in their lives
• Calmer homes
• Less conflict
• Improved relationships
• Increased connection
TINT Groups

Offer:

- Understanding of adolescent (emotional) development
- Small group sizes (no more than 12 parents)
- Comfortable, warm and accepting environment
- Other adoptive and kinship parents
- Experienced, trained group leaders
- Free, interactive and fun
- Learning, sharing and discussion over 7 sessions
- Dinner, child care and mileage reimbursement
- The chance to be part of something ground breaking
Why You Should Know About TINT

- Your staff might be facilitating parent groups
- Your families might be talking about it
  - Remember NOT all families will be invited, this is a research project in which families will be randomly chosen.
- You may be asked questions about this initiative
- Sustainability! We hope this will continue after this project is complete (2019)
Resources

- Questions?
- Comments?
- Please contact Betty Berzin with any questions
- Contact me any time:
  - RGalleseQICAG@gmail.com

Tuning in to Teens™
The University of Melbourne, Dr. Sophie Havighurst and Ann Harley 2012