

Helping children cope with stress

The film *Race to Nowhere* challenges current assumptions on how to best prepare the youth of America to become healthy, bright, contributing, and leading citizens. Families First was pleased to present this critically acclaimed documentary about the high-pressure culture in schools. Dr. Catherine Steiner-Adair, Clinical Psychologist and School Consultant, facilitated a discussion about the topics in the film and offered these words of advice:

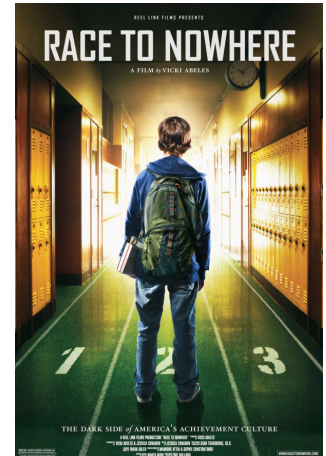
Be mindful of how you talk about other children in your community when they face hardship or troubles. Your child will be listening very closely to your reaction, which will likely influence whether your child will come to you when he/she is facing adversity. Speak about the child in question as experiencing adversity and needing support. Your child will get the message that they are not defined by their mistakes. They will learn that challenges can be overcome.

-Dr. Catherine Steiner-Adair

For highlights of Dr. Steiner-Adair's presentation, visit our website at www.families-first.org.

Tips for parents from the makers of *Race to Nowhere*:

- **Discuss** what success means to your family.
- **Allow** your children to make mistakes and learn from them.
- **Talk** with your children about their experiences in school.
- **Know** the signs of childhood depression. Follow your instincts.
- **Attend** school board meetings and other venues where education is discussed.
- **Eat** dinner regularly as a family.
- **Make** college search about finding the right fit rather than finding the "best" college.



How you make a difference...

Roxbury Prep parents attend a brand new workshop on Teen Communication

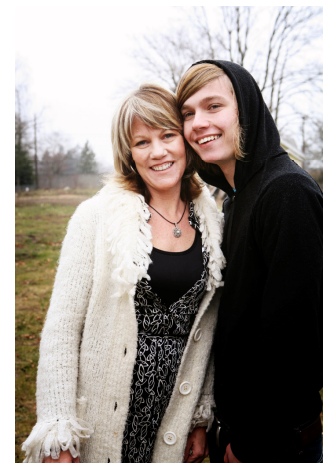
If my parents found out I was lying or breaking their rules, I would just get smacked.

-Participant, Teen Communication and Risky Behavior workshop

Parents at a Roxbury Prep Charter School pilot workshop all nodded and laughed at this familiar statement. Now parents themselves, they want to communicate differently with their children. One parent shared that her daughter challenges her rules, especially curfew. Many parents felt frustration with setting limits, but learned that risk taking is an important part of development in adolescence. It's important to allow their teens freedom but also to develop good communication to keep them away from high risk behavior. Having the opportunity to share their concerns together allows these parents to feel like they are not facing these challenges alone.

The most important issues in limit setting are:

- Keeping expectations reasonable.
- Saving energy for things that really matter to you.
- Setting limits when you are not angry.
- Being as consistent as possible.



Families First is grateful for a generous grant from the Amelia Peabody Foundation. This funding will provide workshops with a focus on early childhood and literacy to parents from the Brockton Public Schools, as well as parenting workshops at Brockton partner sites, including Old Colony YMCA and Brockton Day Nursery.

The Amelia Peabody Foundation seeks to increase positive learning experiences for materially disadvantaged young people living in the cities and towns of Massachusetts. The foundation supports organizations that bring about real changes in the neighborhoods where people live.

We are grateful for this funding and the generosity of the Amelia Peabody Foundation.

Families First launches a new and improved website!

Unsure how to help your toddler interact with other children?

Frustrated about how to talk to your teen so he or she really listens?

You can now search for parenting tips and strategies on our newly designed website! You can also get up-to-date information on ways you can be involved and stories about the parents and organizations you support.

Visit www.families-first.org and read about a grandparent who is parenting again...



Your donations provide programs to more than 4,000 parents and families in over 50 Massachusetts communities each year.

Thank you for your continued generosity and support.



Congratulations and thank you to Aine Cryts, Lisa Rigano and Michael d’Hemecourt

who completed the Boston Marathon and raised over \$10,000 for Families First Parenting Programs!

Thank you to John Hancock Financial Services for sponsoring these outstanding runners!

New Families First partners:

- South End Cluster, Boston
- Cambridge Community Center
- Young Achievers School, Mattapan
- Community Learning Center, Cambridge
- The Family Center, Somerville
- Project Hope Adult Educational Services, Roxbury
- St. Mary’s Center for Women and Children, Dorchester