

NEWSLETTER

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parenting with **COURAGE**



NOVEMBER
2022

Courage and fear live in the same cylinder. Think about it — have you ever ridden to the top of a gigantic hill on a rollercoaster, or stood in front of a group to give a speech, or seen a spider crawl across your leg at a picnic? It is impossible to have courage without those feelings of fear. The trick for us, as parents, is to allow our child to have that fear (and be brave enough to admit to the fear) so we can encourage them to be courageous. We can be ready for this by knowing what fears might be triggers for our children and being prepared to help them navigate those feelings.

Think about how you've responded to your child's fear. Have you said things like, "Don't be afraid," or "Why are you so afraid?" or "Don't be such a scaredy cat!" These reactions may have sent the message to your child that they shouldn't be afraid (or certainly never talk about being afraid). Instead, try to train yourself to say, "Tell me more about what you are afraid of," or "What does your brain tell you is the biggest part of that fear?" Draw out their worry or fear so you can understand it and let them know it's okay to be afraid and talk about fear. Then you can follow it up with, "What do you need from me to help you be courageous/brave?"

Questions for parents to consider:

- How do I respond to my fear?
- Do they see me use courage?
- How do I respond to my child's fear? Or bravery?

Questions to ask your child:

- What are the things you are afraid of?
- How can I help you know that fear is normal?
- When have you ever seen me be courageous?
- Who is a courageous person you know, and why?

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COURAGE:

Being brave enough to do what you should, even when you're afraid

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Week One:

Courage is not the opposite of fear — it is the ability to tolerate being afraid and doing what is necessary anyway. This week we will acknowledge that fear is very powerful. How does fear hold you back? How can fear motivate you?

COLLEGE & CAREER READINESS

Week Two:

So how do you know when you should listen to fear, and how do you know when you should push through? This week, we will break down two acronyms of FEAR: *Forget Everything And Run* vs. *False Expectations About Reality*. Knowing what fear is trying to keep you alive (being chased by a lion) and what fear is holding you back (asking that special someone to sit with you at the football game Friday) will help you know how to handle situations with courage.

ANTI-BULLYING FOCUS

Week Three:

In today's culture, it's important to know something: everyone's afraid, but no one wants to talk about being afraid. Fear feels isolating, and it can be very lonely to believe you are the only one with fears, insecurities, and anxieties. This week, we will find power and courage in a community of fear.

MENTAL HEALTH FOCUS

Week Four:

There's a strong peer aspect to courage — how do the people around you influence you to do what's right, and how do you do that for other people? We know now that everyone has these feelings — fear is universal. So how does your circle of influence impact your level of courage?