

# Generations Family Counseling



**MAKING A DIFFERENCE  
TOGETHER**



## Generations Family Counseling Overview



- Generations Family Counseling is a group of mental health professionals who came together over a shared belief that human relationships are the most complicated, challenging and meaningful parts of life.
- There are five mental health practitioners on staff to help adults, adolescents and children deal with life stressors and relationship struggles.
- Generations takes a family systems approach whenever practical, working with family members individually and as a group to achieve the best results in as short a time as possible.



## Counseling Services





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**We work with children,  
adolescents, adults and families**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Depression</li> <li>• Stress and Anxiety</li> <li>• Phobias</li> <li>• Grief and Loss</li> <li>• Emotional and Physical Abuse</li> <li>• Trauma and Sexual Assault</li> <li>• ADHD</li> <li>• Eating Disorders</li> <li>• Obsessive Compulsive Disorder</li> <li>• PTSD</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare and Enrich Premarital Counseling</li> <li>• Life Coaching</li> <li>• Play and Sand Therapy</li> <li>• Communication Issues</li> <li>• Blending Families</li> <li>• Living with Medical Conditions</li> <li>• Codependency and Boundaries</li> <li>• Anger Management</li> <li>• Parenting Stress</li> <li>• Self Esteem and Self-Confidence Issues</li> <li>• School and Homework Difficulties</li> <li>• Behavioral Problems in Children</li> </ul>
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<p><b>Robin Gustine</b> Parent Coach Board Certified Biblical Counselor</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BA in psychology from William and Mary</li> <li>• Double Masters in Counseling and Psychology from Rhode Island College</li> <li>• Certified by the Love and Logic Institute</li> <li>• Trained in ScreamFree Parenting</li> <li>• Certified by the AACC</li> </ul>
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## Who's Really in Charge Here? The Battle for Control Between Parents and Kids



Adolescence - a time to transition from dependence to independence.

Developmental Stage - the search for identity and autonomy often results in power struggles between parents and kids

What do *you* fight about?

## Rules and Relationship – Who Should be in Charge?



- Rules without Relationship=Rebellion
- Relationship without Rules=Mayhem

Picture a rope connecting you and your child

- If you are pulling too hard, he will pull back with all his might and a battle for control will ensue
- If you aren't pulling hard enough, there is too much slack on the rope and he will act out, trying to find the connection (kids naturally want limits)
- The proper tension on the rope = shared control



## The Science of Control



- A child who feels he has *some* control over his life will spend little time and energy trying to manipulate and control the parent.
- A child who feels he has *no* control over his life will spend much of his time and energy trying to manipulate the system and the adults around him.
- Children who feel a lack of control, recognition, and/or appreciation find ways to sabotage their parents and themselves in their determination to get control.
- Parenting with Love and Logic helps parents learn to give children control on the parents' terms and to build strong, positive relationships with their children.



www.loveandlogic.com



Does this  
look  
familiar?



[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=njTIqHCr4v0&list=FLXH2SUhkIb7Hobcvslvnvw&index=1&feature=plpp\\_video](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=njTIqHCr4v0&list=FLXH2SUhkIb7Hobcvslvnvw&index=1&feature=plpp_video)

## What did Mom do right?



- Focused, full attention
- Asked a lot of questions
- Assessed ownership of the problem
  - Mom does not plan on working harder than child to find the solution
- Made enforceable statements
  - Told child what she was willing to do, rather than what the child had to do, or making a threat
- Empowered and validated child
  - Can-do message

## Love and Logic Formula



- Love and Logic formula “C.O.O.L”.
  - “C” is for control that is shared
  - “O” is for ownership of the problem
  - “O” is for opportunity for thinking
  - “L” stands for empathy and letting consequences do the teaching

## The C.O.O.L. Formula



“C” is for control that is shared

Having choices helps kids feel in control

- Be sure to pick two choices you can live with
- If the child doesn't choose, be prepared to choose yourself
- Never give a choice unless you're prepared to allow the child to live with the consequences
- Example: Kids are acting up at the dinner table
  - Sit at the table politely, or take your noise outside
  - Finish your dinner politely, or wait to eat at breakfast
  - Eat with us politely, or alone after we're finished

Praising and validating her good choices helps the child develop confidence and a strong internal voice.

## Choices You Can Live With Exercise



- Child is playing video games instead of doing homework
  - A. Would you rather play for 15 minutes now or 45 minutes when your homework is finished?
  - B. What would be best for you, finishing your homework before you play or banking all your game time for the weekend?
  - C. Feel free to \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_
  - D. You can either \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_
- The child's bedroom is a mess
  - A. Would you rather clean your room by dinnertime or pay me to do it?
  - B. What would be best for you \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_
  - C. Feel free to \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_
  - D. You can either \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_

## The C.O.O.L. Formula



- “O” is for ownership of the problem
- Who owns the problem?
  - Guiding children to own and solve their own problems increases their feelings of confidence and independence, and reduces power struggles
  - Ask yourself, “What’s going to happen to me if that problem doesn’t get solved?” If your answer is “nothing,” then it is the child’s problem!
  - Examples:
    - If the child loses his phone, it’s his problem to solve. If the child loses your phone, it’s your problem to solve (by delivering a consequence)
    - “You may solve your problem any way you choose, so long as it does not make a problem for someone else.”
- We should not work harder than our kids to solve their problem



### Guide the child to solve the problem

With humor

With love

With sincerity

With rules

- Step One: Empathy
  - “How sad”
- Step Two: Empower the child to find a solution
  - “What do you think you’re going to do?”
- Step Three: Offer choices
  - Would you like to hear what’s worked for others in your situation?
- Step Four: Have the child predict the outcome
  - “And how will that work out?”
- Step Five: Give permission for the child to either solve the problem or not solve the problem
  - “Good luck, I hope that works out.”

## The C.O.O.L. Formula



- “O” is for opportunity for thinking

Unenforceable Statements - Fighting words:

Telling the child what to do, what you will not allow, what you won't do for him

- You're not going to talk to me that way!
- I'm not letting you go out to play until you have your homework finished.
- You're not going to...
- You better...

VS

Enforceable Statements - Thinking Words:

Telling the child the conditions under which the adult will do something, the choices the child has, or when she can do something

- I'll be glad to discuss this with you, as soon as you can speak respectfully.
- You are welcome to go outside as soon as your homework is finished
- I'll know you are ready to \_\_\_\_\_when.....
- Feel free to.....

## Enforceable Statements



### Fighting Words:

- \*You better clean your room!
- \*Calm down right now!
- \*I'm not picking up the dirty clothes from your floor.
- \*As long as you live in my house, you follow my rules.

### Thinking Words:

- \*You may watch TV as soon as your room is clean.
- \*You are welcome to come back into the room when you are calm.
- \*I'll be glad to wash whatever is in the hamper, and you can take care of the rest.
- \*Feel free to enjoy the privileges I give you while you are following my rules.



## Practice



- You're not going to be included in family dinner if you don't take those ear buds out!
  - Feel free to \_\_\_\_\_
- You better not go over your texting limit again this month.
  - I am happy to \_\_\_\_\_
- I'm not driving another inch until you guys shut up.
  - I'll begin \_\_\_\_\_
- Stop fighting with your brother!
  - You are welcome to \_\_\_\_\_

## The C.O.O.L. Formula



- "L" stands for letting empathy and consequences do the teaching
  - Children who experience logical consequences are invested in the problem solving and decision making process and are far more likely to learn from their mistakes.
- Empathy vs. Anger
  - When we respond to our child's poor choices with anger, they become self-defensive rather than self-reflective
  - Develop your favorite empathetic response, practice it and use it often
    - How sad
    - That's too bad
    - Bummer
    - What a shame
- Natural (Logical) Consequences
  - Mimic real life scenarios
  - Are related to the infraction
  - Ideally come from sources other than the parents
- How to Destroy the Teaching Value of a Logical Consequence
  - Talk too much
  - Say "This will teach you a good lesson" or "I told you so!"

## Effective Communication with Kids



- **Choose a teachable moment**
  - When things are going well and everyone is calm, not when emotions are high
- **Ask questions – be inquisitive, but don't set up an inquisition**
  - More ? than !
- **Reflect back what they say for clarity and understanding**
  - So, you feel frustrated because I wouldn't let you go to the mall?
- **Use I statements**
  - I feel as though you lied to me about where you were, even though I can't prove it.
- **Keep it short**
  - The large majority of our words should be used to praise and encourage our kids, whereas corrective or critical messages should be short.

## Mission Control: Ready, Set, Launch



### **Generations Family Counseling in partnership with the J. Michael Lunsford PTA**

- **Our goal: to provide tools to help you launch your eighth grader into high school**
- **3 part series 4/25, 5/2, 5/9 from 7-9 pm**
  - Ready through teaching
  - Set through practice
  - Launch for independence
- **Format for each session includes one hour of teaching and a one hour breakout session for small group discussion**

## Resources



- Parenting with Love and Logic, Foster and Cline
- Connected Parenting, Jennifer Kolari
- The Five Love Languages of Children, Chapman and Campbell
- Homework: A Parent's Guide to Helping Out Without Freaking Out, Neil McNERney