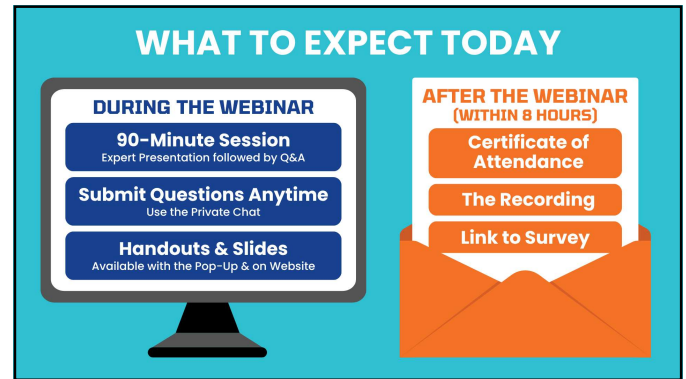
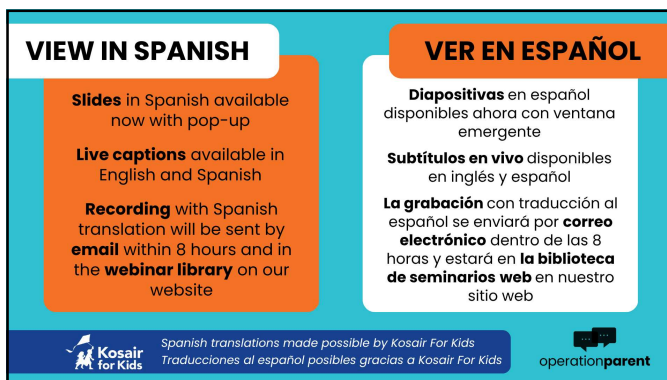




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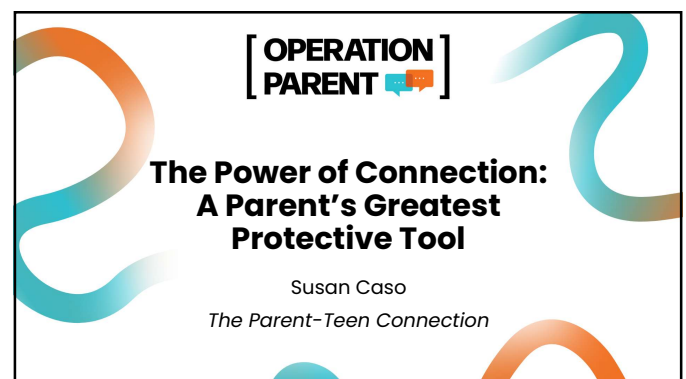
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Susan Caso, MA, LPC Therapist-Author-Speaker



- Parenting over two generations
- After **20+ years of counseling** teens and families, and parenting my own three children, I've seen what works: connection isn't about being a perfect parent, it's about showing up consistently and building trust your child can count on.
- As a parent, my greatest joy is knowing my kids feel safe enough to bring me anything. The connection we've built together is their soft place to land.

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The Parent-Teen Connection

Giveaway
at the
end!



- Gives you the roadmap to create secure attachment—that protective connectedness our kids desperately need to navigate today's world.
- This book meets you where you are and equips you with proven tools to give your teen what they need most—**you**.
- Caregivers/parents our biggest responsibility is showing our kids what a loving, emotionally close relationship looks and feels like.

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Connectedness

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Connectedness

Feeling of being valued, cared for

Internal Warmth

Responsiveness in the relationship that feels safe, reassuring

Feeling behind secure attachment

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Key Takeaways

- 1 Understand how **caregiver**/parent-child and adult-child connection protects children from mental health challenges, peer pressure, and digital-age risks.
- 2 Learn practical strategies to build emotional safety, foster belonging, and strengthen bonds at home and in schools.
- 3 Identify common barriers to connection, including misunderstandings and technology distractions, and discover ways to rebuild trust and resilience.

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What are kids say?

Pressure




I want to feel emotionally close to my parents.

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Parents (caregivers) are the Primary Attachment Figure

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Connectedness is a Protective Factor

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Research shows:

Family remains the central influence

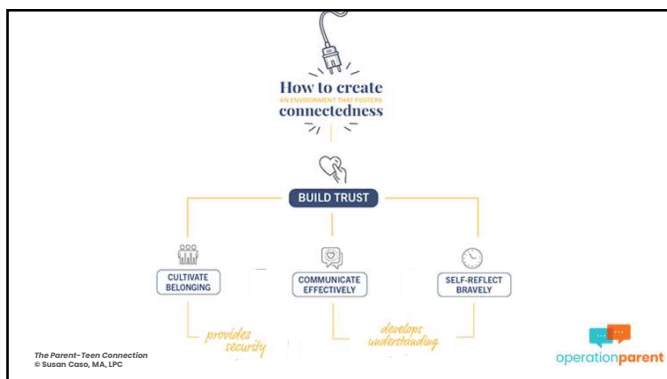
Kids who feel connectedness to at least one parent or caregiver experience:

- Better school performance
- Fewer emotional problems
- Less conduct disorder
- Higher self-esteem
- Less likely to use substances
- Less involvement in violence
- Fewer suicide attempts

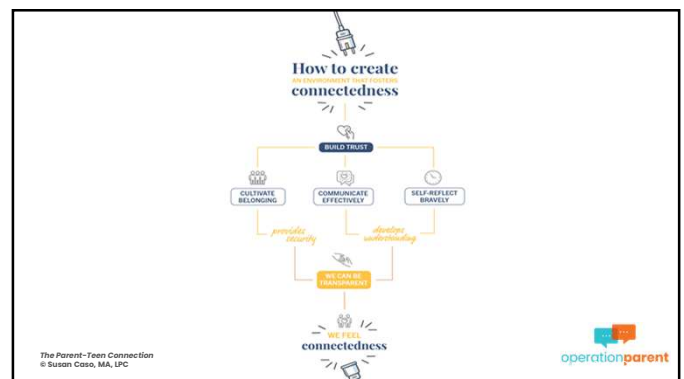
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Connection, Not Perfection

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Build Trust

You are their first relationship

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The Early Years... It's a Volley



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Belonging *provides security*

Must be cultivated

Strengthens their ability to find belonging with their peers

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Acceptance

- Not just loved but **liked** for who they are
- Need to be allowed to explore who they are
- Individuating and differentiating
 - NOT rebelling



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Cultivate Belonging at Home

Mom/Dad Role v. Parent Role
(Caregiver) *experiencing joy* *instructional*

Time (Quantity
& Quality)

Rituals &
traditions

Family dinner

Greetings &
Goodbyes

Physical
affection

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Barriers to Belonging

create disconnection

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Ask yourself:

"What is the relational climate at home?"

Parent-Child

Parent-Parent

Sibling-Sibling

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Effective Communication

develops understanding

We are always sending and receiving messages

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Ways We Communicate

55%
Nonverbal

38%
Paraverbal

7%
verbal

How it is said
Expressions of meaning – tone, pitch, inflection, pacing, rhythm, and volume of voice

What is not said but shown
Body language – posture, facial expressions, eye gestures, and touch

What is said

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Volley with Your Kids

Listening to understand

Confirming messages received until both have clarity

Empathizing and validating each others perspective

Owning and repairing

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Remember

Slow things
down

Stay
regulated

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Barriers to Effective Communication

creates disconnection

Not listening

Criticism

Judgement

Assumptions

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The Second Conversation

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other Source of Disconnection

Technoference

- Impacts Bonding
- Lost skill building
- Avoidance / coping
- Missed milestones

Set Boundaries & Collaborate

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Parents and Caregivers Serve as a Model



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Self-Reflection



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Question for Audience

Use the Private Chat for Your Answers

What's one thing from your own childhood you want to carry forward as a parent?

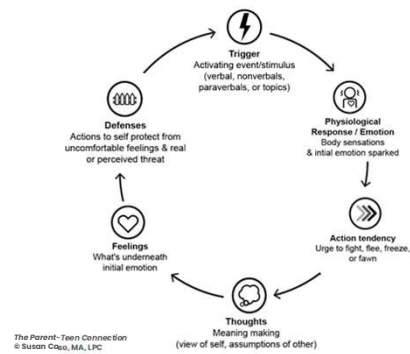
What's one thing you'd like to do differently with your kids?

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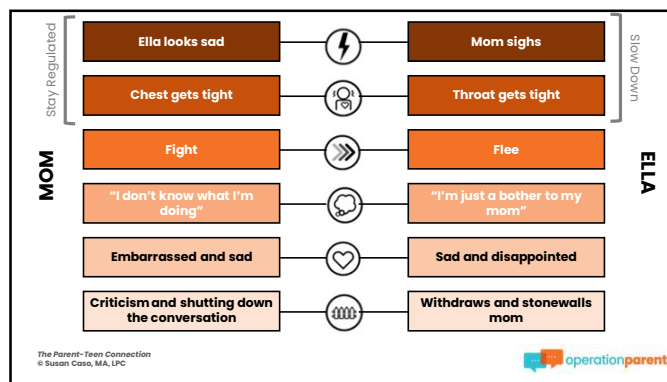
Cycle of Response



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Vulnerability is...

a Stepping Stone to
Emotional
Transparency

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Positive Feedback Loop



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Connectedness is a Protective Factor

and

A Path to Cooperation

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Parents

Connectedness

- The foundation begins from birth through consistent, responsive caregiving. But it is never too late!

Your presence matters more than perfection

- Being emotionally available is more protective than being a "perfect" parent.

Communication is bidirectional

- Children need to feel safe sharing without fear of immediate judgment.

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Parents

Prioritize consistent one-on-one time

- Schedule regular, uninterrupted time with each child doing activities they enjoy.

Create emotional safety

- Respond to difficult emotions with curiosity not problem solving: Ask "tell me more" before offering solutions.

Model healthy relationships

- Show children what healthy connections look like through your own supportive relationships.

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Pause & Reflect

- **How are you creating a sense of safety?**
- **Are you showing up as Mom/Dad/Caregiver?**
 - Approachable, volleying, listening

Ask your teen: ***What is your experience in your relationship with me?***

Ask your younger children: ***What do you like about our relationship? What do you wish was different?***



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So, what can schools do?

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Schools

Students who feel connected have higher grades, better attendance, and graduate at higher rates

Every adult in the building matters

- Connectedness isn't just about teachers; all staff can be the caring adult who makes a difference.

Not all students experience school the same way

- Some students face greater social isolation and need targeted support to feel belonging.

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Schools

Implement relationship-building structures

- Create advisory programs and mentorship so every student has an adult who knows them well.

Train all staff in relational practices

- Prioritize building connection skills and understanding child/adolescent development.

Create pathways for student voice

- Offer diverse activities and leadership opportunities so every student can find their place. **Specific success examples**

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So, what can communities do?

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Communities

Disconnection is a public health crisis

- Youth connectedness reduces violence, substance abuse, and mental health crises community-wide.

Community connectedness requires *intentional infrastructure*

- Strong communities need accessible spaces, programs, and intergenerational connections.

Structural barriers prevent connectedness

- Poverty, transportation, and unsafe neighborhoods all block families from building connections.

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Communities

Invest in accessible youth programming

- Provide free or low-cost activities in all neighborhoods with transportation and meals included.

Create *intergenerational* opportunities

- Develop mentorship programs and events that bring youth and caring adults together.

Build networks among families

- Support parent groups and neighborhood organizations that help families connect with each other. **The Parent-Teen Connection book** groups have helped parents gain parenting tools and build community at the same time.

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National Organizations

American Academy of Pediatrics: <https://www.aap.org/en/>

Society for Adolescent Health and Medicine: <https://adolescenthealth.org/>

National Family Support Network:
<https://www.nationalfamilysupportnetwork.org/>

NAMI: <https://www.nami.org/>

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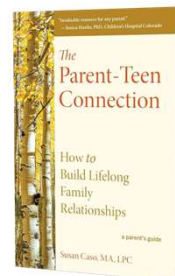
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SUBMIT YOUR



QUESTIONS

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BOOK GIVEAWAY

Click the button on the pop-up to enter!

Winners will be asked for their mailing address when contacted

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Susan Caso, MA, LPC

- <https://susancaso.com/>
- counseling@susancaso.com
- Instagram: @susan.caso
- LinkedIn: Susan Caso, MA LPC

Get my book on Amazon!



Want to start a book club with the Parent-Teen Connection? Email me or use the pop-up!

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PARENT HANDBOOKS:
YOUR GUIDE TO MEANINGFUL CONVERSATIONS!

"They cover so many topics that are pertinent to what parents need to know when raising their kids right now!"
—Susan Caso, Therapist & Author

TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION WITH YOUR TEEN

Beginning the Journey

Start your journey off on the right foot...

Understand your role as the parent. Your job as a parent isn't to be all-knowing or to control your child. They need to know you will keep them safe, but more importantly, they need to know you will help them grow into the adults they need to be. They need to know you will be there for them when they need you.

Think with the end in mind. In other words, remember that you are really raising a child, not just raising an adult. Think of the child as a person who is developing, growing, and changing.

Be a positive role model. Right now, you are the most important role model in your child's life. They will look up to you and want to be like you. So make sure you are the best example you can be.

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INFOGRAPHICS CONVERSATION STARTERS RED FLAGS

MIDDLE | HIGH: \$14.99
ELEMENTARY: \$9.99

SPANISH & CHRISTIAN EDITIONS AVAILABLE

VAPING SOCIAL MEDIA BULLYING ALCOHOL SCREEN TIME DEPRESSION GAMING OPIOIDS ANXIETY

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GIVE THE GIFT THAT KEEPS ON GIVING!

PARENT HANDBOOKS HELP FAMILIES STAY INFORMED, CONNECTED, AND READY TO HANDLE LIFE'S TRICKY MOMENTS.

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LET'S KEEP HAVING **CASUAL COURAGEOUS** conversations

BECOME A PROMO PARTNER

@OPERATIONPARENT

Growing Minds and Modern Highs: THC, Hemp & Kratom
Julie Dreifaldt
One Chance to Grow Up

UPCOMING WEBINARS

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QUESTIONS

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