

Nurturing stability in the face of uncertainty

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In just 90 minutes...

- What we know from the research
- What we suggest for nurturing stability through your relationships and your environment
- What you can do going forward
- Questions

(Stone & Mudry, 2020)

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Disaster Invites Uncertainty

Unique challenges for teens:

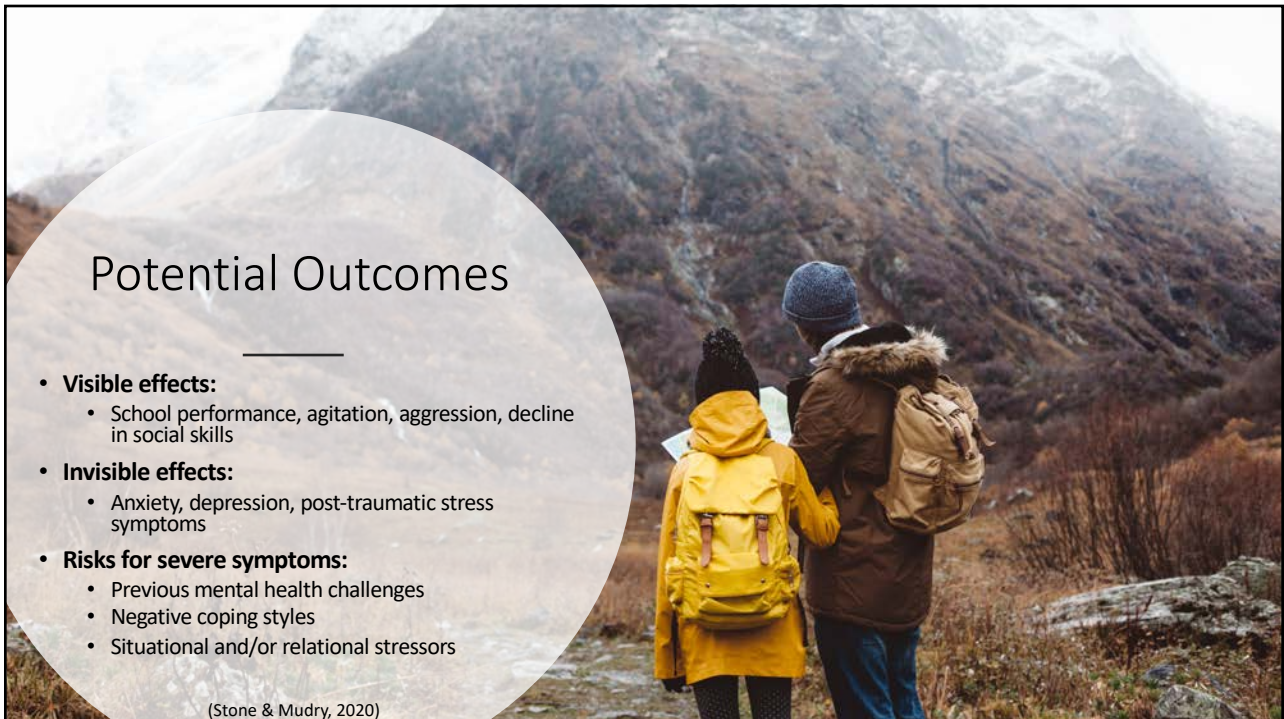
- Barriers to independence
- Reliance on caregivers
- Interrupted social lives
- Family-related stressors
- Reduced access to supportive adults

Unique challenges for the family:

- Meeting the social/emotional/physical needs of adolescents
- Contagious effect of stress
- Unbalanced attention on those who are struggling

(Stone & Mudry, 2020)

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Potential Outcomes

- **Visible effects:**
 - School performance, agitation, aggression, decline in social skills
- **Invisible effects:**
 - Anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress symptoms
- **Risks for severe symptoms:**
 - Previous mental health challenges
 - Negative coping styles
 - Situational and/or relational stressors

(Stone & Mudry, 2020)

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Uncertainty Invites Discomfort

- We look to what we know to provide certainty:
 - Previous experience
 - Acquired knowledge
 - Family of origin
- Fear drives biased predictions
- We crave drastic change

(Stone & Mudry, 2020)



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The good news...

- Society adapts.
- We work towards recovery.
- Resiliency is possible with the right ingredients!

(Stone & Mudry, 2020)



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Protective Factors

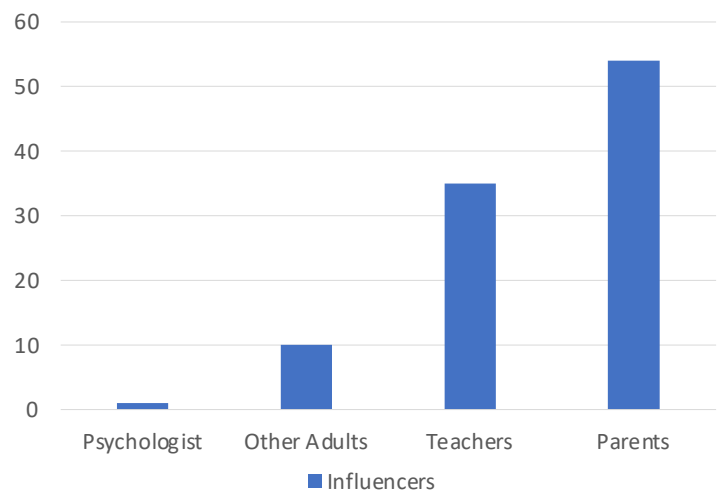
- Personality
- Positive coping strategies
- Activities that bring joy
- Community involvement
- Relationships
- Family
 - Long-lasting safety and protection
 - Calm brain vs. emotional brain

(Stone & Mudry, 2020)

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Hours of Influence

Joan Besant, MD



(Stone & Mudry, 2020)

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Nurturing Stability: *Relationships*

- Consider the “tools” your teens are working with
- Re-evaluate your goals
- Dedicate quality time
- Check in, but don't fix
- Strengthen their narrative of being capable
- Pay attention to what you model
- Encourage safe social connection

(Stone & Mudry, 2020)

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Criticizing lack of motivation

Avoiding homework

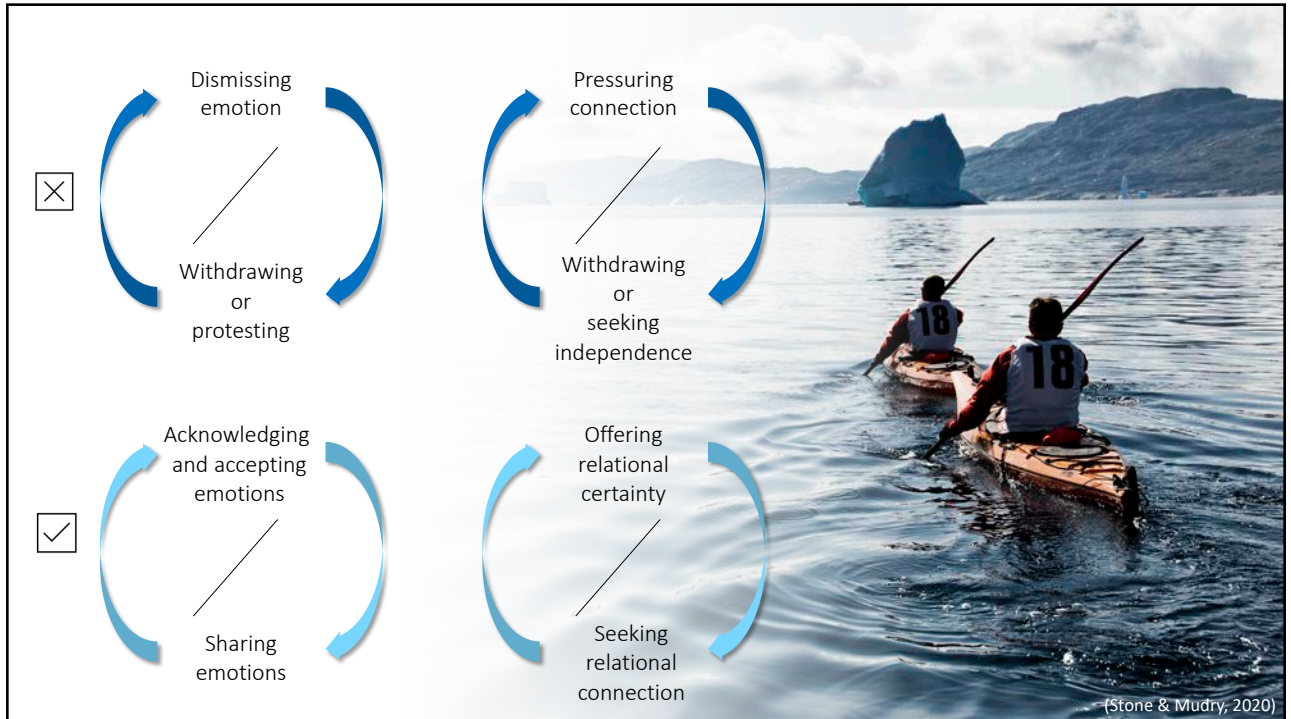
Recognizing effort

Feeling motivated

Notice invitations

(Stone & Mudry, 2020)

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Teenager Gazing

- Shift from “you” to “we”
- Take the spotlight off of your teen and onto the family

(Stone & Mudry, 2020)

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Nurturing Stability: *Environment*


- Encourage general routine
- Outline expectations and outcomes
- Be consistent and follow through
- Get outdoors
- Help create purpose
- Monitor exposure to news/media
- Maintain your calm
- Collaborate with others (teachers, community, professionals)
- Have patience and compassion for those around you

(Stone & Mudry, 2020)

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Taking care of you

- Ask for help
- Prioritize your self-care
- Take frequent breaks
- Trade off with others
- Befriend uncomfortable emotions
- Practice self-compassion



(Stone & Mudry, 2020)

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Where to next?

Upcoming research opportunity:

- Twitter @jstone_psych

Integrated Services in Education at UofC:

- Strong Parents, Strong Kids
- Strong Mind, Strong Me

<https://werklund.ucalgary.ca/integrated-services/intervention>

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