

MAY 9, 2017

EMPATHY YOUR MAGIC WAND



By Dr. Laura Markham

When a parent bestows the gift of empathy on a child, that visceral connection changes everything.

I see parents and children make breakthroughs every day. And guess what makes the most difference? Empathy. If we can actually see things from our child's perspective, everything changes.

This doesn't mean agreeing with our child, or letting him do whatever he wants just because we understand why he wants to. But it does mean that while our child doesn't get everything she wants, she gets something better: Someone who understands and accepts her, no matter what. It also means that once we understand our child's perspective, we can intervene to help her meet the needs that she was trying to meet all along, from connection to feeling valued.

Empathy is the foundation of emotional intelligence; it's also the foundation of effective parenting, according to John Gottman, the author of *Raising An Emotionally Intelligent Child*. Why? Because it's essential to your ability to understand your child and connect with her. Because it will prevent you from visiting on your child all the issues from your own childhood. And because without it, your child simply won't feel loved, no matter how much you love her.

Empathy is often defined as seeing things from the other person's point of view. But empathy is actually a physical event, controlled by the insula in our right brain. The structure of the right brain is formed during the first two years of life, before your baby becomes verbal. Scientists suspect that the right brain is the orchestrator of intimacy. The insula connects the brain with the heart, digestive organs, and skin.

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UPCOMING TRAININGS

Date & Time	Name of Training & Trainer
ANKENY Saturday, May 13, 2017 (9am-12:15pm)	Mandatory Child Abuse Reporter Training
ANKENY Saturday, May 13, 2017 (1:15pm-5:30pm)	CPR and First Aid (Register & Pay Here)
ANKENY Saturday, May 20, 2017 (9am-12:15pm)	Why Don't Friends Come With Instruction Manuals (Summer Brunscheen, Ph.D.)
ANKENY Saturday, May 20, 2017 (1:15pm-4:30pm)	It's All Greek to Me! A Brief Overview of Learning Disorders (Summer Brunscheen, Ph.D.)
DAVENPORT Saturday, May 20, 2017 (9am-12:15pm)	Grrr..."I Am Just so Mad!" - Helping Young Children Deal with Their Anger (Joann Seeman Smith, Ph.D., LMHC)
DAVENPORT Saturday, May 20, 2017 (1:15pm-4:30pm)	Parenting the Willful Child - Helping Your Child Use Their Power for Good and Not Evil (Joann Seeman Smith, Ph.D., LMHC)
MASON CITY Saturday, May 20, 2017 (9am-12:15pm)	Trauma in Children & Teens: What it Really is and What Really Works (Warren Phillips, Ph.D.)
MASON CITY Saturday, May 20, 2017 (1:15pm-4:30pm)	Arrggg...What Can I Do With My Kids? The Power of Receptive Parenting vs. Reactive Parenting (Warren Phillips, Ph.D.)
SIOUX CITY Saturday, May 20, 2017 (9am-4:30pm)	What Are You Trying to Tell Me? Responding Effectively to Troubling Behaviors (Lois Smidt & Krista McCalley)

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER FOR A CLASS](#)

IMMEDIATE CHANGES TO ALL IOWA OPPORTUNITY FOSTER CARE GRANT

The All Iowa Opportunity Foster Care Grant will not exist for the 2017-2018 school year. However, students in foster care can apply for the 2017-18 All Iowa Opportunity Scholarship instead. Any student who has already applied for the 2017-18 Foster Care Grant AND has submitted a 2017-18 FAFSA will have their application automatically converted into an application for the All Iowa Opportunity Scholarship; therefore, no additional action is needed from those students.

The official application for the All Iowa Opportunity Scholarship is closed for the year, however, students in foster care can follow [THESE STEPS](#), to apply for the All Iowa Opportunity Scholarship. Students must complete these steps by June 1st. Please note, the Education & Training Voucher (ETV) Grant is still available for the 2017-2018 school year. If you have questions, [email](#) Iowa College Aid, or call them at 877-272-4456 ext. 3.

APPLICATIONS NOW AVAILABLE FOR VARIETY AMP CAMP

Each year AMP brings teens from all over Iowa to be a part of the magic that happens at Variety AMP Camp. Last year we had ten mentors and forty-one youth spend six days at the Iowa 4H Camp in Madrid, IA. Each mentor shared their life experience with the AMP Campers and formed a special bond which provided a life-long connection to teens that have lived in the child welfare "system". Campers also attended trainings that prepared them for leadership roles when they returned to their local AMP Councils. If your teen is not part of an AMP Council, this is a great opportunity to experience AMP and meet members of an existing council so they can be involved in AMP after camp!

This year Variety AMP Camp will be in a new location; Forest Lake Camp in Bloomington Iowa (approx. ten miles south of Ottumwa). YSS Camp Staff will offer activities specifically designed with teenagers in mind such as: swimming, fishing, canoeing, horseback riding, geo casting, tie dying shirts, art projects, archery, cooking plus various hikes and campfires. AMP offers guest speakers that encourage self-awareness, forward thinking, character counts, telling their stories of hope through poetry and expressing their feelings through art! IFAPA is offering training for youth & parents together on Saturday, June 24th at camp on transition planning and how to protect youth from the dangers of human trafficking (six foster parent licensing hours approved). Variety AMP Camp changes youth and the adults that stand in awe of their resilience!

Mentor applications (10 positions) are for young adults ages 18-22 who have already attended Variety AMP Camp as a camper, but are now interested in mentoring younger teens. Mentor training begins June 20th at 10:00am. Youth applications (40 spots) are for teens ages 15-18 who want to be part of the youth voice that advocates for change in Iowa's Child Welfare System! Fill out your [CAMP APPLICATION](#) today and plan to send your teen to Variety AMP Camp...the experience of a lifetime!

UPCOMING CLASSES FOR PARENTS AND TEENS 14+

COUNCIL BLUFFS

THURSDAY, JUNE 8, 2017 (5pm-8pm)

Future Fest West - For Foster/Adoptive Youth Age 14+
WORTH TWO HOURS OF CREDIT [VIEW MORE INFO](#)

SIoux CITY

SATURDAY, JUNE 10, 2017 (9am-12:15pm)

Human Trafficking - It Is Here & Thriving in Iowa!
WORTH THREE HOURS OF CREDIT [VIEW MORE INFO](#)

BLOOMFIELD

SATURDAY, JUNE 24, 2017 (9am-4:30pm)

Equip...Launch...Success! Preparing Your Teen
for a Secure Journey to Adulthood
WORTH SIX HOURS OF CREDIT [VIEW MORE INFO](#)