OEOP Parent Webinar:
It’s tough being a teen in 2015

Tuesday, November 3, 2015
Agenda

- Welcome!
- Logistics of webinar
- Introductions
- Overview of OEOP
- Presentations from Linda & Lorraine
- Discussion and wrap-up
- Reminder of next webinars and post survey request
OEOP team on the webinar

Shawna - Executive Director
Lorraine - MOSTEC Student Program Assistant
Linda - Consultant, Student Support
Denise - Manager of Programs
Nick - Communications and Alumni Coordinator
Our vision, mission, and values

Vision
Making science and engineering careers accessible to all

Mission
To diversify the science and engineering community by serving students from underrepresented and underserved backgrounds and empowering these students to develop the skills and confidence needed to pursue careers in technical fields

Values
Learning, diversity, transformation, access, and community
Our programs

MITES
Minority Introduction to Engineering and Science

E2@MIT
Engineering Experience at MIT

MOSTEC
MIT Online Science, Technology, and Engineering Community

SEED Academy
Saturday Engineering Enrichment and Discovery Academy

STEM Program
Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics Program
Purpose of the OEOP Parent Webinar Series
OEOP Students have a great path ahead of them!
What your teen might be experiencing

There is a lot of focus on the negatives!
Teens let that be the narrative that drives their self view
Recognize Adolescence as a Time of Upheaval

Adolescence is a time of hope and expectancy as well as extreme disappointment and moodiness. It’s normal for adolescents to experience stress, confusion, and self-doubt. In addition to normal physical, hormonal, and emotional changes, adolescents confront many of the following challenges:
What else is going on?

- Constant evaluations of self and academic achievement
- College applications
- School tests & Standardized testing
- Navigating peer pressures
- Social media perceptions
- What are the barriers to my success?
External & Internal Pressures

Social Media
The constant connections to what is happening among peers

Elevated sense of expectation
Their expectations of success and what they will perceive as others' expectations about their success

Fear of failure
They don't want to fail themselves

Social anxiety
“Will I fit in?” “Be likeable?” “Be smart enough?” “Be understood?”

Pressure of Competition
Academic stress can produce a sense of competition

Overwhelmed by demands on time

Confusion
How will I manage this?
I think that the biggest problem is balancing homework from 7 different classes with finding time to sleep and take a break every once and awhile. While also dealing with every day social pressure by trying to fit in.”
Getting stuck in the negatives

TED Talk by Alison Ledgerwood (UC Davis)
- practice seeing the upside
- share good news & what we're grateful for
Noticing Signs of Distress

While they may try to hide it, teens in distress are likely to give off clues.

Learning how to notice the difference between signs of normal stress and signs of distress is important.

If you’re feeling worried about your teen, always talk with them about your concerns.
Academic/Work Indicators of Distress

unexpected frequent absences from class

marked decline in performance

repeated need for accommodation

reported or observed changes in motivation, concentration, and investment in work

emails, papers, or essays that express themes of social isolation, depression, hopelessness, helplessness, and/or despair
Psychological/Physical Indicators

changes in personal hygiene, weight, or sleeping and eating habits

depressed appearance, isolation, or withdrawal

apathy or lack of energy

intense anxiety, significant worrying, or panic attacks

changes in personality

anger and irritability

self-injurious behaviors

substance abuse

expressions of hopelessness and helplessness
Tips for Talking About Your Concerns

Don’t keep your concerns to yourself!

It’s better to say something and be wrong than to be silent because you were unsure.

Make sure you can approach your teen in a caring non-judgmental way
Specific tips for talking to your teen

- Be discreet/personal
- Be nonjudgmental
- Ask open-ended questions
- Be a listener
- Help your teen find people who can help
- Gently counter resistance, but don’t fight them
- Know your own limits
✓ Be aware of the positive aspects ahead of you, not only the challenges
✓ Self care! Sleep, plan your studies, plan your free time, give time to both
✓ Be available to friends and family but setting limits to protect you time for yourself
✓ Manage expectations – Sometimes not getting into a school or program is because it was not a good fit and there are others that might be a better fit
✓ There are a lot of potential support systems for teens. Family members might feel silenced by all the additional opportunities. Remember you have a voice. You can call upon supports as well.
✓ Reinforce their skills to connect with others to assist with study skills, time management, and writing. This builds their network. There is no stigma around support networks; these are resources that others also have access to.
Blog Posts Affirm Ways Students Find Stress Relief!

When you feel stress and anxiety what helps?

- Taking walks
- Taking naps
- Reaffirming goals
- Talking with friends
- Taking time for self reflection
- Making time with family
- Listening to music

ALL great ways to cope!
Encourage your teen to:

• Be serious about self care!
  • It is important! (Sleep, find free time, make time with family)

• Look at what they have accomplished!
  • Participating in OEOP
  • New possibilities ahead
  • New connections through STEM interests
  • New perspectives
  • New goals

Q: What else?
Identify challenges, but don’t let them be distractions!

Distractions

- Comparisons to others
- Peer pressure
- Negative thinking
- Opinions of others
- Disappointment
Coping strategies are used to:
~ Solve a problem
~ Reduce emotional stress
Create realistic expectations about how long it will take you to reach your goals
Find ways to measure your progress
Celebrate the milestones in your journey
Develop a plan to resist the temptation to be negative about your progress
Pace yourself!
Set goals that include relaxation and enjoyment
Don’t assume that because progress is slow, it means you are off track
Support Networks

Social support comes from family, friends, community members...

They provide friendship, activity, reassurance, guidance, decision making

- What people are important to you?
- Who are the most supportive and positive influences?
- The number in your support network is not relevant – your sense of their availability to you and your trust in their influence on you is the important part.
Strategies to examine issues with your teen

- Examine issues from different perspectives!
- Are there exceptions to the intensity?
- Can we put the problem on a scale from 1 – 10?
- What if the problem didn’t exist?
Upcoming webinar topics

Early December
“Counseling your child through their school experiences”

Early January
“Financial aid and college affordability”
Thank you!