

# NEW GENERATION OF PARENTS

Generational cohorts

- Their shared experiences
- Effects of parents' experiences on students
- Effects of what's going on at home on students

How today's parents contact you

How you should respond

Conflict Resolution

Importance of working with school counselor & support staff



# Generational Cohorts

- Members of a generation linked through the shared life experiences of their formative years
- Shared experiences develop values and life skills
- Other influences
  - Life stages
  - Gender
  - Race
  - Socioeconomic conditions
  - Geography
  - Education



# Generational Cohorts

from Schuman and Scott (1989)

- Depression (born 1912-21)
- World War II & Eisenhower (born 1922-45)
- Baby Boomer 1 (born 1946-54)
- Baby Boomer 2 (born 1955-65)
- Generation X (born 1966-81)
- Millennials (born 1982-present)

# Generation X

- Born: 1966-1981
- Ages: 28-43
- Classes: '87-'02
- 44 Million Strong
- Accept diversity
- Pragmatic/practical
- Reject rules; killer life
- Latch-key kids
- Friend-not family

# Generation X...Shared Experiences

- The Sesame Street Generation
- Cable TV, PCs and Internet
- Witnessed downsizing of 1980s and its impact on their families
- Information unlimited – choices plentiful
- Children of divorce and 2 career families
- More tolerant
- AIDS, safe sex

# Millennials also called Gen X

- Born: After 1982
- Ages: 11-27
- High School Class of 2000
- Celebrate diversity
- Optimistic/realistic
- Rewrite the rules; killer lifestyle; heightened fears
- Sheltered – parents obsessed with safety (helicopter parents)
- 63% prefer Web over TV
- 55% prefer e-mail over the phone
- Most day cared generation ever; nurtured
- Friends = family
- Acceptance of change

# Millennials –Shared Experiences

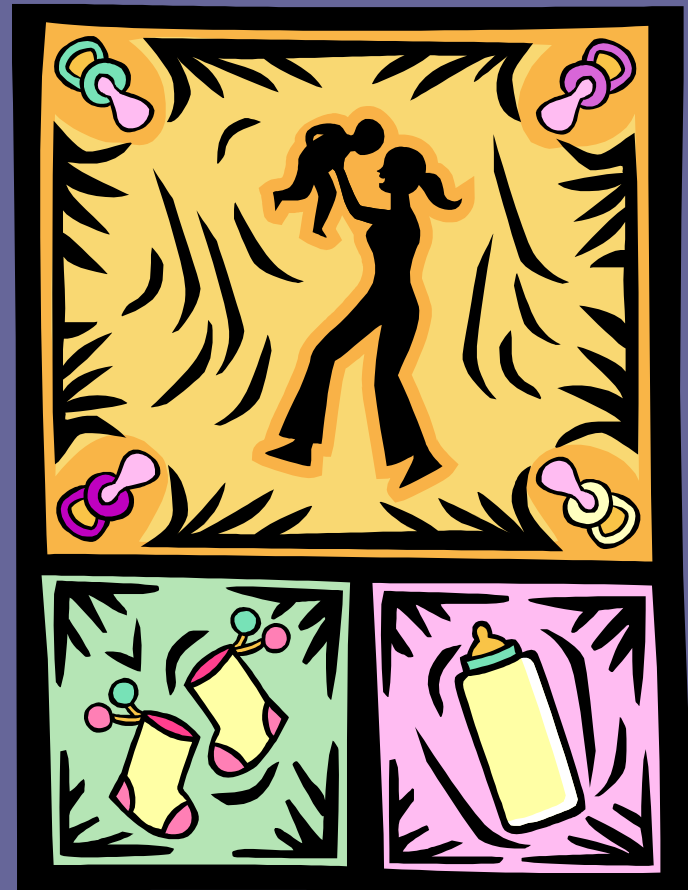
- Columbine
- Oklahoma City Bombing
- Princess Di's death
- Clinton scandal
- 9-11 terrorist attack
- 2 wars in Iraq
- Tsunami and Katrina
- Rise of the Internet
- President Barack Obama elected

# Generations X, Y, Z and others

*"In the final analysis it is not what you do for your children but what you have taught them to do for themselves that will make them successful human beings."*

*Ann Landers*

- High stress levels – job, parenting, over-extended
- Friend vs. parent
- Single parents
- More transient
- Less family support (extended family or grandparents, etc.)
- Disruption in the family is common
- Teen violence on the rise



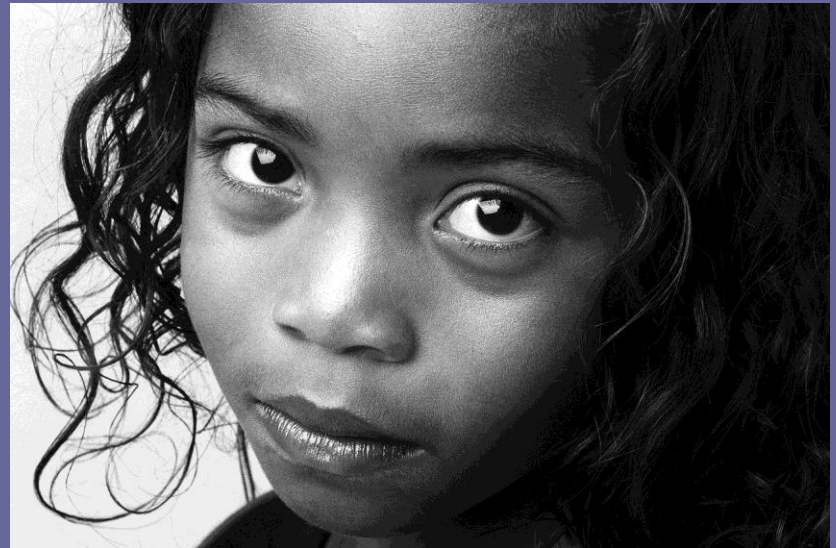
# Generations X, Y, Z and others



- Have survived intense competition for jobs
- Speak up more and more involved in school activities
- Some married later than previous generations and had children later than previous generations
- Some are having children at a very early age – children having children
- Looking for work life balance in a race against time

# Effects of parents' high stress levels on children

- Alone at home more often (no parents at home after school)
- Thrust into independence before they have the life skills to handle it
- Children forced to be adults at home; come to school to be children



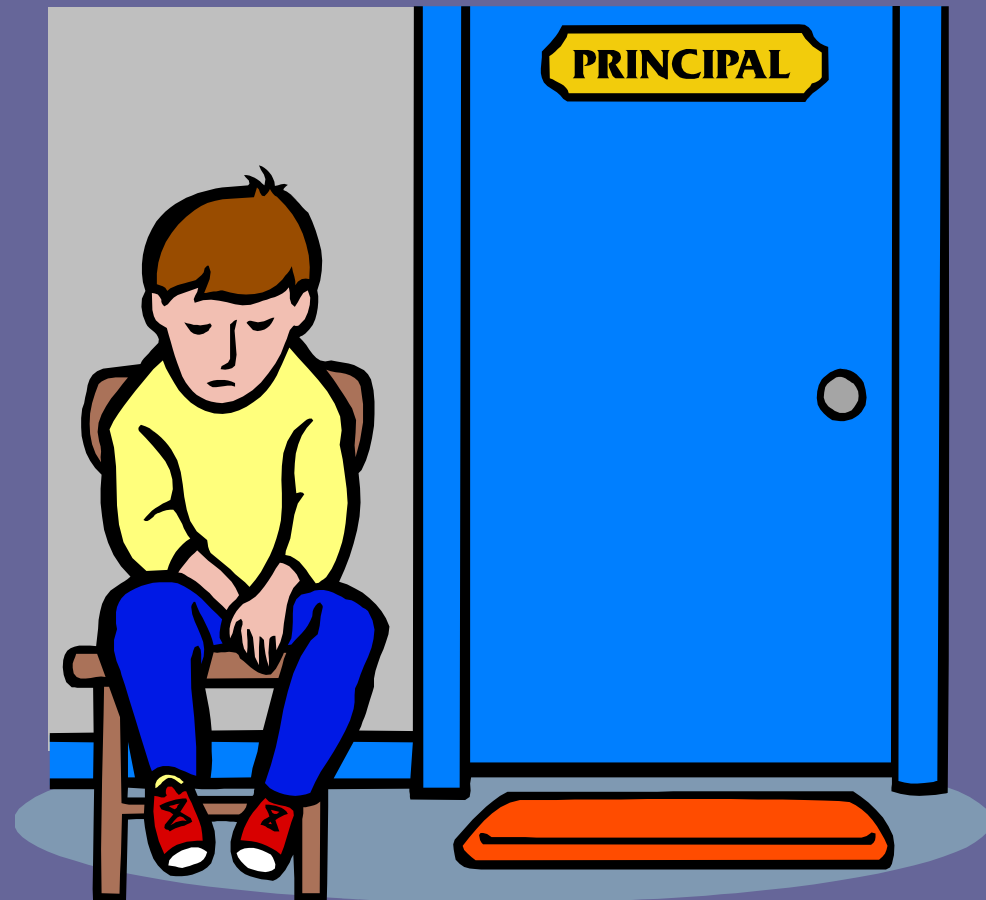
# Effects of parents' high stress level on children



- Lack of stability – lack of grounded, solid value system
- Less inhibition with adults, manipulative
- Left with third party caregivers or are raising themselves
- Over-indulged and over-empowered (parents lavish money and things instead of time)

# Effects of what's going on at home on children

- Greater pressure – validated for what they do rather than what they are
- More anxious, worried and depressed
- Harried, often high-stressed home life
- Greater frequency of significant life events



# How today's parents contact you



# How you should respond



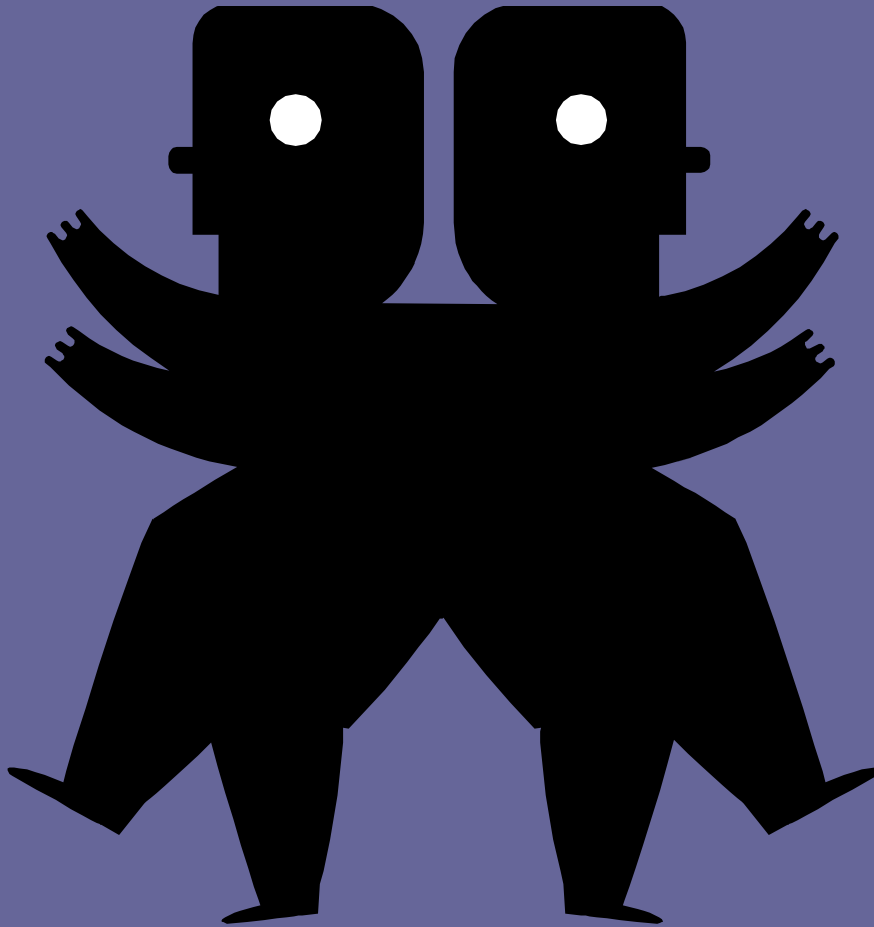
- Parents need to know that they and their calls are valued
- There is no substitute for a friendly greeting – one that includes the name of school and the name of the person answering the telephone
- Should hear a friendly encouraging message on answering machine
- Keep the message up to date
- A reasonable period to respond to messages is 24 hours if possible 😊
- Review your school's policies

# Via the computer: email and the Internet

- Emails should not replace personal communication (telephone, letters, or conferences) and should never be used to communicate confidential information about individual students



# Conflict Resolution



- Know your school's policies and procedures
- Do not defend the indefensible
- Remember that your mission's first-order commitment is to your students – not to their parents
- Good counseling displays wisdom and courage
- Remember pure “win-win” solutions are uncommon

# Important to work with the school counselor and other support staff



Critical mechanism in the life of the school

# Advantages of having a counselor and support staff

- Obvious advantage of having a centralized, personal contact for each student is invaluable to your school's program but there are many other ways in which the counseling department or social worker helps form the backbone of the school.
- Designated adult who will serve as an advocate for a student, when necessary

# Characteristics of an excellent division or classroom group

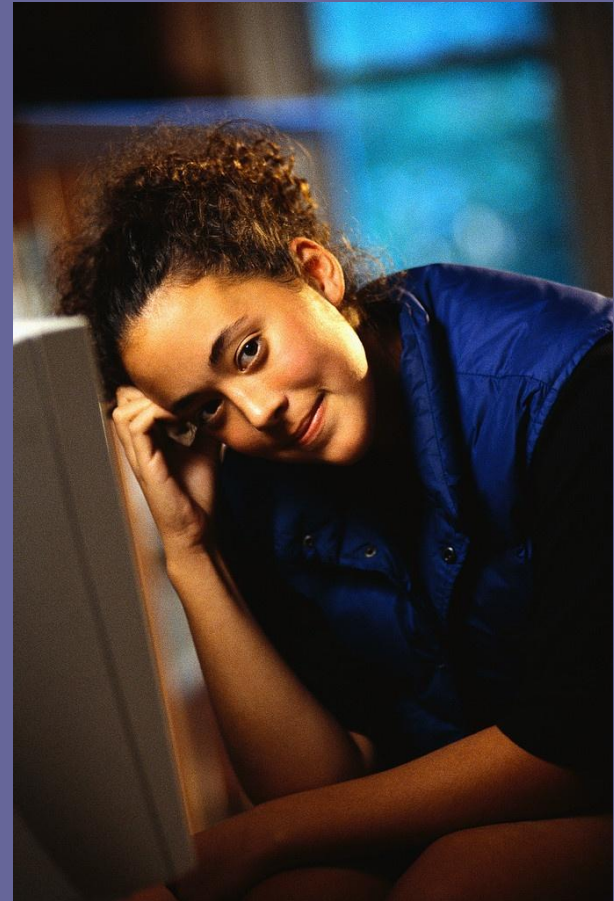
- Division or classroom groups satisfy a need to belong. Activities should be designed to encourage a sense of belonging for all participants
- Communication – essential to a student feeling that they belong. Division or classroom teacher should make sure everyone participates in group time together. Division or classroom teachers should be attentive to ways that the more introverted students might be involved
- Shared goals – tasks of the division or classroom group might include the business of the school (announcements, surveys, discussion of school incidents). One of the goals of the division or classroom group is to fulfill the emotional needs of students

# Counselors or classroom teachers

- Allow for coordination of care and education by skilled adults
- Afford opportunities for one-on-one general academic advising (time management skills, organizing help)
- Provide a built-in engagement between faculty and all students. School research has consistently shown that students will stay with a team, activity or school if they are connected to a person who brings meaning to their lives.

# Counselors or classroom teachers

- Offer an opportunity for honest feedback from students and parents
- Allow for healthy group identity
- Teach respect and delayed judgment



# Resilience Research

## By Werner and Smith (1989)

- “The presence of at least one caring person – someone who conveys an attitude of compassion, who understands that no matter how awful a child’s behavior, the child is doing the best he or she can given his or her experience – provides support for healthy development and learning.”

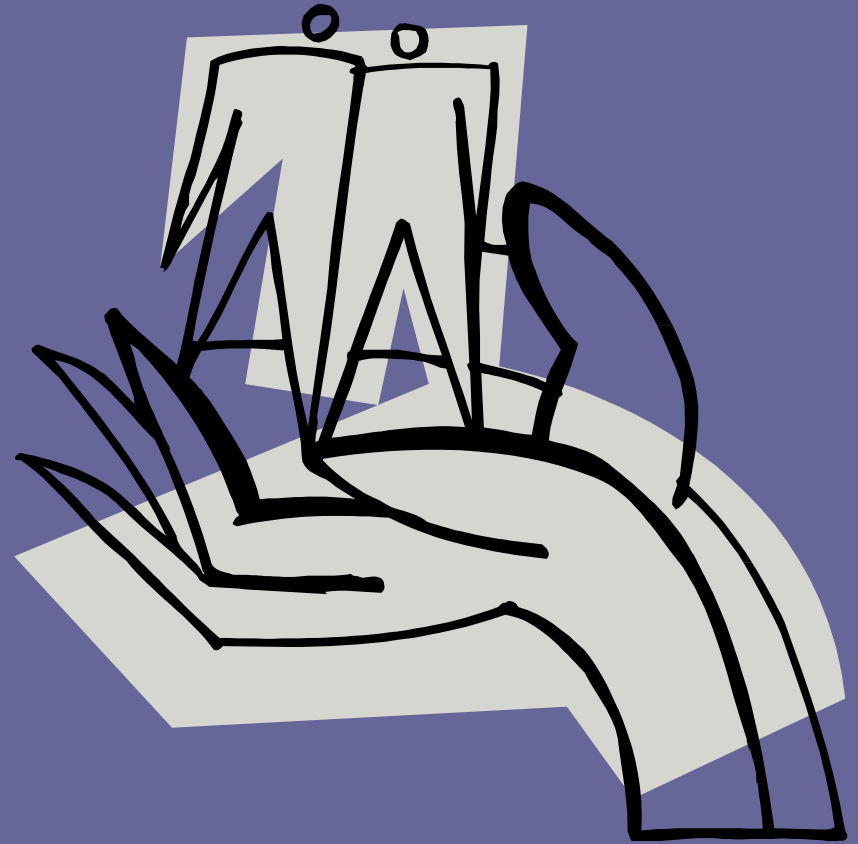
# Positive role models

- Werner's and Smith's study found that, among the most frequently encountered positive role models in the lives of resilient children, outside of the family circle, was an individual who was not just an instructor concerned about academic skills but also a confidant and positive model for personal identification.



# A caring relationship

- Noddings (1988) articulated in her research, “a caring relationship with a teacher gives youth the motivation for wanting to succeed:...It is obvious that children will work harder and do things...for people they love and trust.”



## Counselor or support staff - working with the Division or classroom teacher

- Distinguished by interdependence, shared goals, and communication
- Interdependence in a division or classroom is accomplished by attendance, participation and care. It requires commitment and involves some personal sacrifice (i.e. modeling appropriate work ethic)
- Provide value – opportunity for discussion and role modeling