

## Beyond Consequences

November 1, 2007

Rebecca: Good evening everybody. I am Rebecca Thompson and am the founder of the Consciously Parenting project. I am so delighted to be here tonight with Heather Forbes. We are getting to do this again this week. We had a little bit of technical difficulty on Monday but we are excited to be back and talking with some new people. Maybe some of you are joining us again so thank you if you are coming back and thank you for joining us and spending some time with us on Thursday night. If I can just start with myself I am going to talk a little bit about the Consciously Parenting project. You can find that at [www.consciouslyparenting.com](http://www.consciouslyparenting.com). It is about giving parents information and support to be the best parents they can be wherever they are in the parenting journey. I am a mother myself. I have two sons. I have had all kinds of experiences that have brought me to this project on my own parenting journey. The information that Heather has shared with me has made an amazing difference in my family and in my relationships with my sons. I am delighted to have her here with us tonight to talk about creating connections with adopted children. Hello Heather

Heather: Hello. Glad to be back. Last Monday we experienced some difficulty and I got so stressed out trying to get back on the line that I forgot to hit record. That is a testimony to everything I said 45 minutes beforehand. When you are under a lot of stress you do not function well. You do not function clearly. You cannot think very well and things get discombobulated and that is exactly what happened to us the other night. Isn't it interesting that everything we talked about happened to us as well? So much of what we have, like you said Rebecca, is our own experiential knowledge. That is where we always have to draw from. So it is good to be back and stress free.

Rebecca: We are set tonight. Let's do a little bit of a recap for those of you who were not with us on Monday or those of us who have done a few other things since then and have maybe forgotten what we were talking about. Stress can cause confused and distorted thinking. We were talking about creating connections with children who have been adopted. We also talked about how some of these same ideas apply to all families. It is not just about families who have adopted. When we ended the call we had just finished talking about children between the ages of birth and three. We talked about attunement and eye contact and providing them with rhythm, movement, and talking. We were talking about regulation at that very early stage. Carrying the child as much as possible. We were getting ready to move into the three to five year olds. Unless there is anything you wanted to add Heather then we will move into that.

Heather: No, I appreciate you bringing me up to date to see where we left off because I was pretty stressed out. Let's talk about three to five year olds. That is a wonderful age. If you have children that you are bringing into

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your home at that age, it is certainly a challenge as well. Where do you want to go?

Rebecca: I have a son that is in this age range. He is normally a very regulated child. He is not necessarily the kind of child who would be coming in with a trauma history. Yesterday was Halloween and he was so incredibly dysregulated. Once I stopped handing him candy he had the biggest temper tantrum, he regressed, and he had all these severe behaviors. I found myself thinking that I had not had to deal with that type of situation with him. It was hard for me to connect with him in that moment to connect with him. I thought about those parents who are trying to connect with these children who are like that all the time. I want to bring that into the call. That is what we are talking about. We are talking about connecting with these kids who may be exhibiting some significant behaviors.

Heather: It is hard. It's hard work. We want to be able to connect with our children when they come into our house. There is so much work that happens before the adoption. There is so much paperwork and mental anguish. The process of adoption is so difficult. When our children finally come into the home we want to pick up there and begin parenting. We want to have fun. It is a great age. Children at that age with trauma histories do not have a very well developed regulatory system. They do not have the ability to handle emotional stress, the highs and lows of emotions. Children are emotional beings. How does a child that is three to five deal with these emotions? How are they expected to be calm and balanced? The typical scenario is that a caretaker is with that child who can connect in relationship to help that child navigate between those highs and lows of emotions. When you have that kind of relationship then the child is able to connect and see that he is safe and he will allow you to help soothe and calm his stress. That is what we typically see when we do not see this break in attachment. When we have a break in attachment, a child who has a dysregulated system, who has a heightened system because of the trauma all, of a sudden he is with a caretaker he does not have a relationship with. That is where you see some very severe behaviors and see parents becoming frustrated because they cannot connect. They try to help soothe and bring the child back down to an emotional state of balance but they cannot. We have to look at the dynamic of a child who does not have a deep history with the person who is trying to connect with him. The intensity of those behaviors escalates. What can we do? Recognize that for the child who has just come to your home, or who has been there a while but is still very difficult to regulate, or who has a high sensitivity to stress that it is not a choice. It is not the child waking up just wanting to be difficult. It may feel that way day in and day out and may be perceived that way.

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The other piece I want parents to recognize is that it is not about the parent's inability to be a good parent. Many times the parents are doing all the right things but the child cannot receive that kind of attunement or nurturing at that moment. When the parent does not receive feedback or see any positive outcome from the child, and sometimes it can get worse, the parent can get stressed out. Now the parent and the child are completely stressed out. Where do you go with that? That is where you have a 3 or 4-hour tantrum. It is not just the child having the tantrum but also the parent may have a tantrum or may completely shut down. Regulating ourselves as parents becomes so very important. Stay in a mindful place that is not about us but rather the child's inability to regulate. Open up to accept the emotional distress coming off the child at whatever level it is. That sounds easier than it is to do in real life. We have to say, "Wow, he's really stressed out. He's really scared". That is something I want parents to start seeing. It is not that the child is bad or angry or disobedient or disrespectful. It is truly that the child is terrified. When the parent sees that then it puts the parent in a different mindset and your whole physiology can become very safe. If we see that the child is scared then we can begin making ourselves very safe. It might just be staying in the same space with the child saying, "it's ok, I'm just here to be with you, and however upset you are right now I am so ok with that". It might mean pulling that child in and giving him a hug. You might have to dance with that because the child might not be ready for a hug. Maybe their sensory systems are overloaded. Sometimes they will be ready but you have to understand that you cannot force a hug either. As the parent stays in a calm place, completely mindful of how terrorized the child is, it is sometimes like magic. I have had this work as a professional working with parents, and as a parent myself. Staying in that calm state and watching as the child's whole emotional state comes back down to a regulated state. It is very, very hard work. We could probably talk the entire seminar on that one question. I want you to have the understanding first that the child is not angry but that he is scared. In saying that, you can hear my voice change from "he's angry" to "he's really scared". The different tone of voice is a reflection of how we approach different emotions within our own physiology. Does that make sense Rebecca?

Rebecca: Yes it does. What activities can parents do to connect with kids who are dysregulated? You have to be regulated yourself before heading into their space but once you are somewhat regulated and you want to connect, what do you suggest for this age group?

Heather: Are you talking about when a child is fairly regulated or in the midst of dysregulation?

Rebecca: Let's talk about those moments when a child is somewhat regulated.

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Heather: The best thing to do is to start looking at those opportunities that are more preventative for the dysregulated times and for connection. At this age, children's language is play. This is how they think and speak. Imagination is their world. We need to reconnect with our children at that age. We need to reconnect with ourselves at that age. We need to get on the floor with our children. We need to play with our children. Allow them to direct the play and take the back seat. We no longer are in charge. We might throw out an idea but just put it out there and allow them to have control over the play experience. We are allowing them to have some control over their lives, especially kids with trauma histories who have had no control over what happens to them. There was nothing they could do. The devastations and experiences they went through they probably felt completely out of control and helpless. Completely powerless is the word I am looking for. We can allow them the experience through play to have control and power to direct the play. We become safe. If I allow my child to direct the play and not interfere or take over, I am all of a sudden really, really safe. I now have an experience with my child where he knows that I am safe. We start developing that relationship so that, in the middle of the parking lot when he starts running away and I grab him so he does not get hurt, he has some foundation that tells him that mom is safe and that she is protecting him. That comes with some practice but we want to have positive repetitious experiences through play. Swimming lessons is an excellent way to gain skin-to-skin connections with our children. Skin is the largest organ in our body and physical touch has such a soothing effect on the human body. Many of our kids have had physical touch that was not soothing so we have to counteract that through positive physical touch. We can do that through massage, backrubs, and swimming. Be mindful and touch him all the time yet working with where the child is. For some children, it might be too much if they have some sensory integration issues. For the most part we want to start hugging our children a lot. Twelve or fourteen times a day is the prescription I want to give to parents. When you are walking, put your hand on their shoulders. Always have a nice, soft touch. It will be a way for the body to learn to soothe and calm down. The more we can do that, outside of the emotionally difficult times, the more we are going to be that safe person inside those emotionally dysregulated moments.

Rebecca: You mention the child who is running into the streets. All parents, whether they have an adopted child or not, have those experiences. Can you talk a little bit about what happens after you have grabbed the child?

Heather: At that moment, we are very scared and rightly so. We are scared that our child is going to get hurt. What I want parents to do is certainly react. Pull that child into you. I do not want parents to react in anger. It

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is our own fear that we have to take ownership of. If we put that back on our child through anger saying they are going to get run over and terrible things are going to happen we are creating a disconnect because our child does not understand that, especially at three or five. I want parents to pull that child in and create safety. Take a couple deep breaths to help calm yourself down and get to the core issue. The core issue is "I was so scared sweetheart. I probably scared you picking you up like that but I was so scared." It is absolutely our own fear so we have to be careful not to blame them for not listening. They are only three or four. Even at nine a child may not be emotionally nine so blaming them and getting mad at them will only create a negative experience. I want parents to hear that. This is so hard because our parents probably yelled at us and got mad at us so that is our blueprint. That is what we automatically go to. To be mindful to express the core issue emotionally. When I say, "I was so scared", I am much safer for that child to hold me and connect with me and want to hug me. Not in a sense to comfort me but to hold me. If I am angry at that moment then they are not going to want to hold me, in fact, they might run back out in the street again. In those intense moments, start breathing and be mindful of what we are feeling underneath. When we can start expressing our true feelings on a deeper level that is when we become safe. When we become safe we start creating attachments.

Rebecca: I know there are some parents who are listening wondering how the children will learn not to run into the street if you are not telling them how dangerous it is. Can you address that?

Heather: Once you have gotten to the place where all the emotion has come out then the life lessons can happen. We have to teach our children safety issues, life issues, ethics, morals and all the rules of life. It is important to recognize that when we are stressed out or in a fear state our minds are not thinking clearly. We cannot access the cognitive and rational parts of our brains. We are in the primal survival part of our brain. The higher-level thinking is not accessible. If we try to teach logical, rational, cognitive thought during those moments we are not going to be very effective. This is what happens when parents say, "well gosh, I've told Johnny 100 times not to run out in the street". For the 100 times that you told him, he was in a hyper aroused state or deep fear state so he could not learn from that. Once all the emotions have come out in a loving, connected way and both the parent and the child have calmed down, and notice I said both, that is the time you start teaching the life lesson. You can then say, "when you ran out like that it scared me, something could happen to you. There are cars that come down here and they do not look for kids, they are doing their own things so it is not safe. Here is what I need you to do. I need you to always hold my hand when

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we are in the parking lot. That is going to keep you, me, and all of us safe. My job is to keep you safe." You can then start talking about how it is your job to keep them safe. You can give all that information when both of you are calm and it is going to be much more easily absorbed. His system is going to be able to comprehend that and place it in his memory and know that for next time. I also want parents to learn from these experiences because if it is a continual problem then before you even get out of the car you can say "we are all going to breathe so that we are ok and I am going to hold your hand and we are going into the store." You give the scenario of what is going to happen ahead of time so the child has some predictability then they do not have the need to get stressed out. We also have to begin looking at why the child did run away. There might be an issue such as going to the store could be too overwhelming or transitioning from the car onto the sidewalk could be overwhelming. We can do some preventative work before we get out of the car to align ourselves with how scary it is for our child. We can give a sequential order of how things are going to happen and create some safety and that you are the secure base for the child then you will not have the problems you have had in the past.

Rebecca: Just like you would talk to a much younger child about what is going to happen next, it sounds like it is still really important when a child is older especially one with a trauma history.

Heather: If any behavioral issue is a continual problem I want parents to think that there is something that prevents him from being able to move forward in his development. Go back and talk in those terms. The child might be 4 or 5 years younger than his actual chronological age because there is a piece in his development that he has not been able to comprehend yet. Meet your child exactly where he is in that emotional age. Development is sequential. If we have missed a piece we have to go back and get it. It is an important concept to know. We might have a 9-year-old sitting in the car and we are holding his hand like a three year old because he has acted that way before. That is how we have to connect with him. That is not in a demeaning way but we become attuned to what the emotional age of your child is at certain instances and certain experiences. You have to accept him the way he is. He just missed a lot of pieces. He did not have someone holding his hand in the parking lot. Maybe someone was screaming at him in his earlier life. You do not even know but what you want to start creating is predictability so the situation becomes safe for him.

Rebecca: Let's move on to the 5 to 9 year olds and adopting children at this age. What do parents need to consider to create connection when they bring a 5 to 9 year old in their home. or they already have a 5 to 9 year old in their home and are seeking to connect?

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Heather: Much of what we just talked about is very applicable to this as well. One thing we had talked about in the last call was about bottle-feeding and nurturing activities. Development is sequential so if you have missed those pieces it is important for the parent to go back and recreate that. I have had 5 to 9 year olds whose parents have bottle-fed them. This might come off as sounding a little bit odd or uncomfortable. It did for me at first because we do not typically think of a 9 year old as being bottle-fed. We have to think outside the box and understand that if a child has missed that, especially with that parent, it becomes a very important tool to help the child calm down. I have had great success with parents being able to offer their children a bottle. Most parents think this is crazy and are not going to do it but it is so amazing to see kids when they are offered it. Their eyes light up and they want it. There are times when you offer a child a bottle and they do not want it. That's ok then they probably do not need it. If the child accepts a bottle when the parent is holding them and the parent is holding the bottle then he really needs it. Kids regress also. Kids will regress when you give them a bottle. They will start acting like little babies and that is really important. It scares us as parents to see a 9 year old talking in baby talk. It is a naturally organic developmental stage that they missed. When they can recreate that I promise you that they will be able to jump back up to being a 9 year old and sit at a table acting like a 9 year old. The more they become regulated in those early life experiences that they missed, the more they will be able to stay balanced and calm in their chronological age. We have to remember that we do not develop in a linear path. It is not a straight line. We jump back and forth all the time. When we give our kids the opportunity to do that it can be incredibly healing. It can be a great experience for parents to get what they missed as well. I would also suggest that this is the age where you can start helping your children talk about feelings. In order to do that it requires parents modeling that. Think about modeling feeling words. There are five basic feeling words. They are mad, sad, angry, scared, and happy. Do not go with the forty feeling words on a typical therapists chart. Stick with five because those can develop the vocabulary that we want our children to have. They have not always had the permission to ask for what they want. We want to give them permission and encourage them to ask for what they want. They begin to connect with feeling words. When we can navigate the cognitive and verbal part you will see that the negative behaviors will start decreasing. We know that negative behaviors are a form of communication. We do not like them because they are ugly, sassy, and make us feel bad if we let them. We can start helping our children express themselves at a verbal level then they do not have the need to

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express themselves at the negative behavioral level. That is an important concept to connect with.

Rebecca: That is a hard one to get too sometimes. We are so conditioned to the ideas that behaviors require a time out or a sticker chart. To come at this from the other direction is foreign for most parents.

Heather: The other piece I want to talk about for 5 to 9 year olds is sleep. This is an age that many adopted children have a difficult time getting to sleep at night. We typically expect 5 to 9 year olds to go in their beds and fall asleep. That is what the "typical" child does at this age. Our children do not have the ability to calm down. So much happens at night when it comes to abuse. Many things are scary because of previous history so going to sleep at night can be absolutely terrorizing as if you are not going to wake up in the morning. That is how it is for so many of our kids. When we get mad at them and think they are not following the rules and they are keeping us up at night it is not that they want to do that. It's truly that they go to sleep at night and think they won't wake up in the same bed. Many kids are brought out of their birth homes in the middle of the night when the police came with social workers and take them out. Sexual and physical trauma happens at night. Nighttime is such a different time of day. Recognize that even if you do not know if there is trauma in the nighttime but your child is acting up at nighttime, that is an indication that there is some sort of traumatic history. If they cannot settle down at night it is our job and responsibility to help them soothe down. That may mean lying down with them in the same bed helping them to soothe. It might mean a family bed or allowing them to come into your bed. If you cannot do that then maybe bring a mattress or sleeping bag to let them sleep on the side of your bed because they are too scared to sleep alone. The more you create negative experiences around nighttime the more you are going to perpetuate the same cycle. If you are having difficult times at night allow some flexibility. Eventually you can get them back to their own bed. If they cannot, you are only going to create more fear and more dysregulation during this important time for physical regulation. If your child cannot settle down at night then they wake up the next morning at a whole new level of stress. We want to do as much as we can to recognize that they need to be given some adult regulation. If they start the morning stressed out at the top of their window of tolerance what kind of day are they going to have?

Rebecca: Yes, a bad day.

Heather: By nighttime then you are really stressed out and you won't want the child in your bed. I understand that. We have to begin to find ways to interrupt the stress cycle. There are ways to do that. It takes flexibility and a deeper understanding of why our children are acting the way they are.

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Rebecca: Let's move on and talk about tweens between 9 and 12. How do we connect with children at that age? They're starting to get pretty big physically. They don't look like babies. They don't look little. How do you create connections?

Heather: It's the same mindset but it does get more difficult because physically they are different. Physically they are not cute little 5 year olds anymore. They are developing and going into puberty. Their bodies are starting to develop and oftentimes kids begin to look awkward. Again we have to understand where that child is in development. They may not be ready to navigate independence. Tweens is a difficult age because they are not quite teenagers able to do what a big sister is doing. They are caught in a place where they want to start becoming independent but if they do not have a strong foundation or secure base then trying to be independent is even more difficult. In order for our children to be fully independent they must first be fully dependent. The two go hand in hand. We do not want to push them out into independence. We want to encourage dependency if they have not had that with us in the past. That is contrary to what we hear in society regarding teaching responsibility. Believing that because they are almost teenagers that they should be doing certain things needs to be erased and destroyed from our minds immediately. If a child is not there emotionally and the more we press on that and insist that they act that way we are creating less connections. We are forcing them into something they are not ready for and that is a scary place to go. We are trying to create secure attachments. We have to step back and say "at twelve years old what can I do at this very moment to create connections?" That is the parent's number one responsibility at any age. Put the behaviors aside and recognize the dysregulation. What at this very moment can I do to create relationship? When we get in that mindset we will no longer look at sticker charts or threaten with taking privileges away. We will see that child for the person, spirit, soul, and essence of who that child is in that moment. That is what we want to start doing. What we start doing, unfortunately, is making our children behave a certain way because if we don't then when they become teenagers they really won't behave the way we want them to. Sometimes at that age we get into a mindset that we have to be aware of. The bottom line is that for any age we must look at the child's emotional age and allow them to have some space to grow.

Rebecca: That is scary for a lot of parents. I can imagine that parents are thinking, "but he's 12, I can't bottle feed him because he's 12".

Heather: Let me tell you a story about that. I have a mom with two children. They were two sons adopted out of the foster care system when they were about five and seven. Now they are ten and twelve. The mom offered the younger son a bottle. She was bottle-feeding him and it was going

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well. Then the twelve year old walked into the room. Most of us are thinking that the twelve year old would start making fun of him, right? No. He looked at his mom and said, "I want a piece of that". It doesn't matter. If they are indicating that they would like to be a part of that then they need it. I've had parents of 14-year olds bottle-feeding and doing baby stuff. Allow children that are 13 years old to play with 6 or 7 year olds because socially that's all they can do. They cannot always play with children at the same chronological age because it is too much and too threatening. If we create playgroups or scenarios where they can play with younger children, with adult supervision, then they have the ability to develop their social skills at the emotional age where they are. If you are having trouble with your tween or any other age child acting socially appropriate I want you to notice what age group your child navigates to. It will typically be the younger children because it means the child feels safe with the younger kids. He feels more that age socially so that he can interact and feel comfortable in his own skin. When he's around the 12 year olds he doesn't feel safe so maybe he becomes a bully. That is an indication that he is too scared to play with that age group. Be mindful of this at the social level.

Rebecca: I know there is a lot of fear, even among my friends who do not have children at this age yet, about those teen years. What can parents do with tweens to prepare themselves for when they are teens?

Heather: I think the best thing is to stop forcing the issue. Stop trying to make everything work. Back up and start listening to our children more. This is an age when children get mouthy and sassy. They start talking back. I believe that is an indication that they do not feel like they are understood and not feeling like someone listens to them. At the tween age we need to focus on listening. You might say, "but he won't talk". He doesn't feel safe enough to talk. Maybe then you can spend time together just listening to music or taking a walk together. Make more opportunities for conversations to naturally flow. You are not going to sit down and say, "ok it's time for us to talk" because you will get silence. Create opportunity to be together so that those conversations can start happening. When your child does start talking, instead of giving a life lesson or coming into that conversation with an agenda, just listen and say, "wow really" or "I didn't know that". Validate what they are saying. Really listen to them and try to get yourself back to that age. None of us want to go back there but try to get back into that age to understand where they are coming from. Stop giving them solutions. We try to give our kids solutions so that when they become a teen or an adult they have it all and they are ok. That is about our own fear that they are ok. We have to trust that our children have the solutions already in them. Help them to develop their own internal controls, thoughts, and solutions. The

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more we put our parental solutions on them the more we will get rebellion. The more we listen to them, guide them, help them, or make suggestions in a loving secure relationship the more they will start listening to some of our advice. We cannot give them our advice in the very beginning. We must step back, give them some space, allow them to talk, be safe and then they will have the capacity to listen. We have to listen first.

Rebecca: Having those opportunities to listen to our children means that we have to be spending time with our children. Families today are so busy that it has to be a conscious decision to spend time together otherwise they are not going to talk. Maybe it is cutting some things out or picking them up from school so you have ten minutes with them.

Heather: It is interesting that when tweens and teens do not have that connection at home it is developmentally correct for them to start seeking it out. At this age we become huge social beings. We want to create the security at home so they do not go seeking with another dysregulated teen or tween what they are seeking at home. When they have a strong secure base they can start navigating the social scene in a whole other way. If they have their validation and security and know they are all right and unconditionally loved at home they are not going to have the need to seek that in their peer group. They will connect because that is appropriate. They will not start seeking connection for survival. That is a big difference. The more we create those opportunities at home the less they will seek their survival validation outside in the social arena.

Rebecca: We want them to come to us for that secure base. Let's talk about teens. There was an interesting question someone asked and I'd like it addressed. As they start spending more time with friends, how do you keep them close? This person was saying her son has an emotional age of four so how can that parent let him do those normal teenage activities when he's emotionally not ready for it?

Heather: That's a difficult one. We have a teenager who is emotionally four so that gap is tremendous. It will take the parent creating stronger, safer social and emotional boundaries. That might mean setting limitations like going to the football game with the parent and having the child check in with him every ten minutes. Start creating connection so that you are always in proximity, whether by cell phone or physically, for that child to go to you so he is not left out in this wilderness of teenage social scene with nothing. There is always a plan in place to get back to you to regulate through you and with you. It's a difficult time. Create some boundaries. The child might be upset and angry but that's sometimes a time where you tell them "I understand you're upset, of course you're upset but it's my responsibility to make sure you are ok". I think that when most parents start setting boundaries and begin listening to them, children

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want that. They want their parents to intervene. I know that I sound absolutely off my rocker but let me give you an example. I've been working with a mom who has a teenage daughter. At school, the daughter was skipping class and hanging with the wrong crowd and the mom asked her what she wanted the mom to do. She said, "what do you want me to do? Do you want me to come to the school? Be part of all that and help out? Work with the teachers?" Most children would say "no way". When the mom sat down with her and talked with her one-to-one and her core fears were out in the open she finally said, "yeah mom I need you to do that for me." What the daughter is saying is, "I can't set those boundaries. I need you to do that for me because it's too scary." When we develop that relationship we will have feedback from our children that they will want us to do some things that we might think they don't want us to do anymore. If the teenager is emotionally four then he will absolutely want us to be a part of his life in a capacity that would be different from a teenager who didn't have that trauma history. These are general examples so I want to encourage parents with kids, not just of teenagers but all ages, to login to our website. We have a special on our book. We give several concrete, real life examples of how parents can navigate the whole teenage issue with children who are not emotionally at the teenage years. Rebecca, is it ok if I give that website out because there really is good information on it that parents can use?

Rebecca: Absolutely.

Heather: The website is [www.creatingsecureattachments.com](http://www.creatingsecureattachments.com) On there you will find my book, Beyond Consequences, Logic and Control. There is lots of hands-on, real life parenting examples. Several of them are on the teenage years and exactly the issues I am talking about here. Included with that, because you are on the call tonight and you're listening to the recording, I put together some free audios that will help deepen your understanding of attachment and regulation. There is a free audio that you can download with Sir Richard Bowlby who is the son of John Bowlby. There is an audio on pre- and perinatal psychology which is an important part for adopted children. There are some other bonuses on there where Dr. Bryan Post and I give solutions. I want parents to be equipped and start to put this information into action with a deep understanding. I invite you to go to that website, [www.creatingsecureattachments.com](http://www.creatingsecureattachments.com).

Rebecca: While we are on the website idea I will give you my website again. It's [www.consciouslyparenting.com](http://www.consciouslyparenting.com). As a thank you for being on the call tonight or listening later we're going to have transcripts of the calls, both Monday night and tonight, audios of the calls, and a PDF about emotional age expectations just as another resource for you. If you can go to my website, [www.consciouslyparenting.com/events.html](http://www.consciouslyparenting.com/events.html) there is a link to sign

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up for this information. Please go and we will get that information for you.

Heather: It's important to have resources. When I was going through this on my own I did not have the resources and that is a horrible place to be. It is so confusing. You feel hopeless. You feel powerless. You end up creating the most insecure attachments known in human history. I am an advocate for resources and creating understanding. You should never be alone in this. There is an Internet support group. There are all sorts of free articles on your site and my site. There is so much out there that I encourage those of you on the call that are having difficulties to keep educating yourself. Keep yourself attuned to the scientific research that is out there. That is where you find the solutions. I do not believe that secure attachments happen in a therapist's office once a week. It cannot happen. It happens in your home. It happens with every interaction. This is an important point Rebecca. Every interaction I have with my child is the potential for either a secure connection or an insecure connection. There is no middle ground. At every point, every day I have opportunity after opportunity. If I flub one up or get mad or frustrated I have the next opportunity right in front of me. It happens all the time. I do not want parents to miss opportunities. It is right inside of you. What you have is everything your child needs. It will take support around you or perhaps clinical work to support you through, going to our website, or listening to teleseminars. You are biologically equipped to have everything you need whether you have a biological child or an adopted child. We have to pull out that innate quality within us. So much of our work is about understanding the natural process. What things in our society have distorted our own abilities and organic processes to be able to do that? I could go on and on but I'll stop right there.

Rebecca: Did you want to answer some questions?

Heather: How about two because it's getting late?

Rebecca: If you have a question press 5\* we'll be able to call on you. Well we're having some problems. Isn't technology great? At least when it works.

Heather: Let's try unmuting everyone to get this caller's question in. It looks like we're not going to be able to take any calls tonight. We apologize for that. For those of you who have questions, send me an email at [info@beyondconsequences.com](mailto:info@beyondconsequences.com). I want you to email me the questions and then I will respond to that question either through an e-newsletter or I will send a note out to everyone who was on the call tonight. I will get your questions answered for you.

Rebecca: Thank you Heather for talking to us about creating connections with adopted children. I appreciate it.

Heather: You're welcome. The website is [www.creatingsecureconnections.com](http://www.creatingsecureconnections.com) for great resources that you can get immediately tonight. I appreciate you

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coming back on the call Rebecca. I wish you all the best with your new project, which is this parenting website. I think you have a good thing going and I appreciate your passion and dedication to that.

Rebecca: Thank you Heather.

Heather: Good night everybody.

Rebecca: Good night.