

Tips for coping with rejection

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With the school year starting soon, many students will be trying out for various sports teams and other activities, and while many will make these teams, others will not. Even though this rejection almost always stings, one Baylor College of Medicine expert has some tips for coping with rejection at any age.

"I think that at the end of the day, whether we are talking about relationships, activities at [school](#) or friendships, when you feel rejected at your core it goes against any good feelings," said Dr. Elizabeth McIngvale, assistant professor in the Menninger Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at Baylor. "Often when you get rejected there are a multitude of different emotions that can come out, such as fear, betrayal and feeling unwanted, and it's hard for people to process and deal with these types of emotions."

One way parents can help their children cope with the possibility of rejection is to emphasize that they should just do their best, McIngvale said.

"Before anything happens such as a tryout for a sports team or a big test, it is important that parents talk with their kids and let them know that as long as they work hard and they try their best, they will be proud of them no matter what the outcome is. Also, the child needs to feel good about the effort they put in to the activity even if the outcome is not what they thought it would be," McIngvale said.

Rejection can hurt no matter what stage of life you are in, and the same

coping skills can be used at any age.

"When you get rejected, it is essential to not let the decision of someone else define you. You should remember that you are still strong and talented, and it just may not be the right fit at the right time," she said.

However, McIngvale said it is also important to recognize what you can improve.

"Self-reflection can be helpful when dealing with rejection because in looking back you may be able to see something you missed before, and you can learn from that and carry that lesson on so you don't follow the same path in the future," McIngvale said.

She added that accepting the situation also is another way to move on from [rejection](#).

"You can't change the past. You have to let go of the frustration and anger you feel about being rejected and accept the reality in front of you. Once you do that, then you can start to problem-solve and move forward and think through what next steps you need to take in order to be successful in what you are trying accomplish," McIngvale said.

Provided by Baylor College of Medicine

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