


BUILDING RESILIENCE IN CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS



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RESILIENCE

**Resiliency is the
happy knack of being
able to bungy jump
through the pitfalls of
life**

(A.Fuller 1998)

2

The Importance of Resilience

- Resilience is essential to success in school and life
- Adults can help children become more resilient
- Fostering resilience in children improves school and personal outcomes and reduces risk behaviors

• Why Focus on Building Resilience?

Coping with Challenge: Stress

Common stressors for young children aged 3-5 years have been identified as:

- uncertainty
- being abandoned by a significant adult
- toileting accidents
- getting into trouble with a teacher or parent
- being punished by adults
- trying something new
- being bullied or teased
- wanting to belong to a group
- the dark
- losing something or someone special

Frydenberg, Deans, & O'Brien, 2012

10 big reasons to explain the erosion of young people's resilience

1. Treating young people like infants
2. Spotlight on the individual
3. Black and white thinking
4. Entitlement
5. Wrapping up in cotton wool
6. Psychological cleanliness
7. Negative emotions are wrong
8. Ignoring the importance of bad feelings
9. The need to be perfect
10. Too much choice

5

Profile of the Resilient Child

- **Social competence**
- **Problem solving skills**
- **Autonomy**
- **Sense of Purpose and Future**

Social Competence

- **Responsiveness**
- **Flexibility**
- **Empathy/caring**
- **Communication skills**
- **Sense of Humour**

7

Social and Emotional Learning Skills

Personal and Social Capability – Australian Curriculum



8

Problem - Solving Skills

- **Critical thinking**
- **Generates alternatives**
- **Planning**
- **Produces change**

9

Problem Solving

- **Define the problem**
- **Generate possible solutions**
- **Evaluate the solutions**
- **Make decisions - choose solutions**
- **Determine how to implement the decision**
- **Assess the success of the solution.**

10

Autonomy

- **Self-esteem, self efficacy**
- **Internal locus of control**
- **Independence**
- **Adaptive distancing**

11

“In order for your child to experience mastery, it is necessary for him to fail, to feel bad, and to try again repeatedly until success occurs.”

“Failure and feeling bad are necessary building blocks for ultimate success and feeling good.”

Seligman

12

Sense of Purpose and Future

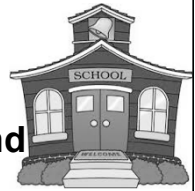
Optimism encompasses the sense of having a bright future, a tendency to see challenging situations in positive terms, and a belief in one's ability to deal with whatever life brings.

- **Goal directedness**
- **Achievement**
- **Motivation**
- **Educational Aspirations**
- **Healthy expectations**
- **Persistence**
- **Hopefulness**
- **Compelling future**
- **Coherence/ meaningfulness**

13

PROTECTIVE FACTORS WITHIN THE FAMILY

- **Caring and Supportive Relationships**
- **High/Realistic Expectations**
- **Participation and Involvement.**



14

Caring Relationships

- **convey compassion, understanding, respect and interest**
- **are grounded in listening**
- **establish safety and basic trust.**

15

Listen earnestly to anything your children want to tell, no matter what. If you don't listen eagerly to the little stuff when they are little, they won't tell you the big stuff when they are big, because to them all of it has always been big stuff.



Catherine Wallace

16

High but Realistic Expectations

- Communicate not only firm guidance, structure and challenge



but most importantly

- convey a belief in the child/youth's innate resilience and look for the strengths and assets as opposed to problems and deficits.

17

- Psychologists have discovered that if a child **doesn't play outside** and is **never allowed to experience a skinned knee**, they frequently have **phobias as adults**. Kids need to fall a few times to learn it's normal; adolescents need to break up with a boyfriend or girlfriend to appreciate the emotional maturity that lasting relationships require. If parents remove risk from children's lives, we will likely experience high arrogance and low self-esteem in our growing leaders. Wendy Mogel Ph D

18

Participation & Involvement

having opportunities for.....

- valued responsibilities
- making decisions
- giving voice
- being heard
- contributing one's talents to the community

19

“Deprived of opportunities for genuine productivity, lured into consumptive roles, young people come to believe that their lives make little difference to the world.”

Brendtro

20

Age-Appropriate Chores for Children



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Ages 2-3

- Put toys in toy box
- Stack books on shelf
- Place dirty clothes in laundry hamper
- Throw trash away
- Carry firewood
- Fold washcloths
- Set the table
- Fetch diapers & wipes
- Dust baseboards

Ages 4-5

- Feed pets
- Wipe up spills
- Put away toys
- Make the bed
- Straighten bedroom
- Water houseplants
- Sort clean silverware
- Prepare simple snacks
- Use hand-held vacuum
- Clear kitchen table
- Dry and put away dishes
- Disinfect doorknobs

Ages 6-7

- Scatter wash
- Fold towels
- Dust mop floors
- Empty dishwasher
- Match clean socks
- Weed garden
- Rake leaves
- Peel potatoes or carrots
- Make salad
- Replace toilet paper roll

Ages 8-9

- Load dishwasher
- Change light bulbs
- Wash laundry
- Hang/fold clean clothes
- Dust furniture
- Spray off patio
- Put groceries away
- Scramble eggs
- Bake cookies
- Walk dogs
- Sweep porches
- Wipe off table

Ages 10-11

- Clean bathrooms
- Vacuum rugs
- Clean countertops
- Deep clean kitchen
- Prepare simple meal
- Mow lawn
- Bring in mail
- Do simple mending (hem, buttons, etc.)
- Sweep out garage

Ages 12 and up

- Mop floors
- Change overhead lights
- Wash/vacuum car
- Trim hedges
- Paint walls
- Shop for groceries w/list
- Cook complete dinner
- Bake bread or cake
- Do simple home repairs
- Wash windows
- Iron clothes
- Watch younger siblings

21

**There are two lasting bequests we can give our children.
One is roots, the other is wings.**

Hodding Carter

22