



SCHOOL COUNSELLOR NEWSLETTER

Building Resilience

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All children are capable of working through challenges and coping with stress. Resilience is the ability to bounce back from stress, adversity, failure, challenges, or even trauma. It's not something that children either have or don't have; it's a skill that children develop as they grow.

Resilient children are more likely to take healthy risks because they don't fear falling short of expectations. They are curious, brave, and trusting of their instincts. They know their limits and they push themselves to step outside of their comfort zones. This helps them reach for their long-term goals and it helps them solve problems independently.

Strategies to build resilience.

- **Teach them to solve problems independently.** While the gut reaction of the parent might be to jump in and help, so that the child avoids dealing with discomfort, this actually weakens resilience. Children need to experience discomfort so that they can learn to work through it and develop their own problem-solving skills.
- **Spend one-on-one time with your children.** Children develop coping skills within the context of caring relationships, so it's important to spend one-on-one time with them. Positive connections allow adults to model coping and problem-solving skills to children.
- **Promote healthy risk-taking.** This means something that pushes a child to go outside of their comfort zone, but results in very little harm if they are unsuccessful. Examples include trying a new sport, participating in a school production, or striking up a conversation with a peer. When children embrace risks they learn to push themselves.
- **Label emotions.** Teach children that all feelings are important and that labeling their feelings can help them make sense of what they are experiencing. Tell them it's ok to feel sad, jealous, worried, etc. and reassure them that bad feelings usually pass.
- **Model resiliency.** The best way to teach resilience is to model it. We all encounter stressful situations. Use coping and calming strategies. Deep breathing can be an effective way to work through stress. Always label your emotions and talk through your problem-solving process.



IT IS HARD TO FAIL, BUT IT IS WORSE NEVER TO HAVE TRIED TO SUCCEED.

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