

Resilience Activities: Parents are the most important people to help build their child's resilience. Children learn how to be resilient by watching their parents cope with everyday stress. Therefore, carrying out small activities that model how your child is supposed to cope in stressful situations and highlight their strengths and abilities to handle difficulties will help to increase your child's resilience.

- ⇒ **Story Time:** Read or tell stories about how others overcame difficulties with resilience, and how they developed their strengths and confidence.
- ⇒ **Belly Balloons:** Show your child how calm themselves through deep breathing. When they take a slow, deep breath in, their tummy inflates like a balloon. When they breath out, their tummy deflates like it would a balloon. Remark on how relaxing it is.
- ⇒ **Compliment Cards:** Build your child's competence by helping them understand what they are good at. Make it a habit to randomly write a surprise note or verbalise a sincere compliment about one of your child's strengths.
- ⇒ **Tea Time Talks:** Use your time at the table to talk about the positive things that happened in your day, praise the strengths and effort your child may have displayed and encourage talking about what you have to be grateful for that day. This will help your child to have a positive outlook on life.



Educational Psychology
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A short guide for parents and caregivers on Building Resilience

'One of the most comforting things about resilience is that it is very hopeful—that building it is an ongoing process that you're never too old to learn.'

-PARENT



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Resilience is the ability to recover from or adjust easily to misfortune or change. Resilience gives people the psychological strength to bounce back from life's challenges & thrive. Children are not born with resilience, it is a skill that is learned.

Why is it important? Resilience makes a big difference to your life. People who respond to difficulties with resilience are:

- ⇒ Healthier & live longer
- ⇒ More successful in school & work
- ⇒ Happier in their relationships
- ⇒ Less likely to become depressed

The Resilient Mindset: Believes that within them is a power to overcome any obstacle, learning to endure disappointment & not feel devastated from it.

What does a resilient child look like?



'I am Important' *Happy*

Flexible **Strong**

Friendship *Confidence* **'I have what it takes'**

BRAVE *'I am in control'* **Independent**

How Resilience works

Resilience can be thought of as a seesaw. Protective experiences (e.g. caring relationships, positive family & community role models) & adaptive skills (listed above) on one side can counterbalance significant adversity on the other (such as family breakdown, loss, academic failure, learning & communication difficulties. Resilience is present when a child's health & development are tipped in a positive direction even in the presence of significant adverse factors.

How can I develop my child's resilience?

Competence:

- ⇒ Focus on your child's individual strengths, identify & build upon them.
- ⇒ Empower your child to make their own decisions.
- ⇒ Let your child make safe mistakes so they can learn from them.

Confidence:

- ⇒ Praise your child honestly about specific achievements.
- ⇒ Encourage your child to keep trying even when the task is hard or frustrating, *'That's it! You almost did it, keep going. You kept trying and you did it!'*
- ⇒ Encourage your child to do a task one step at a time, helping them to see their progress step-by-step, making tasks seem less overwhelming.

Connected:

- ⇒ Give attention and affection– Lot's of smiles and hugs to make your child feel secure, loved and accepted.
- ⇒ Help your child to identify & express their feelings (glad, sad, angry). Allow the expression of all emotions, so your child feels comfortable reaching out.
- ⇒ Listen with interest and show empathy, helping your child to feel their voice is important and understood.

Character/Contribution:

- ⇒ Help your child understand how their behaviours affect other people in good and bad ways.

Coping:

- ⇒ Model positive coping strategies consistently.
- ⇒ Make sure your child has enough sleep and healthy food.

Control:

- ⇒ Practice deep breathing to calm yourself down and focus attention.
- ⇒ Help your child understand that no one can control all circumstances, but you can shift the odds by behaving positively.

