

Helping Kids Build Resiliency Tip Sheet

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Resilience or the ability to recover and bounce back from difficult times is a critical skill for everyone.

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics and Dr. Kenneth Ginsburg, there are 7 building blocks that kids can develop to help them build resilience.

1. Confidence

- It's no surprise that confident kids are generally more resilient. Help your student develop confidence by giving the opportunities to try different things to learn more about themselves and their strengths. Encourage them to be failures as a learning experience, rather than a disaster. Tell them that you believe they will ultimately succeed. If they hear it enough, kids may just start to believe it.

2. Competence

- Competence & confidence go hand in hand. Nothing builds confidence like using real world skills to fix a problem yourself. Teach & model important skills like self-advocacy and communication. Then give kids and teens an opportunity to use them. Encourage them by using skills they already possess using this phrase... "I know you can _____ because you have already shown me how you _____." I know you can complete this project because I've seen how hard you work when you have a deadline.

3. Control

- A key factor in developing resilience is feeling like you have some control over what happens to you. Help kids to understand that actions have consequences, and they have the ability to control their actions. Different choices will result in different outcomes. They may not be able to go back in time and change how they responded to something in the past, but they can change how they respond in the future.

4. Connections

- Even the biggest setbacks can seem more manageable when we have a team on our side. Encourage kids to build meaningful connection by participating in youth groups and clubs when it's safe to do so. And don't underestimate the power of family connections. Tell the kids that you are there to provide help when they need it and demonstrate how people can work together to come up with creative solutions to problem

5. Character

- Encourage your child to see themselves as a caring person and model the values you wish to see them emulate. Share stories about how your values have influenced the decisions you made.

6. Contribution

- Kids and teens who recognize their purpose and ability to make the world a better place are far more resilient. Possibly because it is easier for them to see the bigger picture. Give kids opportunities to contribute and help at home or in the community. Knowing that they can help others builds confidence and it may make them more comfortable asking for help when they need it.

7. Coping

- Kids & teens who know how to cope with stress effectively have a much easier time bouncing back from a setback. Model healthy ways to cope with stress through exercise, meditation, or journaling. Encourage kids to take a break and practice one of these strategies when it is apparent that they are getting upset.

The wonderful thing about resilience is it's a skill we can continue to develop and work on the rest of your lives. It's never too late or too early to work on becoming more resilient.