

You are the Experts of your Family!

Resilience is the ability to cope with challenges or stress in ways that result in an increased ability to respond well to future adversity. Resilience is not a fixed quality – it can change in different situations. It can be taught, modeled, and learned. The development of resilience is a process that occurs over a lifetime and can be enhanced in many ways.

Resilience can be recognized by listening to life stories and watching how other people overcome challenges.

Continual Development

Resilience is developed through facing and overcoming challenges. Resilience in children is fostered through love and encouragement from caring adults, giving children the strength to navigate through life's daily challenges.

Children who have opportunities to use their personal strengths and feel confident to make decisions for themselves will have a greater capacity to overcome adversity and develop resilience.

Resilience is developed not by avoiding risk, but by experiencing it.

Resilience in Action

Children that are allowed to participate in the process of dealing with challenging family-life events will develop resilience as a response. This increases their likelihood of responding positively to other challenges in the future.

Resilience is developed through experiencing obstacles or challenges. Resilience is not a trait; it is an active process of thoughts and behaviours that influence an individual's ability to overcome adversity.

Limitations and weaknesses can become strengths. Every opportunity to thrive and overcome a set of challenges strengthens resilience. Resilience thrives in families and communities who stick together and build relationships.

Overcoming challenges is a very important part of child development. Experiencing a small amount of risk gives children the opportunity to practice overcoming challenges, so they will be prepared when something big comes along. Just like strengthening the muscles in your body, resilience is strengthened through use. This resilience muscle can be used to for successful growth and development.

Participating in interests will enhance resilience.

Getting through challenges can be a family effort.

Awareness of personal strengths will increase resilience.

Honesty and trust creates resilient relationships.

Strengthening Resilience

There are many factors that are important in the development of resilience. Some of these are:

- Positive self-esteem
- Humour
- Optimism and a sense of hope
- Cultural diversity and beliefs
- Emotional self-control
- Creativity
- Caring family and strong relationships with parents
- Setting goals to overcome challenging opportunities
- Safety and stability

Resilience and strengths can be found in children's stories. Listen closely to children when life has thrown them a curve. You will recognize resilience in the story when children overcome these challenges.

Times of transition such as family illness or loss, moving to a new town, or going to a new school can create resilience in children and families as they work through new challenges.

“Protective factors are qualities or situations that help alter or reverse expected negative outcomes” (Resiliency Initiatives, 2001).

Children need advice and support from parents. Listen to your child's feelings and discuss ways to use effective communication. This will increase your child's social and emotional development and build resilience.

Role model healthy behaviour and build decision making skills with your children for greater resilience.

Factors of Resilience:

- Can be internal (personal qualities) or external (support systems).
- Healthy attachment; trusting and supportive relationships stimulate trust and respect and provide role models and encouragement.
- A sense of mastery increases the child's sense of competence and capability.
- Family, school, peer and community are all contributing factors in children's resilience.
- Self-awareness and emotional regulation help to manage strong feelings and behavioural desires.
- Eating meals together as a family increases positive mental health.