

Understanding & Building Resilience: Helping Our Kids Thrive!

Great Start - November 14, 2018

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We are on the
traditional territory of
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Resilience: What is it? Why does it matter?

re·sil·ience

/rəˈzɪljəns/ 

noun

1. The ability to use our **strengths** and **skills** to **cope** and **recover** from problems or **challenges**, and the strength to turn the stresses of life into **opportunities**.



Dr. Bruce Ferguson on Resilience



**“Children and youth run on hopes and dreams like cars run on gasoline”
- Dr. Bruce Ferguson**



Building Blocks of Resilience

- Relationships, relationships, relationships!
- Warm, responsive, predictable
- Social emotional development in the early years
- Family, school, cultural, community



Building Blocks of Resilience

Thinking Skills + Social-Emotional Skills:

- Emotional regulation and expression
- Impulse control
- Problem solving, including causal analysis
- Empathy
- Realistic optimism, hopeful outlook
- Self efficacy
- Reaching out, initiative



What experiences, relationships, skills have built resilience **for you** or someone you **know**?

What difference has resilience made in your own life?



Building Resilience: What Are Schools Doing?

Resilience and the PDSB Mental Health Strategy

- ✓ Mentally Healthy Classrooms
- ✓ Social-Emotional Learning & Skills
- ✓ Professional Learning
- ✓ Identify students in need, build pathways to care



Role Models for Resilience!

- ✓ **Thinking** Skills
- ✓ Help children build a sense of **mastery**, or being able to control outcomes
- ✓ **Model** resilient thinking and problem-solving
- ✓ Praise for **effort**, not just achievement
- ✓ Demonstrate **calming** and focusing

For more information, tips and activities visit:

reachinginreachingout.com/resources-parents.htm



What are you **already doing** to build resilience in your kids?

What is an area you'd like to **focus** on?

What might you **try**?



Personal Resilience Activity

“The well-being of **children** is **inseparable** from the well-being of all the **critical adults** in their lives”
- Dr. Stuart Shanker

Guiding Questions:

- **How** are parent and child well-being **related**?
 - **Why** does self-care, and care for others **matter**?
- What **impact** does it have?
- A self-care area you're doing **well** in?
 - A self-care area that tends to be a **challenge**?
 - A self-care area that you're ready to make a **commitment** to?



PERSONAL RESILIENCY
THE BASICS OF SELF-CARE

EAT We all need to refuel. If we go under a lot of stress, be mindful of the food you choose. Also, keep a healthy snack close to you so that you can refuel easily and avoid being "hangry."

SLEEP Aim to get seven to nine hours of sleep each night. Research has shown that getting five hours or less of sleep a night can create health problems. Getting enough sleep also helps you to better deal with the demands of everyday life.

DRINK A lot of water and consider decreasing or discontinuing your caffeine intake as the latter creates a stress reaction in your body and can cause you to feel nervous or contribute to sleeping difficulties.

MOVE The positive effects of being physically active are astounding. It increases your energy, reduces your mental stress, reduces anxiety, stimulates brain growth, and even acts as an anti-depressant. You can achieve these benefits by as little as a 30-minute walk. Endorphins produced from following physical activity to nature's gift to you for stress management.

CONNECT Strong social connections are one of the most powerful influences on our minds. Those who are dedicated to spending time with friends, and family show the highest levels of happiness. If you can't see your loved ones every day, you can still send an email or make a phone call.

PAUSE Make sure to take time for yourself during the day. To learn to pause, take a few deep breaths, meditate, write in a gratitude journal, do a five-minute walk, or do some other activity that helps you feel renewed.

ACKNOWLEDGE Be mindful of your thoughts and feelings, both positive and negative, as part of your self-care. Finding a healthy outlet (see some suggestions below) to process your emotions and setbacks can lead to optimal self-care practices.

REFLECT Take time to reflect on what is important to you both personally and professionally. Your values and sense of purpose help you focus on what is meaningful for you. Taking time to reflect can assist you to intentionally and systematically make decisions in your life.

REPEAT Research has shown that trying a new skill/habit/routine for 21 days in a row will increase the likelihood of maintaining this new practice. It is recommended having an accountability partner. During these first few weeks, it's a helpful strategy to enhance your success rate of maintaining your new practice.

Noticing and Reaching Out

- Recent changes in behaviour (eating, sleeping, social interactions)
- Difficulty regulating emotions
- Physical symptoms (headaches, stomach aches)
- Difficulty coping with situations that were manageable before
- Trust your instincts as a parent!



Noticing and Reaching Out

- Communication with your child
- Communication with other caring adults in your child's life
- Community supports: family doctor, faith and cultural leaders, children's mental health services
- School-based support: classroom teacher, school administrator, professional support staff (e.g. psychology, social work)



Thank You!

More Resources Here:

bit.ly/ResiliencyTips

