

Teaching Strategies for Developing Resilience in Children

Resilience is the ability to bounce back from life's difficulties. For many young people it is vital to help them develop resilience strategies that promote well-being and develop coping mechanisms. Many resilient teenagers are seen as resourceful and are emotionally and mentally balanced.

Andrew Fuller is a clinical psychologist and **Generation Next** speaker; he describes resilience as "the happy knack of being able to jump through the pitfalls of life & to rise above adversity and obstacles."

Few Tips for building resilience in children are given below:

1. Make connections

Teach children how to make friends and develop empathy. Encourage them to be a friend in order to get friends. At school, watch to make sure that one child is not being isolated. Connecting with people provides social support and strengthens resilience.

2. Teach children to help others

Children who may feel helpless can be empowered by helping others. Ask for help with a task they can master. At school, brainstorm with children about ways they can help others.

3. Daily routine

Following a routine can be comforting to children, especially younger children who crave structure in their lives. Encourage children to develop their own routines.

4. Take a break

Although it is important to stick to routines, endlessly worrying can be counter-productive. Show children how to focus on something besides what's worrying them.

5. Self-care for children

Teach child the importance of making time to eat properly, groom themselves, exercise and rest. Children need "down time" to relax, so make sure that not all free time is filled with a scheduled activity.

6. Goals

Teach children to set reasonable goals and move toward them one step at a time. Moving toward that goal and receiving praise for doing so will focus children on what they have accomplished.

7. Nurture a positive self-view

Help children remember ways that they have successfully handled hardships in the past and how this can help them handle future challenges. Help children learn to trust themselves to solve problems and make appropriate decisions.

8. Be optimistic

Even when children are facing very painful events, help them look at the situation in a broader context. A positive outlook enables children to see the good things in life and keep going even in the hardest times.

9. Self-discovery

Change and tough times are often when children learn the most about themselves. Help children to see that this is a good time to find out what they are made of. Change can be scary for young people, help them to see that change is part of life.

10. Make home a safe haven

In high school, taunting and bullying can intensify so home should be a haven, especially as your teen encounters more freedoms and choices and looks to home to be a constant, safe and emotionally secure place in his or her life.

Common Components of Resilience:

While each model has its favourite components of resilience, we looked across the various models and found that the following components kept re-appearing.

Individual Behaviours, Attitudes, and Competencies

Physical health supports resilience, including getting enough sleep, eating well, exercising, and enjoying good health.

Social and emotional competencies that promote resilience include stress management; a sense of control over one's life; positive relationship to self-including self-efficacy, self-regulation, and self-esteem; hopefulness and goal-setting with the motivation and perseverance needed to reach those goals; and social competence.

Cognitive competencies that help include insightfulness and general skills such as problem-solving, information processing, and intellectual ability.

Family, School, and Community Support

A positive and supportive family, including warmth, stability, cohesiveness, a positive parenting style, and high expectations.

Presence of a caring adult outside the family, such as a teacher, counsellor, coach, or mentor

Belonging to groups and institutions, like schools, clubs, organizations, and religious communities.

Promote positive social connections between staff and students, among students, and between schools and home.

Nurture positive qualities, such as empathy, optimism, or forgiveness, and give students a chance to use them.

Notice and reinforce qualities are key to resilience.

Avoid focusing on failure or negative behaviours.

Teach by example, which is an effective approach; train staff to develop the same qualities.

Apply restorative justice techniques can help schools by giving students a structured opportunity to work difficulties out by encouraging reflection and empathy.

Foster feelings of competence and self-efficacy.

Set high expectations for students; teach them to set realistic, achievable goals, and also how to reach out for help when needed.