

5 WAYS TO BOOST RESILIENCE IN CHILDREN



As children mature, they are faced with both academic and social challenges and their level of resilience will determine how they cope with these situations. Our natural response is to shield our children from stress but instead we need to give them the tools to positively deal with stressful situations. Being resilient does not mean that kids won't experience difficulty or distress, it is how they deal with their feelings that matters.

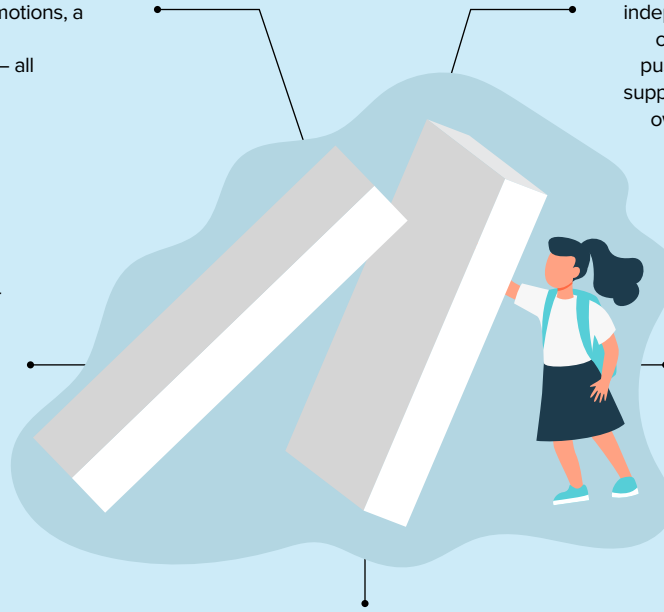
DO THESE 5 THINGS TO BOOST RESILIENCE IN CHILDREN

DO foster a positive, supportive relationship.

The presence of a responsive adult and social support is associated with more positive emotions, a sense of control over situations and higher self-esteem, and motivation to keep trying – all important qualities in building resilience.

DO encourage a growth mindset.

A growth mindset means believing that our most basic abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work. When your child says, "I can't do this", then rephrase it to: "Yet. I can't do this yet." Your child will realise that they are in control of the situation and its outcome, rewarding the effort and not the result.



DO allow appropriate levels of independence.

The playground is a great place to allow more independence – by struggling to use the monkey bars or climbing up to a high slide, children are challenged to push themselves past their comfort zone. Remove your support gradually and allow them the chance to see their own capabilities. If they fall, encourage them to get up and try again.

DO provide them problem solving tools.

Giving our children problem solving tools means teaching them ways of talking to themselves about the tricky situation. Encourage children to ask themselves: "What would [someone they admire] do in this situation? What did I do last time I was in a situation like this? What is the first step I can take in solving this problem?"

DO nurture and encourage optimism.

Children often acquire their way of thinking from the adults they observe and model. If your child tends to look at the glass as being half empty, show them a different, more positive view. So, if fun plans have to be cancelled, try to reframe the disappointment to focus on other fun things that can happen instead.

STOP DOING THESE 5 THINGS TO BOOST RESILIENCE IN CHILDREN



Stop doing everything for your child.

The best way to raise independent children is to allow them time to practise being independent. This can be difficult with younger children but always let them try first on their own before stepping in.

Stop focusing on the end result.

Praising the effort, not the end result is key in building resilience. The most important part of the grade is determined by the effort that went into the activity and that's what we should be applauding. The approval should come from the effort, not just the result.

Stop and think about how YOU deal with adversity.

How do we deal with difficult situations? It's important to let children see how we deal with disappointment. By bringing them into our emotional world at appropriate times, they will begin to see that dealing with sadness, and disappointment are all very normal human experiences.

Stop overprotecting your child and shielding them from their own mistakes.

Rather than forcing children into risk taking, try to gradually move them towards it using small steps while working towards an ultimate goal. Let them know that the courage they show in doing something brave and difficult is more important than the outcome.

Stop trying to fix the problem and ask questions instead.

When our kids come to us with problems instead of explaining what the best solution might be, ask questions of your child instead. Explore their feelings and listen to their ideas of how to deal with the problem.