

Helping Children to Be Resilient

Resiliency is the capacity to "bounce" back from adversity. When bad things happen to resilient kids, they are hurt and they struggle to cope but eventually they bounce back. They are not permanently "damaged."

Resilient kids have good self esteem, social skills, and can problem solve. They also have a strong sense of self, purpose and future. Resilient children are also supported by caring and fulfilling relationships.

Building Self Esteem

- ✧ Point out when your child does something well.
- ✧ Compliment and hug your child several times a day.
- ✧ Children learn by example so set a good example. Talk about the things you do well and, if possible, what the other parent does well. If you can't do this, at least avoid running the other parent down.
- ✧ Be human, allow yourself to make mistakes and allow your child to make mistakes. Children learn much better from their mistakes if they are complimented for their effort and not just criticized for their failure

Building Social Skills

- ✧ Set a good example. Respect your child and the other parent.
- ✧ Don't just set rules, let your child know the reason for the rules.
- ✧ Help your child understand how other people feel about things by using real examples. When your child is helpful and kind to someone, ask her/him how s/he feels when other people are helpful and kind to her/him. This helps children connect actions to feelings and this is an important part of developing social skills.

Help Your Child to Develop Problem Solving Skills

- ✧ Set a good example. Solve problems aloud and identify the steps to problem solving.
- ✧ Give your child time and space to solve problems. If s/he still can't create a solution, offer one or two alternatives and let her/him choose.
- ✧ If your child refuses the alternatives encourage her/him to explore why. This will give space to create her/him own alternatives.
- ✧ Hold regular family meetings in which family rules and responsibilities are discussed. These should also be opportunities for children to bring forward problems and engage in problem solving.
- ✧ Help your child understand that actions always have consequences that have to be considered.
- ✧ Help your child to be responsible for her/his actions and decisions.



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Building Sense of Self, Purpose and Future

- ✧ Set a good example, value the work you do and speak of it in a positive manner. This is all work, not just paid employment. Parents work hard at many things; most do not involve "pay".
- ✧ Encourage your child to work toward goals.
- ✧ Recognize your child's unique skills.
- ✧ Compliment your child on his/her contribution to the family.

Children contribute in many ways; e.g. doing their chores, being kind, solving a problem, giving a family member a hug.

- ✧ Don't put your child down, call her/him names, or compare her/him to others. Each child is unique and each child needs to feel special.
- ✧ Help your child to develop an awareness that things change over time.
- ✧ Talk to your child about the future and what s/he would like to do when grown up. Children whose parents have divorced often feel very uncertain about the future. They need extra help to develop a healthy sense of future again.
- ✧ Talk about what you or your friends do at work.

Resilient Children are supported by caring and fulfilling relationships. Children need to know not only that they are loved but also they can love.



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