Bouncing Back: Teaching children resilience skills

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What is “Resilience”?

“The capacity to adapt well to trauma and adversity”

✓ Bouncing back

Post-Traumatic Growth
Resilience

Great News: It can be learned
Resilience

✓ A personal journey

✓ Unique for each person
Why do we need resilience?

✓ Makes us stronger

✓ Better able to cope with life’s problems

✓ Helps manage during tough times
How can kids & teens learn resilience?

✓ Skills and strategies to strengthen resilience
✓ Learn at home and school

Remember: No one right way or single path
Key Points to Teach Parents

Resilience begins at home

✓ Create a strong bond
✓ Provide a caring and supportive relationship
✓ Show love and trust
Resilience Begins at Home

✓ Give encouragement and reassurance

✓ Be a resilient role model
Ten Tips for Bouncing Back
10 Ways of Building Resilience in Kids & Teens

1. Talk with your child
   - Open and honest, but
   - Age appropriate discussions
10 Ways of Building Resilience in Kids & Teens

2. Make home an emotionally safe place.
10 Ways of Building Resilience in Kids & Teens

3. Limit extended exposure to the news

✓ television
✓ newspaper
✓ flyers
10 Ways of Building Resilience in Kids & Teens

4. Acknowledge relationship between stress and moods
10 Ways of Building Resilience in Kids & Teens

5. Establish routines/rituals

✓ bedtime
✓ morning
✓ school
✓ chores
Rituals

✓ “handprint”
✓ “kissing hand”
✓ journaling
✓ calendar diary
✓ pictures
10 Ways of Building Resilience in Kids & Teens

6. Create emergency plan
   - Simple and clear for all
   - Practice and routinely talk
✓ Meeting location
✓ Communication plans
  ✓ With each other
  ✓ With someone else
✓ Extended family/friends
10 Ways of Building Resilience in Kids & Teens

7. Teach how to express their fears
   - Creative activities
     Art/expressive writing
10 Ways of Building Resilience in Kids & Teens

7. Teach how to express their fears
   - Creative activities
     Art/expressive writing
   - Keep in perspective
8. Enlist their help
- Around house
- Around community
(age appropriate activities)
10 Ways of Building Resilience in Kids & Teens

9. Teach how to keep a positive perspective - Look at future
9. Teach how to keep a positive perspective
   - Look to the future
   - Set goals
10 Ways of Building Resilience in Kids & Teens

10. Take care of your own self

✓ You are a model for others

“The cobbler’s kids do not have shoes”
Real-Life Resilience Lessons

Your daughter sits alone - playing a video game in the park. She doesn't reply when some kids having fun and laughing while playing in a tree say “hi” and ask her to join them.
Real-Life Resilience Lessons

Your son is already anxious about starting middle school and meeting new people. To make matters worse, he tells you he is being bullied by another kid.
What does Resilience mean to Kids and Teens?

✓ Bouncing back from difficult experiences

✓ Helps us manage during tough times

✓ Makes us stronger
Developmental Stages

✓ Alter messages to age-appropriate level

✓ Those closest are best aware of child’s level
Resilience and Pre-Schoolers

✓ Watch for signs of fear and anxiety they may not be able to verbalize

✓ Encourage play to help them express feelings

✓ Use your family like a security blanket (picnic dinner)
Resilience and Elementary School Children

✓ Make them feel safe

✓ Answer questions honestly and simply with clear statements that leave no room for doubt

✓ Limit exposure to news and information
Resilience and Middle School Children

✓ Help them keep perspective
✓ Share your feelings
✓ Reinforce safety and security
✓ Enlist their help
Resilience and Teens

✓ Talk whenever you can; ask for their opinions and listen

✓ Make home a safe place emotionally

✓ Use news as a catalyst for discussion but not to overwhelm

✓ Recognize their physical changes
What are some signs a child isn't coping well?

- Sleep problems; change in appetite
- Feeling depressed, sad, low energy
- Irritability, agitation, anger, resentment
What are some signs a child isn’t coping well?

- Being on edge, easily startled, overly alert
- Feeling extremely protective
- Feeling scattered or unable to focus
What are some signs a child isn't coping well?

- Difficulty making decisions
- Crying easily and spontaneously
- Recurring thoughts or nightmares
Fostering Resilience in the kids & teens

✓ Presentations for:
  ➢ kids & teens
  ➢ teachers
  ➢ school groups
  ➢ youth groups (church, scouts)
Resilience Resources

- Brochures
- Worksheets
- Fact sheets

More information:
www.APAHelpCenter.org
Building Resilience in Kids & Teens

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