



A GUIDE FOR PARENTS & YOUTH

RESILIENCE

"BOUNCING BACK"



PARENTS AND TEACHERS CAN HELP CHILDREN BE MORE RESILIENT.

Give children lots of opportunities to take on new skills and experiences. Be patient. Allow children to make mistakes without shaming them. Keep encouraging them toward their goals.

These children will grow up to be resilient teens and adults, with the kind of attitude and determination to handle difficult situations.

Why is resilience important?

Whether you're 8 or 18 years old, life can be tough. Stress can come from many sources. It can come from starting a new school, or the pressure to get top grades and be the best at everything you do.

Kids and teens experience stress if a parent loses their job or gets sick, if they lose someone close to them, or if their parents get divorced. Seeing or surviving abuse—whether it's sexual, emotional, or physical—can be very stressful for young people. So can trying to “act normal” in front of friends and teachers and to pretend that problems are not happening.

When kids and teens are unable to cope with stress and trauma in healthy ways, they can lead to body image issues and disordered eating. Part of a positive, nurturing environment for helping young people maintain self-esteem and healthy body image is teaching them resilience.

Resilience is the ability to believe in yourself, to cope to the best of your abilities, to adapt well in difficult circumstances—to “bounce back” from adversity. It isn't something you're born with. It's taught and nurtured.

Resilience is more than just a state of mind: healthy, balanced eating habits and regular exercise are necessary for young people to deal with the symptoms of stress.

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How do I know if I am a resilient person?

- You have a positive outlook.
- You have goals and aspirations.
- You adapt well to change and persevere through setbacks.
- You have an active lifestyle, with regular exercise.
- You have a healthy relationship with food.
- You feel connected to others.
- You know how to communicate how you feel.
- You say what you think and can resist peer pressure.
- You are comfortable in your own body.
- Your self-worth doesn't depend on the way you look.
- You don't abuse alcohol or drugs.

What can I do?

- 1 Make and maintain strong connections with others.** A strong support network of friends, family, and coworkers reinforces resilience. Your network can offer help and emotional support in difficult times.
- 2 Keep to a daily routine, but accept that change is a part of life.** A consistent routine can give you a strong foundation to be flexible in ever-changing, difficult situations.
- 3 Set goals for yourself.** Ask yourself: "What can I do today to bring myself closer to the life I want?"
- 4 Act decisively in adversity.** Take steps to solve stressful situations. Don't just hope they will go away.
- 5 Take care of yourself.** Doing something fun and relaxing keeps you refreshed and prepared for stressful situations. Research shows that regular exercise helps you deal better with stress.
- 6 Develop your own tools for managing stress.** Keep a journal, go for regular walks, listen to music or take a bath—whatever works for you.
- 7 Nurture a positive self-image.** Building confidence is key to building resilience!
- 8 Listen to what your body needs.** Eat when you're hungry. Don't skip meals. Drink plenty of water. Rest when you're tired.
- 9 Keep things in perspective.** When you feel stressed and overwhelmed, remember that eventually things will change and the difficult times will come to an end. Remember that you have made it through tough times in the past, and that you can get through what you are facing now.
- 10 Challenge yourself.** Setting obstacles for yourself to overcome makes you more prepared for the challenges life gives you.