

Hand-out for Parents

SUPPORTING SCHOOL RESILIENCY

RESILIENCY IS the ability to adapt well and recover from the stresses, challenges and setbacks of life. Resiliency is a combination of skills and positive attributes that people gain from life experiences and relationships, and it's considered to be a core part of mental health.

One kind of resiliency has to do with school and learning. School success is not just about how smart you are and how hard you try. It also involves social and emotional skills, being motivated, enjoying learning and dealing with the challenges and stresses of school. Here are four ways parents can help:



Build and Support Relationships

Positive relationships with parents and teachers help children to feel safe and supported. When they feel secure, children can put their energies into learning.

- Keep your parent-child relationship strong by spending enjoyable time together, eating meals together when possible and being a good listener.
- Get to know your child's teacher.
- Do your best to encourage and support your child's positive relationship with the teacher.
- If there are problems in any relationships at school, work together with your child and the teacher to find positive solutions.

Help Children with Stresses and Challenges

A certain amount of stress is simply part of school and learning. However, ongoing excess stress can interfere with children's ability to learn, get along with people and deal with challenges.

- Be aware of signs that your child may be dealing with excess stress at school.

- Work with the teacher to identify what is stressing your child and reduce the stress when possible.
- Help your child learn positive coping strategies.
- Model good stress management skills.

- Remember, not all stress is negative. Positive stress – learning new skills, overcoming interesting challenges, etc. – helps children develop self-esteem and resiliency.

Nurture a Positive Attitude

A positive attitude helps kids feel good about school, and makes it easier for them to bounce back after difficulties.

- If children say negative things about school, don't tell them they are wrong, but look for ways to help them see the situation in a more positive (but still realistic) light.
- Praise your child's effort more than results: "I admire the way you worked really hard on that project."
- Try to be positive when you talk about school and learning.
- Treat problems as challenges rather than failure.

Help Your Children Develop Learning Skills at Home

"Learning how to learn" is not just about schoolwork. Help your kids develop a lifelong zest for learning:

- Help them follow their own interests.
- Give young children time to play. Unstructured play helps children develop their curiosity, thinking skills and learning skills.
- Give children the chance to participate in fun activities that build skills: sports, music or art lessons or other activities.

For more information building children's resiliency check out our Parenting for Life booklet: [Kids Can Cope: Parenting Resilient Children at Home and at School](#)