

***Nine Ways Families,  
Schools and  
Communities Nurture a  
Child's Resilience  
(even during a  
pandemic)***

**Michael Ungar, Ph.D.**

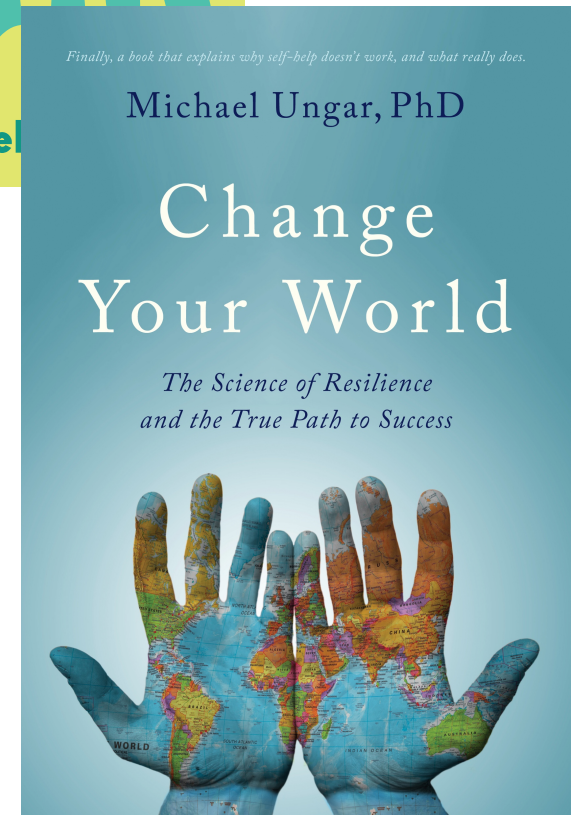
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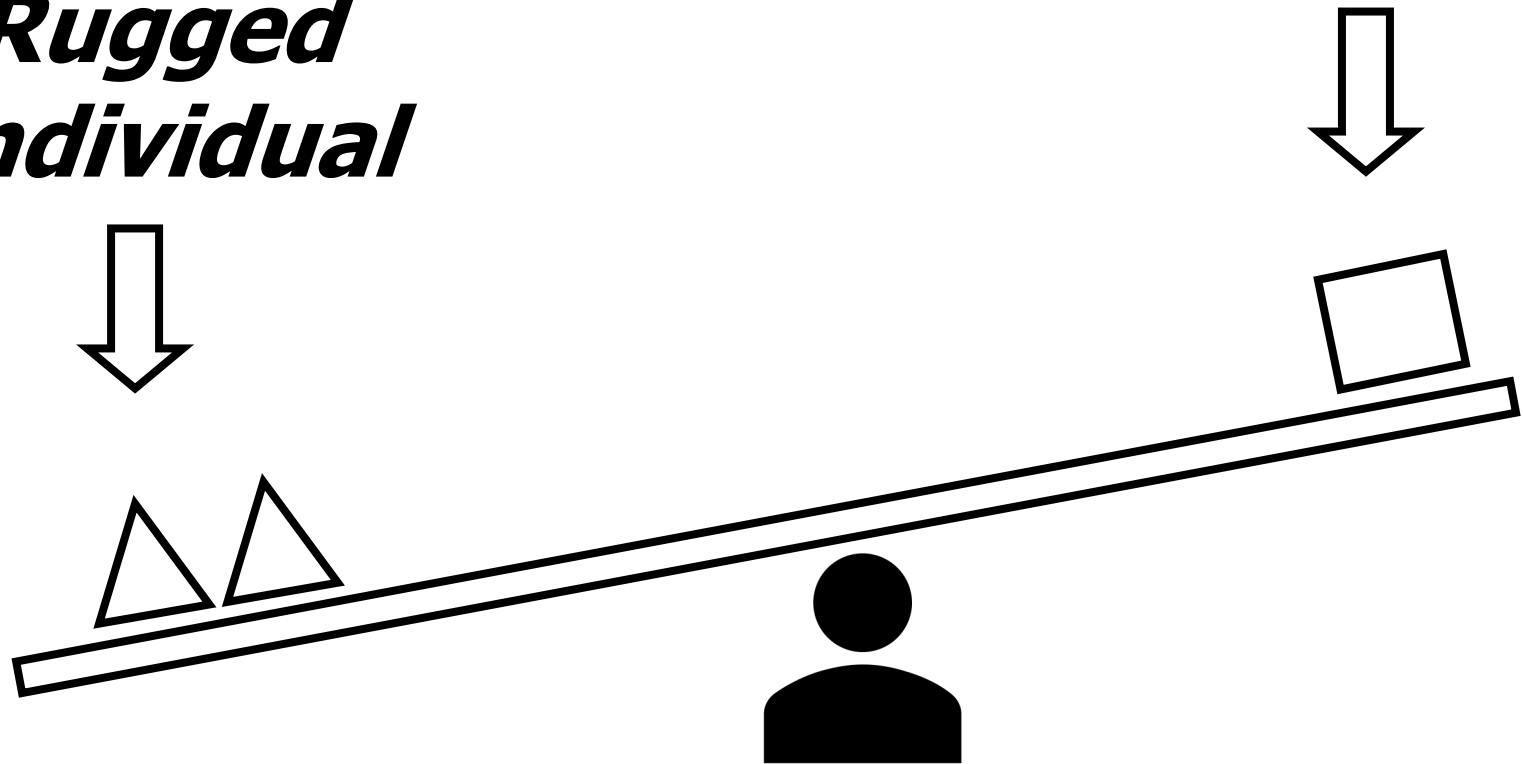
**[www.michaelungar.com](http://www.michaelungar.com)**

**[www.resilienceresearch.org](http://www.resilienceresearch.org)**



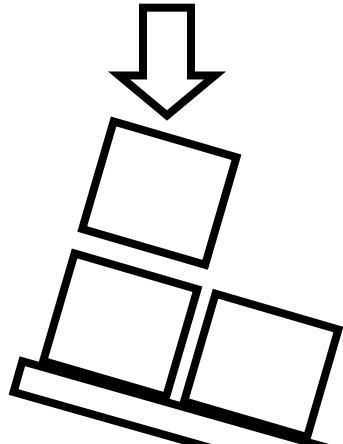
***Rugged  
Individual***

***Problems***

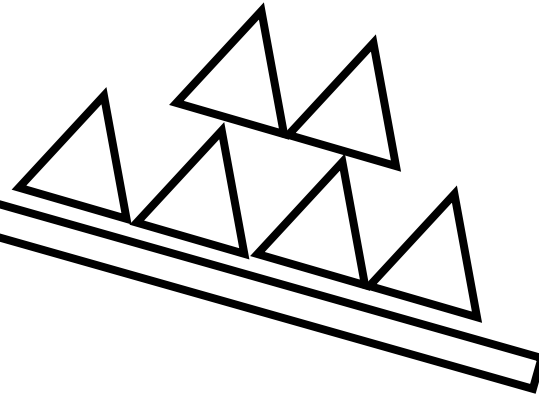
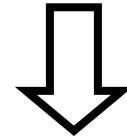


*When problems are few, we can rely on  
ourselves to solve our own problems*

***Problems***

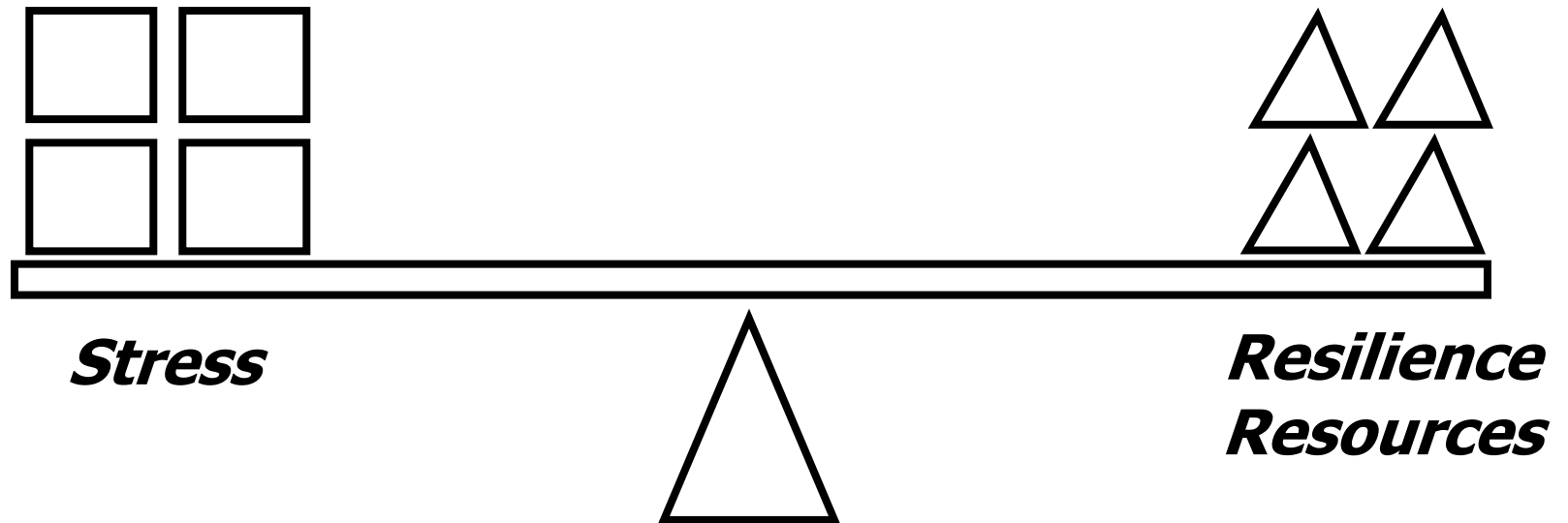


***Resources  
Individual***



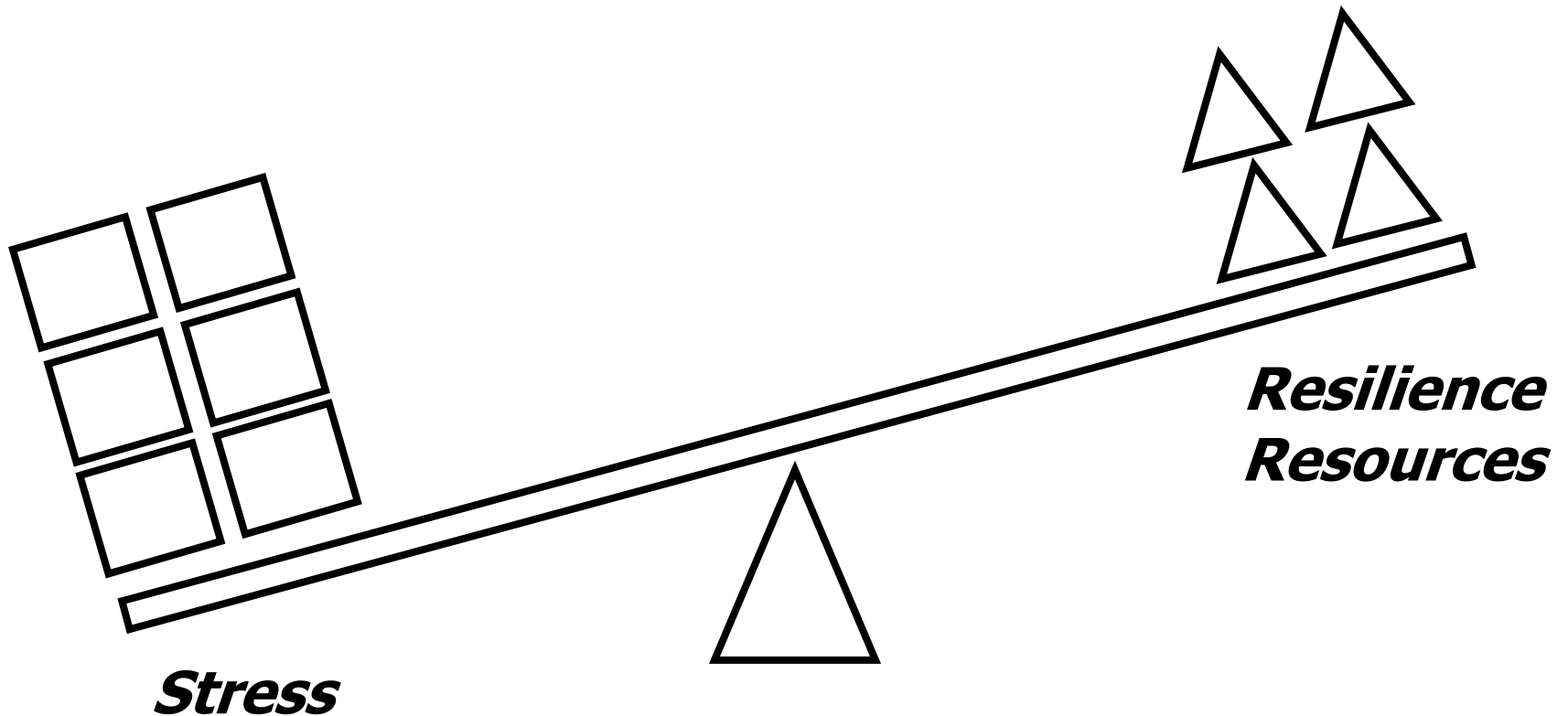
*When problems are many and complex, we need  
lots of resources to cope effectively*

# ***Normal times***



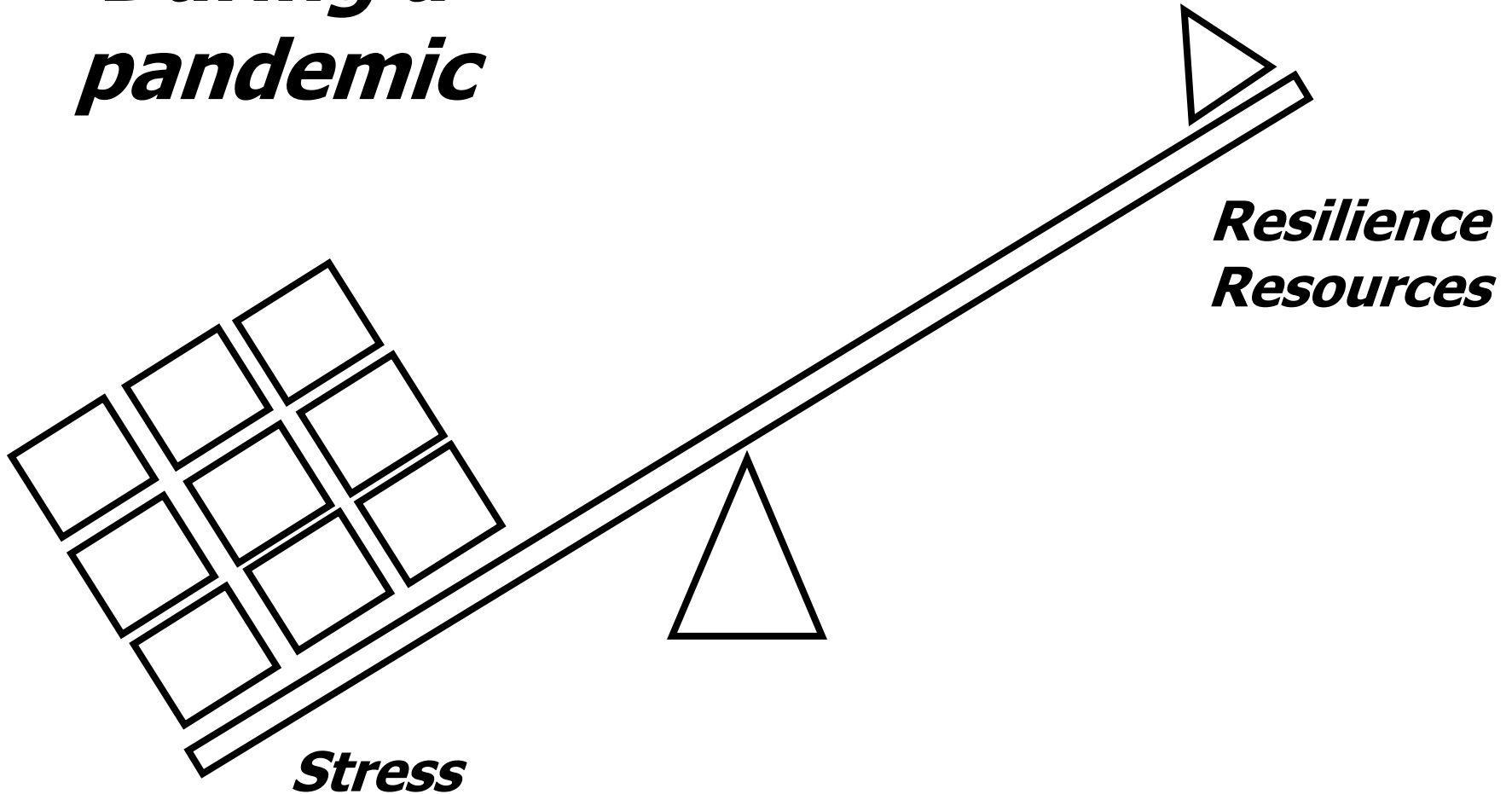
*During "normal" times we have enough resilience to cope with everyday stressors*

## ***During a crisis***



*During a "crisis" our capacity to cope is overwhelmed, but we adapt*

***During a  
pandemic***



***During a "pandemic" we have fewer resources  
and far more stressors***



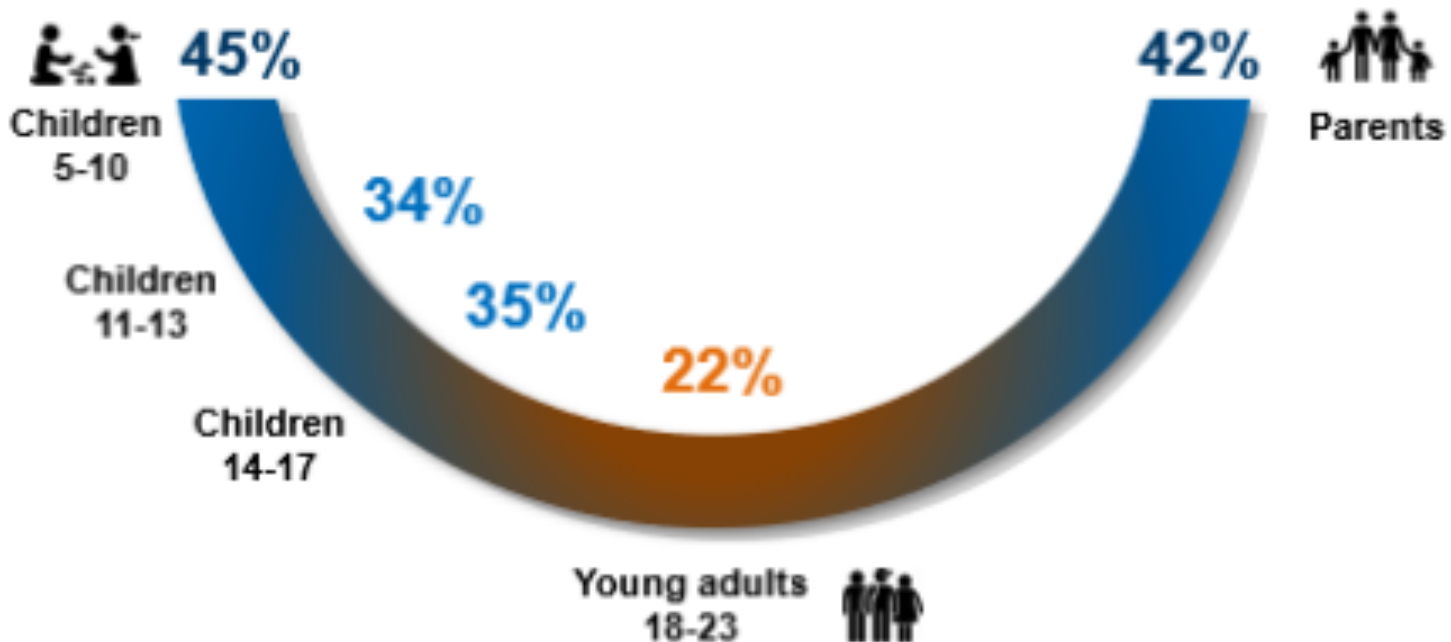
# *Resilience is...*

- ✿ In the context of exposure to significant adversity, resilience is our capacity, individually and in groups, to *navigate* our way to the psychological, social, cultural, and physical resources that sustain our wellbeing, and...
- ✿ our capacity individually and in groups to *negotiate* for these resources to be provided in meaningful ways.

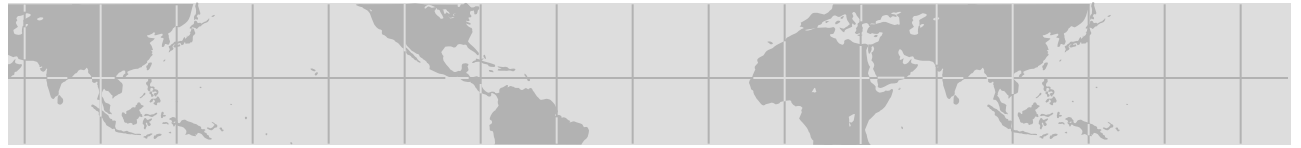


# *Cigna Resilience Index*

- Survey of 5,000 parents and children, 1,500 young adults, 5,000 workers in US







# *Nine Resources All Children Need, and Parents Can Provide*

1. Structure
2. Consequences
3. Parent-child connections
4. Lots and lots of strong relationships
5. A powerful identity
6. A sense of control
7. A sense of belonging/culture/s spirituality/life purpose
8. Rights and responsibilities
9. Safety and support



# *Assessing my child's resources for resilience (during a pandemic):*

## ✚ Structure:

▣ "There are people in my life who expect me to \_\_\_\_\_."

## ✚ Consequences:

▣ "When I don't meet expectations, I know that \_\_\_\_\_ will happen."

## ✚ Parent-Child, and Other, Relationships:

▣ "I can reach out to my \_\_\_\_\_ to get help when I need it."



## ✚ Identity:

- ✚ "I feel respected for what is special about me when I'm with/at/doing \_\_\_\_\_."

## ✚ Power and control:

- ✚ "In my \_\_\_\_\_ I get to participate in making decisions that affect my \_\_\_\_\_."

## ✚ Belonging, spirituality (sense of cohesion):

- ✚ "At my \_\_\_\_\_ people miss me when I'm not there."



## ✚ Sense of culture

- ✚ "There are places such as \_\_\_\_\_ where I can celebrate my culture and beliefs."

## ✚ Rights and Responsibilities (social justice):

- ✚ "When I'm with others at my \_\_\_\_\_ I feel treated fairly."
- ✚ "When I'm with \_\_\_\_\_ I am responsible for myself/others."

## ✚ Safety and Support:

- ✚ "I am well-cared for by \_\_\_\_\_."
- ✚ "I feel safe when I'm with/at \_\_\_\_\_."



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# *Practical Strategies for Nurturing Children's Resilience*

✚ Individual qualities



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# Gratitude



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# Optimism



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# **Nutrition, Sleep and Physical Activity**





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# *Practical Strategies for Nurturing Children's Resilience*

 External resources



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# **Structure and Routine**



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## **Supportive Relationships**



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## Powerful Identity

17-year-old Emily Tuck,  
Performing in the Nova Scotia  
COVID-19 Kitchen Party



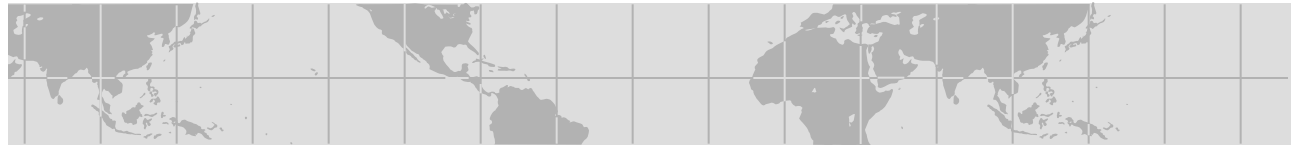
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**Sense of Control**



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# *Can Over-Protected Children be Resilient During a Pandemic?*



# *Actual Risks facing our children today*

- ✚ Crimes by teens: *down*
- ✚ Likelihood of being murdered: *down*
- ✚ Rate of school drop-out: *down*
- ✚ Accidents causing death: *down*
- ✚ Smoking and drug use: *down*
- ✚ Early sexual activity: *down/stable*
- ✚ Pregnancy rates among teens: *down*

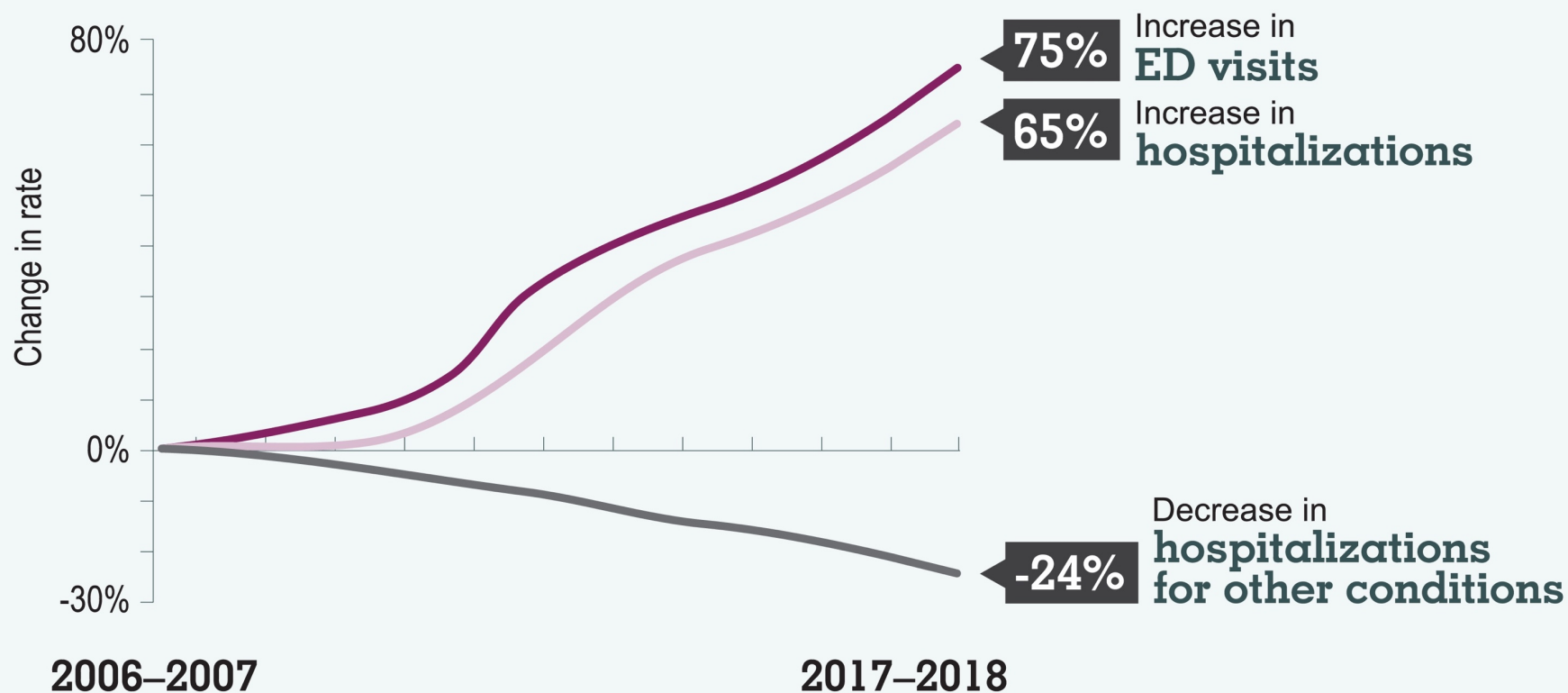


## *And the real dangers are...*

- ✚ Texting while driving
- ✚ More than 3 hours of screen time each day (unrelated to school work)
- ✚ Unprotected sex (STIs)
- ✚ Self-harming behaviors
- ✚ Lack of information and honest conversations about the pandemic (leading to increased anxiety)



## Has hospital use for mental disorders changed?



Visit [cihi.ca](https://cihi.ca) for more detailed information about youth and mental health in Canada.



**What risks did  
you take  
growing up?**

**Taking those  
risks, what did  
you learn?**

**Were those  
lessons helpful,  
unhelpful, or  
both?**

**How will your  
children learn  
these same life  
lessons?**



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# **Better to Say ‘Yes’ than ‘No’**

*Thank You!*

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