

REAL kids



in an **UNREAL** world

What is resilience?

Resilience refers to the ability of a person to successfully manage their life, and to successfully adapt to change and stressful events in healthy and constructive ways. It is about survivability and “bounce-back-ability” to life

“A universal capacity which allows a person, group or community to prevent, minimize or overcome the damaging effects of adversity.”

The International Resilience Project, 2005, p3

Why is resilience so important in today's modern world?

Young people have always needed effective coping skills, however the modern world is more challenging than ever before, and many young people have fewer resources to deal with adversity than in previous generations. Our main concerns today involve the increasing numbers of our young who are depressed, suicidal and engaging in maladaptive coping strategies such as substance abuse and anti-social behaviour.

Characteristics of resilient people

- Ability to bounce back and recover from almost anything.
- Optimistic and flexible thinking skills.
- Have a, ‘where there’s a will, there’s a way’ attitude.
- Tend to see problems as opportunities to learn and grow.
- Ability to hang in there, or persevere and persist.
- Have a healthy, authentic self esteem.
- Capable of setting clear, realistic and attainable goals.
- Have a healthy social support network.
- Seldom dwell on the past or the future.
- Have well developed emotional and spiritual competence.
- Learn from previous challenges and mistakes.
- Have a capacity for detachment.
- Have a well developed sense of humour.
- Have meaningful involvement with others or their community.
- Treat themselves and others with respect.
- Have problem solving and conflict resolution skills.



Self Esteem

Self esteem is the ability to choose to experience oneself as competent to be able to cope with everyday life and particularly life's challenges, and also of being worthy of happiness and goodness (Maggie Dent).

Children cannot view themselves directly; they can only know themselves via the feedback and images they receive from significant others. Parents are like mirrors in which children view themselves and these pictures tend to endure into adulthood.

Parenting with Purpose: Five Keys to Raising Children with Values and Vision, Reasoner, Robert W., and Lane, Marilyn L. (2007).

According to Dr Nathaniel Branden, self esteem has two essential components:

- Self-efficacy—Confidence in the ability to cope with life's challenges. Self-efficacy leads to a sense of control over one's life.
- Self-respect—Experience oneself as deserving of happiness, achievement and love. Self-respect makes possible a sense of community with others.

The relevance to resilience must now be clear. Self esteem influences our capacity to cope with life's challenges and in some ways it is the immune system of consciousness.

Any emotionally significant experiences—positive or negative—can shape our values and developing beliefs.

Research has demonstrated that healthy self esteem develops when children feel secure, have a positive sense of self, feel valued by others and feel a sense of competence.

Reasoner, Robert W. et al.

Transforming Negative Beliefs

1. Mastery or new powerful positive experiences—including modeling another.
2. Mental rehearsal.
3. Awareness and changing inner-self talk.

Beware of praise.



In some early years classes teachers are asked to avoid saying “No,” to young children in some misguided notion it can damage the young child's self esteem. **This is ridiculous in terms of building resilience and healthy self esteem.**

Parents who remind children that they make choices all the time—even when they don't choose they are making a choice—are helping their children build reflective, flexible thinking strategies that will help them through life.

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