Teaching Resilience to Elementary School Children: Helping Them Bounce Back®

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About Turning Point: The Center for Hope and Healing

Turning Point is a family support center serving the Kansas City metropolitan area. Through innovative programs including resilience training, Turning Point strives to empower and transform the mind, body, and spirit of individuals, families, and friends living with serious or chronic physical illness.

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With a PhD in Community Health Psychology, Moira has devoted much of her career to providing support, awareness, and education for people with cancer and other chronic illnesses. She has extensive experience designing and implementing stress management support and training programs for hospitals, companies, and the military. She is a sought-after lecturer on issues related to resilience and chronic illness.

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With a Bachelor of Science degree in Human Development and Family Studies and a Master of Science degree in Family Therapy, Annie has spent her entire career working with children and families affected by illness. She worked as a Pediatric Hematology/Oncology Child Life Specialist for 10 years and since 2007 has served as the Director of Children’s Programs at Turning Point. In keeping with her deep knowledge of child development, Annie creates a safe environment where children and teens feel comfortable expressing their thoughts, feelings and concerns related to illness. She employs methods of self-expression, therapeutic play, medical play and parent consultation to help children, teens and their parents develop positive coping strategies for managing the emotions that accompany illness. Annie feels very fortunate to serve such extraordinary children and their families who share their lives with her.

For more information on Turning Point: The Center for Hope and Healing, call (913) 383-8700 or go to www.turningpointkc.org.

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Tip: Download a copy of this guide at www.turningpointkc.org
Introduction

Resilience: The Ability to Bend Without Breaking
Some children recover quickly in the face of tragedy, abuse, poverty, or major life changes while others are so deeply affected, they may never be the same. Why is that? The difference is resilience. The children who can bounce back are resilient, which in simplest terms means they are able to bend without breaking. They can do this because they are able to calm themselves, replenish their spirits, and reframe their thinking about stressful events.

Why Does Resilience Matter?
This guide was created to help caregivers teach children ages 7-12 to be more resilient. When children are resilient, they have a stronger sense of their own self-worth, are self-motivated, and can express their emotions in healthy, constructive ways.

Children who aren’t resilient are more likely to engage in risky behavior as they get older. The National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion conducts a yearly Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System, which monitors priority health-risk behaviors and the prevalence of obesity and asthma among 9th-12th-grade students in public and private schools in the United States. Here is a sample of findings from 2011:

- 15.8% of students had seriously considered attempting suicide and 7.8% of students had attempted suicide one or more times during the 12 months before the survey.
- 21.9% of students had had five or more drinks of alcohol in a row (i.e., within a couple of hours) on at least 1 day during the 30 days before the survey (binge drinking).
- 32.8% of students had been in a physical fight one or more times during the 12 months before the survey.
- 16.6% of students had carried a weapon, (e.g., a gun, knife, or club) on at least 1 day during the 30 days before the survey.
- 12.2% of students went without eating for 24 or more hours to lose weight or to keep from gaining weight during the 30 days before the survey.
- 13.0% of students were obese\(^1\) and 15.2% of students were overweight\(^2\).

Given these alarming statistics, caregivers must pay close attention to young children so they can address emotional problems early. School and healthcare professionals are effective partners in monitoring children’s health, so caregivers need to be open to their suggestions and use whatever help they can offer.

Learn more about the survey and its results online at http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/yrbs.

\(^1\) Students who were \(\geq 95\text{th percentile for body mass index, by age and sex, based on reference data.}\)

\(^2\) Students who were \(\geq 85\text{th percentile and <95th percentile for body mass index, by age and sex, based on reference data.}\)
Teaching Resilience

It’s normal for caregivers to want to protect children from life’s disappointments and frustrations. But instead of sweeping challenges under the rug, we need to teach children the skills that increase their resilience. Research suggests the ability to bounce back can be improved by strengthening even one of the ten facets of resilience described in the ten chapters of this guide. Also, the activities presented here aren’t just for kids. The whole family, a classroom, or peer group can do the activities together and learn from each other.

The Role of Creativity

Children are imaginative, creative beings. It seems they are constantly dancing, singing, inventing, creating art, and making up stories. This natural tendency allows them to express their emotions in a healthy way. However, if a child’s creativity is not nurtured, it will likely be buried or “stuffed,” leaving the child without a healthy way to deal with his or her feelings. This guide will help you encourage a child’s natural creativity as a way to give voice to his or her thoughts and feelings.

The activities in this book are meant to be a fun way to introduce children to the language of resilience. Be as creative as you like, and if you don’t have the materials listed, borrow them or improvise. Just remember, the activities alone can’t teach a child to be more resilient. For resilience to become an automatic response to stress, a child must understand the facets, practice the skills, see the skills modeled by a caregiver on a regular basis, and believe that adults value resiliency. To do this, look for teachable moments. For example, when the child expresses emotions in an appropriate way, compliment his or her behavior.

The Second Brain

Did you know that humans have two brains – one in the head and another in the gut? Recently discovered, the “second brain,” or enteric nervous system, is a network of nerve cells lining the digestive tract. Even though this second brain can’t do math problems or decide what movie to see, it contains more than 100 million nerve cells – that’s more than are in the spinal cord!

The digestive tract also houses up to 95 percent of the body’s serotonin, a hormone that affects mood, emotion, sleep, and appetite. These important discoveries show that a person’s emotional state is directly influenced by information from the gut.

How does this relate to resilience? You will learn that when the body is in fight-or-flight response mode, it stops digesting food. A child experiencing chronic stress, from bullying or test anxiety for example, may suffer from frequent digestive problems or stomachaches. If the child can be taught to be more resilient, those problems may decrease.

**Bend Without Breaking**

*Materials:* Pipe cleaner, paper clip, or other small flexible wire

*Instructions:* Ask if the child has ever heard the word “resilience” and what it might mean. Give the child a pipe cleaner to bend into many different shapes. Talk about how the pipe cleaners don’t break no matter how much they are twisted or bent.

*Discussion:*
1. Tell me about a time when you were able to bend without breaking. How did you do it?
2. Tell me about a time when you weren’t able to bend without breaking. What happened?
3. Explain that resilience depends on how we choose to handle difficult situations. We can’t always control what’s happening around us, but we can learn to react in ways that help us bend without breaking.
A Note to Caregivers

We recognize that the word “family” doesn’t always mean a mom, a dad, and their children living under one roof. Similarly, we know “parents” may be single parents, foster parents, grandparents raising their grandchildren, same-sex parents, and blended households. In some cases, childcare providers and school staff might be the most consistent, caring adults in a child’s life. For this reason, the authors of this guide use “caregiver” instead of “parent” when referring to adults who nurture children.

Whether you realize it or not, the children in your life are watching you carefully for cues about how to relate to the world. As you work through this guide, think about how your own behavior might influence them. You might even find that you are learning how to be more resilient right along with them!

Since resilience and stress reduction techniques can be taught to individuals of any age, these same ten facets can be modified for younger children, adolescents, young adults, adults, and older adults. Individuals of all ages can benefit from resilient lifestyle practices, such as: meditation and mindfulness; physical activity; healthy eating; adequate sleep; limited harmful substance use; supportive relationships; creative activities; volunteerism; and lifetime learning.

See the “Resources” section for more information and sources of additional help. Individuals who have chronic or serious illness can attend free programs at Turning Point (www.turningpointkc.org).
Getting Back to Your Center

The Ability to Self-calm

To understand the first facet of resilience, it’s important to know what happens to the human body during times of stress. It all started many, many years ago…

In primitive times, our ancestors couldn’t lock the doors to their caves, or call for help on their cell phones! To save themselves, they had to fight off predators or run for their lives.

Thankfully, those cave dwellers’ bodies were equipped with a remarkable system called the sympathoadrenal, or fight-or-flight, response. Here’s how it would prepare them for action, say, if they came face-to-face with a sabertooth tiger:

- Pupils dilate to let more light in.
- Air pathways dilate to let more air into the lungs.
- Saliva becomes sticky so it doesn’t flow into the lungs.
- Blood vessels in the skin constrict so the blood can coagulate, making hands and feet very cold.
- Blood leaves the intestines and goes to the skeletal muscles to prepare to fight or run away, bringing the digestive system to an abrupt halt.
- Heart pumps faster and blood pressure rises.
- Breathing becomes shallow.
- Palms of the hands become sweaty.

Today, our bodies still have that fight-or-flight response. But what was so necessary for cave people has become a health hazard in modern times. We react to today’s stressors — running late for a soccer game, studying for a spelling test, arguing over a toy — as though we were still facing a genuine physical threat, like that sabertooth tiger.

In the event of chronic stress, it’s as if the tiger is sitting on the doorstep! The body constantly is preparing to fight or flee. This can lead to digestive problems, ulcers, high blood pressure, anxiety attacks, poor sleep, poor concentration, and more. Those health problems don’t only affect adults. Children experience them too, along with emotional disturbances such as disruptive behavior, irritability, and unexplained crying or clingingness.

A dry mouth, racing heart, cold hands, and sweaty palms are all easily-recognized symptoms of stress. Caregivers can help children learn to notice these symptoms and use the resilience skills explained in this guide to relieve the stress they are feeling.

Like a free throw in basketball, this skill must be practiced in a comfortable environment, so it works automatically when the pressure is on.
The Happiest Place on Earth

*Materials: Paper and pencil (colored pencils, markers, or crayons optional)*

*Instructions: Ask the child to sit and be calm, with eyes closed (optional). Then ask the child to picture a safe, happy place. It can be pretend or real. Allow the child to be in this place for a minute or two.

Next, ask the child to draw a picture of the place or tell you about it, and to give it a name. Explain that in stressful times, the child can “visit” this place, either by looking at the picture or by imagining it again.

*Discussion:*
1. Why do you feel good when you are in that place?
2. When you see the child becoming agitated, frustrated, worried, or scared, say “This is when you can go to ______________.”

*If these materials aren’t available, ask the child to use words to describe the place in as much detail as possible.
Deep Breathing

Materials: Light object (small stuffed animal or piece of paper) and soap bubbles. If bubbles aren’t available, make your own using the recipe below or choose from the first two exercises.

Instructions: Remind the child that breathing is something the body does automatically, all day, every day, without being told. Use any of the following activities to help the child understand that he or she can control his or her breathing. Ensure that the child breathes slowly and exhales fully through the nose to prevent hyperventilation.

Belly Breathing:
Have the child lie back in a comfortable position. Place a light object such as a small stuffed animal or piece of paper on his or her stomach. Have the child inhale through the nose as you count slowly to three, then exhale through the nose as you count slowly to three again. Once the child can breathe along with your counting, he or she can focus on the object moving up and down on his or her belly.

Blowing Out Your Birthday Candles:
Ask the child to imagine he or she is looking at a birthday cake. He or she can describe it to you in as much detail as they would like. The child can then practice taking a deep breath and blowing out the candles on the cake.

Blowing Bubbles:
Show the child the difference between blowing bubbles with different breaths – quick shallow breath makes lots of little bubbles while a slow, steady breath makes a large one. Ask the child to try to blow large bubbles, practicing a slow, steady, calm breath.

Discussion:
1. When are some times that deep breathing can help you calm down? Some examples are: before a test; during an argument with a friend; when at bat; before shooting a free throw; before a dance recital or other performance.
2. Explain that deep breathing can help anytime the child feels excited, anxious, scared, worried, or agitated.

Make Your Own Soap Bubbles!
Ingredients:
- 1 cup basic liquid dish soap
- 10 cups distilled water
- ¼ cup of glycerin (available at drugstores) or white corn syrup

Instructions:
1. Mix all ingredients gently, without creating foam.
2. Store bubble mixture in an empty food container.
3. You can make bubble wands from household items such as flexible wire, straws, or anything that makes a closed loop.
Filling Your Bucket

The Ability to Self-replenish

The book *How Full is Your Bucket for Kids*, by Tom Rath and Mary Reckmeyer, is an excellent tool for teaching children about self-replenishment. In the story, a boy named Felix learns how his daily interactions with others affect him in good ways or bad, filling or emptying his bucket.

Like the character in the story, everyone has an invisible bucket that can be filled or drained depending on how they choose to handle what’s happening around them. For example, positive self-talk, affirmations, and positive interactions with others fill the bucket, while negative self-talk and negative interactions with others drain the bucket.

The ability to self-replenish means recognizing when the bucket is almost empty and then doing something to fill it up again. Replenishing activities are different for everyone, so each child needs to identify his or her own personal bucket-fillers.

Best Bucket Filler: Positive Self-talk

How we talk to ourselves has a self-hypnotic quality that influences our emotions, mood, and actions, and therefore, our resilience. Whether our inner speech is positive and uplifting or negative and critical, it will determine our core attitudes toward others and the world and either fill or drain our buckets.

One way to teach children to use positive self-talk is to introduce them to affirmations. Affirmations are positive phrases that children can repeat to help counteract negative beliefs.

Some ideas are:

- I am smart.
- I am hard working.
- I am strong.
- I am beautiful.
- I am proud.
- I am perfect just the way I am.
How Full is Your Bucket?

*Materials: How Full is Your Bucket for Kids,* by Tom Rath and Mary Reckmeyer, a Styrofoam cup, pencil, water, and dishpan or sink to catch water*

*Instructions:* Read *How Full is Your Bucket for Kids* or review the story in the “Materials” section and share it with the child, then give the child a Styrofoam cup to use as a bucket. Ask the child to talk about activities that fill up the bucket and why. Each time the child names an activity, pour water in the cup. When the cup is full, ask the child to name something that would drain the bucket. For each thing the child says, poke a hole in the cup, starting at the top of the water level and working your way down to the bottom. Eventually, the cup will empty.

*Discussion:*
   1. What makes you happy?
   2. Tell me three of your favorite things to do?
   3. What are three ways you help other people?

*A summary of the story can be found in the “Materials” section of this guide.

Filling Your Bucket Game

*Materials:* A cup or empty food container and several small items such as cotton balls, dry beans, uncooked pasta, or stones

*Instructions:* Explain that the cup represents the child’s invisible bucket. Give examples of positive interactions or thoughts and let the child put one small item in the cup for each example. Then give examples of situations that drain the bucket and have the child remove one item for each. Let the child add or remove items throughout the day accordingly. Caregivers and others can also add items to the child’s cup.

*Discussion:*
   1. Explain that each person is responsible for filling his or her own “personal bucket,” but that we also add to or dip from other people’s buckets through positive and negative interactions.
   2. Share an example, such as: “If you take the time to help your little brother, you have added to his bucket and to your own. But if you ignore him or refuse to help him, you have made both of your buckets drip.”
Strong from the Inside Out

Exercise and Self-care

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), regular exercise is one of the most important things we can do to be healthy both physically and emotionally. Exercise is proven to help reduce a person’s risk for cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, and some cancers. It strengthens our bones, muscles and improves our mental health.

Exercise also helps us be more resilient, keeping our bodies and minds strong so we can bend but not break. Here’s how:

- Exercise is an excellent self-calming technique (Chapter 1). In fact, research has shown that 15 minutes of brisk walking is more relaxing than commonly prescribed anti-anxiety drugs.
- It’s a fun way to refill our buckets (Chapter 2).
- Exercise promotes better sleep and boosts energy levels, both of which contribute to resilience.
- Exercise improves mood, reduces tension, and promotes the tendency to see problems as solvable. Robert Thayer, author of Calm Energy, says, “Exercise is the single best remedy for bad moods – states characterized by increased tension and decreased energy.”
- Regular exercise increases our natural resistance to anxiety-producing factors.

Regular exercise ultimately improves a child’s ability to practice the other nine components of resilience. It is a perpetuating cycle – one that caregivers can influence by being active themselves and presenting many opportunities for children to be active.
Let’s Get Moving!

Materials: Paper and pencil

Instructions: With the child, brainstorm a list of favorite activities the child can do alone or with others (playing at recess, playing action-based video games, tag or kickball, dancing, etc.). Do one of the activities together, or take a walk, or play Freeze Dance. (Put on music and dance. Freeze when the music stops.) After a few minutes of activity, find your pulse. (Place fingers at the top of the neck, just under the jaw at about the mid-point between the earlobe and chin, and press gently.)

Discussion:
1. How did our bodies change when we were active? (Hearts beat faster; breathing is faster, deeper; sweat is forming.)
2. While we were active, did you feel uncomfortable? (If yes, say, “What’s another, more positive way to think about it?” For example, “Isn’t amazing what my body can do for me,” or “I’m a little uncomfortable now, but I’m going to feel better in the long run.”)
3. Think of a day when you were very, very active. Do you remember how you felt later? Did you have more energy throughout the day? Did you sleep better that night?

Fun Ways to be Active

• Play frisbee
• Walk or bike to school
• Rake leaves
• Throw snowballs or build a snow fort
• Take a hike
• Work in the garden
• Build a homemade obstacle course
• Play tag, kickball, basketball, or soccer
• Dance
• Jump rope
• Play action-based video games
Committed, In Control, and Up for a Challenge

**Hardiness**

People who are “hardy” respond to stressful events in a much healthier and more effective way than others. Through years of research, psychologist Dr. Suzanne Kobasa and psychology professor Dr. Salvatore Maddi developed the concept of Stress Hardiness, or resistance to stress, at City University in New York. Through their research, Kobasa and Maddi found that people who did not handle stress well experienced more medical and psychological problems and symptoms and made more visits to their doctor. Those who coped well with the stressors of life and work were generally free of those problems, and thus were defined as “hardy.” In their work, the researchers identified three components to “hardiness:”

1. **Commitment:** People who are high in this component work hard and give their best effort. They have a curiosity about what is happening to them rather than feeling alienated from people or their environment.

2. **Control:** People who feel that they can influence life events and their surroundings are high in this component. They have a strong sense that they can influence their circumstances and do not feel like victims.

3. **Challenge:** People who are high in this component see life’s difficulties as a challenge rather than a disaster. They see these challenges as an opportunity to learn and grow.

To teach commitment, caregivers can convey to children that they expect them to give their best effort. For example, instead of saying “It’s okay if you don’t do well on your spelling test, I know it’s not your favorite subject,” say, “I know you will do the best you can on your spelling test.”

By reinforcing the “control” component of hardiness, caregivers are helping children in their innate need to be independent. We see the beginnings of this in toddlers who want to have a say in every decision that affects them. The desire and need to be independent continues to evolve through adolescence and sometimes into adulthood.

Caregivers can help children feel in control by offering small choices throughout the day. For example, at snack time ask, “Do you want an apple or an orange?” instead of making the decision for the child.

Caregivers can reinforce the “challenge” component of hardiness by validating the child’s feelings, then helping him or her reframe the situation. For example, if the child is upset for forgetting to take homework back to school, you can say, “I know you’re disappointed and that’s okay. What can you do to remember it next time?” Some ideas might be to leave it by the door or put it in the backpack the night before.
The Tale of Despereaux

Materials: The movie, “The Tale of Despereaux No Ordinary Mouse” or the book, The Tale of Despereaux Movie Tie-In Reader: No Ordinary Mouse by Candlewick Press, October 2008* (Several versions of the story are available. Choose the one that is the most age-appropriate for your child.)

Instructions:
Read or watch the story or review the story in the “Materials” section and share it with the child. As you move through the ten facets of resilience, refer back to the story and read or watch it, continuing to explore the discussion questions below.

Discussion:

1. Despereaux’s image of himself is different from how he actually looked. Others thought he was small and puny, but Depereaux saw himself as a giant. How is your image of yourself different from the image others have of you?
2. How did negative words affect Despereaux when he rescued the Princess Pea? (He did not let the words of others deter him.) Can you think of a time when someone said something negative to you or about you? How did you respond?
3. Why did Despereaux keep saying “Chivalry! Bravery! Honor!”? (He was using affirmations and positive self-talk.)
4. What words would make you feel strong in a difficult situation?
5. Give an example of a time you saw a challenge as an opportunity.
6. Tell me about an event in the story where Despereaux believed he could influence or change his circumstances.

*A summary of the story can be found in the “Materials” section of this guide.
My Journey
Sense of Coherence and the Role of Routine

In the latter part of the twentieth century, Aaron Antonovsky, an Israeli American sociologist and researcher studied survivors of Holocaust concentration camps. He defined Sense of Coherence as the belief that things will work out reasonably well; that it’s worth the effort to try to solve problems; and that stress is a challenge rather than a burden. Antonovsky identified three characteristics that determine Sense of Coherence:

1. **Meaningfulness**: the belief that life makes sense and therefore coping is desirable. The metaphor of a journey can help children understand this component. Life itself is also like a journey. We may not always know where we are going and we often encounter some bumps along the way, but as we learn resilience, we can more easily navigate those bumps.

2. **Manageability**: the belief that resources are available to meet life’s demands. Trusted caregivers, teachers, coaches, family members, friends, and clergy are all “resources” who can help children navigate life’s bumpy spots. It’s important that children understand that asking for help is a sign of strength, not weakness.

3. **Comprehensibility**: the belief that the world is understandable, meaningful, orderly, and consistent rather than chaotic and unpredictable. Young children cannot influence this component. Adults have the majority of influence when it comes to making life consistent and predictable.

Sense of Coherence is an abstract concept that even some adults struggle to understand. It is primarily the result of consistent life experiences, routine, and lots of love, which children depend on caregivers to provide. These factors help children feel their lives have meaning and are manageable.

Consequently, children whose basic needs such as food, shelter, sleep, and love are not met can learn this facet to some extent through self-calming and reframing techniques.
Life Map

Materials: Paper and pencil (real map or atlas optional)

Instructions: Ask the child to name some things that would be necessary on a journey or trip. If the child doesn’t mention a map, ask if it would be helpful. If a real map or atlas is available, let the child examine its details. Discuss what kinds of information a map provides:

- The legend shows types of roads and identifies other symbols
- The compass shows direction.
- The scale indicates distance or mileage.
- Colors identify mountains, roads, bodies of water, parks, and forests, etc.

Ask the child to create a life map. (This is an excellent group activity for a family.) The child needs to decide what to include on the life map, and then create a legend assigning meaning to the objects. For example, a mountain might represent a challenge the child has overcome or is working to overcome; the ocean may symbolize things that change; and roads may represent the skills and strengths needed on the journey. The child can then draw a map incorporating mountains, rivers, lakes, roads, and bridges.

In your discussion, help the child reframe the difficult times shown on the map. As much as possible, explain how you witnessed the child getting through a hard time. If the child is currently struggling, help him or her make a plan to overcome the challenge. After discussing the map, display it as a reminder of the child’s life journey.

Discussion:
1. Tell me about your map.
2. Can you tell me about ______________? (Point out the high and low points in the picture as the child depicted them.)
3. Why did you choose (a certain feature) to represent (a certain event)? Repeat for each feature on the map.
My Goals are Within My Reach

Sense of Hope

Hope is a powerful predictor of everything from athletic performance, academic achievement, and happiness, to coping with tragedy and serious illness. People who are strong in this facet set higher goals, and achieve them by creating a plan and being flexible. They are also better able to cope with difficult circumstances, and they adapt better to serious illnesses such as congestive heart failure, cancer, and spinal chord injuries.

Dr. Charles Richard “Rick” Snyder, Wright Distinguished Professor of Clinical Psychology at the University of Kansas, said hope is more than just wishing for something – a person must have the ability to define goals and make plans to achieve them. Snyder identified three components of hope:

1. Willpower: “I have goals.”
2. Waypower: “I can make plans and find ways to meet my goals.”
3. Follow-through: “I can be flexible and I can see my goals through.”

Snyder found that people who are hopeful by this definition are: able to turn to others for advice; believe they can succeed; feel things will get better as time goes on; are flexible and able to change course if need be; and can break a task down into manageable pieces.

Hope is similar to optimism (Chapter 7) but the two facets are distinct. An optimist might have goals but not the plan or motivation needed to accomplish them.

It’s important for children to understand that just wishing for something isn’t enough to make it happen. Reaching goals requires having a plan and seeing it through.

Children may think of hope in terms of the material things they wish for, but this facet relates hope to a specific personal goal or achievement, which is measurable.

When children express goals that are out of reach or not relevant, caregivers can help provide focus and direction for a more attainable and relevant version of the goal. In addition, caregivers can teach follow-through by suggesting resources and helping children work through obstacles. Plus, caregivers can assist children with devising a method to track their progress toward attaining their goal.
Set a Goal and Follow-through

Materials: Paper and pencil (colored pencils, markers, or crayons optional)

Instructions: Ask the child to make a list of his or her hopes. Older children can do this in a list form while younger children may want to draw a night sky full of stars and with help, label the stars with hopes/wishes. Discuss each item in terms of Snyder’s three components of hope.

Here are some examples:

A. The child labels a star with “I hope to get a B in Math.”

1. Willpower: Restate the wish or hope as a goal: “My goal is to get a B in Math”
2. Waypower: Discuss the ways to achieve a B grade. (i.e. finishing homework, paying attention in class, asking the teacher for additional help/explanation, enlisting help from a tutor).
3. Follow-through: Continue to follow up with the child on how these tasks are coming along. This will help the child practice accountability.

B. The child lists “I want a new toy.”

1. Willpower: Restate the wish or hope as a goal: “My goal is to get a new toy.”
2. Waypower: Discuss the ways to get a new toy. (i.e. waiting for a birthday or holiday, saving allowance, trading with a friend).
3. Follow-through: Continue to follow up with the child on how these tasks are coming along. This will help the child practice accountability.
I’m Going to be Okay

Optimism

Optimism means expecting the best, giving yourself credit for good outcomes, and believing that bad outcomes are likely the result of changeable circumstances.

Optimists believe things will work out reasonably well, and that there’s always a way to get a job done. They believe, in spite of troubles, that life is generally good and can be improved through their own efforts. They feel they have some kind of control over situations in their lives, even if it’s internal control over how they react to each event.

The power of optimism:
- Optimists predict excellence in everything.
- Optimists are healthier and better able to fend off infectious illnesses and chronic diseases of middle age.
- Optimists are less likely to be depressed.
- Optimists recover more quickly from surgery.
- Optimists tend to have more energy.
- Optimists have more peaceful, happier, and calmer feelings.

On the flip side, pessimism means expecting bad outcomes, and believing they are the result of permanent personal flaws. Pessimists believe they can’t make things better so they won’t even try. Because they are more comfortable when things are bad, pessimists are hard to be around. In fact, a Mayo Clinic study indicated that pessimists were 19% more likely to die prematurely.

Research shows children are born with certain temperaments. If the child in your life is tending toward pessimism, take heart: it’s entirely possible to teach optimism. You can do this by helping the child reframe negative thoughts as positive.
**Reframing**

*Materials:* None

*Instructions:* Introduce the following techniques and use them at every opportunity. Reinforce the ideas by modeling the techniques with your own thought and speech. Be on the lookout for statements that include absolutes, such as “never” and “always.” These are often followed by pessimistic thoughts. (“I never get my way,” or “I always have to go last.”)

**Thought Stopping:**
Help the child reframe thoughts with four steps.
1. Recognize a pessimistic thought. (“When I play soccer, I always mess up!”)
2. Tell yourself to stop thinking the thought. (“Stop!”)
3. Challenge the thought. (“Do I really always mess up? No, I missed a goal today, but I made a goal in our last game.”)
4. Replace the thought with a more optimistic, sensible, and supportive thought pattern. (“I’m not going to score every goal I attempt, but I did my best, and I’ll keep practicing.”)

**Three Good Things:**
As a dinner-time conversation starter or as a nighttime ritual, adults and children can share three good things that happened that day. Research shows that this simple exercise increases feelings of happiness and optimism.

**Nightly Reexamination:**
At bedtime, talk about how the child handled challenges that day. If the child was pessimistic, replay each scenario with an optimistic response and explore how the outcome might have been different.

**Two Sides to Every Story**

*Materials:* Large sheet of paper and pencil (colored pencils, markers, or crayons optional)

*Instructions:* Have the child draw a line down the middle of their paper. Ask the child to draw or write a pessimistic thought on one side of the paper and an optimistic response on the other. Explain that this is a way to visualize the habit of replacing negative thoughts with positive ones, which children can learn to do in their heads.

Pessimistic thought: “I’m not the best at free throws.”
Optimistic response: “What can I do to improve? Practice more!”

Pessimistic thought: “Why is that person better than I am?”
Optimistic response: “I measure myself against my own abilities, not someone else’s.”
Going Easy on Myself and Others

Non-judgmental/Self-supporting, Lack of Perfectionism

Perfectionism, the greatest enemy of resilience, is a habit formed in childhood. It stems from an underlying fear of failure or rejection and it produces self-critical thoughts which lead a child to feel hopeless and discouraged. If left untreated, perfectionism can escalate to Obsessive-Compulsive Personality Disorder, eating disorders, self-harm, and clinical depression.

Characteristics of Perfectionism:
• Having an irrational belief that you or your environment must be perfect.
• Striving to be the best, to reach the ideal, and to never make a mistake.
• Believing that whatever you do in life must be letter perfect with no deviation, mistakes, slip ups, or inconsistencies.
• Believing that no matter what you attempt it is never “good enough” to meet your own or others’ expectations.
• A tendency to be critical or yourself or others if standards are not met.
• A perfectionist says things like…
  “My painting is not as good as the Mona Lisa!”
  “If I can’t do it perfectly I won’t do it at all.”
  “I’m not going to try because I know I can’t meet my standards.”

Most perfectionists are happy to hear that it’s actually okay to have high standards. It’s just the negative self-talk, and criticism (of yourself and others) that has to go. To help perfectionistic children be more self-supporting and nonjudgmental, caregivers can provide opportunities for them to explore and share their personal strengths. This will encourage a strong, positive “sense of self,” or personal identity. Children with a strong sense of self can then learn to practice positive self-talk, which reinforces optimistic thinking.

The techniques for eliminating perfectionism are the same for training optimism (Chapter 7). However, if both are a problem for a child, we suggest working on the facets one at a time starting with the one that will relieve the most disruptive habit.
A Bad Case of Stripes

Materials: The book, *A Bad Case Of Stripes* by David Shannon*

In this story, Camilla Cream worries too much about what others think of her and tries desperately to please everyone. Her troubles are resolved only when she decides it’s okay to be herself, making this book an excellent way to introduce children to the idea of independent thinking.

Instructions: Read the book together or review the story in the “Materials” section and share it with the child.

Discussion:
1. Why does Camilla always do what is expected? (She wants to be popular.)
2. What did Camilla need to do to get better? (She just needs to be herself.)
3. What about your life makes you feel happy and proud?
4. Remind children that we all have beliefs, thoughts and feelings hidden within ourselves. Those things are often what make us unique.

*A summary of the story can be found in the “Materials” section of this guide.

Inside/Outside Box

Materials: Box with a lid, photos, magazines to cut up, colored pencils, markers, or crayons*

Instructions: Ask the child to decorate the outside of the box in a way that shows what someone would quickly learn when just getting to know the child. This could include, but is not limited to, personality, affirmations, physical appearance, hobbies, and/or favorite activities.

Have the child decorate the inside of the box with pictures and drawings that represent aspects of that are more private. These might be thoughts, feelings, memories, personal affirmations, and insecurities.

Discussion:
1. Tell me about your box.
2. With whom do you share things on the inside of the box?
3. How do you show people what is on the inside?
4. Do your feelings about your inner self match your behavior that people can see?*

*If these materials aren’t available, let the child use personal items to represent different aspects of his or her personality, or write on slips of paper. Use any sort of household container such as a grocery bag or empty food container if a box is not available.
The Way I Feel

Emotional Expressiveness

Emotional expressiveness is one of the most important facets of resilience. Children who can comfortably express their true emotions in a safe and appropriate way are better able to cope with stressful situations. Children who have difficulty with this will experience an increase in stress above and beyond the stress caused by the event that evoked the emotion.

Research on the physiology of emotions shows that the emotions we are born with were meant to strengthen us and help us process events.

Three steps for processing emotions:

1. **Recognize the True Emotion**: Children often need help labeling the emotion they are expressing. To do this, an adult can say, “Wow, it looks like you are feeling (anger, fear, sadness, grief, love, joy) right now.”

2. **Express the Emotion**: Children need to be taught that it’s okay to feel whatever they are feeling. They don’t have to be afraid of feelings because a feeling can never hurt someone. How that feeling is expressed, though, can make things better or worse. For example, being angry can’t hurt someone, but biting, yelling at someone, or punching a wall can. Caregivers can help children identify appropriate ways to express their emotions.

3. **Move On**: Caregivers may need to help re-direct children to keep them from dwelling on the feeling or having it escalate.

Emotional expressiveness plays a role in developing conflict negotiation skills, which have lifetime benefits. A child who can successfully manage conflict with others will feel more confident and be more even-tempered.
Situation/Options/Outcomes

Materials: Paper, pencil, and Situation/Options/Outcomes chart in “Materials” section*

Instructions: To help a child prepare for dealing with a strong emotion or difficult situation, teach him or her to think it through before reacting. Complete the chart as follows and discuss it with the child.

Discussion:
1. What is the situation?
2. What are your options for dealing with the situation?
3. What are the possible outcomes of each option?
4. Remember that outcomes can be positive or negative.

*If these materials are not available, talk through the three parts of the chart.

How My Heart Feels©

Materials: My Many Colored Days by Dr. Seuss, How My Heart Feels© graphic, and colored pencils, markers, or crayons*

My Many Colored Days, by Dr. Seuss, labels different feelings and relates them to colors. Just like in art, when two colors combine into one. While this picture book is intended for young children, it can help people of all ages understand how colors can symbolize feelings.

Instructions: Read the story together or review the story in the “Materials” section and share it with the child. Photocopy or trace the handout in the “Materials” section of this guide. Ask the child to use his or her own ideas about colors and feelings to fill in the color key and assign a different feeling to each color. Let the child color the heart according to the color key. An older child can use light or dark colors depending on the intensity of each feeling.

Discussion:
1. Tell me about your heart.
2. What color are you today?
3. What colors have you been lately?
4. Caregivers can share their colors too: “Today I’m __________________.”
5. Can you tell me about a time when you’ve felt that feeling, mood, or color? (Point to each color on the heart.)
6. Do your feelings change who you are as a person – your true self? (No. All feelings are okay because they make us who we are.)
7. What are some things we have learned that can help us move to a different color? (See chapters 1 (self-calm), 2 (self-replenish), or 3 (self-care)).

*A summary of the story and a heart with a color key can be found in the “Materials” section.
Helping Hands

Social Support/Overview

Social support refers to the network of friends, family, peers, teachers, coaches, and church family that can support us during good times and bad. It helps us feel connected to something outside of ourselves.

A strong support network creates an environment with several positive effects:
- Fosters a sense of belonging.
- Promotes the feeling of being safe and secure.
- Provides opportunities to give and receive support.
- Increases self-worth and self-esteem.
- Keeps you from feeling lonely.
- Creates an environment that fosters a positive attitude and feelings of being accepted and cared for.
- Promotes compassion, empathy, and trust.

It’s important to reassure children that it’s okay to accept help when it’s offered and ask for help when it’s needed. In fact, it’s more than okay – it’s a sign of strength, not weakness. Caregivers can model this facet by sharing stories about times they’ve needed help, or times they were there for someone in a time of need.

My Helping Hand

Materials: Paper and pencil (colored pencils, markers, or crayons optional)

Instructions: Have the child trace both hands on the paper. Next, the child can fill one outline with the names of people who provide him or her with help and support, and the other outline with names of people the child helps. Make suggestions, as necessary.

Discussion:
1. Tell me about a time that ________________ helped you?
2. What things can you do to strengthen your support network?
3. Explain that it is okay to give and receive help.
4. Remind the child he or she has the love and support of many people.
Keep Going, Keep Growing – Together!

When a child improves upon just one of the ten facets of resilience covered in this guide, he or she can become more resilient. That’s pretty powerful. But an even bigger factor is the commitment you have shown to sit down and spend time with the child as you work through the activities together. When you do that, the child sees that you believe this work is important, that you believe in the child and that what he or she brings to the world is important.

This guide’s culminating activity, The Tree of Me® (found in the “Materials” section), is one more way a child and caregiver can explore resilience together. Trees are good for so many things, and in this exploration, a tree becomes a symbol that provides many different ways to talk to a child about resilience. Because trees are just about everywhere, they also provide a constant reminder of the ten facets of resilience and an easy conversation starter when you’re out and about.

We hope that going forward, you will encourage the child to continue to practice these resilience skills, and even revisit the activities from time to time to help the child gauge his or her progress. Like so many things in life, practice is the key to developing and maintaining resilience skills.
Chapter 2: Synopsis for How Full is Your Bucket for Kids

In the story, *How Full is Your Bucket for Kids*, by Tom Rath and Mary Reckmeyer, a boy named Felix learns how his interactions with others make him feel good or bad about himself.

Felix was building with blocks when his little sister Anna wanted to play too. When Felix said no, the two fought, and Anna knocked down the tower Felix had built. That’s when Grandpa told them about invisible buckets.

Everyone has an invisible bucket, and when our buckets are full, we feel great. But when people treat us poorly, or we aren’t good to others, the buckets drip. When our buckets are running low, we don’t feel good about ourselves or others.

In the morning, Felix woke up and saw his bucket floating above his head. When his mom yelled at him for being late and spilling his cereal, he felt invisible drips spill out of his bucket. When his sister Anna teased him and his mother continued to scold him, he felt more drips. Then the dog ate his breakfast, and a boy on the bus teased him about his backpack. He felt more drips escaping his bucket. At school, a group of kids whispered behind his back and a boy shoved him. He could tell his bucket was almost empty.

He felt bad about himself and his classmates and wanted bad things to happen to the people around him.

Then his teacher asked him to share an A+ story he wrote. Felix felt a big drop fall into his bucket. The class liked his story, and he felt more drops fall in. When Felix finished the story and the whole class applauded, he felt many drops land in his bucket.

When he saw his mom had left a note in his lunchbox, when he was chosen as team captain in P.E., and when his teachers and classmates complimented him, he could feel that his bucket was almost full.

At recess, he saw everyone else’s buckets too. He helped a teacher who dropped his papers, helped a boy find his baseball, and made friends with a new boy at school. Soon he realized that while he was filling their buckets, he was filling his own, too!

After school, Felix made his little sister feel better about a broken toy then asked her to build a block tower with him, filling both their buckets.
Chapter 4: Synopsis for The Tale of Despereaux

_The Tale of Despereaux_, by Kate DiCamillo, is a story about a very hardy little mouse. He uses positive self-talk and affirmations, he sees challenges as opportunities, and he believes that if he does his best, he can change his circumstances.

Despereaux is a mouse who was born in a castle. He was different from the other mice because he was very small, even for a mouse. In his own mind, though, he was a brave, strong giant. He didn’t behave like a mouse either. He set off mousetraps for fun and drew pictures of cats!

His parents asked another mouse, Furlough, to teach him how to act like a mouse. Furlough showed Despereaux how to eat books, but Despereaux only wanted to read the books. As he read, he learned about honor and courage. He read about a princess and a brave knight who rescued her.

Before long, he met a real princess named Pea, who was crying. He told her about the story he read about a sad princess just like her. He promised he would tell her the end of the story the next time he saw her. He liked her so much, he told Furlough about her.

But it was against the rules for mice to talk to people, so Despereaux was sent to the dungeon!

He felt afraid, but he was also a little curious. In the dungeon he met a rat named Roscuro, who was sent there because he fell into the queen’s soup bowl. Like Despereaux, Roscuro was different from the others. He didn’t like the dark dungeon or the rat’s songs and dances. Roscuro saved Despereaux’s life when the other rats tried to feed him to a cat! In return, Despereaux told Roscuro the story of the princess he had met.

Then Despereaux heard Pea’s voice. She had been kidnapped and thrown in the dungeon. Despereaux knew he had to rescue her. He made it his quest. “Chivalry! Bravery! Honor!” he repeated to make himself feel those things.

With help from Roscuro and a magical knight made of vegetables, Despereaux defeated the rats and rescued the princess, fulfilling his quest.
Chapter 8: Synopsis for A Bad Case of Stripes

In *A Bad Case of Stripes*, by David Shannon, Camilla Cream worried about fitting in with the kids at school. She wouldn’t eat lima beans, even though she loved them, because the kids at school hated them. She was so worried about impressing everyone, she tried on 42 outfits on the first day of school. When she finally decided what to wear, she looked in the mirror and saw she was covered with stripes! She felt fine, but was relieved when her mother made her stay home from school because she was worried about what her friends would think.

A doctor came to see Camilla, but he didn’t know how to help. He gave her some ointment and said she could go back to school. The next day, the kids laughed at her and called her terrible names. During the Pledge of Allegiance, her stripes turned to red, white, and blue! Soon, everyone was calling out colors and patterns, and Camilla’s skin was changing into polka dots and checkerboards, whatever the kids in her class yelled out.

The principal asked Camilla to stay home from school. Other parents were worried their children would catch the stripes too. Camilla wanted to eat some lima beans, but was afraid to because she didn’t want to be laughed at any more.

Next, Camilla was visited by four Specialists. They gave her terrible medicine that made her head look like a giant pill. Two Experts examined her and had no idea what was wrong. Everyone who tried to help her only made things worse. Whatever they said changed the way she looked until she was part tree, part animal, and even part of her room! Soon, TV reporters were outside her door, and people were camped out on her lawn!

Then, a sweet old lady came to the door. She said Camilla had the worst case of stripes she had ever seen. She said lima beans would turn Camilla back into her old self, but Camilla still didn’t want them because she was worried what people would think!

As the woman turned to leave, Camilla stopped her and admitted she loved lima beans. The woman fed her some, and the whole room started to spin. When it stopped, Camilla was herself again. “I knew the real you was in there somewhere,” said the woman.

After that, Camilla was true to herself, even if her friends thought she was a little weird for liking lima beans.
### Chapter 9: Situation/Options/Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Situation</th>
<th>Options</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The child is being teased by a friend visiting his or her home.</td>
<td>Cry and run away.</td>
<td>Child who is teasing gets satisfaction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ignore the friend.</td>
<td>Child may or may not stop teasing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Say, “I don’t want to be around people who talk to me like that. If you don’t stop, then I’ll ask my mom to take you home.”</td>
<td>Child being teased has a sense of control.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 9: How My Heart Feels

In the story *My Many Colored Days*, by Dr. Seuss, a child compares feelings and moods to colors and animals.

- A horse: excited and wild (red)
- A bird: adventuresome and determined (blue)
- A fish: calm and quiet (green)
- A flamingo: joyful and worry-free (pink)
- A bear: slow and bored (brown)
- A circus seal: funny and silly (orange)
- An owl: scared, frustrated, and confused (gray)
- A dinosaur: sad and lonely (purple)
- A wolf: angry and mad (black)
- A bee: energetic and busy (yellow)

Every day is different, and some days are a mix of colors. But no matter what our feelings or moods on any given day, we are still ourselves. All feelings are okay because they make us who we are.
How My Heart Feels

No matter what you are feeling, you are still you.
All feelings are okay because they make you unique.

In the story, My Many Colored Days, by Dr. Seuss, a child compares feelings and moods to colors and animals.
Every day is different, and some days are a mix of colors.

Color the animals with whatever colors you think fit their moods. Next, color the heart according to how you feel, using the animal colors as a guide. If you are feeling mostly joyful and a little bit wild, color a large spot of your heart with your “joyful” color and a smaller part with your “wild” color. You can also make the colors darker or lighter depending on the intensity of your feelings.

This activity is from Teaching Resilience to Elementary School Children: Helping Them Bounce Back©, which can be downloaded at www.turningpointkc.org.
Chapter 10: The Tree of Me©

A tree that gets plenty of sunshine, water and nutrients will grow healthy and strong. Its trunk will be stable and its branches flexible. Its roots will spread out, making the tree steady. In a storm, the tree will bend without breaking. If it’s damaged, a tree can grow new bark to cover a wound. In a drought, the tree stops growing until more water is available.

Use these symbols to fill in the blanks on The Tree of Me©.

**Sunshine** symbolizes self-calming. A tree uses sunlight to make the food it needs. We use self-calming techniques to maintain our energy stores and to feed our true spirits. (Chapter 1)

The **trunk** represents self-support. We all use both negative and positive self-talk, but negative self-talk makes the trunk weak. Positive messages make it strong. (Chapter 2)

**Water** stands for self-replenishment. When soil is dry, it’s like an empty bucket. (Chapter 2)

A tree’s **bark** symbolizes exercise and self-care. When a tree is damaged or loses a limb, its bark can grow over its wound to protect it from disease. Exercise keeps our bodies and minds healthy and protects us from illness. (Chapter 3)

The **tree** as a whole stands for hardiness. A tree sways to keep from falling over in a storm. It can heal itself, and make its own food. If its roots can’t find water, they reach further into the soil. When we give our best effort, when we believe we can change our circumstances, and when we are able to see challenges as opportunities we are hardy too. (Chapter 4)
Soil symbolizes basic needs. Love, acceptance, forgiveness, routine are nutrients that are available or that need to be provided. Traits like perfectionism and pessimism harm the soil. (Chapter 5, 7, and 8)

A tree’s seeds represent a sense of hope. A tree’s purpose (or goal) is to reproduce. To do this, it must produce seeds at just the right time to allow them to grow into healthy new trees. This relates to how we must set goals and have a plan to reach them. (Chapter 6)

The branches represent our gifts, talents and passions. These overflow from the truest self and produce leaves and fruit. Even though leaves and fruit come and go with the seasons, much like our thoughts and feelings do, they are very good indicators of the health of the tree. (Chapter 8)

Leaves and fruit stand for feelings. Feelings come and go. Whether they are bright green and lush, or brown and dry, all feelings are okay. (Chapter 9)

Roots represent social support. A tree’s roots support and anchor it in heavy storms. They collect water and nutrients from the soil so the tree can grow. The people who ground and anchor us also pick us up when we are weak. They provide us with love and affection, which are vital nutrients to the soul. (Chapter 10)
The Tree of Me

A healthy tree can bend without breaking. Color the parts of the tree and fill in the blanks to see how you can be resilient like a tree.

Water stands for self-replenishment; to replenish my spirit like rain gives water to trees, I can:

The branches represent the truest self; like a tree’s branches, my gifts, talents, and passions are:

A tree’s bark symbolizes exercise and self care; when I exercise, I protect myself from illness. Some of my favorite physical activities are:

Soil symbolizes basic needs; like nutrients in the soil, my basic needs are:

This activity is from Teaching Resilience to Elementary School Children: Helping Them Bounce Back®, which can be downloaded at www.turningpointkc.org.
Leaves and fruit stand for feelings; feelings come and go and that’s okay. Today I’m feeling:

Sunshine symbolizes self-calming; like the tree grows toward the sun, I grow when I calm myself by:

A tree’s seeds represent a sense of hope; like a tree’s life cycle, I can take action to reach my goals. One of my goals is:

The trunk represents self-support; to make myself strong like a tree’s trunk, I tell myself nice things like:

Roots represent social support; the people who ground and anchor me like a tree’s roots are:

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Turning Point
The Centre for Hope and Healing

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Kansas City
Turning Point’s Model of Resilience

Turning Point’s model of resilience is based on the following research:

A Study of Coping Styles

The “Grant Study” of adult development was begun at Harvard University by Arlie Bock and Clark Heath in 1937. The study examined students’ coping styles into advanced old age and identified styles that supported healthy, happy, and successful lives, including the following patterns:

• Looking ahead and preparing for predictable stressors.
• Putting things aside once nothing more could be done about a distressing event.
• Avoiding being engulfed by stressors.
• Keeping a sense of humor.
• Taking the needs of others seriously.

A Lifetime of Data

Members of the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine classes of 1948 through 1964 volunteered to keep a running medical chart of their entire lives, providing detailed annual updates. This data has yielded fascinating and important results over the many years of its collection.

Among the many findings relevant to resilience, the following emerged:

• Habits of nervous tension and worry included nervous tension, anxiety, and anger under stress.
• Habits of nervous tension and worry were linked to premature disease and death.

The Birth of Resilience Research

Emmy Werner was one of the first scientists to use the term resilience in the 1970s. She studied poverty stricken children from Kauai, Hawaii, who grew up with alcoholic or mentally ill parents.1 Werner found that, of the children who grew up in these difficult environments, two-thirds exhibited destructive behaviors in their later teen years while one-third did not. Werner called the latter group “resilient.” She observed that resilient children and their families had traits that made them different from non-resilient children and families.

Through Werner's research, she identified three protective factors related to resilience:

1. **Personal Attributes**: being outgoing, bright, and having a positive self-concept.
2. **Family**: having close bonds with at least one family member or an emotionally stable parent.
3. **Community**: receiving support from peers.

**Resilience and Nurturing**

Resilience was also studied in children of schizophrenic mothers in the 1980s. Masten studied children of schizophrenic parents and concluded that these children did not receive appropriate nurturing like the children of healthy parents. This lack of nurturing generally impacted the children's development. However, some children of ill parents thrived and did well in school which led researchers to study their responses to adversity.

**The Big Three**

Dr. Charles L. Sheridan spent many years researching the dimensions of resilience. Through his research, he described three factors that appear to reliably separate more resilient people from less resilient people.

1. **Attitudes/Skills**: pertains to attitudes and skills that are effective and self-supporting. Senses of coherence, optimism, hope, etc. are partial aspects of this dimension.
2. **Hypersensitivity/Perfectionism/Self-criticism**: pertains to high sensitivity, perfectionism, and the tendency to be self-critical instead of self-supportive.
3. **Communication/Expressiveness**: reflects the ability to understand your reactions to distressing events and to express those reactions in ways that reduce feelings and sensations of distress.

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Resources

Activity Books

*How Full is Your Bucket? for Kids*, by Tom Rath and Mary Reckmeyer, 2009 (Chapter 2)

*The Tale of Despereaux*, by Kate DiCamillo, 2003, and Movie Tie-In Reader: No Ordinary Mouse by Candlewick Press, 2008 (Chapter 4)

*A Bad Case of Stripes*, by David Shannon, 1998 (Chapter 8)

*My Many Colored Days*, by Dr. Seuss, 1996 (Chapter 9)

Other Children’s Books

*A Quiet Place*, by Douglas Wood, 2002

*Giraffes Can’t Dance*, by Giles Andreae, 2001

*Have You Filled a Bucket Today?*, by Carol McCloud, 2007

*I Was So Mad*, by Mercer Mayer, 1983

*I’m Gonna Like Me: Letting Off a Little Self-Esteem*, by Jamie Lee Curtis and Laura Cornell, 2012

*My Mouth Is a Volcano!*, by Julia Cook, 2006

*My Mouth Is a Volcano Activity and Idea Book*, by Julia Cook, 2009

*Spaghetti in a Hot Dog Bun: Having the Courage to Be Who You Are*, by Maria Dismondy, 2008

*The Hope Flower*, by A.J. Cosmo, 2012 (Kindle Edition)

*The Way I Feel*, by Janan Cain, 2004

*Today I Feel Silly: And Other Moods That Make My Day*, by Jamie Lee Curtis and Laura Cornell, 1998

Reference Books

*The Heart of Parenting: Raising an Emotionally Intelligent Child*, by John Gottman, PhD, and Joan DeClair, 1997

*Raising Resilient Children: Fostering Strength, Hope, and Optimism in Your Child*, by Robert Brooks, PhD, and Sam Goldstein, PhD, 2001

*Handbook of Resilience in Children (Issues in Clinical Child Psychology)*, Edited by Sam Goldstein, PhD, and Robert Brooks, PhD, 2005

*Raising a Self-Disciplined Child: Help Your Child Become More Responsible, Confident, and Resilient*, by Robert Brooks, PhD, and Sam Goldstein, PhD, 2007
Ten Facets of Resilience

1. The Ability to Self-calm

2. The Ability to Self-replenish

3. Exercise and Self-care

4. Hardiness

5. Sense of Coherence

6. Sense of Hope

7. Optimism

8. Non-judgmental / Self-supporting
   (Lack of Perfectionism)

9. Emotional Expressiveness

10. Social Support