

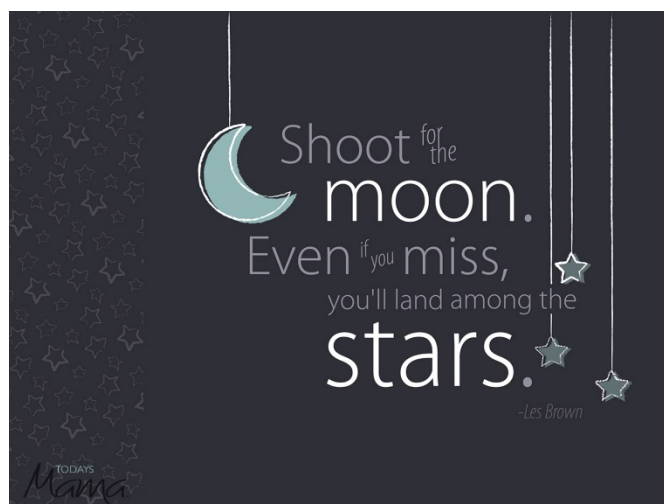


What is resilience?

Resilience is the ability to cope when things go wrong. It is how we adapt when we face challenges in life.

When we talk about children's resilience, it is how they cope with daily challenges for example moving home, changing schools, friendship issues, dealing with a death of a loved one. Building resilience helps children not only deal with current difficulties that are part of everyday life but also to develop the skills and habits that will help them deal with challenges in their adult life.

Resilience is very important when it comes to children's mental health. Children with greater resilience manage dealing with life's stress and anxiety. Not coping with stress on a regular basis can lead to mental health conditions.



How can I build resilience in my child?

You can help build your child's resilience by providing opportunities to develop their skills, habits, and attitudes. These can include coping skills, positive thinking, and self-confidence.

- Let children experience their emotions, help your child by acknowledging how they feel and help them to label their emotions as often young children struggle with this.
- Help your child by developing strategies when difficult situations arise and help them come up with their own ideas too.
- When your child experiences a difficult experience, ask them how you can support them.
- Although it can be difficult for parents it is important to let, your child experience failure rather than protect them from it. When children experience this you can help put things into perspective and teach them how to "bounce back."
- If your child talks negatively, get them to rephrase it in a positive way, for example, "I can't do maths it's too difficult," get them to say instead "maths might be difficult for me but I can always do my best and ask for help."
- Try to be a good role model yourself, being positive and calm around your child and solving problems in a rational way.
- Encourage your child to talk freely about any difficult times with you and make clear that you are always there to listen and support them when needed.
- You could look at famous people or people you know and discuss how they have overcome difficult situations.
- Role play different scenarios and have discussions on how they would deal with each situation.

- Have positive conversations asking each other “what was the best thing that happened to you today?” or “What was something that didn’t go as well today and how can you move forward from this?”
- Allow risk taking which is age appropriate and have a “have a go” attitude.
- Encourage healthy exercise and activities.
- Do things together as a family, which you all enjoy, maybe even help people in your community by getting your child to help a neighbour or relative as this builds positive relationships.
- Build family routines for example, eating, sleeping, family activities, and rituals. Routines help things flow more smoothly for example having a clear routine before school each morning.

Activities to help build resilience with your child

- Create a mood/dream board with all of your child’s dreams and goals in life. Get creative by allowing them to print out, draw, or paint pictures of their dreams and aspirations in life.
- Encourage your child to interview neighbours, relatives, friends who have worked hard to achieve a goal and how they managed it.
- As above, encourage your child to research a famous person who has managed to succeed after previously failing e.g. JK Rowling.
- Read books together, which has a thread of perseverance running through it. E.g. Ada Twist by Andrea Beaty and David Roberts, The Dot by Peter H. Reynolds.
- Write a gratitude diary...every day for one-week write 3 things, which you are grateful for every evening. Get the whole family involved and discuss each other gratitude.

- Write a laughter diary... every day for one-week write 3 things, which made you laugh.
- Work on breathing exercises together; in the morning to focus yourself for the day ahead or in the evening to wind down before bedtime. [Deep Breathing Exercises for Kids — Coping Skills for Kids](#)

For more ideas on building resilience have a look at the websites below:

[Fun Games for Building Resilience in Children \(tomsofmaine.com\)](http://tomsofmaine.com)

[Building Resilience in Children - 20 Practical, Powerful Strategies \(Backed by Science\) - Hey Sigmund](#)

[Resilience Activities - 9 Resilience Building Activities for Parents to do with Kids \(bouncebackparenting.com\)](http://bouncebackparenting.com)

[KAN-Emotional-resilience-toolkit.pdf \(hbtg.org.uk\)](http://hbtg.org.uk)