



WHAT IS RESILIENCE?

Resilience is the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats or significant sources of stress—such as family and relationship problems, serious health problems, or workplace and financial stressors. It is the ability to not only successfully overcome serious challenges, but to grow from the experiences.

The foundation of resilience is a combination of supportive relationships, adaptive skill-building, and positive experiences. Focusing on four core components—connection, wellness, healthy thinking and meaning—can empower a person to withstand and learn from difficult and traumatic experiences. Adults who strengthen these skills in themselves can better model healthy behaviors for their children, thereby improving the resilience of the next generation.

WHY IS RESILIENCE IMPORTANT?

Every person at some point in the life will experience everyday challenges, difficult circumstances or a traumatic event, like the death of a loved one, a life-altering accident or a serious illness. While experiencing adverse events is painful and difficult, they do not have to determine the outcome of your life. Becoming more resilient not only helps you get through difficult circumstances; it empowers you to grow and even improve your life along the way.

Over time, people's life experiences and the coping skills they have gained help equip them with the tools to address future challenges. Because of this, kids who build resilience early in life have a better chance of achieving positive health and development outcomes even when faced with a heavy load of negative factors and challenges.

MYTH VERSUS REALITY

Some people think that being resilient requires having to face extreme hardships. Others think that if someone is resilient, they never experience stress or difficulty. But that is not the case. Resilience can be developed from both positive and negative experiences, and someone who is resilient can still struggle with mental and emotional challenges.

It is never too late to build resilience. It takes time and intentionality. Age-appropriate, health-promoting activities can significantly improve the odds that an individual will recover from stress-inducing experiences. For example, regular physical exercise, stress-reduction practices and programs that actively build social, emotional and self-regulation skills—**the ability to calm yourself down when you're upset and cheer yourself up when you're down**—can improve the abilities of children and adults to cope with, adapt to and even prevent adversity in their lives.

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