

SUPPORTING CHILDREN WITH BECOMING MORE RESILIENT

Children who may have had adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) or who may have experienced trauma may be more likely to experience a range of extreme emotions because their window of tolerance is often smaller due to their lived experiences.

Unfortunately, we can never remove these experiences from the children's lives. We can, however, create supportive environments for these children and help them to understand and manage their emotions and hence their behaviour.

An integral part of this is supporting children to become more resilient. Resilience is the ability to adapt well when faced with adversity or stress and to be able to "bounce-back" from it. Trauma-experienced children are much more sensitive to potential sources of stress and danger.

The government paper: Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools (2018) states that

"Schools are in a unique position, as they are able to help prevent mental health problems by promoting resilience as part of an integrated, whole school approach that is tailored to the needs of their pupils"

This Paper also indicates some of the protective factors that can help build children's resilience:

In the Child

- Secure attachment experience
- Outgoing temperament as an infant
- Good communication skills and sociability
- Being a planner and having a belief in control
- Humour
- A positive attitude
- Experiences of success and achievement
- Faith or spirituality
- Capacity to reflect

In School/Education Setting

- Clear policies on behaviour and bullying
- Staff behaviour policy (also known as code of conduct)
- 'Open door' policy for children to raise problems
- A whole school approach to promoting good mental health
- Good pupil to teacher/school staff relationships
- Positive classroom management
- A sense of belonging
- Positive peer influences
- Positive friendships
- Effective safeguarding and child protection policies
- An effective early help process
- Understand their role in and be part of effective multi-agency working
- Appropriate procedures to ensure staff are confident to raise concerns about policies and processes, and know they will be dealt with fairly and effectively



The Children's Society promote the following techniques to build mental resilience:

- Try and be positive, think of the benefits and learning experiences of difficult situations and events
- Remember your strengths. When you are going through difficult times, remember times when you have overcome challenges previously
- Remind yourself that you always have a choice. You have a choice whether to let a situation overcome you or whether you have the strength to fight it. Knowing you have a choice and power in any situation
- Don't hold grudges or focus on negatives. Holding grudges will only affect you and it will increase your negative thoughts
- Take a step back. When you are in a difficult situation, ask how you will feel about it in a week, in a month, in a year etc. It helps create some perspective

[https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/information/young-people/well-being/resources/mental-resilience\)](https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/information/young-people/well-being/resources/mental-resilience)

Boingboing

Boingboing have produced some excellent resources including:

- Ready, Set, Resilience. This is a workbook and supporting guidance created to support young people's resilience aimed at year 9 students. It uses mixture of activities which support individual resilience (beating the odds) and activities to support changing the odds.
- The Boingboing Resilience Framework. This is a handy table that summarises 'what works' when supporting children and young people's resilience according to the Resilience Research base.
- A resilience toolkit. Written by young people, for young people.

Plus much more. Please visit the website to access these resources

<https://www.boingboing.org.uk/resources/resilience-resources-for-schools/>



FURTHER RESOURCES

Mentally Healthy Schools <https://mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk/getting-started/social-and-emotional-skills/what-is-resilience/>

Newport Resilience Toolkit <https://www.newportacademy.com/wp-content/uploads/NewportResilienceToolkit.pdf>

Family Lives <https://www.familylives.org.uk/advice/your-family/wellbeing/building-resilience-in-children-and-teens>

Worth It <https://www.worthit.org.uk/blog/building-resilience-young-people>

Young Minds <https://www.youngminds.org.uk/professional/find-a-course/building-resilience/>

Mental Health UK <https://mentalhealth-uk.org/partnerships/projects/your-resilience/>

