

# EXPECT SUCCESS



## 10 TIPS FOR BUILDING RESILIENCE IN YOUR CHILD

Our natural instinct as parents is to protect our children from the hardships of life, whether it be loss of friendships, failing a test, or losing a big game, yet we know avoiding the disappointing times in life is not possible. Instead of avoiding challenge, we can teach kids to cope positively, to learn and grow from adversity. According to decades of research, **the biggest influence on resilience is something within our control — the way we think.** Below are tips from the American Psychological Association at <http://www.apa.org/helpcenter/resilience.aspx>.



1. **MAKE CONNECTIONS** Teach your child how to make friends, including the skill of empathy, or feeling another's pain. Encourage your child to be a friend in order to get friends. Build a strong family network to support your child through his or her inevitable disappointments and hurts. Connecting with people provides social support and strengthens resilience.
2. **HELP YOUR CHILD BY HAVING HIM OR HER HELP OTHERS** Children who may feel helpless can be empowered by helping others. Engage your child in age-appropriate volunteer work, or ask for assistance yourself with some task that he or she can master.
3. **MAINTAIN A DAILY ROUTINE** Sticking to a routine can be comforting to children, especially younger children who crave structure in their lives. Encourage your child to develop his or her own routines.
4. **TAKE A BREAK** While it is important to stick to routines, endlessly worrying can be counter-productive. Teach your child how to focus on something besides what's worrying him. Be aware of what your child is exposed to that can be troubling, whether it be news, the Internet or overheard conversations, and make sure your child takes a break from those things if they trouble her.
5. **TEACH YOUR CHILD SELF-CARE** Make yourself a good example, and teach your child the importance of making time to eat properly, exercise and rest. Make sure your child has time to have fun, and make sure that your child hasn't scheduled every moment of his or her life with no "down time" to relax.
6. **MOVE TOWARD YOUR GOALS** Teach your child to set reasonable goals and then to move toward them one step at a time. Moving toward that goal — even if it's a tiny step — and receiving praise for doing so will focus your child on what he or she has accomplished rather than on what hasn't been accomplished, and can help build the resilience to move forward in the face of challenges.
7. **NURTURE A POSITIVE SELF-VIEW** Help your child remember ways that he or she has successfully handled hardships in the past and then help him understand that these past challenges help him build the strength to handle future challenges. Help your child learn to trust himself to solve problems and make appropriate decisions. Teach your child to see the humor in life, and the ability to laugh at one's self.
8. **KEEP THINGS IN PERSPECTIVE AND MAINTAIN A HOPEFUL OUTLOOK** Even when your child is facing very painful events, help him look at the situation in a broader context and keep a long-term perspective. Although your child may be too young to consider a long-term look on his own, help him or her see that there is a future beyond the current situation and that the future can be good. An optimistic and positive outlook enables your child to see the good things in life and keep going even in the hardest times.
9. **LOOK FOR OPPORTUNITIES FOR SELF-DISCOVERY** Tough times are often the times when children learn the most about themselves. Help your child take a look at how whatever he is facing can teach him "what he is made of."
10. **ACCEPT THAT CHANGE IS PART OF LIVING** Change often can be scary for children and teens. Help your child see that change is part of life and new goals can replace goals that have become unattainable.