

Parenting in a Pandemic: *Keeping Calm at Home and Building Resilience*

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**“CHILDREN
LEARN MORE
FROM WHAT
YOU ARE THAN
WHAT YOU
TEACH.”**

—W.E.B. DuBois

ADDRESSING OUR KIDS CONCERNS:

Children rely on their parents/guardians for *safety*,
both *physical* and *emotional*.

NOT EVERYTHING IS CANCELLED

sunshine is not cancelled
spring is not cancelled
love is not cancelled
relationships are not cancelled
reading is not cancelled
naps are not cancelled
devotion is not cancelled
music is not cancelled
dancing is not cancelled
imagination is not cancelled
kindness is not cancelled
conversations are not cancelled
hope is not cancelled



#keeplookingup
SimpleStencils.com



Practical Strategies to Help Children Build Resilience



Building Resilience

“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.”



Practical Strategies to Help Children Build Resilience



Problem solving

Build a Strong Emotional Connection

Promote Healthy Risk-Taking

Resist the Urge to Fix It and Ask Questions Instead

Teach Problem-Solving Skills

Label Emotions

Demonstrate Coping Skills

Embrace Mistakes—Theirs and Yours

Promote the Bright Side—Every Experience Has One

Model Resiliency

Go Outside

Build a Strong Emotional
Connection



Plan for Special Time

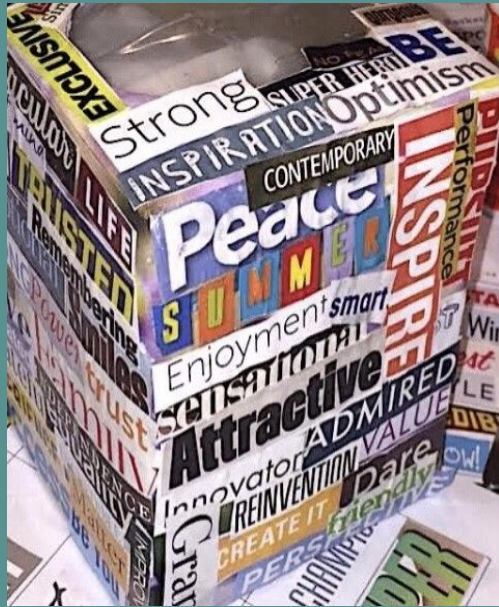
- Even with everyone home together 24/7, set aside some *special time* with each child.
- Ideas can include *cooking* or *reading* together, playing a favorite *game*.
- You choose the time, and let your child choose the activity!
- Can be 10 or 20 minutes of your undivided attention, even if it's only once a week, it will mean a lot to your child.
- Try and keep cell phones off or on silent so you don't get distracted.

Creative Ideas for Special Time Together

Please visit our “Distance Learning Website” for more ideas like the ones below:

<https://sites.google.com/mcpsmd.net/sfes-counseling-webpage/home>

“Wish for you “Tissue Box”



Gratitude Scavenger Hunt



Calming Bottles



Promote Healthy Risk-Taking

It is important to encourage kids to take risks!

A *healthy* risk is something that pushes a child to go outside of their comfort zone, but results in very little harm if they are unsuccessful.

Ex's: trying a new sport, participating in the play, or starting a conversation.
→ When children avoid risk, they internalize the message that they *aren't strong enough* to handle challenges. When children embrace risks, they learn to push themselves.

Resist the Urge to Fix It and Ask Questions Instead

When children come to parents to solve their problems, the *natural* response is to *lecture or explain*.

→ A better strategy is to ask questions. ←

By bouncing the problem back to the child with questions, the parent helps the child think through the issue and come up with solutions.

Teach Problem-Solving Skills

The goal is not to promote rugged self-reliance. We all need help sometimes, and it's important for children to know they have help.

By *brainstorming solutions* with kids, parents engage in the *process of solving problems*.

Encourage children to come up with a *list of ideas* and weigh the pros and cons of each one.

Label Emotions

When stress kicks in, emotions run hot!

Teach your kids that *all* feelings are important and that labeling their feelings can help them make sense of what they're experiencing.

→ Tell them it's *okay* to feel anxious, sad, jealous, etc. and reassure them that bad feelings usually pass.

Demonstrate Coping Skills

Deep breathing exercises help children *relax* and *calm* themselves when they experience stress or frustration.

This enables them to remain calm and process the situation clearly.

Show your kids how YOU practice Self-Care!

Exercise, sleep, nature walk, journaling, pick up a hobby, read, listen to music, GIVE YOURSELF A TIME -OUT to “Chill Out!”

Embrace Mistakes—Theirs and Yours

Failure avoiders lack resilience. In fact, failure avoiders tend to be highly anxious children.

When parents focus on end-results, children get caught up in the pass/fail cycle. They either succeed or they don't. This causes risk avoidance.

Embracing mistakes (your own included) helps promote a growth mindset and gives kids the message that *mistakes help them learn*. It can be helpful to talk about a mistake you made and how you recovered from it.

Promote the Bright Side—
Every Experience Has One

Optimism and resilience go hand in hand!

Some kids may appear more naturally optimistic than other, but *optimism can be nurtured.*

→ If you have a “mini pessimist” on your hands, acknowledge the feelings that lead to pessimistic thinking and teach your child to *reframe his thoughts to find the positive.*

Model Resiliency

The best way to teach resilience is to *model it!*

We all encounter stressful situations.

Use coping and calming strategies. Always label your emotions and talk through your problem-solving process.

Go Outside

Exercise helps strengthen the brain and make it more resilient to stress and adversity.

All children really need is time spent outdoors engaging in a physical activity!

Encourage them or introduce them to something like bicycling, collecting rocks, or even just taking a walk for a game of “I Spy”.

These are just a few ways for children to engage in free play that also builds resilience.

Knowledge Check



Question

How do you build resilience?

- a. Supportive relationships with trusted adults who are resilient themselves.
- b. Supporting children to engage in physical exercise, healthy diet, hobbies and interests.
- c. Supporting children to take managed risks and develop problem solving skills.
- d. All of the above.

Check your answer

REMEMBER :

You can also reach out to your pediatrician with any concerns you may have about your child's behavioral or emotional well-being and managing your family's stress.

More information

- [Tips for Coping with a New Baby During COVID-19](#)
- [How to Help Children Build Resilience in Uncertain Times](#)
- [Building Resilience](#)
- [Mood Boosting Tips for Families During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)
- [Mental Health During COVID-19: Signs Your Child or Teen May Need More Support](#)
- [What's the Best Way to Discipline My Child?](#)
- [Feeling Overwhelmed with Parenting Demands?](#)

Links for Families

Distance Learning Website

<https://sites.google.com/mcpsmd.net/sfes-counseling-webpage/home>

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Remember We're All Trying Our Best... We've Got This!

When kids meltdown over the holidays

It does not mean

- They are a bad child.
- You are a bad parent.
- They are trying to ruin your fun
- They are trying to embarrass you.
- You need to fix their feelings.
- You need to jump to their demands.
- They need to learn a lesson.
- They are defiant and refuse to listen.
- They hate you.

It may mean

- They need a break.
- They are overwhelmed.
- They need connection with you.
- They are struggling with a sensory.
- They need you to be their calm.
- They are seeking a quiet, calm space.
- They are tired, hungry, or bored.
- You are their safe space.
- They are still figuring out how to navigate their big feelings.



DISCUSSION and QUESTIONS

