

LADC Behavior Handout



**Life is not
about
how fast
you run,
or how
high you
climb,
but how
well you
bounce!**

Resilience

Resilience is the ability to handle challenges that life presents and the ability to bounce back from those hard times. Resilience is something that you build and acquire over time, through life experiences. Resilience is important as it is linked to more success in school/life, and the ability to build more positive relationships. There are many components or skills that children need to build resilience. One of the most important components to helping your child foster resilience is to first build a strong, caring relationship with your child so that they feel supported to learn new skills. Children feel safe and secure when they have a strong relationship with at least one adult. They learn that their needs will be met, which gives them confidence to explore the world. Some common ways to build positive strong relationships with your child are: giving attention and affection, providing positive reinforcement, playing with your child, comforting your child when hurt, listening to your child with interest, showing empathy, and helping your child identify and express emotions.

Children often look to their parents as role models to build resilience. What can your children learn from you? When you model listening and understanding, you are modeling to your child how to understand others. When you model staying calm, you are teaching your child how to handle stressful situations and keep calm themselves. When you model patience, you are teaching your child to wait and develop patience. When you model stopping and problem solving, you are teaching your child to stop and think and become a flexible thinker. When you model positive thinking and attitude, you are teaching your child to recognize the positives in life and be hopeful. When parents model making mistakes, children learn that mistakes are okay, and it is good to try new things. When you model perseverance when things are hard, you are teaching your child to keep trying until you achieve your goal. Be mindful that your children are always watching you so model the behavior you want them to learn.

Other Components of Resilience

Build Positive Thinking

The way we think impacts the way we feel and behave in situations. Therefore, one way to build resiliency is to teach children how to change their thoughts to positive alternatives. One way to begin helping your child with positive thinking is to first get them to express their feelings or thoughts. You could ask questions like “What are you saying to yourself inside your head?” or “What is your head telling you?” When your child uses words like always or never, try to help them come up with situations that contradict that. For example, if your child says, “Billy always gets the snack first,” try to help your child think of a time when Billy didn’t get the snack first. Try to help your child challenge the all-or-nothing thinking by showing them that just because one bad thing happened in the day, didn’t mean that there weren’t any good things.

Practice pointing out good things that are happening and give attention to those things. For example, if your child always comes up to you to tattle when a sibling is doing something wrong, being mean, not sharing, or is not following a rule, change the focus of your attention to when things are going well between your children. Teach your child to notice when their sibling IS sharing with them and have them come tell you about it. When their sister is following the rules, teach your child to notice and point that out. If you provide lots of attention for them noticing positive things, you will help them shift their mindset. Additionally, you will want to role model to your child when you notice positive things in life. You could say things like, “Wasn’t it good when...” or “Even though... we still got to....” Try to build this into your family routine so that it becomes a habit.

Also, practice helping your children learn the concept of gratitude and being thankful for the small things in life. Again, the more you model these types of thoughts, the more likely your child will adopt them. And finally, finding ways to laugh everyday helps children to develop positive perspectives or moods.

The following are books that teach about positive outlooks:

- How Full is Your Bucket? (Reckmeyer & Rath)
- Mr. Mangolia (Blake, Q.)
- It’s Mine! (Lionni, L)
- Just Because I Am (Payne, L.M.)
- What If? (Thomas, F.)
- A Good Day (Henkes, K.)
- Something Beautiful (Dennis Wyeth, S.)
- One Gorgeous Baby (Osborne, M.)

Continue on to Learn More
about Resilience

Resilience Strategies Continued

Perseverance

An important skill to teach your child is how to keep trying even when things become hard. One way to provide many opportunities for your child to develop this skill is to avoid quick fixes. Let your child struggle in situations before offering help. Provide them with slightly more difficult tasks than what they are used to. Additionally, when you provide reinforcement, praise them for when they keep trying hard, rather than praising them for getting it right. Focus the attention on their effort. Things you can say to your child: "I see you're trying; I bet you'll get it soon"; "You figured it out!"; "I bet we can learn something from this mistake – what do you think?"; "It may be hard, but let's see if you can do it."

The following are books that teach about perseverance:

- The Very Busy Spider (Carle, E.)
- Little One Step (James, S.)
- Kitten's First Full Moon (Henkes, K.)
- Tom and Pippo and the Bicycle (Oxenbury, H.)
- Flap Your Wings and Try (Pomerantz, C.)
- The Great Big Enormous Turnip (Tolstoy, A.)
- I Can Build a House (Watanabe, S.)
- Bunny Cakes (Wells, R.)
- Good Job, Little Bear (Waddell, M.)

Self-Confidence

Another important part of resilience in children is to focus on building your child's self-confidence. In order for your child to be successful, you need to provide them with many opportunities to be able to try new things and succeed. Let your child be independent on as many things as possible. Make sure to always provide lots of praise when your child works hard on new skills. Tell them what they are good at! Offering choices also helps them to build self-confidence.

Another way to increase your child's self-confidence is to encourage them to help others in the family. When children feel needed or helpful, their self-esteem and confidence will increase. Ask your child, "What can we do today to help others?" Can your child help with another sibling or can they help with a chore in the house? Make sure to provide them with tasks that you know they will be successful at, but still provide a slight challenge.

The following are books that teach about self-confidence:

- I Like Me! (Carlson, N.)
- I'm Gonna Like Me: Letting Off a Little Self-Esteem (Curtis, J.L.)
- I Can Handle It (Wright, L.)

Which Aspect of Resilience Do You Plan to Focus on in Your Home This Month?

What is the Difference Between an Obstacle and an Opportunity? Our Attitude Toward It. Every Opportunity Has a Difficulty, and Every Difficulty Has an Opportunity.

- J. Sidlow Baxter