



Resilience in the early years

How to promote resilience in younger children.



Understanding and Promoting Resilience in the Early Years

Useful definitions...

- “Positive development despite adversity” (Luthar, 2003)
- “The ability to withstand and rebound from disruptive life challenges, strengthened and more resourceful” (Walsh, 2008)
- “Resilience involves a range of processes” (Rutter, 1999)
- “Ordinary Magic” (Masten, 2001)
- “Beating the odds whilst also changing the odds” (Hart and Gagnon, 2014)

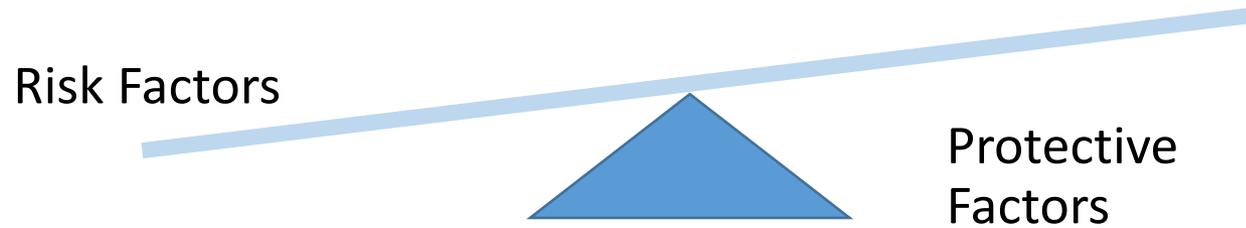


Evidence from Early Years Research

- Adult/child interactions showing warm relationships and ‘sustained shared thinking’
- Encourage children to do things for themselves –supporting them to find their own solutions to conflicts, involve them in decision-making
- Imaginative play with an adult, or other children helps, language development and agency
- Practice self-regulation (stronger predictor of academic success than early reading)
- Ensuring children do not feel ignored or socially excluded – exclusion feels like physical pain
- Listening to parents and involving them not just information sharing
- Noticing and communicating small achievements of children, acknowledging and addressing anxieties of parents

- (DFE, 2017; BERA-TACTYC, 2017; TES, 2018; Smith, 2001; Whitebread, 2019)

Mitigating risks and protective factors





What we know about Early Years Education

- Home learning and support for parents are very important.
- Where settings view educational and social development as complementary and equal in importance, children make better all round progress

(EPPE, 2004; DFE, 2017)

The Resilience Framework

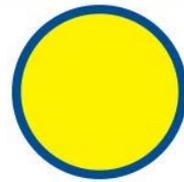
Resilience Framework (Adults) – Copyright Hart, Blincow & Cameron (adapted from original) www.boingboing.org.uk					
	BASICS	BELONGING	LEARNING	COPING	CORE SELF
SPECIFIC APPROACHES	Good enough housing	Find somewhere to belong	Make work & learning as successful as possible	Understanding boundaries and keeping within them	Instil a sense of hope
	Enough money to live	Help understand place in the world, & that others may face similar situations		Engage mentors	
		Tap into good influences (eg peer support)	Identifying & solving problems (reduce self blame and guilt)		Promote understanding of others
	Being safe	Keep relationships going (eg educator /support partners/carers/family)	Map out career or life plan		
	Access & transport	The more healthy relationships the better		Help self-organisation	Fostering their interests
		Take what you can from relationships where there is some hope	Calming down & self-soothing (support reflection, not feeling overwhelmed by illness)		Help the person take responsibility for her/himself (self-advocacy)
	Healthy diet	Get together people the person can count on	Highlight achievements	Remember tomorrow is another day	
	Exercise and fresh air	Responsibilities & obligations		Develop life skills	Lean on others when necessary
		Enough sleep	Focus on good times and places		Have a laugh
	Leisure & work occupations	Make sense of where the person has come from			
		Predict a good experience of someone or something new			
	Make friends and mix				
NOBLE TRUTHS					
	ACCEPTING	CONSERVING	COMMITMENT	ENLISTING	

Parental/carer Resilience

- **Is their child safe?** – how do you communicate this?
- **Exercise** – parents to run sessions for each other – communicates the benefits to the child
- **Financial help** - signposted information, connection to local businesses
- **Belonging** – reception, personal invites -asking if someone is ok, opportunities to meet others
- **Learning**- involving children makes it easier for parents to attend, introduce them to the Framework
- **Coping** – tips sent home for things to do to practice coping
- **Core Self** – reinforce their identity as good enough parents

BEHAVIOR IS

COMMUNICATION



crying
talking back

BEHAVIOR WE SEE

inattention isolation
tantrum yelling aggression

overstimulated sleep executive function

self-esteem attachment

WHAT WE DON'T SEE

change power attention fear safety

social skills hunger

misunderstanding

Individual Activities - Basics

- **Feeling Safe**- collect pictures of places or things where children feel safe. Map out where children feel comfortable in the school, transitional objects.
- (allow parents or carers to stay until the children are settled)
- **Safe corner** – pupils design a safe area of the room to go to when things get tough
 - **Exercise** – daily mile, out of class disco, wake and shake
 - **Healthy food** – talk about it as a treat – ‘you can have a grape if you sit nicely’ etc.

Individual Activities - Belonging

- **Belonging** –celebrate different identities/families, find out where children feel they belong.
- **Taking responsibility**– collect parts of a picture every time a task is achieved until the picture is complete
- **Relationship** – explore positive relationship traits through drama, stories or dance
- **Conflict** – social stories to learn how to deal with conflict or flow charts
- Opportunities to **help each other** – eg mental first aid monitors with a box at break time

Individual Activities - Coping

- **Understanding-** have 'Dr Brain' teach them about the link between emotion and behaviours. (Then they will understand those who have difficulty regulating) Explain it is normal to feel sad sometimes.
- **Worries** - untangling worries from a ball of long and short string and seeing how big the worry is. Create a worry tree to hand worries onto.
- **Vocabulary** – teach children a range of different words and symbols to express themselves
- Help children to learn to **problem solve** solutions. Act it out to show there are choices and consequences
- **Rose tinted glasses** – children make positivity glasses which they can put on to look at a situation differently
- **Squiggles** – child draws and laminates squiggles to represent difficult feelings. Can show to teacher
- **Music** – explain how music can help with mood –even sad music

Individual Activities – Learning and Core Self

- **Learning** – Highlighting a range of achievements that children value. Create bunting to show class talents. Teach each other a new skill.
- **How does it feel?** Children act out the physical sensations when work is challenging and act out overcoming the feelings
- **Instilling a sense of hope** – Use hopeful language with parents and children, emphasise resources they have to cope in the future when they experience adversity. Be aware they may be picking up negative adult talk about the news.
- **Gratitude** – provide opportunities to show gratitude
- **Values** – provide opportunities to share their/their families positive values and validate them

RESILIENCE FRAMEWORK

Basics

- Good Housing
- Money to live
- Being safe
- Transport and getting to places
- Healthy diet
- Exercise and fresh air
- Enough sleep
- Play and hobbies
- Not being judged

Belonging

- Find somewhere you feel like you belong
- Find your place in the world
- Spend time with good people and in good places
- Keep relationships going
- More healthy relationships the better
- Take what you can from relationships where there is some hope
- Get together with people you can rely on
- Responsibilities & obligations. For example: looking after your brother/sister or going to school
- Focus on good times and places
- Understand what has happened in your life
- Predict a good experience of someone or something new
- Make friends and mix with other people

Learning

- Make school or college work as well as possible
- Engage mentors
- Plan out your future
- Organise yourself
- Highlight achievements
- Develop life skills

Coping

- Understand right from wrong
- Be brave
- Solving problems
- Focus on the good things in life. Put on your Positivity Glasses!
- Find time for your interests
- Calming down and making yourself feel better
- Remember tomorrow is another day
- Lean on others when necessary
- Have a laugh

Core self

- Instill a sense of hope
- Understand other people's feelings
- Know and understand yourself
- Take responsibility for yourself
- Find time for your talents
- There is existing help and solutions for problems, use them

Noble truths

- Accepting
- Conserving
- Commitment
- Enlisting

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