

# Resilience: A Parent's Starter Guide

**RESILIENCE** is the ability to recover or “bounce back” from difficult and stressful situations. Without resilience children are at risk for poor outcomes in cognitive, emotional, physical, and social domains.

## HOW DO WE BUILD UP RESILIENCE?

### Establish Structure

It is important for children to know what to expect and what is expected of them. Not knowing what to expect often creates stress or anxious feelings for children.

When children know what to expect they feel safe and can thrive.



### Establish Routines

Meal Times  
Bed Time  
Homework Time  
Hygiene  
Family traditions like:  
Game night  
After dinner walk

### Make Clear & Consistent Rules

Involve your child in the process of creating rules. Make time to sit down together to write rules that reflect your values and expectations; include rewards and consequences. The more consistent you follow through with rewards or consequences, the faster your child will learn these rules. Review and revise the rules as your children grow up.

**Pro Tip:** Earned rewards (like points or stars) should not be taken away for breaking other rules.

No Hitting or Kicking	5 minutes time out. Lose screens for 1 day.
Make bed before school	Earn 1 star per day
No phones at dinner table	
Turn off TV during homework	
30 minutes of reading every day	Earn 2 stars per day.

### Develop Close, Warm Relationships

When children feel stressed it is important for them to have trusted and caring people to rely on. You can help your child overcome daily stresses by talking about emotions, showing self-control, modeling problem solving, and using communication skills.

#### Talk About Emotions

- ◆ Use “I statements” and help your child use them as well. “I feel frustrated when accidents happen”
- ◆ Help your child label their own emotions. Being able to recognize and label emotions helps children regulate emotions and their behavior.
- ◆ Point out emotions in the characters of the movies and books you read. How do they express out their emotions? What do they do with their emotions?

#### Practice Self Control

- ◆ After labeling your child’s emotions, help them find ways of appropriately expressing their feelings.  
“When I get frustrated I take a deep breath”
- ◆ Model the responses you want to see in your child. Show them how you handle angry, happy, and sad situations.  
“Let’s practice our slow, deep breath”
- ◆ Play games that support self-control like musical chairs, red light/green light, freeze tag, and Simon Says

#### Practice Problem Solving

- ◆ Model problem solving in everyday situations.
- ◆ Play games that support problem solving like puzzles, crossword puzzles, alphabet game, Brain Blast, Dots and Boxes.
- ◆ Guide your child and help them identify their own solutions to a problem. Ask them what they think might work to address the problem they are bringing to you before “fixing” it yourself.

#### Use Communication Skills

- ◆ Model the vocabulary and language you want your child to use.
- ◆ Talk to your child every day and express interest in their life.
- ◆ Read together. As your child gets older allow them to read to you.
- ◆ Play games together.



## Some Resources

Meet with one of the HPC Behaviorists to come up with individualized plans.  
It's easy, just ask your child's primary care provider for a referral.

Younger

PBS Parents -- Interactive games and ideas for activities away from the computer for children ages 2 through 8 years.  
[pbs.org/parents](http://pbs.org/parents)

Sesame Street in Communities – Hundreds of multi-media tools to help enrich and expand your child's knowledge during the early years of birth through 6 years, a critical window for brain development. English and Spanish.  
[sesamestreetincommunities.org](http://sesamestreetincommunities.org)

Too Small to Fail — Ideas to make small moments big by creating opportunities for meaningful interactions anytime, and anywhere. English and Spanish.  
[toosmall.org](http://toosmall.org)

[www.schkidules.com](http://www.schkidules.com) – you can purchase supplies for visual schedules, or find inspiration to make your own.

Reading Rockets is a free resource to help teach young readers how to read and encourage the love of reading  
[www.readingrockets.org](http://www.readingrockets.org)

The Gottman Institute's mission is to build relationships with research based approaches. They offer help for parents as well as couples. Check out their approach to Emotions Coaching.  
[www.gottman.com/blog/category/parenting-emotion-coaching/](http://www.gottman.com/blog/category/parenting-emotion-coaching/)

StoryCorps' mission is to preserve and share stories in order to build connections between people and create a more just and compassionate world. Download the free app to record a meaningful conversation.  
[storycops.org](http://storycops.org)

Older

APA Parenting – American Psychological Association has reading material to help guide difficult conversations with your children.

[www.apa.org/topics/parenting/index](http://www.apa.org/topics/parenting/index)

[www.apa.org/helpcenter/road-resilience](http://www.apa.org/helpcenter/road-resilience)

### Books to Read with Your Young Child\*:

"Listening to My Body: a guide to helping kids understand the connection between sensations (what the heck are those?) and feelings so that they can get better at figuring out what they need" by Gabi Garcia

"The Way I Act" by Steve Metzger

"The Way I Feel" by Janan Cain

"In My Heart: A Book of Feelings" by Jo Witek

"Calm Down Time (Toddler Tools)" by Elizabeth Verdick

"Maybe Something Beautiful: How Art Transformed a Neighborhood" by Isabel Campoy and Theresa Howell

"Quizás Algo Hermoso: Cómo el Arte Transformó un Barrio" by Isabel Campoy and Theresa Howell

### Books for Parents\*:

"Parenting from the Inside Out" By Dan Siegel

"The Whole Brain Child" By Dan Siegel

"1-2-3-Magic" by Thomas W. Phelan, PhD A positive-parenting approach to discipline for ages 2 through 12 years. There are books and DVDs.

"The Incredible Years: A Trouble Shooting Guide for Parents of Children Aged 3-8" by Carolyn Webster-Stratton, PhD

### Apps

**Breath, Think Do with Sesame** — This free, bilingual (English and Spanish), research-based app helps your child learn Sesame Street's "Breathe, Think, Do" strategy for problem-solving.

**Breathing Bubbles** — This free emotional-regulation app helps kids focus on releasing a worry or receiving a joy.

**Smiling Mind** — This free daily mindfulness and meditation guide is great for older children to adults.

#### Directions for Deep Breathing

1. Sit up straight or lie down.
2. Inhale through the nose for 4 seconds. The goal is to mostly fill your lungs (about 75% capacity).
3. Pause. Hold the air in your lungs for 4 seconds.
4. Exhale slowly, about 6 seconds.
5. Repeat.

\*Explore the Library for most of these titles.

If you have other tips that have worked for your family, please tell us so we can share with others!