



# Building Resilience in Children and Young People: A Parent Guide

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# Understanding resilience



# Building resilience: Purpose and context for parents

- Resilience is the ability to cope, adapt, and recover from challenges, not avoiding stress altogether.
- Parents strengthen resilience by providing emotional support and encouraging manageable challenges.
- Resilience strategies should consider each child's temperament, age, level of SEN and developmental stage.
- Small, consistent parenting actions can build lasting resilience over time in everyday family life.



# What is resilience and how does it develop?



- Resilience is a dynamic process shaped by interactions between children and their environment, not a fixed trait.
- Key elements include emotional regulation, problem-solving skills, competence, and supportive relationships.
- Adolescence is crucial for resilience development; balanced adult support helps manage emotional challenges.
- Appropriate challenges with emotional support foster resilience, avoiding overprotection or overwhelming pressure.

# Why resilience matters in the secondary school years

- Secondary school years involve complex academic, social, and identity challenges that require resilience to navigate effectively.
- Resilience helps young people manage stress and recover from setbacks like poor grades and social difficulties.
- Parents help build resilience by framing setbacks as learning opportunities, supporting a stable self-worth.
- Resilience fosters academic engagement, wellbeing, healthy relationships, and better handling of adolescent pressures.



# How parents can build resilience



# Protective factors that strengthen resilience

- Stable, caring adult relationships provide emotional safety, enabling children to confidently face challenges.
- Consistent routines and clear boundaries create safety and structure, helping children manage stress effectively.
- Allowing children to experience small successes and safe failures builds competence and essential coping skills.
- Encouraging language and calm adult behaviour teach children resilience and healthy stress management.



# Practical parenting strategies that build coping skills



- Acknowledging children's feelings helps them feel understood and calm enough to think clearly.
- Praising persistence and problem-solving promotes growth mindset and reduces fear of failure.
- Allowing children to make small decisions builds confidence and coping skills gradually.
- Helping children name and understand emotions aids regulation and resilience development.

# Supporting emotional regulation at home

- Parents create calm, predictable environments and respond thoughtfully to support adolescent emotional regulation.
- Using emotional vocabulary helps adolescents move from physical reactions to reflective thinking and self-awareness.
- Co-regulation involves staying calm and present during emotional escalation to help adolescents internalize coping strategies.
- Calm routines and normalizing emotions provide stability and allow empathy before problem-solving.



# Resilience in adolescence and when to seek help



# Resilience challenges for secondary school students

- Peer relationships and social exclusion impact emotional well-being significantly in secondary school students.
- Academic pressure and transitions increase anxiety as students balance workload and changes during puberty.
- Maintaining connection, encouraging autonomy, and promoting healthy habits support resilience in adolescents.



# How parents can support teenagers effectively



- Effective support balances guidance with allowing teenagers independence to build responsibility and problem-solving skills.
- Maintaining open communication through casual conversations and availability encourages trust without pressure.
- Asking teens what might help promotes their ownership of problems and builds confidence.
- Combining warmth, clear boundaries creates a secure environment for resilience.

# When to seek additional support and final takeaways

- Persistent withdrawal, anxiety, mood and behaviour changes signal need for additional support. Trust instincts and seek advice early.
- Schools and health professionals provide guidance or referrals; collaboration between home and school improves outcomes.
- Resilience develops via everyday interactions; connection, listening, and encouragement are key protective factors for young people.

