



Why is Resilience Important for Children?

Many children are incredibly good at bouncing back from the hard knocks they may face in life. Their optimism and day-to-day approach can allow them to carry on in the face of scraped knees, broken toys, and difficult homework.

However, children may have to deal with all sorts of difficult situations, such as moving house, parents divorcing, difficult exams, losing friends, bullying, loss and grief or even caring for their own parents or siblings. Without resilience, these can cause considerable stress and even have long-lasting effects, which can take time and dedication to overcome in adolescence and adulthood.

The good news is that all children *can* develop resilience. All it takes is the right influence and support from those around them. In fact, your presence as a parent, teacher, friend or extended family member can have a hugely positive impact during this flexible phase of their life.

As children, we begin to develop our identity and place in the world, but in turn we are vulnerable to difficulties that we may not know how to handle, and that may leave a significant impact on us.

Characteristics of a Resilient Child

A child who responds well to difficulties in life will often have the following characteristics:

- A strong sense of independence, self-sufficiency, and self-confidence.
- Ability to communicate well with others and express themselves.
- Good problem-solving skills.
- Strong empathy and respect for others.
- Active interest in school activities.
- Responds well to instructions and guidance.
- Knows how to ask for support.
- Open to trying new things.



While no two children are alike, these are good indicators that a child is resilient. Children who are less resilient may avoid problem-solving and may not feel confident in themselves, or in communicating. They may also resist guidance and support and avoid new experiences.

Suggestions for building resilience in children:

- Encourage healthy risk-taking - many people make the mistake of preventing children from taking risks, or they jump in too soon to solve a child's problems.
- Show acceptance of mistakes and losses - is important for you to adopt this mentality every day.
- Ask questions to encourage independent thinking - Whenever children are facing problems, don't be tempted to simply tell them the answer.
- Praise accomplishments - praise and recognition are critical for building a child's self-confidence.
- Acknowledge and label emotions - children should learn how to identify and talk about their emotions.
- Promote optimism and positive thinking - the best way to do this is by showing rather than telling, children learn by example.
- Show that it's okay to ask for help - encourage children to take healthy risks and think through problems on their own.

For more information about the support available for parents in Solihull, please contact the parenting team via email to bsmhft.parenting@nhs.net; by phone on 0121 301 2773; or by finding us on Facebook

