

## **Review Article**

# **Building Strong Foundations: Strategies for Enhancing Resilience in Children**

### **Abstract**

Resilience is the ability to adapt and thrive in the face of adversity. In today's ever-changing world, it is important to foster resilience in children so they can overcome challenges and succeed in life. This research article examines various strategies for enhancing resilience in children, including developing positive relationships with caregivers, building a supportive community, promoting a growth mindset, and teaching coping skills. The article draws on current research in psychology, neuroscience, and education to provide practical and evidence-based recommendations for parents, educators, and other caregivers. By understanding the factors that contribute to resilience in children, we can help them develop the skills and mindset needed to navigate life's challenges with confidence and success.

**Keywords:** resilience; children; coping skills; growth mindset; positive relationships;

### **Introduction**

Children experience many different types of stressors and adversities in their lives including illness and injury, parental dispute and divorce and economic hardship as well. Resilience is the ability to overcome adversity and continue to grow and develop despite upcoming challenging. Children who are resilient can better to be able to cope with stress and maintain positive outcomes in the situation of adversity. This ability to be resilient can be improved if proper environment is offered to the children in family, at educational places and in society in general. Hence, this paper focuses on child resilience with respect to the concept, importance, stages and levels and correlates of child resilience. It also suggests the ways to enhance the ability to be resilient ability child and role of a researcher in enhancing the ability of child to be more resilient.

### **DEFINING RESILIENCE**

In other words, resilience is "the capacity of a system to adapt successfully to significant challenges that threaten its function, viability, or development" (Masten, 2018).

The capacity to bounce back from hardships while keeping one's spirits up is known as resilience. Author: Seligman

Despite the presence of risk and adversity, resilience is the process of coping with stress and adversity that allows for the achievement of positive outcomes. Author: Luthar, (2006)

Maintaining one's emotional and physical health in the face of hardship is an example of resilience. Based on the work of Tugade and Fredrickson (2004)

The capacity to deal positively with hardship, difficulty, or trauma is known as resilience. This is according to Southwick and Charney (2012).

The ability to bounce back from adversity, embrace change, and prosper under trying circumstances defines resilience. Reference: Waite and Richardson, 2014.

Resilience is the capacity to navigate difficult situations and maintain a sense of emotional balance and stability. - **Masten and Narayan, (2012)**

### **IMPORTANCE OF CHILD RESILIENCE**

Child resilience is important for a number of reasons. Resilience allows children to cope with stress and adversity in healthy ways, and to maintain positive outcomes in the face of difficult circumstances. Children who are resilient are better able to adapt to change, maintain positive relationships with peers and adults, and achieve academic success. According to **Masten, (2018)**, resilience is also important for long-term health outcomes, as resilient children are less likely to experience mental health problems and chronic illness later in life.

Furthermore, research has shown that resilience is not a fixed trait and can be nurtured and developed over time. By providing children with a supportive environment and opportunities to practice coping skills, we can help them build resilience and become better equipped to handle life's challenges.

One way to enhance resilience in children is by promoting a growth mindset. Children who have a growth mindset believe that their abilities and intelligence can be developed through hard work and dedication. This mindset helps children see setbacks as opportunities for growth and learning, rather than as failures.

In addition, positive relationships with caregivers, peers, and other adults can provide children with a sense of belonging and support that is essential for building resilience. Caregivers who provide children with a safe and nurturing environment can help them feel secure and develop a sense of trust in themselves and others.

Teaching coping skills is also an important part of building resilience in children. Coping skills such as mindfulness, problem-solving, and emotion regulation can help children manage stress and anxiety, and improve their overall well-being.

### **STAGES OF RESILIENCE**

The term "resilience" is used to describe a person's capacity to bounce back from difficult situations. The most common four stages of resilience developed by **Ungar, M (2011)** are as given below.

**Survival** - This is the first stage of resilience, which focuses on meeting basic needs such as safety, shelter, food, and water. During this stage, individuals are primarily focused on addressing immediate needs and may have limited resources for coping with stress and adversity.

**Adaptation** - In this stage, individuals begin to develop coping strategies and resources to manage stress and adapt to their environment. This may include building social support networks, developing problem-solving skills, and improving emotional regulation.

**Mastery** - The third stage of resilience is characterized by a sense of mastery and control over one's environment. Individuals at this stage have developed a wide range of coping strategies and have a strong sense of self-efficacy, which enables them to overcome challenges and setbacks.

**Growth** - The final stage of resilience involves using adversity as an opportunity for personal growth and development. Individuals at this stage are able to find meaning and purpose in their experiences and may even thrive in the face of adversity.

With the right support and resources, individuals can develop and strengthen their resilience over time.

### **LEVELS OF RESILIENCE**

The levels of child resilience can be categorized as follows:

**Low Resilience:** Children with low resilience tend to be easily overwhelmed by stress and may have difficulty coping with adversity. They may feel hopeless, powerless, and may give-up easily when faced with challenges.

**Moderate Resilience:** Children with moderate resilience are able to cope with most stressful situations, but may struggle with major life events or trauma. They may have some coping skills, but may require additional support and resources to bounce back from adversity.

**High Resilience:** Children with high resilience are able to adapt to change and bounce back quickly from adversity. They have strong coping skills and are able to maintain a positive outlook even during difficult times.

**Exceptional Resilience:** Children with exceptional resilience not only bounce back quickly from adversity, but also use their experiences to grow and flourish. They are able to find meaning and purpose in their struggles and use their resilience to help others. Resilience is not innate, and it may be cultivated and strengthened via training and social reinforcement.

### **CORRELATES AFFECTING CHILD RESILIENCE ADVERSLY**

Numerous external influences reduce children's resilience. They consist of personal qualities, social networks, and material opportunities. Children's resilience is influenced by the following variables.

**Following are some of the correlates that affect child resilience adversely.**

1. Overprotection by parents
2. Academic pressure and excessive focus on grades and marks
3. Overuse of electronic devices
4. Lack of physical exercise and outdoor activities
5. Over-scheduling of activities
6. Limited exposure to failure and adversity
7. Over-reliance on technology for problem-solving
8. Unhealthy eating habits and poor nutrition
9. Sleep deprivation
10. Mental health issues such as anxiety and depression
11. Social isolation and loneliness
12. Lack of emotional support and nurturing

13. Helicopter parenting
14. Negative parenting styles such as authoritarianism and permissiveness
15. Inadequate preparation for challenges and setbacks
16. Unrealistic expectations and pressure to succeed
17. Lack of resilience-building opportunities in schools
18. Poor role models
19. Economic and social inequality
20. Bullying and cyberbullying
21. Lack of coping skills and strategies
22. Low self-esteem and self-confidence
23. Discrimination and prejudice
24. Limited exposure to diverse experiences and perspectives
25. Parental conflict and divorce
26. Negative peer pressure
27. Lack of community support
28. Limited opportunities for creativity and self-expression
29. The pressure to follow the social norms
30. Excessive fear of failure
31. The need for instant gratification
32. The belief that success is determined by talent rather than effort
33. Overuse of medication for mental health issues
34. Lack of exposure to diverse cultures and traditions
35. Overuse of social media and technology
36. A lack of opportunities for proper risk taking
37. A lack of opportunities for independent decision-making and leadership
38. The impact of chronic illness or disability
39. A lack of opportunities for mentorship
40. Lack of opportunities for physical exercise
41. The impact of racism and discrimination
42. A lack of opportunities for team-building and cooperation
43. The impact of cultural and religious intolerance
44. The impact of discrimination based on gender
45. A lack of opportunities for conflict resolution

46. The impact of homelessness and displacement
47. A lack of opportunities for character development
48. The impact of addiction on families
49. A lack of opportunities for experiential learning

## **WAYS TO ENHANCE RESILIENCE IN CHILDREN**

Overall, enhancing resilience in children requires a holistic approach that involves education, support and positive experiences. By building these skills and providing children with the resources they need to overcome adversity, we can help them develop into strong and resilient adults. Here are some ways to enhance resilience among children.

**Emotional Regulation Skills:** Teaching children how to recognize and regulate their emotions can help them develop resilience. This includes skills such as deep breathing, mindfulness, and positive self-talk.

**Problem-Solving Skills:** Children who are resilient are able to find solutions to problems and overcome obstacles. Teaching problem-solving skills, such as brainstorming and decision-making strategies, can help children develop these skills.

**Social Skills:** Children with strong social skills are better able to form positive relationships with others and seek out support when they need it. Teaching children effective communication, conflict resolution, and empathy can help them build social skills and resilience.

**Foster positive relationships:** Strong, supportive relationships with parents, caregivers, and peers can help children develop a sense of security and belonging, which can enhance their resilience.

**Growth Mindset:** A growth mindset teaches children that challenges and failures are opportunities for learning and growth. Encouraging children to see challenges as opportunities and to persist in the face of adversity can help them develop a growth mindset and enhance their resilience.

**Coping Strategies:** Children who are resilient have effective coping strategies for dealing with stress and adversity. Teaching children coping strategies such as exercise, relaxation techniques and hobbies can help them develop resilience.

**Provide a safe and nurturing environment:** Children who feel safe and secure in their environment are more likely to develop resilience. Make sure that children have access to a safe and nurturing environment, free from physical or emotional harm.

**Encourage Positive Self-Talk:** Teach your child to use positive self-talk. When they face challenging situations, they can say to themselves, "I can do this," or "I am strong." This helps them to stay positive and focused on finding solutions.

**Practice Mindfulness:** Mindfulness is the practice of being present and aware of one's thoughts and feelings. Encourage the child to practice mindfulness by taking deep breaths, paying attention to their surroundings, and taking breaks when they feel overwhelmed.

**Celebrate Achievements:** Celebrate child's achievements, no matter how small. This helps them to develop a sense of accomplishment and self-worth, which contributes to their resilience.

**Encourage healthy habits:** Encourage children to eat a healthy diet, get enough sleep, and exercise regularly to help build their physical and mental resilience.

**Build self-esteem:** Encourage children to take on challenges and praise their efforts and successes to build their self-esteem and confidence.

**Practice gratitude:** Encourage children to focus on the positive things in their lives and express gratitude for them regularly.

**Develop problem-solving skills:** Teach children how to identify problems and come up with solutions to build their problem-solving skills.

**Encourage creativity:** Foster creativity and imagination in children to help them think outside the box and find new ways to approach challenges.

**Teach them to set goals:** Teach children how to set realistic and achievable goals, and help them track their progress and celebrate their successes.

**Building Resilience through Curriculum:** Educational institutions can build resilience in children by integrating resilience-building concepts into the curriculum. For instance, teachers can teach about resilience as part of social studies, health, or psychology classes. This approach helps children understand the importance of resilience and how it can be applied in various aspects of their lives.

## **ROLE OF A RESEARCHER TO ENHANCE RESILIENCE IN A CHILD**

As a researcher, there are several ways to contribute in enhancing resilience in children. Here are a few:

**Conducting research:** By conducting research on factors that contribute to resilience in children, researchers can identify interventions that are effective in enhancing resilience. Research can also identify risk factors that undermine resilience and help develop strategies to counteract them.

**Disseminating research findings:** Once the research is conducted, researchers can disseminate their findings to a wider audience, including parents, educators, policymakers, and other researchers. Dissemination can take many forms, including publications, presentations, workshops, and online resources.

**Collaborating with practitioners:** Researchers can collaborate with practitioners such as psychologists, social workers, and educators to develop and test interventions that enhance resilience in children. Collaboration can also help researchers better understand the needs of practitioners and develop research questions that are relevant to real-world problems.

**Advocating for policy change:** Researchers can use their findings to advocate for policy change that supports the development of resilience in children. For example, they can advocate for policies that support early childhood education, access to healthcare, and community-based programs that promote social and emotional well-being.

**Providing training and education:** Researchers can provide training and education to practitioners, parents, and educators on the importance of resilience in children and the strategies that are effective in enhancing it. This can include training on the latest research findings and evidence-based interventions.

**Develop tools to measure resilience among children focusing local environment.** As per the data available after attempting on resilience measurement tools, suggestions should be provided and follow up is to be taken.

Overall, researchers play a crucial role in enhancing resilience in children by conducting research, disseminating findings, collaborating with practitioners, advocating for policy change, and providing training and education.

## **Conclusion**

Resilience in children is a complex and dynamic concept that is impacted by many different factors. Several factors may have an impact on children's resilience. These include the children's access to resources, the support they receive from their families and communities, the children's self-esteem, and the children's optimism. Ability to cope with stress and adversity, as well as the retention of positive results and the achievement of long-term health outcomes, are all strongly connected with a child's degree of resilience. Fostering resilience in children and promoting their healthy development is made easier when parents, teachers, and other caretakers are knowledgeable of the factors that contribute to resilience.

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