

# Creating Resilient Families

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Research by my team at Resilient Youth on 160,000 young people shows that we achieve the best outcomes for our lives by developing a **Resilient Mindset**. This is built in schools and families where children are:

Protected  
Respected  
Connected.

This brief quiz will give you an idea of some of the strategies that build the Resilient Mindset.

**1. My child leaves a favorite toy outside overnight. The next morning, the toy is gone & my child is crying. I would:**

- a. Tell my child, "I told you so."
- b. Begin by empathizing with their unhappiness and saying, "I know you're upset that the toy is gone".
- c. Buy them another toy.

**2. When my child disagrees with me, it appears that her goal is to seek revenge. When this happens, I should:**

- a. Ignore her anger.
- c. Allow her to rant until she runs out of steam.
- d. Acknowledge her anger but not change my decision.

**3. Which of the following will help children feel loved, special, and appreciated?**

- a. Creating traditions, family rituals and special times
- b. Making certain to not miss significant events.
- c. Accepting your children for who they are.

**4. What's is the best way to deal with mistakes:**

- a. Serve as a model for dealing with mistakes and setbacks.
- b. Teach your children that mistakes are to be avoided.
- c. Lower your expectations.

**5. Your child tells you that she feels ugly and fat. Your first response should be:**

- a. "But, you're not ugly and fat."
- b. "I know you feel that way. I'm not certain why you do but maybe we can figure out what will help you feel better."
- c. "If you keep saying that way, no one will want to be with you."

**6. When your children are successful at a task, you can reinforce a resilient mindset by saying:**

- a. "Well done that was good luck".
- b. "It was great to see how you figured that out."

c. "Now that you see you can succeed, you shouldn't make excuses for not trying something in the future."

**7. Your child calls you on her phone from school and says she has no friends**

- a. Leap into action and call the school
- b. Tell her to stop being dramatic
- c. Calmly re-assure her and say, " When we get home we'll work out about how you can make the friends that you want"

**8. Your child has left schoolwork to the last moment and wants a day off to catch up. Do you:**

- a. Give in
- b. Insist they go to school but write an "excuse"
- c. Insist they go to school and help them word an explanation for the teacher

*Resilience is the happy knack of bungy jumping through the pitfalls of life. When tough things happen, resilience helps people to overcome these and get on with their lives.*

**The following are the answers that build a resilient mindset in children:**

1. **b.** The ability to see the world through your children's eyes and be empathic is essential for fostering resilience.
2. **d.** In this example, you can say to your child in a calm voice that you know she is angry, but her yelling and saying you are not a good mother will not change the situation.
3. All of them.
4. **a.** Ask yourself what your child observes when you make mistakes. If children see their parents respond by remaining calm and seeking more effective solutions, they will be more prone to acting in the same way. Mistakes are a natural part of life for kids and grown-ups. Most mistakes serve as opportunities for learning.
5. **b.** When we hear our children say negative things about themselves such as that they are ugly and dumb, our first inclination is to quickly support them by telling them that they are not that way at all. However, this kind of support represents a missed opportunity. Validating what our children say does not mean we agree with them, but rather that we understand them. A parent might respond to their child's negative statement by saying, "I know you feel ugly and fat and I'm sorry you do. I don't see it that way and maybe we can figure out what makes you feel that way and what will help you to feel better."
6. **b.** One of the characteristics of resilient kids is that they relish and take realistic credit

for their successes. When mistakes and set backs occur (as they inevitably do!) they start planning how to do better in the future.

7. **c** Guiding your child towards creating a solution to problems is more powerful than solving them yourself.
8. **c** Avoiding things almost never works. Give your child the tools to sort it out but don't do it for them.

## **Characteristics of resilient families**

### **1. Spontaneity and Curiosity**

Resilient families have adults who model that life is worth living - that success is worth it.

### **2. It is clear who is in charge**

No parent wins all the time but even so, it is important that young people feel their parents are in charge of the family and are able to protect. It is NOT enough to just be a friend to your child

### **3. Mistakes are how we learn.**

Rather than avoiding mistakes or being embarrassed by them we need to embrace them because that is how we learn to improve.

### **4. Ensure diversity of friendships**

Young people are protected and connected when they have a diversity of friendship groups.

### **5. Involve other adults**

Resilient families also seem

to be able to share the task of parenting more broadly

### **6. Relationships are more important than discipline or consequences.**

Resilient families know that building positive relationships and calming children when they are upset or angry is the most powerful way to manage behaviour issues.

### **7. Consistency**

Resilient families have consistently high expectations for themselves and hold key values about life and the way they live it. Resilient families avoid harsh and inconsistent discipline methods that often just teach children to get sneaky and trust no one.

### **7. Maintain rituals**

Resilient families take time out from the rush of life to celebrate life anniversaries and have weekly rituals.

### **8. They know that NOTHING WORKS ALL THE TIME!** So they try to do things that are fun and help them not to take problems too seriously.

**Andrew is the author of many best selling books –**  
***-Unlocking Your Child's Genius***  
***-Tricky Teens***  
***-Tricky Kids***