


Understanding and Building Resilience



Aims

- Explore different models of resilience in relation to adversity, risk and protective factors.
- Discuss ways in which we can build resilience in ourselves and others.




Breakout

What is resilience?



Resilience

- Signs of resilience include the ability to **regulate emotions**, a sense of **confidence** and **control**, effective **coping** skills, and leaning on **social support** when needed.
- Resilience represents an ability to handle life's **setbacks** and is an overall representation of **adaptability**.



Protection/Bouncing Back

- Resilience is our ability to bounce back from life's challenges and unforeseen difficulties, providing mental protection from emotional and mental disorders.
- Michael Rutter (1985)
- Psychological resilience refers to the ability to use personal qualities to withstand pressure.
(David Fletcher and Mustafa Sarkar 2016)
- Resilience represents a constellation of characteristics that protect individuals from the potential negative effect of stressors.
(Ivan Robertson et al. 2015)

Positive Growth

- Resilience is seen as more than simple recovery from insult (Trauma/adversity), rather it can be defined as positive growth or adaptation following periods of homeostatic disruption.
- Laura Campbell-Sills (2006)

Continuum/Not Static

- Resilience is believed to be a process rather than a single event and a continuum rather than a binary outcome.
- Meetu Khosla (2017)
- Resilience is a process and a staircase. You might be on step four of the staircase, and I might be on step one, but we can both keep moving up the staircase so that our resilience levels will hopefully exceed the rising tide of stress.
- Glenn Schiraldi (2017)

Context/Adversity

- If we want to help vulnerable youngsters become more resilient, we need to decrease their exposure to potent risk factors and increase their competencies and self-esteem, as well as the sources of support they can draw upon.
- Emmy Werner (1995)
- Any psychological resilience training program should, as much as practically possible, consider the broader environment within which individuals operate.
- David Fletcher and Mustafa Sarkar (2016)



Context/Adversity

- Children and young people are not on a level playing field when it comes to exposure to risk, and resilience is not infinitely elastic.



Breakout

What can make you more resilient?





Breakout

What can make you less resilient?



Risk and Resilience Factors

Individual factors:

- **Risk**

- Low IQ or learning difficulty
- Developmental delay
- Communication difficulty
- Physical illness or disability
- Difficult temperament
- Low self esteem
- Lack of confidence
- Not an academic success
- Anxious personality
- Learned helplessness

- **Resilience**

- Easy temperament (sociability)
- Ability to regulate emotions
- Good coping & problem-solving skills
- Physically healthy
- Positive sense of identity and cultural heritage
- Positive attitude to help seeking
- Connected to family, school, community

Individual factors: Signs of Resilience

- Resilient people often have a number of different characteristics that help them weather life's challenges. Some of the signs of resilience include:
- A survivor mentality: When people are resilient, they view themselves as survivors. They know that even when things are difficult, they can keep going until they make it through.
- Effective emotional regulation: Resilience is marked by an ability to manage emotions in the face of stress.
- This doesn't mean that resilient people don't experience strong emotions such as anger, sadness, or fear. It means that they recognize those feelings are temporary and can be managed until they pass.

Individual factors: Signs of Resilience

- Feeling in control: Resilient people tend to have a strong internal locus of control and feel that their actions can play a part in determining the outcome of events.
- Problem-solving skills: When problems arise, resilient people look at the situation rationally and try to come up with solutions that will make a difference.
- Self-compassion: Another sign of resilience is showing self-acceptance and self-compassion. Resilient people treat themselves with kindness, especially when things are hard.
- Social support: Having a solid network of supportive people is another sign of resilience. Resilient people recognize the importance of support and knowing when they need to ask for help.

Family factors:

Risk

- Parental conflict or abuse
- Family breakdown
- Hostile or rejecting parents
- Abuse or neglect
- Parental mental illness, substance use or criminality
- Bereavement or loss of a parent
- Inconsistent or unclear or absent discipline

• Resilience

- One positive parental figure
- Attachment, a belief that ones needs will be met
- Supervision and authoritative discipline
- Demonstration of love and affection
- Family support of education and school
- A parent or significant adult who is themselves resilient
- Responsibilities

Community and environmental factors:

Risk

- Poverty
- Homelessness
- Discrimination
- Low expectations

• Resilience

- Supportive network
- Good housing
- High expectations of behaviour in school/college
- Strong academic opportunities in school/college
- High morale in school/college

Common Risk Factors to Mental Health

Individual	Family	Peers	School	Community
Difficult temperament (e.g. overly shy or aggressive)	Family conflict including domestic violence	Poor peer role models	Poor student-teacher relationships	Social or cultural discrimination and racism
Low self-worth	Inconsistent or unclear discipline	Exclusive or rejecting peers	Difficult or inadequate student transition management	Socio-economic disadvantage including limited access to support services
Low IQ and learning difficulties	Lack of warmth and affection by parents	Peer norms favouring excessive use of drugs, alcohol and violence or antisocial behaviour	Bullying or discrimination	Neighbourhood violence or crime
Impulsivity	Parent/s with mental illness or substance abuse problems		School community is not inclusive	
Poor social skills			School violence	
Significant negative life events relating to loss, trauma and abuse			Low teacher expectations of students	
Alcohol and drug use			Lack of parent and community involvement	
Chronic illness, physical or mental disability			Poor absenteeism structures and processes	

Common Protective Factors

Individual	Family	Peers	School	Community
Easy temperament (e.g. sociable)	Positive parent or carer relationship	Positive peer role models and influences (e.g. peer group with pro-social values and activities)	Supportive relationships	Participation in community networks
Socially and emotionally competent (e.g. able to regulate emotions)	Family provides structure, limits, monitoring and predictability	Inclusive group norms: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental health status • Same sex attraction • Disability • Open group membership 	Opportunities for academic or other school achievement	Access to support services (e.g. mental health care and family support)
Good coping and problem solving skills	Clear expectations for behaviours and values		Opportunities to participate in a range of activities	Economic security
Optimistic (e.g. a belief life has meaning and hope)	Supportive relationships between family members		Physical and psychologically safe environment	Safe and inclusive community
Physically healthy	Support available at critical times		Clear policies on behaviour and bullying	
Positive sense of identity and cultural heritage			Support available at critical times	
Positive attitude to help seeking			Connections to competent and caring adults	
Connected to family, school and community			School acknowledges and respects diversity (inclusive environment)	
			Positive approaches to behaviour education	

Risk and Protective Factors

RISK FACTORS

- ✗ Genetic influences
- ✗ Low IQ and learning disabilities
- ✗ Specific development delay
- ✗ Communication difficulties
- ✗ Difficult temperament
- ✗ Physical illness
- ✗ Academic failure
- ✗ Low self-esteem



Child

- ✗ Family disharmony, or break up
- ✗ Inconsistent discipline style
- ✗ Parent/s with mental illness or substance abuse
- ✗ Physical, sexual, neglect or emotional abuse
- ✗ Parental criminality or alcoholism
- ✗ Death and loss



Family

- ✗ Bullying
- ✗ Discrimination
- ✗ Breakdown in or lack of positive friendships
- ✗ Deviant peer influences
- ✗ Peer pressure
- ✗ Poor pupil to teacher relationships



School

- ✗ Socio-economic disadvantage
- ✗ Homelessness
- ✗ Disaster, accidents, war or other overwhelming events
- ✗ Discrimination
- ✗ Other significant life events
- ✗ Lack of access to support services



Community

- ✓ Secure attachment experience
- ✓ Good communication skills
- ✓ Having a belief in control
- ✓ A positive attitude
- ✓ Experiences of success and achievement
- ✓ Capacity to reflect

- ✓ Family harmony and stability
- ✓ Supportive parenting
- ✓ Strong family values
- ✓ Affection
- ✓ Clear, consistent discipline
- ✓ Support for education

- ✓ Positive school climate that enhances belonging and connectedness
- ✓ Clear policies on behaviour and bullying
- ✓ 'Open door' policy for children to raise problems
- ✓ A whole-school approach to promoting good mental health

- ✓ Wider supportive network
- ✓ Good housing
- ✓ High standard of living
- ✓ Opportunities for valued social roles
- ✓ Range of sport/leisure activities

PROTECTIVE FACTORS



Breakout

What can we do to build resilience?

Building and Developing Resilience in Young People

There are eight sets of protective factors which can affect a young person's daily life and shape their resilience.

Below gives youth organisations some ideas around what they can do to develop and support these protective factors

Skills

Description	What can Youth Organisations do?
<p>Young people need many skills to be resilient, healthy and successful in life and active in their communities.</p> <p>Personal skills include:</p> <p>Self-awareness and self-monitoring.</p> <p>Adaptive, coping and management.</p> <p>Interpersonal communication.</p> <p>Relationship and social skills.</p> <p>Critical and creative thinking skills.</p>	<p>Adapt environments so that young people with learning and physical disabilities can take part and fully benefit.</p> <p>In group work sessions use learner-centred approaches such as drama activities to help young people learn about and practice living and learning skills.</p> <p>Provide a sounding board, mentor or coach young people who are trying to get through a problem or conflict.</p> <p>Encourage young people to spend time with people who like them and make them feel good about themselves.</p> <p>Help young people set realistic and achievable goals.</p> <p>Encourage young people to share their opinions so they get good practice at communicating their views.</p> <p>Provide opportunities for young people to challenge themselves.</p>

Parents

Families

Description

Many different people play a parenting role in young people's lives. Their resilience is greatly affected by parental expectations, their style of discipline and the quality of attachment and communication between them.

What can Youth Organisations do?

Provide information about parenting programmes and other services that can support parents.

Families that are resilient and function well give young people a positive identity, a sense of connectedness and an environment in which they can flourish. Family includes anyone a young person sees as important because of a strong enduring connection, whether related by blood or not.

Engage young people in activities to identify family values, strengths and rituals.

Schools

Most young people spend much of their time in school. Of particular importance to a young person's resilience is the feeling of belonging and acceptance at schools.

Establish working relationships with local schools to ensure consistency of support and development of young people.

Peers

Relationships with peers are important in adolescence. Friends and other peers provide social support and a sense of belonging.

Use group management techniques that recognise the power and impact of the peer group. Avoid negatively labelling groups of young people. Engage young people in discussions about peer groups and moral dilemmas.

Community

Cultural Identity

Economic & Financial

Resilient young people have links to their community and have opportunities to be meaningfully involved. A strong community nurtures a sense of belonging and connectedness and engages in constructive activities that benefit them and others.

Encourage young people to get involved with community organisations and volunteering opportunities.

Involve young people in advocating for needed resources in their community.

Work with community partners to help develop a youth friendly community.

A strong cultural identity is an important part of how young people see and value themselves.

Provide opportunities for taking part in cultural traditions and celebrations.

Provide opportunities for young people to learn about stigma and discrimination and to critically reflect on how this impacts on their lives.

Belonging to an economically secure household affects the health and wellbeing of young people. Young people need to understand how money works and have the skills needed to earn and manage their own money.

Develop financial literacy classes and workshops.

Provide services to support young people in finding and retaining employment.

Promote open communication about finance. Encourage youth participation in budgeting processes.



Assessing Resilience Three Sources of Resiliency

Edith Grotberg of the International Resilience Project

Defines resiliency in terms of **three** sources.

For a young person to be resilient, he or she needs to have more than one of these strengths.

I HAVE (Context)

Social and interpersonal supports

Awareness of those who support them

Who I have

Trusting and loving relationships with others

Parents, siblings, teachers, friends.

Structure at home

Clear rules and routines, comprehensible and fair sanctions when breached, praise when followed.

Role models

Parents, other adults, peers, siblings, who model good behaviour and morality.

Encouragement to be independent

People who offer praise for growing autonomy.

Access to health, education and social care

Consistent direct or indirect protection for physical and emotional health.

I AM (Personality)

Inner strengths

How they view themselves

Who I am

Loveable

The young person possesses, or is helped to develop qualities that appeal to others.

Loving

The young person is able to express affection to others, and is sensitive to their distress.

Proud of myself

The young person feels they have the capacity for achievement and resists discouragement.

Responsible

The young person accepts and is given responsibilities, and believes their actions can make a difference.

Hopeful and trustful

The young person has faith in institutions and people, is optimistic for the future and is able to express their faith within a moral structure.

I CAN (Skills)

Interpersonal and problem solving skills

Degree of confidence they have in their own abilities

What I can do

Communicate

The young person is able to express feelings and thoughts and listen to those of others.

Solve problems

The young person can apply themselves to problems, involve others when necessary and be persistent.

Manage my feelings

The young person knows and understands emotions, recognises the feelings of others and controls impulsive behaviour.

Seek out trusting relationships

The young person has the ability to find people, peers or adults, in whom they can confide and develop mutual trust.

Understand my temperament

The young person has insight into their personality and that of others.

Edith Grotberg of the International Resilience Project

For example, if a young person has good self-esteem (I AM), but lacks anyone whom they can turn to for support (I HAVE), and does not have the capacity to solve problems (I CAN), they will not be resilient.

Edith Grotberg of the International Resilience Project

Each of the I HAVE, I AM, and I CAN factors suggests numerous actions young people and workers can take to promote resilience.


You do not have to use the entire pool of resilience factors, some use many; others use few.

However, the larger the pool of choices before them, the more options young people have for selecting appropriate responses to a situation.



Breakout

Discuss as a group any significant messages relating to Resilience and how you can further build Resilience in yourself and others.



Supporting and building Resilience



Supporting and building Resilience



Dimensions of Resilience

- Fitness and stamina
- Nutrition for energy
- Rest and recovery

- Self-belief
- Outlook & perspective
- Thinking traps
- Sustained focus
- Causal analysis
- Control controllables



- Calming and focusing
- Impulse control
- Emotional regulation
- Positive emotion
- Realistic optimism

- Values and beliefs
- Empathy
- Reaching out

