



Raising resilient kids

Student resilience and wellbeing are essential for both academic and social development. Children who are confident, resilient and emotionally intelligent perform better academically. The skills these children also possess can contribute to the maintenance of healthy relationships and responsible lifestyles.

Research has shown that children who are resilient are also less likely to be involved in problematic alcohol or other drug use, or misbehave in anti-social ways. Resilience and drug education is so important because it can help young people to learn the skills that will help them to manage their emotional responses and cope better with challenging situations that may come their way.

Resilience education gives young people the opportunity to develop a range of social and emotional skills that can influence the way they make choices and decisions in drug-related situations.

SDERA, 2011

Resilient kids know how to cope and bend or flex so they can manage life's ups and downs when they happen without letting them get them down, and without giving up.

Resilience is the fine art of being able to bungy jump through life. The pitfalls are still there but it is as if you have an elasticised rope around your middle that helps you to bounce back from hard times.

Andrew Fuller, 2011

Our class is building on the social and emotional skills that were covered in Year 7 and learning some new skills which include:

- **Seeking help for themselves and for others**

Help seeking is a fundamental skill for the health and wellbeing of young people. Knowing who to talk to when they have a problem can be difficult for some children, particularly when they are feeling stressed or confused. There can also be barriers that young people face when seeking help such as feeling afraid or embarrassed, thinking that others will judge them or won't understand, and that no-one will want to help them. Talk with your children and let them know that you will always be there to listen to their problems and can give advice on how to work through a situation if asked.

- **Recognising their own strengths and limitations**

Some children only see what they can't do not what they can do. Knowing their ability strengths (eg good at running or art) or character strengths (eg fair and honest) can help your children to take steps to overcome problems and set goals to increase their resilience. Tell your children the strengths that you see in them and why these are important. Give examples of how your children have used their strengths in the past.

- **Speaking assertively**

Being able to tell others how we are feeling and why, and what we would like to see happen can be helpful in establishing and maintaining relationships and in working through problems. Use any conflict situations at home as an opportunity for your children to practise this skill. Remember the result should be a 'win-win' for everyone.

- **Managing our emotions**

We know it can be hard to manage our emotions but the difference between adults and children is that we've learned how to work with these feelings appropriately. So ask yourself these questions. Have you practised good emotional management techniques yourself so your children can see what it looks like and how it works? Do you say things out loud such as "I can manage this if I work on the parts of the problem that are my fault and stop worrying about the parts that aren't my fault and I can't change"? Do you share how you feel with your children and explain why you're experiencing those feelings? Help your children get better at reading other people's emotions as this will help them to get along better with students and staff at school.



Try to model these resilience skills so your children can see from your example how they can help to maintain their health and wellbeing, and relationships with others.