

Parental Resilience

What Is Resilience?

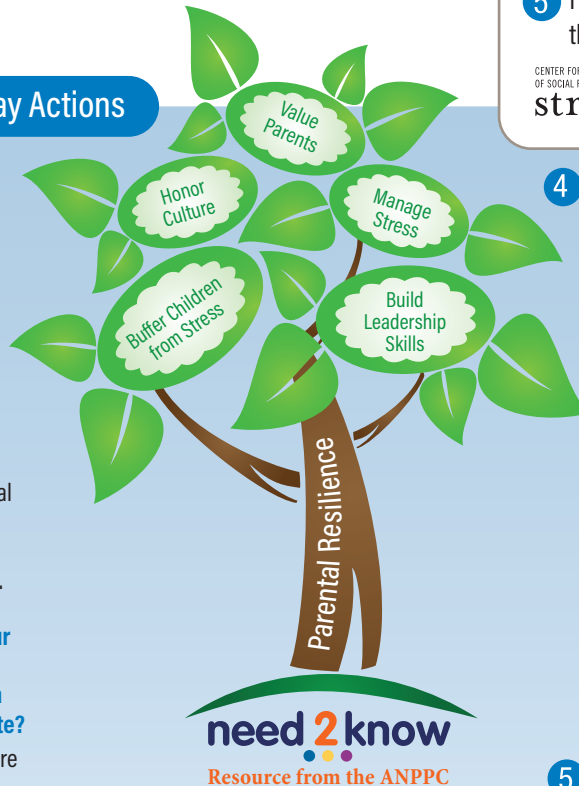
Resilience is the ability to recover from difficult life experiences, and often to be strengthened by and even transformed by those experiences.

Resilient parents have empathy for themselves and others and are able to keep a positive attitude, solve problems creatively and take life's events in stride. They are able to "bounce back" from negative experiences. Resilience isn't about how many bad things you experience; it's about how you respond to them.

Everyday Actions that Help Build Resilience

Concrete Examples of Everyday Actions

- 1 What are some ways your community (local businesses, day care centers, schools and churches) demonstrates it values parents?**
 - My child care has "Dads and Donuts" and "Moms and Muffins" events to say thank you to parents.
 - My place of worship offers parenting classes and other ministries for single moms.
 - My child's school invites parents to special conferences, sends out electronic newsletters, offers parent-child activities and many other opportunities to connect.
- 2 Give examples of concrete ways that your family's race, language, culture, history and approach to parenting is valued as a part of any group in which you participate?**
 - My bi-racial children attend a school where less than 3% of the student body is a minority. The school invites guest speakers from many ethnicities, including African-American, and shares books and crafts that honor my children's heritage.
 - Our children represent multiple ethnicities. We help create opportunities where they can explore their individual ethnic histories through reading, meeting others and continuing dialogue.



- 3 What are some ways that you can remind yourself to deal with stress effectively? How can you encourage others to do the same?**
 - Look for the humor in the situation. If I can find a way to laugh at what happened or something else about the day, I can "own" it and move forward. Laughter is a life saver.
 - Get a sitter and garden.
 - I keep a Top Ten List (of things that feed my soul) in the nightstand by my bed. When I have a challenging day, I pull out my list and do at least three of the things on it. (For example, listen to music, dance and take a walk.)
 - I enjoy nature and photography. I go for a walk and take pictures.
 - I find it helpful to keep a journal – writing down the good and the bad is a way I can re-group.
 - Chatting with a friend makes me feel better.
 - Pray, read, bake and exercise (not always in that order).
 - Be quick to forgive others – especially myself!

- 1** Demonstrate in multiple ways that parents are valued
- 2** Honor each family's race, language, culture, history and approach to parenting
- 3** Encourage parents to manage stress effectively
- 4** Support parents as decision-makers and help build decision-making and leadership skills
- 5** Help parents understand how to buffer their child during stressful times

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- 4 How do you encourage your peers to exercise their unique leadership skills in their own families – and in the community? How do you find the courage to lead out in your family and community?**
 - I go to my "encouraging cupboard" – the strength in my own family is astounding! I am finding ways to be a good steward of the knowledge we have built over generations.
 - With several other parent's help, I started a leadership and advocacy group in our area for families of children with disabilities. Our training events are open to the public and sometimes we offer CEUs. This has been so successful that parents and professionals have been attending from surrounding communities. The best part is that all of our parenting tips apply to all areas of participants' lives – school, church and more!

- 5 When you face a crisis, what are some ways that you protect your child from being negatively impacted by this stress?**
 - Reflect and remember what skills I have used to manage or overcome struggles in the past.
 - I tell myself I've been through tough times before – then I drop everything and do something fun with my little one!
 - My kids handle stress better when they realize there is stress and a plan to manage it. It is a mistake for me to drag them through it and let them figure out how to cope.
 - I keep my children involved in activities with their friends and encourage friendships.
 - Make sleep/rest a priority – model self-care for my children.
 - Encourage laughter either through silly songs or dancing, telling goofy jokes and reading funny stories. Take time to play, interact and focus on the children – let them know that no matter what – they matter the most!

For more parent-to-parent tools visit
[ctfalliance.org/partnering-with-parents/
anppc/#resources](http://ctfalliance.org/partnering-with-parents/anppc/#resources)



National Parent Partnership Council (ANPPC)

Parental Resilience within the Framework

Parental Resilience is one of the five protective factors. Each of the protective factors is essential but most important is what they do together to build strength and stability in families.

Parental Resilience might come in the form of requesting and accepting support to meet basic needs for families (Concrete Support). It could show up when parents support each other at critical moments to promote self-care (Social Connections). It may even be celebrating children's strengths and milestones as they grow through challenges (Knowledge of Child Development).

The Protective Factors work together to help make your family strong!

Parents Help Define Parental Resilience

Many parent groups have defined the protective factors in ways that are relatable for their community and their lives. These ideas help us appreciate and honor family strengths in diverse geographical and cultural settings from across the country. Here are some ways parents have defined this protective factor - **Parental Resilience** - in ways that are meaningful for them.

Defining the Five Protective Factors

Families are supported to build:

Parental Resilience

The ability to recover from difficult life experiences, and often to be strengthened by and even transformed by those experiences.

Social Connections

The ability and opportunity to develop positive relationships that lessen stress and isolation and help to build a supportive network.

Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development

The ability to exercise effective parenting strategies to guide and know what to expect as children develop in multiple domains (physical, cognitive, language and social and emotional).

Concrete Support in Times of Need

Access to supports and services that reduce stress and help to make families stronger.

Social and Emotional Competence of Children

Family and child interactions that help children develop the ability to communicate clearly, recognize and regulate their emotions and establish and maintain relationships.

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Colorado Department of Human Services - Children's Trust Fund

Be strong in the face of stress.

Michigan Great Start Collaborative (Charlevoix, Emmet and Northern Antrim Counties)

Exercise flexibility and develop inner strength. Flexibility and Inner Strength = Resilience. Resilience makes your family STRONG.

New Hampshire Children's Trust

I can handle challenges with flexibility and take time to recharge.

Prevent Child Abuse Arizona - Strengthening Families Arizona

Parenting is challenging. Having resilience means being flexible, managing stress in healthy ways and giving yourself permission to make mistakes.

Alaska Child Welfare Academy

Be strong, not stressed.

Hawaii Child and Family Services - The Parent Line

I am a strong parent. I know someone who I can talk to who understands my parenting style.

Community Café Collaborative

I will continue to have courage during stressful times or after a crisis.

Wisconsin Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Board - Five For Families (fiveforfamilies.org)

Building Inner Strength - Keeping it together - and even growing stronger - during times of stress.

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