



# Hardwired to Learn

## Part III: Helping All Children Succeed in School

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“I’m not afraid about my girlfriends and myself, we’ll squeeze through somehow, though I’m not too certain about my math.”

Anne Frank  
June 21, 1942

“I have lots of courage, I feel so strong and as if I can bear a great deal, I feel so free and so young! I was glad when I first realized it, because I don't think I shall easily bow down before the blows that inevitably come to everyone.”

Anne Frank  
July 15, 1944

# Defining Key Concepts

Websters defines *resilient* (adjective) as:

- (of a substance or object) able to recoil or spring back into shape after bending, stretching or being compressed.
- (of a person or animal) able to withstand or recover quickly from difficult conditions.

# Defining Key Concepts

Mid 17th Century origin from the Latin **resilient** - '**leaping back**', from the verb **resilire**.

# Defining Key Concepts

*Adversity* is an environmental condition that interferes with or threatens the accomplishment of appropriate developmental tasks.

# Defining Key Concepts

*Resilience* is a pattern of positive adaptation in the context of past or present adversity.

# Defining Key Concepts

*Risk* is an elevated probability of an undesirable outcome.

# Defining Key Concepts

*A risk factor* is a measurable characteristic in a group of individuals or their situation that predicts negative outcome on a specific variable.

# Defining Key Concepts

*Vulnerability* is the individual's  
suceptibility to undesirable  
outcomes.

# Defining Key Concepts

*Protective factors*  
reflect person, context  
or the interaction of  
these two, that  
predicts better  
outcome particularly in  
risky or adverse  
situations.

# Defining Key Concepts

Coping = Resilience

# Defining Key Concepts

Is resilience inversely related to impairment?

*Protective factors* reflect person, context or interaction that predicts better outcome particularly in risky or adverse situations.

*Resilience* is a pattern of positive adaptation in the context of past or present adversity.

Is there a need for a  
conceptual process like  
resilience?

# Resilience Encompasses:

- A process leading to good outcome despite high risk;
- The ability to function competently under stress.

# Three Waves of Resilience Research

- Identifying person and variable-focused factors that make a difference.
- Identifying and understanding the operation of these factors within systems with a process focus.
- Intervening to foster resilience.

# Person Attributes Associated With Successful Coping\*

- Affectionate, engaging temperament.
- Sociable.
- Autonomous.
- Above average IQ.
- Good reading skills.
- High achievement motivation.
- Positive self-concept.
- Impulse control.
- Internal locus of control.
- Planning skills.
- Faith.
- Humorous.
- Helpfulness.

\* Replicated in 2 or more studies

# Helpfulness

Young children will pick up an object dropped by a researcher 15 times in a row without being asked and hand it back.

Science, Vol. 311, 1301-1303

# Helpfulness

Volunteers who fulfilled their commitments had parents who modeled helpfulness and with whom they had a good relationship. The reverse was also true.

Child Development, Vol 57, 1358-1369

# Altruism

Altruistic behavior in early  
childhood predicted altruistic  
behavior in adulthood.

Child Development, Vol. 70, 1360-1372

# Environmental Factors Associated With

- Smaller family size
- Maternal competence and mental health.
- Close bond with primary caregiver.
- Supportive siblings.
- Extended family involvement.
- Living above the poverty level.
- Friendships.
- Supportive teachers.
- Successful school experiences.
- Involvement in pro-social organizations.

\*Replicated in 2 or more studies.

# Most Powerful Predictors of Good Coping

- Easy temperament.
- Consistent family relationships.
- Competent available caregivers.
- Development of self-esteem.
- Possessing a sense of emotional security.

Resilience is a developmental process that involves individual differences in children's attributes (e.g. temperament, cognitive abilities) and environments (e.g. supportive parenting, enriched classrooms).

Kirby Deater-Deckard

Resilient children are not simply born that way nor are they made from scratch by their experiences. Genetic and environmental experiences loom large as protectors against a variety of risks to healthy development ranging from resistance to bacteria and viruses to resilience to maltreatment and rejection.

Kirby Deater-Deckard

# Classrooms Created to Nurture and Grow Developing Minds

- Reinforce instinctual optimism
- Provide opportunities for empathy and altruism
- Provide competition in the absence of winning.
- Provide extrinsic reinforcers for effort not control

# Classrooms Created to Nurture and Grow Developing Minds

- Foster opportunities for intrinsic control.
- Minimize external consequences to control.
- Enhance self-discipline.
- Set limits in autonomous ways.

# Focus on Well Being!

- COMPETENCE in academic, social and vocational areas
- CONFIDENCE or a positive identity
- CONNECTIONS or healthy relations
- CHARACTER or positive values, integrity, and values
- CARING and compassion

(Lerner et al, 2000)

# The Mindset of a Resilient Child

- Optimistic and hopeful.
- Feel special and appreciated in the eyes of others.
- Set realistic goals and expectations.
- View mistakes, hardships and obstacles as challenges.
- Solve problems and make decisions.
- Internal locus of control.
- Believe and set out to solve problems.
- Possess empathy.

“The secret of education lies in  
respecting the student”

Ralph Waldo Emerson

# Goldstein's Axiom

Through intelligent and ethical educational practices develop self-discipline and build educational proficiency in all children without stealing away their dignity and hope.

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