

Resiliency Research

Resiliency can be described as the ability to bounce back and effectively cope with life's difficulties. Resilient individuals tend to be academically and socially successful, have effective relationships with other people and be goal oriented. They also have many positive qualities, including:

- ability to control their own behaviour
- expectations for a healthy lifestyle
- service orientation (giving to others)
- optimism
- sense of humour
- moral sense (right and wrong)
- strong problem-solving skills
- perceptiveness
- independence
- self-motivation
- creativity
- empathy.

Protective factors are characteristics and experiences that help individuals develop personal resiliency and enhanced ability to overcome difficulties. Research identifies these protective factors:

- high behavioural expectations
- strong social skills
- positive bonding with at least one significant adult
- meaningful participation at home, in school and/or in the community.

Schools can foster resiliency by:

- creating a positive school climate
- setting high standards for learning and behaviour
- providing opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate responsibility and decision making
- encouraging students to develop and maintain friendships
- providing peer and adult mentoring
- providing opportunities to participate in activities that involve helping others.

Schools can help students build internal protective factors by encouraging creativity, fostering a love of learning, teaching prosocial skills and providing opportunities to become more independent. These factors help students overcome setbacks, and maintain strength and balance in their lives. Increasing the protective factors in children's lives can help them become more caring, confident and competent members of society.

Related Web sites

Resiliency Initiatives

www.resiliencyinitiatives.com

Resiliency in Action

www.resiliency.com

Related publications

Henderson, Nan and Mike Milstein. *Resiliency in Schools: Making it Happen for Students and Educators*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, 2002.

Henderson, Nan, Bonnie Bernard and Nancy Sharp Light (eds.). *Schoolwide Approaches to Fostering Resiliency*. San Diego, CA: Resiliency in Action Inc., 2000.

Thomsen, Kate. *Building Resilient Students: Integrating Resiliency Into What You Already Know and Do*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, 2002.