

Summary of

# Building Resilience in Children

## 20 Practical and Powerful Strategies

Article: by Karen Young @ [Hey Sigmund](#)

1. **Resilience needs relationships, not uncompromising independence.** What leads kids through adversity, is the reliable presence of at least one supportive relationship.
2. **Increase their exposure to people who care about them.** *'I told Grandma how brave you were. She's so proud of you.'*
3. **Let them know that it's okay to ask for help.** Let them know that being brave and strong means knowing when to ask for help.
4. **Build their executive functioning.** Establish routines, play board games, give them opportunities to think and act independently, as well as make their own decisions.
5. **Encourage a regular mindfulness practice.** This supports a healthy response to stress.
6. **Exercise.** It can calm the brain in times of stress.
7. **Build feelings of competence and a sense of mastery.** Acknowledge their strengths, the brave things they do, and their effort when they do something difficult.
8. **Nurture optimism.** The idea is to focus on what is left, rather than what has been lost.
9. **Teach them how to reframe.** Acknowledge their disappointment, then gently steer them away from looking at what the problem has cost them, and towards the opportunities it might have brought them.
10. **Model resiliency.** Bringing them into your emotional world at appropriate times will help them to see that sadness, stuck-ness, disappointment are all very normal human experiences.
11. **Facing fear – but with support.** See here for [the stepladder](#), which explains how to edge them gently and safely towards the things that challenge them.
12. **Encourage them to take safe, considered risks.** Age-appropriate freedom lets them learn where their edges are, encourages them to think about their decisions, and teaches them that they can cope with the things that go wrong.
13. **Don't rush to their rescue.** It is in the precious space between falling and standing back up again that they learn how to find their feet.
14. **Meet them where they are.** Resilience isn't about never falling down. It's about getting back up again, and there's no hurry for this to happen.
15. **Nurture a growth mindset.** Having the belief that people have the potential to change, means they are more likely to show resilience when things get tough.
16. **Let them know that you trust their capacity to cope.** If you believe they have it in them to cope with the stumbles along the way, they will believe this too. This isn't always easy.
17. **Build their problem-solving toolbox.** Rather than solving their problems for them, start to give them the language to solve their own.
18. **Make time for creativity and play.** This will strengthen their problem-solving skills, and nurture their resilience.
19. **Let them talk.** Guide them, but wherever you can, let them talk and try to come up with their own solutions. Try to resist solving their problems for them.
20. **Try, 'how', not 'why'.** Rather than why did you do this, try 'How can you fix this?'