

Caregiver's Corner

NEWSLETTER



Take a peek! Inside this month's issue:

- Resilience: ready to use tips!
- Empathy to build resilience: the WIG technique
- Resource recommendations
- Compliments: what are yours saying?

Buzz Word: Resilience

You've probably heard it a lot more recently than in the past. Whether you say resilience, grit, or simply "getting back up"... we've all been hearing and talking about how we build it in our kids and ourselves. In this month's newsletter we bring you tips and tools that any parent can use to encourage resilience in your child!

Resiliency: ready to use tips!

Resilience, or grit, is our ability to cope or adjust to change or when things are challenging. While the idea of building resiliency in our children can feel like an incredible task, there are lots of simple ways to do this everyday. Here are a few favorite tips that can be done easily at home!

- ★ **Model and norm:** dinnertime is a great time to bring up a challenge or disappointment you faced recently, or even that day. Your kids want to be like you, so sharing about a tough time, how you felt, and how you coped will make them feel more able to explore their own challenges. Brainstorm as a family other ways you can handle other tough situations in the future.
- ★ **"Parking Lot"** a frustration. If your child is upset about something that doesn't need to be fixed right then, tell them you want to "parking lot" that problem. Explain that you are glad they shared and sometimes it's best to take a break from trying to figure something out and come back to it later. When you revisit the next day, help your child to reflect on how their feelings about it may have changed with time. Compliment how they bounced back, or kept going despite the challenge.
- ★ **Don't "rush the rescue"!** Instead of fixing for your child, ask them "how do you think we could solve this?" This helps to build the problem solving part of resiliency that is key. If they say "I Don't know," try asking them "If a friend was having this problem what would you tell them?"

Empathy to build resilience: the WIG technique

When children are upset it quickly induces a want to fix what is causing them distress. But, as mentioned above, this can often lead us to "rush the rescue," and miss a chance to build critical skills in our children. Instead, what our children most often need is empathy. Displaying empathy in these situations helps us three fold: makes our kiddos feel heard, models the skill of empathy, and allows them to build resiliency. See their emotions as an opportunity to connect and build.

By staying calm while they share their frustrations you lower their emotional energy. Then make sure your child feels heard. This involves reflecting and validating. These two things lead to feeling understood and accepted which allows them to tackle challenges effectively. Psychologist Erin Magen writes that you can use the "WIG" or "What I Got" technique. This involves thinking about what your child shared with you and then using your language to reflect it back to them.

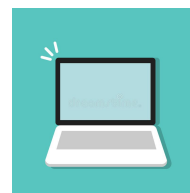
Examples include:

- "What I got from what you said is that it feels like..."
- "It sounds like..."
- "Am I getting this right, you feel...because..."
- "Let me see if I'm understanding..."

Now, validate those feelings!

Examples include:

- "I think most people would feel scared like you did."
- "I've felt that way before."
- "I can see why you felt..."



Book Recommendation:

"After the Fall: How Humpty Dumpty Got Back up Again" by Dan Santat. A fun twist on the famous story that focuses on what Humpty did after his fall.



Dinnertime Do Now:

Practice taking deep breaths as a way to calm our bodies and minds when something is hard. Breathe in for four counts through your nose, hold for two, breathe out for four counts through your mouth. Do this with your kids each day. Make it a part of your routine too!

Virtual Resource:

For younger kids, try Sesame Street's Resilience Toolkit:

[Sesame Street Communities](#)

Fun videos, printables, and articles!

Compliments: what are yours saying?

Compliments are a great way to positively connect and build self confidence in our children...BUT, just as important as giving compliments is how we say them! Often we default to common compliment language like "Wow, that was so smart," or "That drawing is beautiful." And while these compliments are good, we can tweak them slightly to make them great and help to build resilience. Think about using compliments to focus on the "process" not the "ability." For example, instead of saying "You're so smart" try using "Wow, that was really hard and I'm impressed you kept at it." This kind of language focuses on the idea of grit or resilience, and builds children's self trust for hard situations in the future. Other ones to try:

- "You really took that challenge and made the best of it."
- "I'm so impressed with how positive you stayed during that, I'm very proud of you."
- "You were so patient while completing that, I love how you took your time."
- "Wow, you worked for 30 minutes even with distractions around, and you got all your work done."

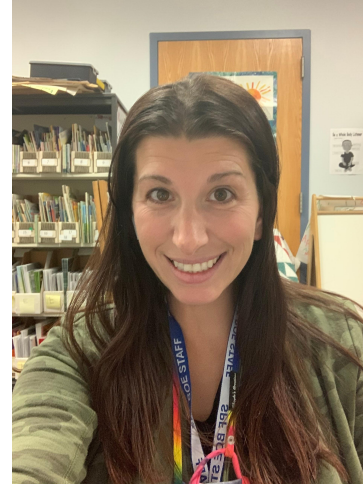
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