

Views from VanDeWalle

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April 17, 2024

Resiliency: What is It?

Resiliency: what is it and why is it important? In short, resiliency is the “ability to bounce back from challenges or hardships”. According to the Center on the Developing Child from Harvard University, “Reducing the effects of significant adversity on children’s healthy development is essential to the progress and prosperity of any society. Science tells us that some children develop resilience, or the ability to overcome serious hardship, while others do not. Understanding why some children do well despite adverse early experiences is crucial because it can inform more effective policies and programs that help more children reach their full potential.”

According to the Connect with Kids network, adapted from “Project Resilience”, there are seven attributes that describe ways you can show resiliency when facing challenges. Keep in mind that you – like most people – may show some, but not all, of these attributes/strengths when faced with difficult situations.

- **INSIGHT**—Having insight means asking questions of yourself, even when the questions are difficult. If you answer honestly, you can learn and move forward. Having insight helps you understand the problem and how to best solve it. Insight helps you analyze the situation from as many perspectives as you can.
- **INDEPENDENCE**—Showing independence means keeping a healthy distance between yourself and other people so you can think things through and do what is best for you. It also means knowing how to step away from people who seem to cause trouble or make things worse by their words or actions.
- **RELATIONSHIPS**—Building relationships means finding connections with people that are healthy for both of you and keeping those relationships growing.
- **INITIATIVE**—Taking the initiative means taking control of the problem and working to solve it. It means asking questions of yourself and answering them as honestly as you can, so you can move past a sticky situation. Sometimes people who take initiative become the leader in activities and teamwork.
- **CREATIVITY**—Using creativity requires that you use your imagination or resourcefulness to express your feelings, thoughts and plans in some unique way. Remember that when you make something happen, it shows resiliency of spirit and a positive attitude.
- **HUMOR**—Humor is the ability to find something funny (especially yourself!) in a situation, even when things seem bad. Humor often gives you the perspective needed to relieve tension and make a situation better.
- **MORALITY**— Being a person of morality means knowing the difference between right and wrong and being willing to choose and stand up for what is right.

In conclusion, it is important for both youth and parents to communicate ways how they can adapt to change, stress or problems and are able to take things in stride. The result of this bouncing back is a feeling of success and confidence.