

# **Building Resilient Kids**

**Resilience represents the  
manifestation of positive adaptation  
despite significant life adversity  
(Robertson).**



**At the end of this sharing, you will be able to:**

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- **Clarify the complex findings from resilience research in psychology.**
- **Discuss and learn how to start encouraging the 5 muscles for resilience in your children.**



# Qualities of the Resilient Child

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- When facing a crisis or challenge
- He/she has a can-do spirit.
- He/she is able to care for their own emotional distress or look for help
- He/she will find ways to overcome the challenges
- He/she is not afraid of new situations and challenges

# Educating for Resilience

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What does an authoritative teaching style look like? These are four key areas of importance:

1. The teachers monitor and supervise
2. They provide consistent discipline
3. They are supportive and communicative
4. They help the children to develop emotional awareness, expressiveness, and control.

Authoritative teachers set clear limit and then monitor and supervise the children to make sure the rules are followed.

# 5 Muscles to Building A Resilient Child

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- Social Competence
- Problem-Solving Skills
- Critical Consciousness
- Autonomy
- Sense of Purpose

# 5 Muscles to Building A Resilient Child

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## 1. SOCIAL COMPETENCE

Includes qualities such as responsiveness, especially the ability to *elicit positive responses from others*; flexibility, including the ability to move between different cultures; *empathy*; communication skills; and *a sense of humor*.

# Social competence includes

## Self-regulation

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- Self-regulation includes the abilities to control impulses, delay gratification, resist temptation and peer pressure, reflect on one's feelings, and monitor oneself (Kostelnik et al., [2002](#)).
- Much of self-regulation involves the *management of emotion*.



# Social competence includes Self-regulation

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- ***Emotional regulation*** is “the extrinsic and intrinsic processes responsible for monitoring, evaluating, and modifying emotional reactions... to accomplish one’s goals” (Thompson, [1994](#), pp. 27–28).
- In a recent study, preschoolers’ emotional competence, including ***self-regulation***, was found to contribute significantly to their long-term social competence (Denham et al., [2003](#)).

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- EMOTIONAL REGULATION

allows for

- SELF-REGULATION

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- **Marshmallow Test**
  - **<http://www.thetimeparadox.com/2008/08/the-marshmallow-experiment/>**
  - **<http://www.thetimeparadox.com/2008/09/the-marshmallow-game-modifying-kids-time-perspective/>**
  - <http://www.thetimeparadox.com/2008/09/the-marshmallow-game-modifying-kids-time-perspective/>

# What do you already do to build

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- SOCIAL COMPETENCE?
- Discuss with a partner next to you

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**The teacher's role in strengthening social competence is to help children *constructively channel and manage their feelings and impulses.***



# Activities – Emotion- Focused Coping

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- **Laugh and pick yourself up**
- **Distract self from problem**
  - **E.g. music, hobbies, sport etc**

# Activities – Problem- Focused Coping

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- Break down the problem
- Plan
- See whether it can be solved
- “Serenity Prayer”
- God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change; courage to change the things I can and wisdom to know the difference.

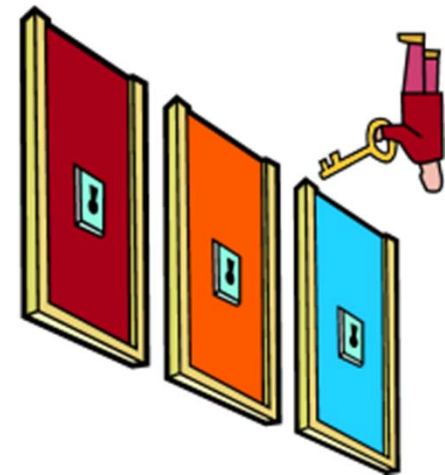
## Interpersonal knowledge and skills

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Social competence also includes understanding others' needs and feelings, articulating one's own ideas and needs, solving problems, cooperating and negotiating, expressing emotion, *“reading” social situations accurately, adjusting behavior to meet the demands of different social situations, and initiating and maintaining friendships* (Kostelnik et al., [2002](#); Odom et al., [2002](#)).



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- Acquiring social knowledge and mastering social skills are difficult and comprehensive tasks for young children; once children have learned new social knowledge and skills, *they need to know when to use them, where to use them, and how to choose from among them* (McCay & Keyes, [2002](#)).



# What do you already do to build

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- INTERPERSONAL KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS?
- Discuss with a partner next to you

# 5 Muscles to Building Resilient Child

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## 2. PROBLEM-SOLVING SKILLS

Encompass the ability to plan; to be resourceful in seeking help from others; and to think critically, creatively, and reflectively.



# Activities for Problem-Solving

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- **Give them challenges (e.g. plan a family trip)**
- **Plan the budget for a weekend trip**
- **Deal with everyday problems**
- **Read stories about dealing with adversities e.g. bullying**
- **Studies**
- **Making friends**
- **Read papers together... how to work on issues**

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# High Challenge, High Support



# What do you already do to build

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- PROBLEM SOLVING SKILLS?
- Discuss with a partner next to you

# 5 Muscles to Building Resilient Children

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## 3. CRITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS

A ***reflective awareness*** of the structures of oppression (be it from an alcoholic parent, an insensitive school, or a racist society) and creating strategies for overcoming them has been key.

# Activities for Critical Consciousness

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- **Control their media consumption**
- **What is the social causes where they need and can be a change agent**





# Videos

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- We Can Be Heroes -- Singapore National Day Video  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GLqVWEI70vc>
- [RYAN HRELJAC: Ordinary kid, extraordinary impact](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1cpBplxYh7M)  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1cpBplxYh7M>

# What do you already do to build

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- CRITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS?
- Discuss with a partner next to you

# 5 Muscles to Building A Resilient Child

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## 4. AUTONOMY

Having a sense of one's own identity and an ability to act independently and to exert some control over one's environment, including a sense of task mastery, *internal locus of control*, and self-efficacy.

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The development of resistance (*refusing to accept negative messages about oneself*) and of detachment (*distancing oneself from dysfunction*) serves as a powerful protector of autonomy.

# Activities for Autonomy

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- **Do something that has an effect**
- **Proactive/Reactive/Passive coke can**
- **Build skills to do things themselves**
- **Cooking**
- **When to take the bus themselves**
- **Positive Affirmation (Positive Self-talk)**

# What do you already do to build

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- AUTONOMY?
- Discuss with a partner next to you

# 5 Muscles to Building A Resilient Child

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## 5. SENSE OF PURPOSE

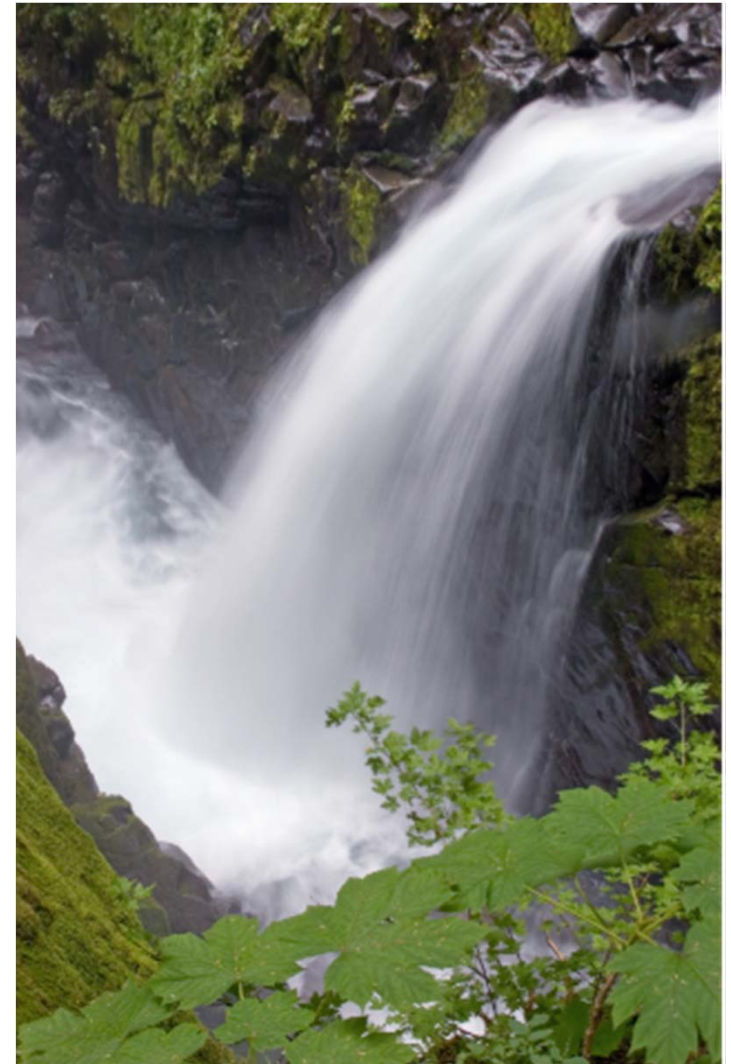
Sense of purpose and a belief in a bright future, including goal direction, educational aspirations, achievement motivation, persistence, hopefulness, *optimism*, and spiritual connectedness.



# Activities for Sense of Purpose

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- Religion
- Plan for study
- Plan for hobbies
- Flow
  - purpose of life etc





# Video

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- Flow
- [http://www.ted.com/talks/lang/eng/mihaly\\_csikszentmihalyi\\_on\\_flow.html](http://www.ted.com/talks/lang/eng/mihaly_csikszentmihalyi_on_flow.html)

# Planning and decision-making skills

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- The ability to act in a purposeful way, by making choices, developing plans, solving problems, and *carrying out positive actions to achieve social goals* has been described as another important component of social competence (Kostelnik et al., [2002](#)).

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- **Learning to make real and meaningful choices is generally considered an important goal of early education (Bredekamp & Copple, [1997](#)).**
  - **As children engage in free play, for example, they gain important practice in making choices about where to play, what to play, how to play, and with whom to play.**



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- They develop plans (more or less consciously) for how to enter an attractive play activity already in progress, or how to create an airport in the block center.
  - Parents can help to scaffold young children's budding ability to be *thoughtful, planful and intentional as they make decisions about social goals* and as they act to carry out their plans.

# What do you already do to build

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- SENSE OF PURPOSE?
- Discuss with a partner next to you

# References

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- The Resilience Factor
- Karen Reivich and Andrew Shatte