

PEARL RIVER SCHOOL DISTRICT

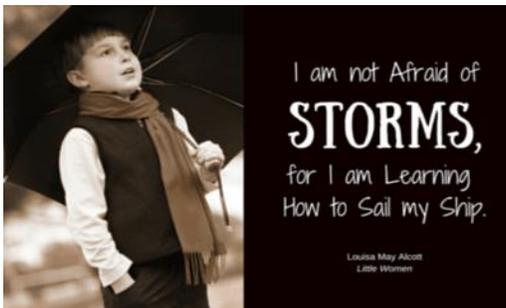
SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS

NEWSLETTER

FALL 2019



RESILIENCE is the ability to meet and overcome adversity in ways that maintain or promote well-being. It incorporates attributes like grit, persistence, initiative, and determination.



Miguel Arias ariam@pearlriver.org

James Calisi calisij@pearlriver.org

Krystina Kane kanekr@pearlriver.org

Ellen McCabe mccabee@pearlriver.org

Jamie Martens martensj@pearlriver.org

Rebecca Massa massar@pearlriver.org

Samantha Turco turcos@pearlriver.org

Supporting Children's Mental Health

- **Create a sense of belonging.** Feeling connected and welcomed is essential to children's positive adjustment, self-identification, and sense of trust in others and themselves.
- **Promote resilience.** Adversity is a natural part of life and being resilient is important to overcoming challenges and good mental health. Connectedness, competency, helping others, and successfully facing difficult situations can foster resilience.
- **Develop competencies.** Children need to know that they can overcome challenges and accomplish goals. Achieving academic success and developing individual talents and interests helps children feel competent and more able to deal with stress positively.
- **Social competency** is also important. Having friends and staying connected to friends and loved ones can enhance mental wellbeing. Encourage children to be inclusive when interacting with peers, celebrate acts of kindness, and reinforce the availability of adult support.
- **"Catch" them being successful.** Positive feedback validates and reinforces behaviors or accomplishments that are valued by others.
- **Encourage helping others.** Children need to know that they can make a difference.
- **Encourage good physical health.** Good physical health supports good mental health. Healthy eating habits and exercising, decreases negative emotions such as anxiety, anger, and depression.

nasponline.org

TIPS FOR BUILDING RESILIENCE

Make connections Teach your child how to make friends, including the skill of empathy, or understanding how others are feeling. Encourage your child to be a friend in order to get friends. Build a strong family network to support your child through his or her inevitable disappointments and hurts.

Help your child by having him or her help others Children who may feel helpless can be empowered by helping others. Engage your child in age-appropriate volunteer work.

Maintain a daily routine Sticking to a routine can be comforting to children, especially younger children who crave structure in their lives. Encourage your child to develop his or her own routines.

Take a break While it is important to stick to routines, endlessly worrying can be counter-productive. Teach your child how to focus on something besides what's worrying him. Be aware of what your child is exposed to that can be troubling, whether it be news, the Internet or overheard conversations, and make sure your child takes a break from those things if they trouble him/her.

Teach your child self-care Make yourself a good example, and teach your child the importance of making time to eat properly, exercise and rest. Time for fun and "down time" are important parts of taking care of oneself and managing stress.

Move toward your goals Teach your child to set reasonable goals and then to move toward them one step at a time. Moving toward that goal — even if it's a tiny step — and receiving praise for doing so will focus your child on what he or she has accomplished rather than on what hasn't been accomplished, and can help build the resilience to move forward in the face of challenges.

Nurture a positive self-view Help your child remember ways that he or she has successfully handled hardships in the past and then help him understand that these past challenges help him build the strength to handle future challenges. Help your child learn to trust himself to solve problems and make appropriate decisions. Teach your child to see the humor in life, and the ability to laugh at one's self.

Keep things in perspective and maintain a hopeful outlook Even when your child is facing very painful events, help him look at the situation in a broader context and keep a long-term perspective. Although your child may be too young to consider a long-term look on his own, help him or her see that there is a future beyond the current situation and that the future can be good. An optimistic and positive outlook enables your child to see the good things in life and keep going even in the hardest times.

Look for opportunities for self-discovery Tough times are often the times when children learn the most about themselves. Help your child take a look at how whatever he is facing can teach him "what he is made of."

Accept that change is part of living Change often can be scary for children and teens. Help your child see that change is part of life and new goals can replace goals that have become unattainable.