

parenting*ideas

Bringing out the Best in Kids Series
by **Michael Grose**

PARENTING FOR RESILIENCE WORKBOOK



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CONTENTS

SECTION 1:	THE IMPORTANCE OF RESILIENCE	4
SECTION 2:	THE FIVE S'S OF RESILIENCE	7
SECTION 3:	HOW TO DEVELOP RESILIENCE IN YOUR KIDS?	9
SECTION 4:	DEVELOPING YOUR CHILD'S COPING STRATEGIES	13
SECTION 5:	HELPING KIDS GET THROUGH TOUGH STUFF	17



THE IMPORTANCE OF RESILIENCE

Twelve year old Jack was upset. His best friend had snubbed him because he heard along the grapevine that Jack had made some derogatory remarks about him. Jack took this rejection to heart. He couldn't remember saying anything nasty about his friend. It began to play on his mind so much that it was affecting his schoolwork.

Jack confided in his dad, who didn't know how to respond.

At this point Jack's dad contacted me for some clues.

This was a tough one. On the one hand this well-meaning father wanted to help his son but this was an issue that his son needed to sort out himself.

It was obvious that Jack needed to be more resilient and not take such rejection to heart. This is easier said than done! However those kids who are socially and academically most successful usually have a strong sense of personal resilience that enables them to bounce back from some of life's curve balls.

Jack is typical of many children of this current generation who lack resilience. Parental overprotection and an aversion to kids taking even safe risks robs many kids of vital opportunities to develop problem-solving skills as well as coping skills, which are necessary for resilience.

The notion of resilience is very much a 21st Century parenting concept that every parent and teacher needs to understand.

Some kids are resilient by nature – their temperament helps them to be mentally and psychologically tough. You know those kids. They get straight back up after a setback or disappointment. Rejection in the playground doesn't faze them. They are flexible enough to cope with changes such as moving from one school to another. They keep working hard in school even if they don't succeed at first. They have resilient spirits. Unfortunately, not every child has such natural resilience.

The good news is that most of the research into the area indicates that resilience can be nurtured and developed, particularly when parents themselves are resilient and they actively foster it in their kids.

Resilient kids share four basic skill sets - independence, problem-solving, optimism and social connection. There are many ways parents can develop these skills but the key is for parents to allow kids to fully contribute to their family. By developing children's self-help skills parents promote a real sense of independence as well as their children's resourcefulness.

Parents also need to resist sorting out children's social problems and skill them up to solve their own friendship challenges. Sometimes parents can create more problems by interfering in children's disputes. From the resilience perspective parents are better off coaching kids through some of their more challenging moments and reviewing what they may have learned for next time.

Kids learn optimism from home. Martin Seligman, the author of *The Optimistic Child*, found that kids pick up the explanatory style of the parent they spend most time around, usually mothers, by the age of eight. So a parent's optimistic, can-do attitude pays-off.

Regular positive parent-child interactions are perhaps the best way for kids to pick up basic social skills that enable them to interact with their peers as well as more subtle resilience skills such as humour, goal-setting and persistence. So parents need to look for as many opportunities to spend time with and talk to their kids as humanly possible.

Children's life experiences contribute to their resilience. The seemingly small disappointments that kids experience such as not being invited to a party, missing being picked in a sports team, or not achieving success in a school project the first time help them learn to cope with hardships and frustrations. Coping with minor development issues such as change, sibling conflict and even failure build up a psychological hardiness that helps them when they face some of life's big challenges in adolescence and beyond.

In Jack's case the rejection by his friend is unpleasant but not abnormal. Kids at this stage can be cruel to each other. Misunderstandings are common. The best way his father could help was to listen to his son, show understanding but also to see this incident as a teachable moment. I advised this dad to lead his son through some possible solutions and also show faith in his ability to get by. A genuine show of faith in kids' abilities to cope rather than simply a 'get over it' attitude gives kids great hope when they face difficulties. The hardest part of parenting is keeping kids chins up when life doesn't go their way.

Parents also need to put children and young people in situations where they need to draw on their resourcefulness. Camps and adventure activities are great ways for kids to stretch themselves and test their problem-solving and coping skills. My second daughter believes an eight day adventure camp she went on as a fourteen year old was the defining event of her early adolescence. It involved real physical endeavour which stretched her to the limits, literally bringing her to tears on many occasions. It was the first time she realised that she could cope with being separated from her friends and family as well as the comforts of home.

One year later she went on a six month student exchange to the other side of the world. While away she frequently drew on the coping skills she learned on her eight day camp to overcome homesickness and deal with the challenges of living in an unfamiliar environment and culture for such a long time.

Promoting resilience in kids is a not a single event but a continuous process. It requires parents, teachers and other adults to look for opportunities for kids to stretch socially, academically and even emotionally. It also requires parents to see some of their children's difficulties and hardships as valuable learning opportunities rather than catastrophic events that will scar them psychologically. It's worth remembering that the stronger the wind, the stronger the trees so if we want our kids to be resilient it's best not to be afraid of a little wind. In fact, we should welcome it every now and then.

PARENTING DEVELOPMENT

Parenting for Resilience Quiz

Complete the following parenting for resilience quiz. State whether these resilience concepts apply to your family or not?

- 1 Kids don't always get what they want. The Rolling Stones were right when they sang, "You can't always get what you want, but you can try" all those years ago. YES / NO
- 2 They have plenty of opportunities to solve their own problems without adults trying to fix everything for them. YES / NO
- 3 Children are expected to help at home from a young age without being paid. YES / NO
- 4 Parental expectations for success are positive, realistic and based on child's interests and aptitudes rather than on adult wishes. YES / NO
- 5 Children receive liberal amounts of encouragement but moderate amounts of praise. YES / NO
- 6 Children have plenty of free time to do three essential things – play, have fun and to daydream. But they need to have the opportunity to initiate all three, rather than have them initiated by someone. YES / NO
- 7 Children are involved in family decision-making. YES / NO
- 8 Children have the opportunity to identify their strengths and then build on these to develop their unique identities through adolescence. YES / NO
- 9 Children grow up in families that have their own rituals, rights of passage and celebrations. YES / NO
- 10 The adults in children's lives are resilient and lead balanced lifestyles. YES / NO

Parenting for Resilience Quiz ANSWERS

ANSWERS

- 1** Yes. The outcomes are better for children who can practise impulse control and learn to wait until things improve.
- 2** Yes. Children will only develop their inner resources and problem-solving skills when given the opportunity to develop their resourcefulness.
- 3** Yes. Children learn to be useful and the skills of participation when they help at home.
- 4** Yes. Expectations for success need to be pitched just ahead of where children are at. Too high and children may give in. Too low and they will reach them!
- 5** Yes. Praise is like French fries – kids want them but they don't need them. They need something a little more substantial than quick fix, feel-good praise. They need something substantial like encouragement to help them grow and develop.
- 6** Yes. These three essentials help insulate human beings when life gets out of control.
- 7** Yes. They learn to impact positively on their environment.
- 8** Yes. When children develop their strengths they are more likely to reach their full potential.
- 9** Yes. These rituals provide important anchors to children as they develop and grow away.
- 10** Yes. Resilient children need to be surrounded by resilient adults rather than adults who are continually stressed and have no real life aside from children and work. A hobby is a good place to start if you feel that life is all work (and kids) and no fun.

SCORES

- 9-10** Outstanding. You are helping your children develop strong psychological muscles.
- 5-8** Good. Just need to pick up a couple of areas.
- 2-4** Hmm! May need to make some adjustments.
- 0-1** Total overhaul needed. Start at number 10

THE FIVE S'S OF RESILIENCE

Every child experiences Hardships, Frustration and Disappointment of some kind. They are part of life. Pets pass away. Friends move town. Families move home and kids change schools. Children miss being picked for a team. Teens are left off party invitation lists. Coping with Hardships, Frustration and Disappointments, both big and small is part of growing up.

How kids respond to these events will be determined by their resilience and will have a profound impact on their future success and well-being.

There are five factors to consider that contribute to children's and young people's resilience.

Sometimes we as parents want to protect our kids from experiencing these difficulties. It's better to help kids develop ways of coping and also of overcoming the difficulties if applicable.



THESE FACTORS ARE

1 SPIRIT

Some kids through their temperaments have resilient spirits. You know these kids because they spring back quickly from adversity. They experience disappointment and they respond quickly with a joke or a remark. Sometimes these kids can really test us with their spirited behaviour, but their spirit is an asset when the chips are down. Spirit consists of many characteristics including determination and persistence to succeed; the propensity to focus unflinchingly on a goal, or even the ability to laugh or find humour in the face of adversity.

2 SKILLS

Resilient kids share a number of different skill sets, which enable them to cope and bounce back from some of life's hardships. There are four basic skill sets that kids pick up from their environment, either through overt teaching or through modelling. **The four broad skills of resilience are:**

INDEPENDENCE

the development of self-help skills and the ability to function freely and safely outside the family.

PROBLEM-SOLVING

the ability for children to resolve many of their own problems in their own way and find their own solutions.

OPTIMISM

involves a way of thinking about the world that shows a belief that success can happen and hurdles overcome.

SOCIAL SKILLS

includes the ability to tap into other people, and a set of coping skills such as the use of humour and an ability to compartmentalize events so that one negative event doesn't spoil everything else.

3 SUPPORT

The quality of the support kids experience from adults will determine how they react to some of life's difficulties. Kids who have the assistance of at least one attentive, healthy adult recover more favourably than those who are surrounded by inattentive, stressed adults. The power of one supportive, attentive adult is immense in difficult times.

4 SELF-ESTEEM

Kids' sense of self is often tested by adverse events. Kids who have a positive sense of themselves built on a solid foundation of competency ('I am capable 'cos I can do lots of things') and mirrored messages ('my mum tells me I'm clever so I must be') are less adversely affected by some of the social difficulties they may experience. Self-esteem teflon coats kids against criticism and social rejection.

5 STUFF

(HARDSHIPS, FRUSTRATION & DIFFICULTIES)

Kids' previous experience of minor adversity helps them cope with major adversity. Either consciously or unconsciously they reach back and use the skills they have developed through previous experience to help get them through. This 'stuff' is also known as hardships, frustration and difficulties (HFD's).

There are six common or developmental Hardships, Frustrations and Difficulties that kids experience on a regular basis. These are: Disappointment, Loss, Change, Rejection, Conflict and Failure.

HOW TO DEVELOP RESILIENCE IN YOUR KIDS

There are a number of ways parents can actively promote a sense of resilience. Here are three of the most potent ways of developing real resilience in kids.

1 HAVE A POSITIVE ATTITUDE YOURSELF

Your attitude as a parent to children's HFD's impacts on their ability to spring back. It helps if you see life's minor hardships as learning experiences. I am not suggesting you want bad things to happen. You wish they didn't happen but make the best of things when they do.

The ground-breaking research of Martin Seligman, author of *The Optimistic Child*, found kids have a remarkable tendency to emulate the thinking of their parents. It makes sense. Kids take their cues from their parents so make sure you model 'you can do it' attitude for your child when he meets some of life's curve balls.

POSITIVE REFRAMING

One very practical thing parents can do is to teach their kids the skill of positive reframing. That is, develop the art of finding something positive in even the most difficult situations. Start by getting kids to notice the good in themselves and others.

Then encourage them to find something positive in a bad experience.

Here are a few positive spins that kids can find in most Hardships, Frustrations and Difficulties:

✓ LEARNING SOMETHING TO PREVENT IT HAPPENING NEXT TIME

"You may have been unsuccessful this time but you know what to do next time."

✓ POSITIVE SPIN-OFF

"It may have been a boring party but you did meet a new friend, which is great."

✓ LEARNING ABOUT YOURSELF

"Maybe football, rather than cricket, is more your bag."

✓ IT'S JUST THIS! AVOIDANCE OF SOMETHING MORE UNPLEASANT

"You may have wrecked your skateboard but at least you didn't get hurt and end up in hospital."

2 LOOK FOR TEACHABLE MOMENTS

Kids live in the NOW. Fun comes before work in their dictionaries. It's easy for parents to get tied up in the NOW particularly when kids experience hardships, frustrations and difficulties. We just want to take away their pain!

When we focus solely on making the situation better we miss some massive opportunities to help kids learn and grow.

The big learning opportunities are usually hidden as problems. Most commonly they are: change, loss, rejection, failure, disappointment and conflict.

Perhaps your child has experienced one of these common challenges:

- ▶ Being taught by a less than favourable teacher
- ▶ Been snubbed by a classmate or friend
- ▶ Missed being picked for a team even though they tried hard
- ▶ Worried about going to school camp
- ▶ Had something stolen from them

I am not suggesting we want bad things to happen but developmentally life throws up these types of curve balls all the time for kids.

How they cope will be determined by their resilience and the mindsets of the significant adults around them. When parents and teachers have mindsets for resilience then they see these situations as TEACHABLE MOMENTS.

A teachable moment is usually disguised as a problem and is easily missed when we focus on the now.

When faced with a TEACHABLE moment ask yourself:

- ✓ How can I teach my child to cope? (e.g. Encouraging kids to talk about problems is a great coping skill.)
- ✓ What can my child learn about himself for next time? (e.g. A child may learn when he goes on a school camp that he was dreading that he can spend time away from home and still survive.)
- ✓ What can my child learn to avoid or turn this situation around?

e.g. A child may learn that he can reduce conflict with less than pleasant peers by ignoring nasty comments and actively spending more time with friendly kids.



Parenting has always required an exceptionally strong set of skills, including carer, nurturer, leader and negotiator. That's why it is such a hard job.

BUT the longer I am involved in parenting the more I am convinced that Parenting is fundamentally about TEACHING.

The ability to pass on skills, knowledge and attitudes is the most important skill of all.

We teach by modelling but we can also teach kids explicitly. That means we talk to kids about 'stuff' and help them work out how they may cope or manage different situations they meet.

First we need to be on the lookout for TEACHABLE MOMENTS. Then make the most of these opportunities so that kids can grow and learn from some of the challenges they face.

Mastering these teachable moments is how parents help their kids become resilient and bounce back from some of the setbacks they encounter now and, importantly, in the future.

Make kids active participants in the family

Active participation in a family develops the self-help, problem-solving and independence skills of kids. This means parents don't spoil kids by doing everything for them and actively help kids develop a range of self-help skills and family help skills. The basic task of parenting, whether you have a two year old or a twenty-two year old, is to work yourself out of a job at the first possible chance.

That means parents need to do less, rather than more for their kids. It's easy for parents to take on the jobs and responsibilities that really should belong to their children. With toddlers it is so easy to dress, feed and clean up after them rather than give these jobs over to them.

With school-aged children we can find ourselves making lunches, getting kids out of bed and cleaning out schoolbags rather than giving these basic tasks of living over to them. And we pay for teenager's mobile phone bills, drive them when there is public transport available and forget to ask them to help out at home.



TIP NO. 1 FOR DEVELOPING INDEPENDENCE

Be clear about who owns jobs or tasks in your family and don't take on a child's job, or part of a task, unless there is extenuating circumstances such as illness.

I recently met a mother who was very clear about jobs allocation in her family. It is her job to wash the clothes of her early teenage children but it is their job to place them in the washing basket. She doesn't check bedrooms as it is not her job to place kids' clothes in the washing basket.

Okay, I can hear you thinking, "Sounds good but what happens if kids don't give a toss and they don't mind being dirty?" Good point. This mum has a son who neglects his personal hygiene. But she didn't become overly fussed about that.

She certainly didn't get fussed when he played a game of football in the same wet, muddy jumper that lay in his sports bag for a week. And she happily showed him how to work the washing machine when he wanted his favourite shirt, which he forgot to put in the washing basket, to be washed for a special night out.

TIP NO. 2 FOR DEVELOPING INDEPENDENCE

Never be more worried about a child's job than they are, otherwise it becomes your job, not theirs.

This mum remained very clear that it was her job to wash the clothes but it was not her job to remind kids to put clothes in the washing basket. She knew that as soon as she keeps reminding them, it becomes HER job rather than her children's job.

Here's my challenge for you: Think of a job that you regularly do for your child that he or she can do for him or herself. Then step back and enable your child to do that for themselves on a full-time basis. Do less not more for your kids.

If you do that, then you can congratulate yourself as you have moved one step more toward REDUNDANCY.



PARENTING DEVELOPMENT EXERCISE

1 THINK OF A RECENT CHALLENGE THAT YOUR CHILD EXPERIENCED

What was the situation?

How do you, or how could you, turn this challenge into a teachable moment?

2 HOW CAN YOU APPLY THE FIVE S'S IN SECTION 2 TO YOUR CURRENT PARENTING?

DEVELOPING YOUR CHILD'S COPING STRATEGIES

It's useful to reflect on how you cope when life throws you curve balls. Healthy adults develop a series of coping mechanisms to draw on, often instinctively, when they experience stress or some difficulty so that they don't become overwhelmed.

It helps to share your coping mechanisms with your children. It's very reassuring for kids to know that their parents also experience and overcome difficulty.

Following are 12 broad coping strategies you can develop in your children to help them deal with normal, developmental Hardships, Frustrations and Difficulties (HFD's).

It also helps to build up a vocabulary of resilience so I have included one possible phrase with each strategy. I encourage you to develop your own language of resilience that has meaning with your kids.

STRATEGY 1: LAUGH ABOUT IT

"Come on, laugh it off."

Humour is a great coping strategy. Encourage your kids to stand back and find a funny side to the situation they may be in. I am not suggesting that we trivialize situations, rather develop the ability to find some humour and hope in adversity. Humour is a powerful tool for resilience as it heightens feelings of control. It helps kids reframe a situation and gain some perspective.

STRATEGY 2: DON'T LET IT SPOIL EVERYTHING

"Come on, laugh it off."

Humour is a great coping strategy. Encourage your kids to stand back and find a funny side to the situation they may be in. I am not suggesting that we trivialize situations, rather develop the ability to find some humour and hope in adversity. Humour is a powerful tool for resilience as it heightens feelings of control. It helps kids reframe a situation and gain some perspective.

STRATEGY 3: GET AWAY FROM IT ALL

"Blink away the bad thoughts."

When kids are troubled by events, or spend too much time brooding do something to get their mind off things for a time. Play a game, spend time together, have a treat, watch some TV, go out – do something different to distract kids. Teach your kids that self-distraction is a healthy thing and usually gives them some perspective. It also prevents them from replaying awful experiences in their head and blowing them out of proportion.

STRATEGY 4: GET SOME HELP**"Who can help you with this?"**

A problem shared is a problem halved. Resilient people seek solace in the company of others when they experience difficulty. Some kids need help identifying who they can talk things through with – including friends, teachers and family members. It's also helpful to talk about how they can go about asking for assistance. Sometimes kids want to talk to others but don't know how to approach people so they bottle things up instead. Talk about the best way to open up dialogue with different groups of people with your kids.

STRATEGY 5: THIS IS NORMAL**"Everyone feels bad sometimes."**

Help kids to normalise a situation rather than personalise it. "You are not the only one to experience this" is a powerful concept for kids to grasp. It helps them understand that 'this too will pass'.

STRATEGY 6: SEE THE SILVER LINING**"What can you learn from this?"**

Optimistic people are able to find positive aspects in negative situations, no matter how small. This encourages people to feel like they have some control over situations and is the beginning of experiencing hope.

STRATEGY 7: HANG IN THERE**"Hang tough!"**

Help kids understand that most situations will improve or at least don't seem as bad after a time. This is particularly helpful when kids experience change of circumstances (such as starting secondary school) and loss (such as a best friend moving away).

STRATEGY 8: BLAME FAIRLY**"You didn't make this happen."**

Most things that happen to you, whether good or bad, occur due to some mixture of luck, other people and your own actions. Encourage your children to apportion blame fairly when difficult situations occur rather than catastrophise and personalize the situation.

STRATEGY 9: ACCEPT WHAT'S HAPPENED**"Go with the flow!"**

Help kids accept situations that won't change. It is natural to want to bring back pets that have passed away or a friend who has moved away. There comes a time when kids need to stop trying to change things and just accept the reality of the situation.

STRATEGY 10: KEEP YOUR PERSPECTIVE**"Where does this fit on the disaster meter?"**

Be mindful of your child's propensity to jump to the worst from time to time. A bit of reassurance is all that's needed in these one-off scenarios. Catastrophisers get themselves in a knot about relatively insignificant things. Okay, making a fool out of themselves may not be insignificant to kids, however compared to plenty of other events..... ..well, perspective is a good thing. Help them get some perspective by giving their worry a score out of ten, on how important the issue really is. (See the disaster meter reality check in the back of this manual).

STRATEGY 11: BE FLEXIBLE WITH YOUR THINKING**"You could be right, but have you thought about...?"**

Today's kids talk in extremes – 'awesome', 'the best' and 'gross' roll off their tongues easily these days. Extreme language leads to extreme thinking. If your child talks in absolutes then let them know that their language can exaggerate a situation out of all proportion.

Encourage kids to moderate their language. For instance, they can replace "I'm furious" with "I'm annoyed", "It's a disaster" with "It's a pain", "I can't stand it" with "I don't like it". Sounds minor but by changing kids' language you change how they think about events and, more importantly, how they feel.

STRATEGY 12: LET'S SET A GOAL OR TWO**"What can we do about this?"**

Help your child see that there are solutions to many HFD's but first they do need to do something. A poor speller can improve but first he's got to get a list of words out and start practising. Help kids set realistic goals and put plans in place to improve their situation. The plans need to be realistic (e.g. learn one new spelling word a day rather than ten).

PARENTING DEVELOPMENT EXERCISE

1 WHAT ARE THREE COPING SKILLS YOU LEARNED FROM YOUR OWN PARENTS?

2 THINK OF FIVE OR SIX KEY RESILIENCE PHRASES THAT YOU CAN USE WITH YOUR KIDS?

3 WHAT DOES THE PHRASE 'THE STRONGER THE WIND THE STRONGER THE TREES' MEAN TO YOU?

HELPING KIDS GET THROUGH TOUGH STUFF

Kids typically face Hardships, Frustrations and Difficulties as they go through different developmental stages. These include changes in routines, social disappointments and loss of friendships. How stressful these everyday events are for children will depend on their coping skills and their home and school environments.

Major Hardships, Frustrations and Difficulties happen from time to time such as divorce, illness or moving home. At these times children and young people need extra support to develop resilient attitudes and skills. This doesn't mean adults should molly-coddle them. However it does mean that they will need more of our energy and focus for a time.



Here are five ways to support kids who are experiencing significant hardships in their lives:

1 WHAT ARE THREE COPING SKILLS YOU LEARNED FROM YOUR OWN PARENTS?

That means you listen to them and hopefully get them to talk. Some kids will put up a mask and refuse to speak. Respect that but look for ways to get around their masks. At times of significant hardship kids need at least one healthy, attentive adult who will hang in there with them and help them process events.

2 MOVE TO NORMALISATION AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE

Sometimes children personalise events believing that they were the cause of them. Pessimists typically attribute bad events to themselves ("It's my fault I have no friends") rather than to circumstances ("They are an unfriendly lot in that football club.") Some kids also catastrophise ("This is the worst thing ever.") and over-generalise events ("Everyone is against me"). Move them to rational thinking by checking the facts and letting them know that others have lost friends, moved home and changed family circumstances and survived. This aspect of keeping hope is important.

3 KEEP THEIR CONFIDENCE UP AND HELP THEM GET ON WITH LIFE

The really hard part is getting kids back on the metaphorical horse once they have fallen. Don't allow them to feel sorry for themselves, nor accept extreme negativity but keep their confidence up and let them know that this hardship will pass. It always does.

4 PUMP UP THE POSITIVES

How do you cope when life throws you curve balls? Let your kids know your own coping strategies. As many hardships children experience involve social skills look for ways to skill kids up in this area, in particular, how to seek out friends, how to stand up for yourself and how to be a good friend to others.

5 CATCH THEM BEING RESILIENT

Look for signs of recovery, perseverance, disclosure (talking about the bad stuff), handling disappointments and checking the facts rather than jumping to conclusions. These are resilient behaviours, which can be pointed out to kids.

Resilience is about coping now and building strengths for the future. There is no doubt that the skills kids learn when they experience small HFD's stand them in good stead when the bigger stuff eventually comes their way. Seeing life as a series of learning experiences is part of the mindset when you parent for resilience.

HARDSHIPS, FRUSTRATIONS AND DIFFICULTIES (HFD'S)

Keep this list of developmental and major HFD's that your child may experience as a reference.

DEVELOPMENTAL	MAJOR
<p>PRE-SCHOOL (1-4 YEARS)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Birth of sibling Adjustment to child care Transition to preschool Separation from attachment figures <p>PRIMARY SCHOOL AGE (5-12 YEARS)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transition to school Competition with peers Peer relationships Peer teasing Peer pressure (e.g. to go with a fad or do something they don't want to do) Sibling reputation pressures Homework Poor academic outcomes Conflict with the teacher Disappointments connected with sport or other extracurricular activities Class presentation Worry about tests Time pressures (balancing schoolwork demands and extracurricular or home demands) Child-parent conflicts Early puberty <p>ADOLESCENCE (13-19 YEARS)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hormonal changes Growth changes Physical appearance Peer pressure Heightened sexuality Issues of independence and freedom Relationship issues Increased responsibility for self in school Career and university choices Transition to work Part-time work Gender role issues Romantic partnership issues 	<p>DEATH</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parent Sibling Close relative Close friend Favourite pet <p>SERIOUS ILLNESS OR DISABILITY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Self Parent Sibling Close relative Close friend <p>OTHER EXTRAORDINARY TRAUMA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> War Fire or flood Legal problems Sexual and/or physical abuse Robbery or assault <p>PARENTAL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Divorce Remarriage Job loss, job start Abuse/violence Mental illness Alcohol and other substance abuse Being jailed <p>CHANGE IN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standard of living School district Residence Number of people living in home Parental contact (e.g. parent working long hours/shift work or loss of contact) Being bullied

DISASTER METER

Kids sometimes lose perspective when bad things happen. With your child make a list of disasters from 10 (really bad) - 0 (mild) and use this as a reality check when they catastrophise.

	10	
	9	
	8	
	7	
	6	
	5	
	4	
	3	
	2	
	1	
	0	