



RESILIENCE

Reintegreat School Toolkit

Building Resilience in Children

Definition

Resilience is the ability to *bounce back* from stress, adversity, failure, challenges, or even trauma. It is not fixed – resilience is a **skill that develops over time**.

Resilient children are:

- More likely to take healthy risks.
- Curious, brave, and willing to step outside of their comfort zone.
- Better problem-solvers and able to recover from mistakes.
- Confident in pursuing long-term goals.

Stress and Resilience

Every child will face stress in their lives. How they respond depends on their resilience. Stress can present through:

- Illness or trauma
- Moving house
- Bereavement
- Exams or academic pressure
- Bullying or cyberbullying
- Friendship breakdowns
- Parental separation

Important: Children need opportunities to experience manageable stress and work through it – without adults rushing in too quickly. This helps them develop coping skills for future challenges.

The 7 C's of Resilience

1. **Competence** – Building skills and giving opportunities to succeed.
2. **Confidence** – Encouraging belief in their own abilities.
3. **Connection** – Creating secure relationships with peers, school, and community.
4. **Character** – Developing integrity and a sense of right and wrong.
5. **Contribution** – Involving children in helping others to build purpose.
6. **Coping** – Equipping children with healthy coping strategies.

7. **Control** – Teaching responsibility and showing that actions have outcomes.

Classroom Strategies

- **Network of Support:** Use a hand outline where children write trusted people they can turn to (home and school).
- **Normalise Asking for Help:** Remind children that support is available in difficult times.
- **Embrace Mistakes:** Model mistakes and show how they lead to growth. Encourage a **growth mindset**.
- **Reframe Stress:** Teach that challenges can bring knowledge, strength, and new skills.
- **Practise Empathy:** Explore characters in books or scenarios and ask, “*How would you feel if that was you?*”
- **Model Optimism:** Adults should demonstrate resilience and positivity in daily life.
- **Encourage Problem-Solving:** Guide with questions instead of giving all the answers.
- **Label Emotions:** Reassure children that it’s okay to feel sad, angry, or worried – and that emotions will pass.
- **Create Belonging:** Promote supportive environments where children feel valued.
- **Mindfulness & Wellbeing Routines:** Embed breathing, relaxation, outdoor play, and exercise daily.
- **Promote Healthy Risk-Taking:** Encourage trying new sports, performances, or social interactions to build confidence.
- **Relax Kids / Similar Programmes:** Use structured programmes for self-affirmation, calming, and resilience-building.

Key Takeaway

Resilience is not about avoiding stress – it’s about **coping, adapting, and growing through challenges**. By embedding the 7 C’s, modelling resilience, and creating safe opportunities for children to face difficulty, we equip them with lifelong skills to thrive.