

# Bouncing Back Bouncing Back Bouncing Back



**W**hether children lose their favorite toy to the family dog, fall off their bicycle, or face a bully, one thing is certain: *All children experience stress and difficult times.* Resiliency is the ability to face a challenge and bounce back. Research increasingly shows that strategies for this can be taught and built upon.

The following six resiliency factors can help you strengthen your child's ability to bounce back:

## **1. Caring and Support**

Children need to know they are supported, taken care of, and loved unconditionally.

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They may have spilled their milk or wet the bed, but parents can assure them they are still loved. Involving

kids in groups through school, community, or faith-based organizations gives children a chance to learn that other people value and support them as well.

## **2. High Expectations for Success**

Children need to know others have faith in their abilities and that they can accomplish their goals. The message "You can do it" is powerful and begins early as parents delight in coos and babbles, first baby steps, and homework done well.

## **3. Opportunities for Meaningful Participation**

Children need to know they have input and some control over their own lives. Listening to their opinions and ideas and showing respect for their beliefs make children feel they are valuable participants. As children get older, they can become involved with volunteering in order to learn that their actions make a difference in the world.

## **4. Making Connections with Others**

Children need opportunities to be involved with others so they can develop close peer and adult relationships. Having play dates or being involved in hobbies or sports increases their sense of connection with others.

## **5. Clear Boundaries**

Children need boundaries, consistent expectations, and rules. They must be told to sit down in the highchair or not cross the street by themselves. Support children as they set boundaries for themselves. This proves invaluable as they learn to stand up for themselves and not let others take advantage of them.

## **6. Life Skills**

All of us must develop a number of skills in order to be productive, healthy individuals. The ability to resolve conflicts, listen, and communicate with others, as well as the ability to be flexible, cope with change, and achieve goals are some of the life skills you can help children learn.