



## FOSTERING RESILIENCE

How You Can Help Your  
Students Be Successful

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## THINKING OF THEIR FUTURE

Students spend the majority of their time in school and teachers have great influence on their outcome, both academically and as a person.

This workshop is designed to help you look for gaps in resiliency in your school setting and formulate a plan to address those concerns and learn some tools to help your students be successful.

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## RESILIENCE

Resilience, or the ability to adapt well to adversity, trauma, or stress, is a challenge facing everyone, but proves to be more difficult for students with learning challenges.

Fortunately, resilience can be learned.

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## RESILIENCE

Research shows that students who to develop secure attachments, healthy emotional regulation, and good interpersonal skills tend to develop a stronger inclination to be resilient.

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## ONE PROBLEM

Far too much time has been spent  
“protecting” our students’ self-esteem,  
rather than allowing for supportive failures.

Let them skin their knees!

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## STRUCTURE OR NOT?

Students need to know what to expect and what is expected of them. Structure provides a sense of security and comfort and can reduce the sense of chaos that stress can bring. Structure also requires creating rules and expectations and applying them consistently.

- ❖ Most students say they want more freedom, but when given even a small amount of independence without proper support, they will most likely fail.
- ❖ This is why structure in their lives is crucial and why it is important to wean them off of needing structure.
- ❖ It requires a great deal of responsibility on the part of the student.
- ❖ Students with learning difficulties are often confused as to what to do when a problem comes up or when they need to make a decision. Most times, they need to be given specific instructions and the proper tools.

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## ENABLING VS. EMPOWERING

- ❖ Enabling does not allow the student to find a solution to a problem or learn the process for making the wrong choice.
- ❖ Enabling is making excuses for the student and relieving them from responsibility.
- ❖ Enabling is blaming others, yourself or the learning disability.
- ❖ Enabling is doing things for the student, rather than letting them learn from their mistakes.

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## ENABLING VS. EMPOWERING

- ❖ Empowering allows the student to express their feelings without being judged as right or wrong.
- ❖ Empowering is being supportive, not nagging or excessively criticizing. Encourage *independent* decision making.
- ❖ Empowering allows a student to own their successes and failures. Let them do things for themselves.
- ❖ Empowering is allowing students to make choices and respecting their decisions no matter how hard it is for you to not correct them.

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## YOUR RESILIENCE

Think about a situation where you were faced with where you had to be resilient.

What helped you to bounce back, overcome that adversity and move on from the problem?

Factors to consider:

- ❖ Attitude
- ❖ Relationships
- ❖ Time

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## RESILIENCY WHEEL

### *The Resiliency Wheel*



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## KEYS TO BUILDING RESILIENCE

- ❖ Accountability
- ❖ Prosocial Behaviors/Character
- ❖ Relationships: model and discuss self-control and problem-solving
- ❖ Build their communication skills
- ❖ Be professional and creative

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## ACCOUNTABILITY

- ❖ Effective accountability requires a particular attitude on the part of the teacher.
- ❖ The responsibility for making choices about their behavior lies solely with them.
- ❖ In holding students accountable, you're doing what is best for them.

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## PROSOCIAL BEHAVIORS/CHARACTER

Students with learning differences often have interpersonal problems:

- ❖ With peers at school
- ❖ Joining groups/extracurricular activities
- ❖ Advocating for themselves
- ❖ Intuitively perceiving verbal & nonverbal cues that help in navigating various social situations

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## PROSOCIAL BEHAVIORS/CHARACTER

There are many ways to give students the tools to manage themselves socially:

- ❖ Understand and accept their learning challenges
- ❖ Problem solving
- ❖ Managing emotions when faced with change
- ❖ Flexibility
- ❖ Goal Setting
- ❖ Communication Skills
- ❖ Managing Relationships
- ❖ Taking responsibility

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## RESILIENCY BUILDERS

We teach our students to meet our expectations, which build character and help in the emergence of compassionate, respectful and responsible adults.

- ❖ Relationships
- ❖ Perceptiveness
- ❖ Independence
- ❖ Attitude
- ❖ Perseverance
- ❖ Humor
- ❖ Life Skills

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## WHAT CAN WE DO TO HELP?

We can teach all these skills throughout the school experience, but the important part is to let them do it themselves:

- ❖ Teach students about their strengths
- ❖ Establish & stick to routine
- ❖ Emphasize the importance of doing a good job
- ❖ Hold them responsible
- ❖ Use tools for success: (planners, problem solving steps, etc.)

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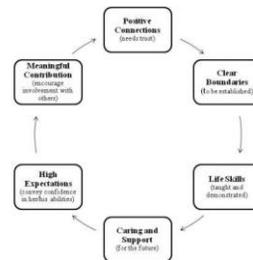
## THE INFLUENCES IN A STUDENT'S LIFE

- ❖ Help your student understand and accept their learning deficiencies.
- ❖ Support them, don't advocate for them.
- ❖ How we act and the decisions we make are determined by what we believe - positive or negative.
- ❖ Encouragement, hope and the ability to correct mistakes independently.

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## YOUR INFLUENCE IN A STUDENT'S LIFE



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## THEMES TO SUCCESS

Resilience is a combination of protective factors that enable people to adapt in the face of serious hardship, and is essential to ensuring that students who experience adversity can still become healthy, productive citizens.

There are 3 themes associated with students with learning differences who are successfully resilient:

- ❖ Motivation/Attitude
- ❖ Preparation
- ❖ Self-Advocacy

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## The Dos & Don'ts of Fostering Independence

Some tips to helping students become more resilient and foster independence are:

### DO:

- ❖ Be available with advice when requested.

### DON'T:

- ❖ Rush in and fix whatever the problem is, no matter how hard it is to not help.

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## The Dos & Don'ts of Fostering Independence

### DO:

- ❖ Be willing to share stories from your own experience in gaining independence.

### DON'T:

- ❖ Compare how you handled things better when you were that age.

### DO:

- ❖ Make it clear that he/she is still an important part of society by working hard, living independently and developing socially.

### DON'T:

- ❖ Close the doors if he/she needs support when things get tough in the real world.

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## A FINAL WORD



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