

PTO Meeting
November 17, 2016

From Friday November 18 Parent link message:

Resiliency: We had a great conversation on the topic of resiliency at last night's PTO meeting. As defined, resiliency is a strength...the quality in objects to hold or recover their shape, or in people to stay intact; the ability to recover quickly from discouragement or depression. The group discussed ten ways adults can build resiliency in children. An example is finding opportunities to engage your children in problem-solving language (ex. If your child asks if they're getting a shot at the doctor's office, instead of placating them, say, "I don't know. You might be due for a shot. Let's figure out how you're doing to get through it." If your child worries they'll hate their college, instead of saying, "You'll love it," you might explain that some freshmen don't like their school, and help them figure out what to do if they feel the same way. The following links were shared at the meeting and will be posted on the BG website. Resiliency, grit and a growth mindset are all skills we are working to develop at BG. Please review the resources provided and try one of the examples!

<https://www.aap.org/en-us/advocacy-and-policy/aap-health-initiatives/resilience/Pages/Promoting-Resilience.aspx>

<http://psychcentral.com/lib/10-tips-for-raising-resilient-kids/>

Ten Tips for Raising Resilient Kids:

1. Don't accommodate every need.

Whenever we try to provide certainty and comfort, we are getting in the way of children being able to develop their own problem-solving and mastery (Overprotecting kids only fuels their anxiety.)

2. Avoid eliminating all risk.

The key is to allow appropriate risks and teach your kids essential skills. Start young. The child who's going to get his driver's license is going to have started when he's 5 [years old] learning how to ride his bike and look both ways [slow down and pay attention]. Giving kids age-appropriate freedom helps them learn their own limits, she said.

3. Teach them to problem-solve.

Let's say your child wants to go to sleep-away camp, but they're nervous about being away from home. An anxious parent, Lyons said, might say, "Well, then there's no reason for you to go." In other words, engage your child in figuring out how they can handle challenges. Give them the opportunity, over and over, "to figure out what works and what doesn't."

4. Teach your kids concrete skills.

Focus on the specific skills they'll need to learn in order to handle certain situations. For instance, teach a shy child how to greet someone and start a conversation.

5. Avoid “why” questions.

“Why” questions aren’t helpful in promoting problem-solving. Ask “how” questions instead. “You left your bike out in the rain, and your chain rusted. How will you fix that?” “How” questions teach different skills. “How do you get yourself out of bed when it’s warm and cozy? How do you handle the noisy boys on the bus that bug you?”

6. Don’t provide all the answers.

Rather than providing your kids with every answer, start using the phrase “I don’t know,” followed by promoting problem-solving. Using this phrase helps kids learn to tolerate uncertainty and think about ways to deal with potential challenges. For instance, if your child asks if they’re getting a shot at the doctor’s office, instead of placating them, say, “I don’t know. You might be due for a shot. Let’s figure out how you’re doing to get through it.” If your child worries they’ll hate their college, instead of saying, “You’ll love it,” you might explain that some freshmen don’t like their school, and help them figure out what to do if they feel the same way, she said.

7. Avoid talking in catastrophic terms.

Pay attention to what you say to your kids and around them. Anxious parents, in particular, tend to “talk very catastrophically around their children,” For instance; instead of saying, “It’s really important for you to learn how to swim,” they say, “It’s really important for you to learn how to swim because it’d be devastating to me if you drowned.”

8. Let your kids make mistakes.

“Failure is not the end of the world. [It’s the] place you get to when you figure out what to do next.” But it helps kids learn how to fix slip-ups and make better decisions next time. If a child has an assignment, anxious or overprotective parents typically want to make sure the project is perfect, even if their child has no interest in doing it in the first place. But let your kids see the consequences of their actions. Similarly, if your child doesn’t want to go to football practice, let them stay home. Next time they’ll sit on the bench and probably feel uncomfortable.

9. Help them manage their emotions.

Emotional management is key in resilience. Teach your kids that all emotions are OK. It’s OK to feel angry that you lost the game or someone else finished your ice cream. Help them think through what they’re doing next. Kids learn very quickly, which powerful emotions get them what they want. Parents have to learn how to ride the emotions, too. You might tell your child, “I understand that you feel that way. I’d feel the same way if I were in your shoes, but now you have to figure out what the appropriate next step is.”

10. Model resiliency.

Of course, kids also learn from observing their parents’ behavior. Try to be calm and consistent. You cannot say to a child you want them to control their emotions, while you yourself are flipping out. [Parenting](#) takes a lot of practice and we all screw up.” When you do make a mistake, admit it. I really screwed up. I’m sorry I handled that poorly. Let’s talk about a different way to handle that in the future.”

Resiliency helps kids navigate the inevitable trials, triumphs and tribulations of childhood and adolescence. Resilient kids also become resilient adults, able to survive and thrive in the face of life's unavoidable stressors.