What helps to make a resilient person? - Reach Out.com

Personal abilities

Resilient individuals have personal strengths, skills and abilities which help buffer them against stress.

Amongst the most important of these are:

- **Social skills** such as communication skills, a sense of humour and being responsive to other people.
- **Problem solving skills** such as planning, help seeking, critical and creative thinking.
- **Autonomy** ie a secure sense of one's identity, self worth and ability to cope.
- **A sense of purpose and hope** for the future e.g. having personal goals and values and a sense of faith and connectedness with others.

Environmental protective factors

Resiliency research shows that there are characteristics within family, school and community environments which foster the natural resilience in children and young people.

These "protective" factors comprise three broad categories.

- **Caring relationships** - Relationships which convey understanding, respect and interest are grounded in good listening and establishing safety and basic trust.
- **High expectation messages** - Having high expectations communicates not only firm guidance, structure and challenge but, most importantly, conveys a belief in the young person's strengths and assets rather than problems and deficits.
- **Opportunities for meaningful participation** - This includes having opportunities for valued responsibilities, making decisions, speaking out and being heard and contributing one's talents to the community.

Acknowledgment

Growing up with young people (a booklet for parents) Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care

Ph: 1 800 066 247 Fax: 1 800 634 400

- This content was created by Reach Out Australia.
- Last updated 06 Sep 10

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