

Mind Space: Helping Your Children to Have Good Mental Health

As parents and caring adults, you probably spend a lot of time thinking of ways to keep your family healthy. A healthy body is important. A healthy mind is just as important. Good mental health can help children deal with life's ups and downs and look at life in positive ways.

When children are stressed, resilience helps them cope. What is resilience? Things that have resilience, like rubber bands, can stand up to tough use and spring back to their original shape. People who have resilience can bounce back from challenges and problems. Children build resilience from the skills and qualities gained from past experiences. Parents and other caring adults can play a big role in helping children build resilience. The idea is not to give you something else to do or worry about. In fact, as you read more about this in future issues you will probably learn you are already doing many great things. We hope you will also find some new ideas to try.

The most important way your children learn resilience is by having a good and positive relationship with you. Here are some tips to building a good relationship:

- Take time each day to talk about school, friends and their interests. Eating meals together is a great time to do this.
- Spend some special time with each child.
- Try to point out the good things your child does rather than their faults.
- Enjoy each other. Laugh together.

If you have concerns about your child's mental health contact your doctor. You can also connect with Contact Hamilton by phone at 905-570-8888 or www.contacthamilton.ca

Source: Kids Can Cope: Parenting Resilient Children at Home and at School. The Psychology Foundation of Canada