

## Building resilience in children

**Emotional resilience refers to the ability to adapt or cope during stressful situations or a crisis – your ability to bounce back.**

‘Resilience is not automatic but is instead a learned behaviour that becomes internalised and applied during stressful times’ - Greenberg, 2007

As adults, we all have emotional resilience to varying degrees which we have developed through experiences of setbacks and difficulties and our willingness to learn from these experiences.

It is our role as early years practitioners to promote and build resilience in children. Investing in children’s resilience will support their health and well-being now and in the future.



Top tips for building resilience in young children include:

1. Sharing information with all staff and parent/carers about what resilience is and why it is important
2. Having strong attachments with children and a sound key person approach, give attention, smiles and affection
3. Labelling the emotions children use e.g. “I know you are feeling sad”, “I’m pleased you are happy”, “I can see you are feeling upset and worried” - use stories and puppets to support this
4. Avoid jumping straight in to resolve conflicts. Instead, support children to solve their own problems (adapt for different age/stages)
5. Model resilience; children learn through observing your reactions, show them how you deal with emotions and disappointment – be open, honest and genuine
6. Building connections through providing a sense of security, routines, boundaries and friendships in a safe environment where they know they are not alone, can take risks and ask for help
7. Having an emotional, supportive environment that includes places for children to relax and sleep, where required and adopt some mindfulness approaches e.g. breathing activities and/or yoga and ensure there are lots of opportunities for outdoor play, fresh air and exercise
8. And above all continue to love, praise and encourage them to help build confidence, self-esteem and belief in themselves – this is crucial for building resilience.

### **Special considerations**

There may have been significant events recently within staff, children or families' lives that may have tested people's resilience.