



Dear Parents,

RESILIENCE

10 Tips for Raising Resilient Children

By Margaita Tartakovsky, M.S.

While adulthood is filled with serious responsibilities, childhood isn't exactly stress-free. Children take tests, learn new information, change schools, change neighbourhoods, get sick, get braces, encounter bullies, make new friends and occasionally get hurt by those friends. What helps children in navigating these kinds of challenges is resilience. Resilient children are problem solvers. They face unfamiliar or tough situations and strive to find good solutions. Resilience isn't a birth right; it can be taught. Parents need to be encouraged to equip their children with the skills to handle the unexpected, which actually contrasts our cultural approach.

"We have become a culture of trying to make sure our children are comfortable. We as parents are trying to stay one step ahead of everything our children are going to run into." The problem? "Life doesn't work that way." Anxious people have an especially hard time helping their children tolerate uncertainty, simply because they have a hard time tolerating it themselves. The idea of putting your child through the same pain that you went through is intolerable, so anxious parents try to protect their children and shield them from worst-case scenarios. A parent's job isn't to be there all the time for their children; it's to teach them to handle uncertainty and to problem-solve. Below are some valuable suggestions for raising resilient children:

1. Don't accommodate every need.

Overprotecting kids only fuels their anxiety, 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. A dramatic but not uncommon example is a child gets out of school at 3:15, but they worry about their parent picking them up on time. So the parent arrives an hour earlier and parks by their child's sports field so they can see the parent is there.

2. Avoid eliminating all risk.

Naturally, parents want to keep their children safe, but eliminating all risk robs children of learning resiliency. The key is to allow appropriate risks and teach your children 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 children age-appropriate freedom helps them learn their own limits.

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, might say, "Well, then there's no reason for you to go." But a better approach is to normalize your child's nervousness, and help them figure out how to navigate being homesick. So you might ask your child how they can practice getting used to being away from home. 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 children concrete skills.

Children need to be given the specific skills they'll need to learn in order to handle certain situations. One needs to ask your children "Where are we going with this [situation]? What skill do they need to get there?" For instance, you might need to 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. If your child left his bike in the rain, and you ask "why?" "What will he say? I was careless. I'm an 8-year-old." Rather ask "how" questions instead. "You left your bike out in the rain, and your chain rusted. How will you fix that?" For instance, he might go online to see how to fix the chain or contribute money to a new chain.

6. Don't provide all the answers.

Rather than providing your children with every answer, start using the phrase "I don't know," "followed by promoting problem-solving," using this phrase helps children learn to tolerate uncertainty and think about ways to deal with potential challenges. Also, starting with small situations when they're young helps prepare children to handle bigger

trials. They won't like it, but they'll get used to it.

7. Avoid talking in catastrophic terms.

Pay attention to what you say to your children 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 I'd be devastated if you drowned."

8. Let your children 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." Letting children mess up is tough and painful for parents, but it helps children to learn how to fix slip-ups and make better decisions next time.

9. Help them manage their emotions.

Emotional management is key in resilience. Teach your children that all emotions are OK. It's OK to feel angry that you lost the game or someone else finished your ice cream. Also, teach them that after feeling their feelings, they need to think through what they're doing next. Children 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, children also learn from observing their parents' behaviour. 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. Talk about different ways to handle a circumstance in the future.

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

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

The Community Outreach at St Peter's has really gathered momentum over the last few years. We have programmes running in Diepsloot Combined Schools (DCS) and Sefikeng Primary. St Peter's have interns and parent volunteers who travel to DCS every Tuesday to work with the children in Grades 0, 1 and 2 from the entire community. The Interns who volunteer at Diepsloot are funded by CIDA and are also interns who are tasked with teaching second language lessons. These Interns are from both the Boys and Girls School; Phono-Graphix and arts and crafts form the basis of the programme offered to the Grade 0-2 children.

The programme that is run at Sefikeng is also based on the Phono-Graphix Reading and Spelling Method. Every Wednesday a teacher and interns from the girls school, as well as volunteers, work with small groups of Grade 1 children, focussing on Literacy and development of phonics. There is also a wonderful Grade 0 programme driven by parents, focussing on perceptual and gross and fine motor development.

Jenny Taylor who started 'Read For Africa' is very involved in both schools and has been invaluable in terms of training and guidance for all volunteers. She is actively involved in skills development enterprise as well as social development. She supports the teachers at DCS and Sefikeng, as well as the parents, interns and teachers from St Peter's. Jenny is absolutely passionate about Literacy and Reading. She recently ran a Phono-Graphix workshop for interested volunteers and interns and the turnout was fantastic. After the training Jenny had this to say:

"Last week felt like the vision of the last 5 years came together so nicely in one room with everyone so excited and all the range of people from interns, to the St Peter's volunteers and then my usual volunteers and even some DCS teachers Read For Africa turns 18 on Wednesday (14 March) and I feel that now after 18 years we're ready for 'adulthood' and have our 'driving license' to proceed and really take things to the next level and teach AFRICA to read!"

We wanted to say thank you to Jenny for her commitment to helping us and a huge thank you to all teachers, volunteers and interns for their constant support and enthusiasm, together we touch lives.

CAMP OUT and DADS & LADS CRICKET

It was with heavy hearts that we postponed the Cricket and Camp Out due to inclement weather on Saturday. Once the calendar has been set I will inform you of the new date.

DAY OF EXPLORATION

Our boys have been challenged to think "out of the box" today and create something from the viewpoint that it is "not a box," while solving a real life problem. A great deal of fun was had by all and some innovative thinking was noted.

JP SPORT

Athletics: Boys must wear their sports kit for athletics on Sports days.

Tennis: Please ensure your son packs socks and white takkies for tennis days (this has replaced swimming on the timetable).

EASTER WEEKEND

On **Thursday, 29 March** the Junior Prep will close early for the Easter weekend. There will be a Waiting Class until **11:00** but no Aftercare that afternoon. Please take note of the closing times:

Grade 0: 10:00

Grade 1: 10:15

Grade 2: 10:30

BOOK WEEK: 03-06 APRIL

A detailed letter will be sent home next week outlining the activities for Book Week at the end of this term.

PARENT CONSULTATIONS: 04 APRIL

The booking sheets for Parent Consultation will be available next week. Please do book a time slot to meet your son's teacher. Parents are reminded that reports will not be sent home this term. The first semester report will go out at the end of June 2018.

GOLDEN MOMENT

A Grade 2 class were learning how to use a dictionary and one of the boys excitedly told his teacher that he was thrilled to be learning how to use a "missionary!"

Enjoy the weekend.

Warm regards,

Kenda Melvill-Smith

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Sunday 25 March PALM SUNDAY
Monday 26 March 12:00 Grade 2 Choir practise during break
Tuesday 27 March 8:30 DCS (Sport morning)
Wednesday 28 March 8:00 JP Easter Chapel Service (birthdays from 19 March to 01 April) 13:00-13:30 Grade 2 Choir
Thursday 29 March: EASTER WEEKEND 10:00 Grade 0 finish 10:15 Grade 1 finish 10:30 Grade 2 finish 11:00 Waiting Class finishes
Tuesday 03 April 7:30 Boys return to school BOOK WEEK commences

ECO NEWS: CELEBRATING EARTH HOUR – SATURDAY, 24 MARCH

Why don't you join millions of people across the world and switch off all your lights for an hour on **Saturday 20:30 - 21:30** to raise awareness for the planet?

Earth Hour is a worldwide movement for the planet organized by the WWF to encourage individuals, businesses and governments around the world to take positive action by turning off their lights for a designated 60 minutes.

At school, we will support this movement on **Friday 08:30 – 09:30**.

We have challenged all departments to turn off as many electrical devices that they can and find creative ways to avoid the need to use electricity during this hour.



Use this event as an educational opportunity to discuss environmental issues as a family.

The Eco Committee

PA NEWS

SECOND HAND SHOP

The second hand shop is situated just behind the current school shop and opening hours are every Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 07:00 to 08:00. School uniforms and sport kit for both girls and boys are available at discounted prices.

All donations are welcome. Kindly deliver clean items to the shop during any of the opening times.

If you would like to volunteer to assist with the shop during one of opening times, kindly contact Carol Sithole on carol.sithole1977@gmail.com or on 072 2268599.

Please contact any of the following ladies to make appointments at other times or for more information:

- Carol 072 2268599
- Heather: 082 654 2755
- Janice 083 325 2464
- Vicky 081 470 9124

All proceeds from the sale of second hand goods are donated to the St Peter's Foundation, to support bursary children at St Peter's Prep Schools.

ST PETER'S WINTER WARMERS 2018 – VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Due to popular demand, *Winter Warmers* is back on the St Peter's Prep 2018 calendar. We are looking for a group of parents to organise this function.

Please click on the following link to volunteer <https://goo.gl/forms/wQ54pY8AFIW4FmoD2>

There will be a 'kick off' meeting at 07:15 at the Mvukuzane Pavilion on Thursday, 29 March.

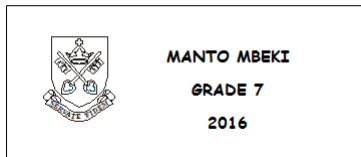
PAVER PLAQUES

A PAVER PLAQUE is a timeless reminder of your son's years at St Peter's Boys Prep School. This brass plaque is engraved with your son's details and is placed in the quad outside the Dodson Hall – The Old Boys Quad.

Should you wish to order, please download the order form from the Communicator under Resources/ GIRLS/BOYS PA information.

Examples of the plaques available to are order:

CURRENT PUPIL:



LEAVERS' 2015:



FAMILY PLAQUES:

