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# SUPPORTING LEARNING AND WELL-BEING AT HOME

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## First things first!

If you take a look on social media at the moment, you will see that parents/carers are very concerned that they will not be able to give their kids enough attention, or that they will lack the knowledge needed in order to provide a successful at-home learning experience.

**HOWEVER** – This should be the last thing on parents' minds; it is the mental health of their kids (and themselves) that should be the main concern. Catching up can occur when school resumes, that is what teachers are for.

Dear Parents,

Don't stress about schoolwork. In September, I will get your children back on track. I am a teacher and that's my superpower. What I can't fix is social-emotional trauma that prevents the brain from learning. So right now, I just need you to share your calm, share your strength, and share your laughter with your children. No kids are ahead. No kids are behind. Your children are exactly where they need to be.

With love,  
All the teachers on planet Earth

Source: Facebook, 2020.

## Parents/Carers – Let's start with you.

Positive Psychology has provided some useful tips to ensure you can be at your best during this difficult time:

- Try watching the news mid-morning rather than when you first wake up - this way it does not set the tone for your day;
- Take one Covid-19 free day per week where you don't watch the news and you don't read the articles about it on social media;
- Expect to see changes in yourself, your partner and your kids. Covid-19 has put us all on edge. Have open conversations about any changes you notice;
- Teenagers are not made for isolation, it is important to remember that they are very attuned to social status so they may struggle adjusting to their 'new normal'. Try not to treat them like children, instead work with their existing motivations to get the desired result. See link for tips:

[https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/how\\_to\\_help\\_teens\\_shelter\\_in\\_place?utm\\_source=Greater+Good+Science+Center&utm\\_campaign=e7dbde7ceb-ED\\_NEWSLETTER\\_MARCH\\_2020&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_5ae73e326e-e7dbde7ceb-65114683](https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/how_to_help_teens_shelter_in_place?utm_source=Greater+Good+Science+Center&utm_campaign=e7dbde7ceb-ED_NEWSLETTER_MARCH_2020&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_5ae73e326e-e7dbde7ceb-65114683)

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## Encourage your family to get into a new routine:

6am: Walk around the block;

7am: Have breakfast together;

8am – 3pm: Work and Learn;

4pm: Play some family board games;

5pm: Drop everything and take some time for yourself (read a book etc);

6pm: Dinner;

7pm: Family movie time.

*Try and schedule at least three activities that the whole family can join in on.*

Research conducted by Cowan (2012) found that kids need a place to feel safe, however social media has taken their safe space away from them, therefore the need for kids to feel connected with their family, school and community is very important.

**Reference:** Cowan, P. (2012). *Building resilient kids to combat bullying*. *Leader Post*.

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### Online resources for parents/carers:

- ✚ <https://gratefulness.org/>
- ✚ <https://www.beyondblue.org.au/get-support/national-help-lines-and-websites>
- ✚ <https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/>
- ✚ <https://www.happify.com/>
- ✚ <https://www.lifeline.org.au/get-help/topics/mental-health-and-wellbeing-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak>

## Parents/Carers – Tips continued:

- Kids who have secure attachments tend to have higher self-esteem, they show better self-control, and generally perform better in school. Check out this exercise: [https://ggia.berkeley.edu/practice/a\\_loving\\_space\\_for\\_kids\\_emotions](https://ggia.berkeley.edu/practice/a_loving_space_for_kids_emotions)
- If you suddenly find yourself at home with your kids and partner full-time, have an open discussion with everyone about expectations, roles, duties, device habits, the need for space or closeness, how to manage irritability, how to show empathy towards each other. A quick video about empathy: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Evwgu369Jw> ;
- Find the silver lining, remember there are many people working hard to keep us safe and minimise the risks – Covid-19 will pass eventually;
- Try to reframe your thinking: focus on the positives in your life, the meaning of life, or the kindness being shown around us;
- Practice gratitude every day – watch this video which is an inspiring take on it: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ungh2XC\\_Rgw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ungh2XC_Rgw)



## How to guide your kids through this pandemic

“The Hopefull Institute” has provided some amazing tips for guiding your children through this scary time:

### Step 1 – Find your anchor:

With the world facing massive disruption, people instinctively seek a place where they feel safe.

Right now, physical distance is essential for health but you can intensify social nearness.

Guide your children to find their anchor. The best anchor a young person can have is their connection to their parents and extended family. This is a time for families to come together like never before, especially with everyone working from home.

With schools shutting down and co-curricular activities cancelled, the need for young people to connect with their peers is paramount to their wellbeing. Encourage your children to stay in touch via Face Time, Zoom or Google Hangouts.

Other anchors in a storm can include listening to favorite music or uplifting messages, connecting with extended family, stretching, setting some goals, cleaning a pantry or bedroom.

### Step 2 - Fix your focus to cope with change:

Please stop listening to people who just read the news and randomly give their opinions on how long this crisis will last and what will happen in the future with no scientific basis to back it up.

Start feeding your children information that

will enrich their soul.

Stories and narratives of hope are always near and present, but you need to fix your focus on them.

During these difficult times, fix your focus on your ambitions and your goals.

Eliminate distractions and you will have more time and tranquility.

### Step 3 - Look for opportunities to pivot or adapt:

In a disruptive world, the ability to adapt is the most essential skill we should develop.

Let us all hit CTRL ALT DELETE on bad habits, old assumptions, negative biases and unhealthy diets while we have the time.

Now is the time to act to pivot and to adapt. To do the things we know are right or to do the things we have procrastinated on for too long.

Instead of allowing the rapid change to affect us emotionally and physically, maybe we should dance with it and allow it to evolve us into something greater.



Source: [https://www.thehopefullinstitute.com/how-to-help-students-cope-with-change/?utm\\_source=ActiveCampaign&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_content=How+to+help+students+cope+with+change&utm\\_campaign=How+to+help+students+cope+with+change](https://www.thehopefullinstitute.com/how-to-help-students-cope-with-change/?utm_source=ActiveCampaign&utm_medium=email&utm_content=How+to+help+students+cope+with+change&utm_campaign=How+to+help+students+cope+with+change)

## WHAT IS RESILIENCE?

Hazelwood (2020) defines resilience as having the ability to adapt and cope in a positive way when difficult circumstances are occurring; one of the key ingredients needed in order to build resilience in kids is through a healthy relationship with their family. However it is important to note that resiliency can also be learned from teachers and other role models in their lives, these role models should practice healthy self-reflection by sharing how they felt about their own behaviour and what they would do differently (Reist, 2013).

### References:

- Hazelwood, V. (2020). *Building resilient children; families have important role to play in helping kids learn to handle adversity*. *Sun Times*  
- Reist, D. (2013). *Resilient Kids—How can parents help? Visions: BC's Mental Health and Substance use Journal*, 8(3), 24.

## COMPLETE AN ONLINE RESILIENCE QUIZ:

<https://www.verywell.com/quiz-how-resilient-areyou-4008851>

To further understand resilience a website called "Big Life Journal" has suggested interviewing a role model in your life about how they achieved their biggest goal. You can ask questions such as:  
"What did you have to do to accomplish that goal?"  
"Did you ever think of giving up. If so, how did you overcome that thought?"  
"How did you feel when you accomplished that goal?"

## Tips for teenagers to get through this pandemic:

1. Mindfulness is an important skill that can help alleviate stress and build resilience. **Do this mindfulness task once a day**, you can even encourage the whole family to join in if you'd like: [https://ggia.berkeley.edu/practice/mindful\\_breathing](https://ggia.berkeley.edu/practice/mindful_breathing)
2. **Try to get into the habit of identifying three happy thoughts at the beginning of each day.**

Write down three happy thoughts-things that bring a smile to your face. For example: a favourite song, a great memory, a funny youtube clip, a person who makes you smile, a place that brings you peace, a funny scene from a movie. These are your "Happy Hits".

Place the Happy Hits in your pocket and read them a few times during the day. Observe how your brain responds and how your mood changes throughout the day.

Experiencing positive emotions, like joy, gratitude, interest, hope, pride, amusement, inspiration and love, has been found to benefit mental and physical health, social relationships, and academic outcomes (Lyubomirsky, King, & Diener, 2005). Studies have shown that positive emotions help us broaden and build the way our brain responds to opportunities and challenges (McQuaid & Kern, 2017).

## WHAT IS SELF-EFFICACY?

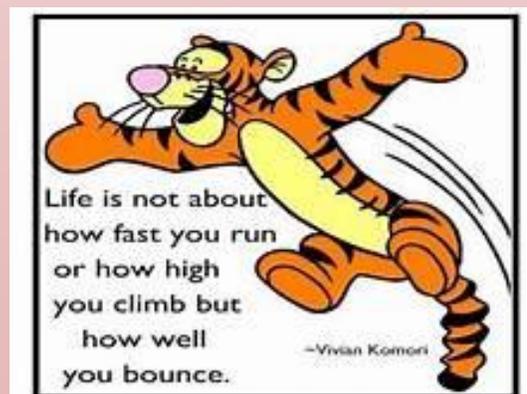
Reist (2013) advises that self-efficacy is the process of believing in your own abilities to succeed at all tasks we face, it is a building block to developing overall resilience.

Parents and/or role models can help kids develop self-efficacy through a range of activities, these include:

- Structuring situations for our kids that bring success, whilst also allowing them to experience failure;
- Asking your kids to evaluate their own performance before you give them your feedback;
- Reinforce positive modeling through your own behavior, and also ask your child to observe other kids;
- Help your children tune into their body and the body responses they can expect when feeling stressed (shaky, upset tummy, sweating etc); teach your children how to combat these feelings with deep breathing.

**Reference:** Reist, D. (2013). Resilient Kids—How can parents help? *Visions: BC's Mental Health and Substance use Journal*, 8(3), 24.

- Try to teach your child that their success should be measured in self-improvement, rather than triumphs over other people;
- Try to give your child information about what they can do to succeed, rather than what they failed to do – failure is a necessary part of learning however lots of repeated criticism will weaken self-efficacy.
- Lastly, it is important to remember that some kids and teenagers have challenges or personality traits that will make it harder for parents to keep up with the self-efficacy exercises, but it is important not to give up – parenting requires you to be patient, lots of practice, and perspective, not to mention a good sense of humor!



The final thing I would encourage parents, carers and kids to do is to watch this 6 minute TED talk which powerfully addresses passion and perseverance towards long-term goals:

[https://www.ted.com/talks/angela\\_lee\\_duckworth\\_grit\\_the\\_power\\_of\\_passion\\_and\\_perseverance](https://www.ted.com/talks/angela_lee_duckworth_grit_the_power_of_passion_and_perseverance)



## HOW TO CREATE A VISION BOARD

Imagination is everything.  
It is a preview of life's coming attractions.



Albert Einstein

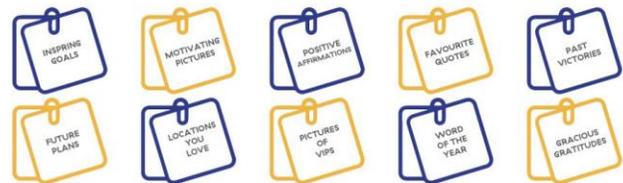
### WHY CREATE A VISION BOARD?



### HOW TO CREATE A VISION BOARD

- 1 Purchase a Board, Use a Wall or Select Digital Wallpaper.
- 2 Cut out inspiring images from Magazines or Newspapers.
- 3 Design your own favourite images, quotes or goals.

### WHAT SHOULD I PLACE ON IT?



### CATEGORIES OF GOALS



### IMAGINE | IMPLEMENT | INTEGRATE



Prepared by The Hopeful Institute

For more information on our seminars please visit [thehopefulinstitute.com](http://thehopefulinstitute.com)  
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