



Positive Parenting.

Make the ordinary come alive

Page from "That Parent's Tao Te Ching" by William Martin



Do not ask your children to strive for extraordinary lives

Such striving may seem admirable but it is the way of foolishness

Help them instead to find the wonder and the marvel of ordinary life

Show them the joy of tasting apples, bananas and pears

Show them how to cry when people and pets die

Show them the infinite pleasure at the touch of a hand

And make the ordinary come alive for them,

The extraordinary will take care of itself.

EFFECTIVE PRAISE

If we praise children for their performance on easy tasks, and tell them they are smart when they do something quickly and perfectly we are not teaching them to welcome challenge and learn from errors.

1. Praise the child's effort - not the ability
2. Praise in specifics, not generalities
3. Praise privately
4. Praise authentically, and not too much
5. Praise "now that," not "if then"
6. Praise behaviour and learning and not the child

RESILIENCE

We all can develop resilience, and we can help our children develop it as well. It involves behaviour, thoughts and actions that can be learned over time.

Following are ten tips to building resilience.

- 1. Make connections** Teach your child how to make friends, including the skill of empathy, or feeling another's pain. Encourage your child to be a friend in order to get friends. Build a strong family network to support your child through his or her inevitable disappointments and hurts. Connecting with people provides social support and strengthens resilience. Some find comfort in connecting with a higher power, whether through organized religion or privately and you may wish to introduce your child to your own traditions of worship.
- 2. Help your child by having him or her help others** Children who may feel helpless can be empowered by helping others. Engage your child in age-appropriate volunteer work, or ask for assistance yourself with some task that he or she can master. Brainstorm with children about ways they can help others.
- 3. Maintain a daily routine** **Sticking** to a routine can be comforting to children, especially younger children who crave structure in their lives. Encourage your child to develop his or her own routines.
- 4. Take a break** **While** it is important to stick to routines, endlessly worrying can be counter-productive. Teach your child how to focus on something besides what's worrying him. Be aware of what your child is exposed to that can be troubling, whether it be news, the Internet or overheard conversations, and make sure your child takes a break from those things if they trouble her. Build in unstructured time to allow children to be creative.
- 5. Teach your child self-care** **Make** yourself a good example, and teach your child the importance of making time to eat properly, exercise and rest. Make sure your child has time to have fun, and make sure that your child hasn't scheduled every moment of his or her life with no "down time" to relax. Caring for oneself and even having fun will help your child stay balanced and better deal with stressful times.
- 6. Move toward your goals** Teach your child to set reasonable goals and then to move toward them one step at a time. Moving toward that goal — even if it's a tiny step — and receiving praise for doing so will focus your child on what he or she has accomplished rather than on what hasn't been accomplished, and can help build the resilience to move forward in the face of challenges. Break down large assignments into small, achievable goals for younger children, and for older children, acknowledge accomplishments on the way to larger goals.
- 7. Nurture a positive self-view** **Help** your child remember ways that he or she has successfully handled hardships in the past and then help him understand that these past challenges help him build the strength to handle future challenges. Help your child learn to trust himself to solve problems and make appropriate decisions. Teach your child to see the humour in life, and the ability to laugh at one's self.
- 8. Keep things in perspective and maintain a hopeful outlook** **Even** when your child is facing very painful events helps him look at the situation in a broader context and keep a long-term perspective. Although your child may be too young to consider a long-term look on his own, help him or her see that there is a future beyond the current situation and that the future can be good. An optimistic and positive outlook enables your child to see the good things in life and keep going even in the hardest times. Use examples from the past to show that life moves on after bad events.
- 9. Look for opportunities for self-discovery** Tough times are often the times when children learn the most about themselves. Help your child take a look at how whatever he is facing can teach him "what he is made of."
- 10. Accept that change is part of living** Change often can be scary for children and teens. Help your child see that change is part of life and new goals can replace goals that have become unattainable. Point out your child has changed as they have grown up through each stage.