Resilience:
a Selected Bibliography


Families, schools, and communities can prepare children and teens from 18 months to 18 years to thrive through both good and challenging times. By building on seven crucial “Cs” — competence, confidence, connection, character, contribution, coping, and control — children can excel in life and bounce back from challenges. Dr. Ginsburg engagingly describes how to raise authentically successful children who will be happy, hardworking, compassionate, creative, and innovative. He reminds us that our goal is to think in the present and prepare for the future, to remember that our real goal is to raise children to be successful 35-year-olds. It’s about more than immediate smiles or even good grades; it’s about raising kids to be emotionally and socially intelligent, to be able to recover from disappointment and forge ahead throughout their lives. The stable connection between caring adults and children is the key to the security that allows children to creatively master challenges and reach their highest potential. This book offers concrete strategies to solidify those vital family connections. Resilience is also about confronting the overwhelming stress children face today. It’s an invaluable guide that offers coping strategies for facing the stresses of academic performance, high achievement standards, media messages, peer pressure, and family tension. The suggested solutions offered are aimed at building a repertoire of positive coping strategies. Students who have these healthy strategies in place may be less likely to turn to those quick, easy, but dangerous fixes that adults fear. The book also includes a guide for teens to create their own customized positive coping strategies.


Psychologist and author, Levine (The Price of Privilege: How Parental Pressure and Material Advantage Are Creating a Generation of Disconnected and Unhappy Kids, 2006, etc.) draws on 30 years of counseling experience and current research to debunk contemporary thoughts on
raising children. Beginning in preschool, parents and teachers push their students to obtain good grades and high SAT scores and participate in numerous extracurricular activities, with the end goal of attending a prestigious college. While these are still worthwhile endeavors, Levine offers readers hands-on solutions to "optimize conditions so that a far greater number of children can actually be successful without the accompanying high levels of distress that have become so prevalent." Through the use of scenarios from her own experience of raising three sons, as well as instances from her clinical practice, Levine provides examples of common situations encountered while raising children and suggests new solutions to handle these situations. The author's approach includes unconditional love, empathy, stimulating challenges, a safe environment that encourages curiosity, and discipline when necessary. A rethinking of the term "success" that provides new insight on how to raise today's youth.


Social-clinical psychologist Mogel concentrates on the hidden blessings of raising teenagers in this engaging follow-up to *The Blessing of a Skinned Knee*. Intermingling wisdom and guidelines from Judaism and adolescent psychology, Mogel compares the teen years to the journey from Egypt to the Promised Land. As kids wander in the "desert" of adolescence, she advises parents to offer counsel and guidance, demonstrate empathy without entanglement, and resist the urge to intervene or rescue. In chapters peppered with true-to-life examples and humor, Mogel examines the blessings of a B minus, staying up late, hangovers, breaking the rules, and a variety of other teen topics, urging parents not just to look on the bright side, but to help kids benefit from the learning opportunities inherent in difficult situations. Some of her advice may be challenging for readers to follow: for instance, she recommends that parents refrain from broaching the subject of college until grade 11. She also encourages parents to let teens learn from their own mistakes and to respect their yetzer hara (aggressive impulse), while seeking balance with a sense of teshuvah (repentance). Mogel's compassion and authenticity rings true with parents of all faiths facing the tumultuous teen years.


In their latest book, psychologists Brooks and Goldstein (the authors of *Raising Resilient Children*) describe how adults can develop a "resilient mindset." According to the authors, while the word "resilient" is usually associated with people overcoming great adversity, daily stress often requires resilience. Using many examples from their clinical practice, Brooks and Goldstein outline how this mindset is best achieved. The first step is "rewriting negative scripts," or changing behavior that one repeats over and over despite its negative outcome, such as a manager yelling at his employees for being uncreative. Other strategies include developing empathy; communicating effectively; accepting oneself and others; and developing self-
discipline. An appendix offers worksheets addressing the concepts covered in each of the
chapters. Throughout, the authors emphasize taking responsibility for one's actions and their
impact on others, as well as setting realistic short- and long-term goals. Their examples, such as
the demanding manager and the couple who nag their teenage son, are familiar figures in whom
readers may be able to see themselves or people they know.

**Jones, Jami L.** *Bouncing Back Dealing with the Stuff Life Throws at You.* Franklin Watts,
2007.

The image of a bouncing ball is used effectively throughout this book to discuss the concept of
resiliency in the context of adjusting to life's problems. Each chapter begins with a short vignette
of a teen facing a stressful situation and ends by reminding readers of the story and
hypothesizing solutions. There are many positives here: the advice given is psychologically
sound, the writing is clear and easy to read, the pages are visually appealing, and photos show
teens of both genders and various racial backgrounds. The idea of becoming resilient and thus
resisting and coping with stress is well explained. Solutions are incorporated into simplistic
acronyms such as "ICAN," standing for Identifying problems, Coming up with solutions,
Analyzing them, and Now, picking one and going for it. Filled with little self-help quizzes and
responses, this book might be just the one to place in a teenager's bedroom or in the backseat of
a car with hopes that a child will pick it up and quietly read and learn.

**Bronson, Po and Merryman, Ashley.** *NurtureShock: New Thinking about Children.* Twelve,
2009.

The central premise of this book by Bronson and Merryman, a *Washington Post* journalist, is that
many of modern society's most popular strategies for raising children are in fact backfiring
because key points in the science of child development and behavior have been overlooked. Two
errant assumptions are responsible for current distorted child-rearing habits, dysfunctional school
programs and wrongheaded social policies. First, things work in children the same way they
work in adults and, secondly, positive traits necessarily oppose and ward off negative behavior.
These myths, and others, are addressed in 10 provocative chapters that cover such issues as the
inverse power of praise (effort counts more than results); why insufficient sleep adversely affects
children’s capacity to learn; why white parents don't talk about race; why children lie; that
evaluation methods for giftedness and accompanying programs don't work; why siblings really
fight (to get closer). Grownups who trust in old-fashioned common-sense child-rearing, the
definitely un-PC variety, with no negotiation or parent-child equality will have less patience for
this book than those who fear they lack innate parenting instincts. The authors provide thorough
research, citing numerous case studies, experts' findings and examinations of successful
progressive programs at work in schools

**Schipani, Denise.** *Mean Moms Rule: Why Doing the Hard Stuff Now Creates Good Kids
Freelance writer and mother of two, Schipani asserts that parents who coddle their children, try to be their friend, or take a child-centric or helicopter approach to parenting are not doing their children any favors. To counteract the trend toward warm and fuzzy parenting, she presents 10 Mean Mom Manifestos in separate chapters (e.g., Hang On to Yourself. You May Need that Person Later, Don’t Follow the Parenting Pack, and Take (or Take Back) Control). Schipani urges moms to take charge and teach life skills so that kids will grow up to be confident, capable adults. Mean, by the author as definition, entails bucking the prevailing parenting trend, liberally using the No word, and taking the long view of parenting by placing more emphasis on future outcomes than jumping to meet children’s demands all day long. Schipani has a solid track record of writing on parenting topics and no shortage of opinions. Self-described as relentlessly practical she is also funny, witty, and loaded with suggestions for keeping children in their place (e.g., stash the grown-up ice cream in the back of the freezer and eat it after they go to bed). While some readers will find the author’s mean-mom shtick a bit jarring, others will welcome the message that when mean moms rule, children benefit.


*New York Times Magazine* editor Tough argues that non-cognitive skills (persistence, self-control, curiosity, conscientiousness, grit and self-confidence) are the most critical to success in school and life. Building on reporting for his magazine, the author interviewed economists, psychologists and neuroscientists, examined their recent research and talked to students, teachers and principals to produce this fascinating overview of a new approach with "the potential to change how we raise our children, how we run our schools, and how we construct our social safety net." At a time when policymakers favor the belief that disadvantaged kids have insufficient cognitive training, Tough finds that a new generation of researchers are questioning that cognitive hypothesis. Foremost among them is Nobel laureate and University of Chicago economist James Heckman, who since 2008 has been convening economists and psychologists to discuss significant questions: Which skills and traits lead to success? How do they develop in childhood? What interventions might help children do better? Tough summarizes key research, such as the Adverse Childhood Experience Study, which revealed a stunning correlation between traumatic childhood events and negative adult outcomes. Others have shown that the effects of childhood stress can be buffered by close, nurturing relationships. Families, Heckman says, "are the main drivers of children's success in school." This book includes many examples of failing disadvantaged students who turned things around by acquiring character skills that substituted for the social safety net enjoyed by affluent students. Well-written and bursting with ideas, this work is essential reading for anyone who cares about childhood in America.

**Recommended Websites**

**Ginsburg, Kenneth, M.D. M.S. Ed. “Fostering Resilience Preparing Children and Teens to THRIVE through both Good and Challenging Times.”**


Free from the American Psychological Association, this online guide gives step-by-step helpful advice and tips about how to build resilience in children and teenagers to assist them in adapting to trauma, tragedy, threats and significant sources of stress.

Compiled from various reviews by K. Craver 9/2012