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What can parents do to increase resilience in children?

Dr. Adelman's "top 10" list of strategies for raising resilient children:

(based on the research and expert recommendations in this field):

1. Help children differentiate between different levels of threat and respond appropriately (e.g., a test for school and a tiger chasing you are not the same level of threat).
2. Model effective coping strategies, such as getting social support, exercising, self-care, positive-self talk, taking a deep breath, etc.
3. Try to avoid modeling unhealthy coping strategies (e.g., being too reactive, catastrophizing negative events, drinking to reduce tension, lashing out at others, or taking a victim stance).
4. Validate your children's emotions, and express confidence in their ability to cope.
5. Engage in active, supportive listening across your child's development. Being a consistently good listener and supportive presence is more important than having all the answers.
6. Try to allow children opportunities for developmentally appropriate challenges and setbacks (i.e., zone of proximal development – both academically and social-emotionally). While you do not have to actively seek out challenging situations for children, you also don't need to shelter children from all forms of adversity. Sports, academic challenges, etc. are great ways to learn about coping with relatively benign "failures."
7. Provide unconditional love and support, clearly distinguishing between your feelings for your child and your feelings about their negative behaviors.
8. Set clear and high expectations about the way that your children will conduct themselves as human beings, rather than focusing on particular academic or other outcomes (e.g., expect your child to be someone who perseveres in the face of challenges and treats others with kindness, rather than expecting them to be a star student who is popular with peers).
9. Let your children make their own mistakes and come up with their own solutions, within developmentally appropriate bounds. This is really important

skill-building practice for the larger challenges that will arise as they grow older. E.g., working out a social stressor with peers with minimal adult intervention.

10. Set up regularly scheduled “special time” with your child that is just about building and maintaining your parent-child emotional bond. Let them take the lead and just have fun together during this time. This will let them know that you are always there for them if they need support in managing especially difficulty circumstances.