



DEVELOPING RESILIENT CHILDREN

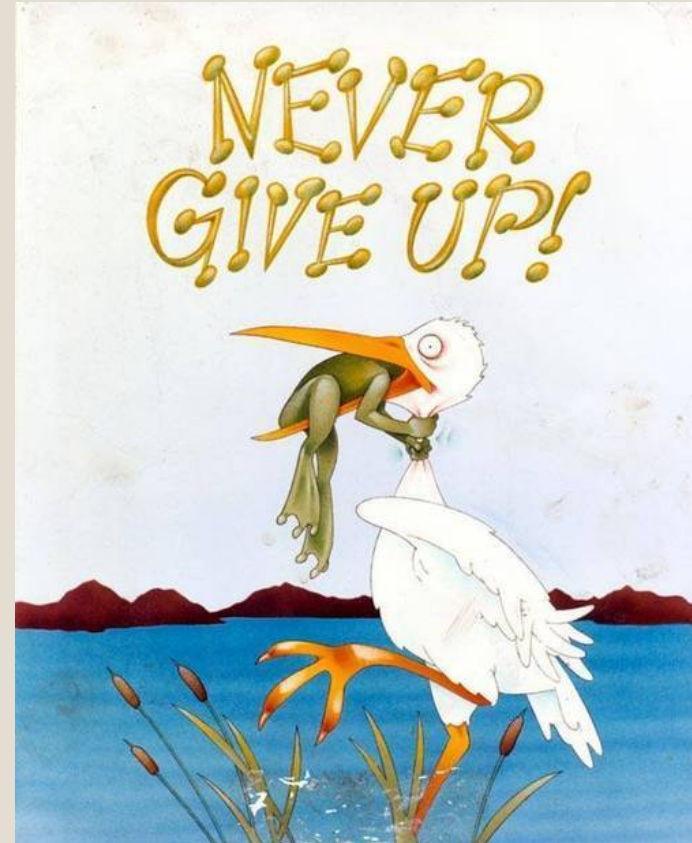
Presented by Kristy Dean
School Counsellor
Registered Psychologist

YOUR CHILD AS AN ADULT

- *Visualisation exercise*
- Hard working
- Stick at things that are hard BUT ALSO
- Know when to stop trying if they decide their efforts are not worthwhile for them
- Empathetic
- Can handle strong emotions
- Ask for help when they need it

WHAT IS RESILIENCE?

The ability to recover from setbacks, adapt well to change and keep going in the face of adversity



LONG TERM OUTCOMES FOR RESILIENCE

- Improved learning and academic achievement – more likely to take risks in learning
- Cope better with life's stressors
- Protective against mental illness
- Reduced absences from work/study due to illness
- Reduced adverse risk taking behaviours such as excessive drinking, drugs, etc.
- Increased involvement in community and family activities
- Live longer, better physical health

(Written by Joshua Miles, Integrative Psychotherapist and Bereavement Counsellor, 2015)

HOW DO WE DEVELOP RESILIENCE?

- Personality factors
- Model resilience – adults in the family, school, community
- PRAISE EFFORT NOT PERFORMANCE
- Explicitly teach social and emotional skills
- Allow children unstructured time away from adults and with other children.....

THE POWER AND IMPORTANCE OF PLAY

WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED FROM ANTHROPOLOGICAL STUDIES

- Peter Gray, a well known professor of play, has studied play in Hunter-Gatherer tribes. Things he noticed were:
 - Unlimited time and freedom to play, mixed age groups
 - Indulgence of children's, no bedtime, trusted, autonomy and egalitarian
 - Exposed to all aspects of adult culture
 - Play focuses on social skills, lack of competitive games
 - Children reportedly cheerful, little conflict, self controlled, highly autonomous, emotionally regulated
- Play allows practise of skills needed as adults
- Negative connotations of "play" – trivial, waste of time, diversion from responsibility
- We now know play is VITAL to normal development of social and emotional skills

Video: Nutters

MYTHS ABOUT HOMEWORK

- Homework has ZERO impact on academic achievement in the **primary school** years (Example - meta-analysis by Cooper, Robinson and Patall spanning 1987 – 2003)
- Learning activities that are interest driven and not forced upon the child are beneficial
- Myth: Doing homework during primary school will create good habits for high school.
- Scenario...
- Truth: Children will develop study habits when they need them and are more developmentally ready for them.

THINGS TO TRY

- Allow your children unstructured play time everyday
- Praise their EFFORT not their performance e.g. “Wow, you tried really hard at that” to encourage perseverance
- Allow your children to experience strong emotions e.g. “You look sad, would you like a hug?” not “Stop crying or I’ll give you something to cry about”.
- Model resilience

RESOURCES

- Book by Dr Justin Coulson: 9 ways to a resilient child
- Book by Dr Judith Locke, The Bonsai Child
- 3 Bridges Tuning in to Teens parenting program
- Journal article:
www.journalofplay.org/sites/www.journalofplay.org/files/pdf-articles/1-4-article-hunter-gatherer-social-existence.pdf
- Kidsmatter website: www.kidsmatter.edu.au