



Building Your Resiliency

A Family Guide to Marathon Skills

Step 1: Love your Child Unconditionally



Unconditional love means to appreciate and value your child in the moment and not get hung up waiting for improvements. Meet them where they are and let them know you love them, regardless of their behavior, talent, success or abilities.

Step 2: Take Time for Yourself



As a primary caregiver, it's important to find ways to de-stress and regroup in order to keep giving to your child and family. You are important and have interests and abilities that are outside your role as a parent. If you can enjoy yourself more, you can enjoy your family more.

Step 3: Develop Your Sense of Humor



Laughing feels a lot better than crying. It changes our thoughts, emotions and behaviors and allows us to handle stress better. Laughter really is the best medicine, so give yourself permission to laugh and joke around.

Step 4: Build a Network of Supports



It's easy to feel isolated and alone, raising a child that is unique among your friends and family. Discover the value of a Facebook group or monthly parent-to-parent meeting to find others out there walking in shoes like yours. Much of the info that you find helpful is in the hearts and minds of other parents like yourself.

Resources: www.scarymommy.com

www.buildingresilienceforchildrenwithspecialneeds.pdf



Step 5: Know Yourself & Your Family



Finding out what your family needs, values and enjoys is important for getting through stressful situations. Family members deal with stress in different ways. Allow them to deal with it in their own way while offering support and encouragement in ways they will each find helpful.

Step 6: Allow Your Child to Take (Small) Risks



We want to protect our kids from hurt, but we must allow them to take some small risks to learn from their mistakes. Often resilient behavior requires us to take action in the face of fear. Overcoming fear and taking small risks safely helps build confidence and competence and allows for growth.

Step 7: Balance Family Needs



Often the temptation, when you have a child with a disability, is to focus all your time, energy and resources on that child. Instead, consider how to balance your special child's needs with your other children, your spouse and your work life (and don't forget Step #2 and add some me-time in there too).

Step 8: Learn to be Flexible



One of the first lessons a parent learns (sometimes the hard way), is that life is about compromise. We need to be realistic and flexible and accept that not all solutions will be perfect. Remember, in a storm, the palm tree bends in the wind and is still standing, strong and tall, after the storm passes.

Step 9: Be An Involved Parent



Get involved in your child's school, attend a PTA meeting, take a class to help you grow your confidence and knowledge. Practice re-framing a problem situation into a positive solution to gain a sense of control over your life. Be an example of resiliency to your children and family and reap the rewards of a calmer, happier life at home.

humormatters.com

parents.com

mindful.org

bouncebackparenting.com