

## EAP Newsletter: Employee



### Tips for raising resilient kids

*Life Advantages, LLC*

Being a kid can be tough. Between peer pressure, schoolwork stress, and friend troubles, children and adolescents are not immune to the ups and downs of daily life. You can't always protect kids from these challenges. But you can nurture your children's resilience to help them respond to the challenges of adolescence and successfully navigate in adulthood.

#### Thoughts from Katie Best, LCSW, FCH EAP Director of Client Services

As Fall approaches, many families are preparing to return to school. Transitions can trigger stress, uncertainty, excitement, and can be a challenging time for caregivers and kids. First Choice Health EAP is here to help members navigate the back-to-school season. This article offers tips for raising resilient kids. Practicing habits, attitudes and coping skills that have been shown to build resilience is a great way to prepare to return to school. And while these tips are aimed at parents, these resilience building strategies work for people of all ages. **In addition, our EAP offers several work-life resources that may be helpful during this transitional time, such as help with finding childcare and tutors, and our 1-800-777-4114 mainline is open 24/7 for referrals and support.**

## Different components of resilience

Resilience isn't a one-dimensional characteristic. As you teach your children how to recognize their inner resources and recover from hardships, keep in mind the seven factors of resilience:

- **Competence**—the feeling of knowing you can handle a situation
- **Confidence**—the belief in your own abilities
- **Character**—the development of a solid set of morals and values
- **Coping**—the ability to handle stress effectively
- **Contribution**—knowledge that the world is a better place because you are in it
- **Control**—awareness that you determine the outcomes of your decisions
- **Connection**—the sense of security from close ties to family and community

## How parents can show support

By encouraging your child's ability to bounce back after a hardship, you provide ways for them to cope with stress and tough situations. Take the following steps to play an active role in developing your child's resilience:

- **Model a positive attitude.** Kids will learn from how you handle difficult situations. Let them see an "I can do it" attitude. Remind your child, and yourself, that the current issue is temporary and things will get better.
- **Help your child set goals.** Promote realistic goals in school, sports, and life in general. Teach children to work toward goals one step at a time—small steps can develop confidence and resilience. Try incorporating checklists to daily routines.
- **Build connections.** Take time to eat and talk together as a family. Encourage your child to make good friends. Creating strong, loving connections will help ensure that your child has support in times of trouble. Support kids with building strong relationships with peers and safe adults in their school, neighborhood, family and community.
- **Highlight your child's strengths.** Comment frequently on what your child does well to help build his or her confidence. Specifically point out when children exhibit qualities such as kindness, integrity, and persistence.
- **Building Self-Efficacy.** It's a normal instinct for parents and caregivers to protect kids from struggle. However, giving kids chances to struggle with learning something new helps increase competence and confidence.
- **Validate Feelings.** Help develop awareness of feelings and give kids the language to talk about them with you. Validate validate validate. Do the same for yourself!