

Building Blocks for Resilience



5 to 8 Years

About this booklet.

This booklet has simple things you can do as a parent or caregiver to help build your child's resilience. It provides information, tips, and fun activities on topics like:

- Brain development, mental health, and resilience
- Self-care for parents and caregivers
- Supportive relationships
- Emotional skills
- Social skills
- Problem solving skills
- Self-esteem

Other books available in this series:

- Building Blocks for Resilience: Birth to 2 Years
- Building Blocks for Resilience: 2 to 4 Years



This booklet is for parents and caregivers of children aged 5 to 8 years old. Parents and caregivers refers to anyone who is the main parent or caregiver of a child.

Produced by
Mental Health Promotion & Illness Prevention, Provincial Addiction & Mental Health
10101 Southport Road SW
Calgary, Alberta T2W 3N2
Email: hpdip.mh.earlyid@recoveryalberta.ca

Recovery Alberta
Building Blocks for Resilience: 5 to 8 Years
First printing: 2008
Second printing: 2013
Third printing: 2016
Fourth printing: 2019

Copyright 2025. Recovery Alberta.

This material is protected by Canadian and other international copyright laws. All rights reserved. These materials may not be copied, published, distributed or reproduced in any way in whole or in part without the express written permission of Recovery Alberta. These materials are intended for general information only and are provided on an "as is", "where is" basis. Although reasonable efforts were made to confirm the accuracy of the information, Recovery Alberta does not make any representation or warranty, express, implied or statutory, as to the accuracy, reliability, completeness, applicability or fitness for a particular purpose of such information. These materials are not a substitute for the advice of a qualified health professional. Recovery Alberta expressly disclaims all liability for the use of these materials, and for any claims, actions, demands or suits arising from such use.

Contents

Introduction

Resilience	1
Your Child's Growing Brain	1
Serve and Return	1
Air Traffic Control Skills	2
Stress	2
Self-Care	4

Supportive Relationships

Helping Your Child Cope with Change	7
Activities	8

Emotional Skills

Recognizing and Naming Emotions	10
Connecting Emotions and Feelings with Body Sensations	11
Showing Emotions and Feelings in Acceptable Ways	11
Calming Strategies	12
Activities	13

Social Skills

Empathy	15
Friendship Skills	16
Activities	17

Problem Solving Skills

Problem Solving Process	18
Activities	20

Self-Esteem

What is Self-Esteem?	22
Giving Praise	23
Activities	24

Resources

Social and Emotional Milestones	26
Recommended Books	28
Community and Online Resources	30
References	31

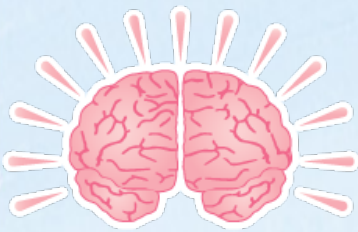
Introduction

Resilience

This book is about building your child's **resilience**. Resilience is the ability to bounce back from setbacks, cope well with life's challenges, and adapt to change in healthy ways. How well we bounce back may change over time and depends on our relationships, **genetics** (the genes that determine what you look like and the type of physical traits you have), **temperament** (how you act and show emotions), environments, resources, and health. Resilience isn't something we're born with but something we can build over time. You can help your child build resilience by supporting their social and emotional skills, surrounding them in love and support, and giving them chances to build their strengths and interests.

i Your child is resilient when they're able to react and adapt confidently and positively to changes or tough situations.

i Children who are more resilient tend to have better relationships, do better in school, and are less likely to get depression or anxiety.



Your Child's Growing Brain

Research on the brain shows that they need more than just genes to develop. The experiences and relationships a child has in the first years of life also affect the **brain's architecture**.

Brain architecture is made up of billions of connections between individual neurons (special cells that send nerve signals) in the brain. These connections help with all different kinds of brain functions like talking, tasting, hearing, emotions, memories, thoughts, and heart beats. Just like the foundation of a home, your child's brain is built in stages that starts from the bottom up.

In the early years of your child's life, positive and caring experiences that happen over and over (e.g., talking, playing, singing, caring for your child) help develop this strong foundation. Healthy experiences can lead to better physical, mental, and social well-being throughout life.

? For more information about brain development go to: www.albertafamilywellness.org/resources

Serve and Return

One of the best ways to build your child’s brain architecture and resilience is through **serve and return interactions**. Serve and return works like an imaginary tennis game between you and your child. But, instead of hitting a ball back and forth, different forms of communication (e.g., verbal, non-verbal) pass back and forth between you and your child. For example, when your child talks to you or wants to play, you can return their serve by speaking back and/or playing with them.

Everyday serve and return interactions that happen over and over are the building blocks that are important for all future brain development. Many of the activities ideas and tips in this booklet are examples of serve and return interactions.

Examples of serve and return interactions

Serve	Return
Your child is crying or upset.	You offer comfort.
Your child asks you a question.	You answer kindly.
Your child wants you to see what they’re doing.	You stop what you’re doing, watch, and comment on their effort.



Screen Time

Children need plenty of time for play and physical activity, as well as time to be creative, quiet, and social with family and friends. They also need plenty of sleep to help them recharge and grow.

Keep screen time (e.g., any time spent with smart phones, tablets, television, video games, computers, or wearable technology) at or less than the Canadian Pediatrics Society recommended times.

- 5 years old = less than one hour per day
- 6 to 8 years old = less than two hours per day

For more information on screen time go to: www.cps.ca

Air Traffic Control Skills

Building a strong brain includes helping your child develop **executive function skills**. These are skills that help them learn to pay attention, plan ahead, deal with conflicts, solve problems, and follow rules at home and school. These skills are like an air traffic control tower in your child’s mental airspace. Imagine that your child’s brain is like an air traffic control tower at a busy airport. Many planes are landing and taking off that need your child’s attention to avoid a crash like organizing things, preparing, deciding what to do first and in what order to do it. Executive function skills develop throughout childhood, adolescence, and even into early adulthood. Some children take more or less time than others to build certain skills.



Stress

Stress is anything that puts strain on the body by increasing heart rate and stress hormone levels. A **stressor** is anything that causes the release of stress hormones. Stressors can be physical and put strain on our bodies (e.g., very hot or cold temperatures, illness, pain) or psychological (e.g., any situation, event, comment, person we see as negative or threatening).

Stress is one of the factors that affects your child's developing brain. Whether it strengthens or weakens your child's brain architecture has to do with the type of stress, how severe it is, how long it lasts, and whether or not they have supportive adults to help them cope.

Not all stress is bad. Experiences that create **positive stress**—like meeting new people or starting the first day of school are healthy because they help prepare your child for future life challenges. Learning to cope with these types of stressors is important for developing resilience. There are many chances in every child's life to experience this type stress—and with the help of supportive parents and caregivers, this positive stress can be growth-promoting.

Other, more traumatic stressors (e.g., a natural disaster, losing a loved one) can be stressful for children. But, if supportive parents and caregivers help to lessen the **stress response** (e.g., increased heart rate, increase in stress hormone levels), then these stressors may not have negative effects on a child's brain or body. This is called **tolerable stress**.

A third kind of stress weakens brain architecture and upsets healthy development in children. This type of stress, called **toxic stress**, happens when no supportive parents or caregivers are around to help a child cope with many negative experiences. Types of toxic stress include abuse, neglect, family addiction, mental illness, violence* inside and outside the home, and chaotic environments. When a child's brain development is affected by toxic stress, research shows that they're more likely to have future physical, mental, and substance misuse health problems. However, if a child experiences toxic stress it doesn't mean that they will definitely have problems. Everyone copes with stress differently. Understanding how stress affects us and getting support can help can lessen the effects of toxic stress.



Talk to your healthcare provider or call Health Link at 811 if you or your family are having trouble managing your stress or have a history of toxic stress that may be impacting your health and/or your parenting.



Positive Stress

Normal and everyday stress that is very brief and short-lived.



Tolerable Stress

When a child experiences serious, temporary stress but they receive support from parents and caregivers to help them recover.



Toxic Stress

When a child experiences serious stress for a long time without the support of parents or caregivers.



*Violence includes physical, verbal, emotional, financial, and sexual abuse, neglect, stalking, being kept from seeing other people, or being forced to stay in one place. For information about family violence programs and services as well as advice and support call the 24 Hour Family Violence Info Line (Toll Free): [310-1818](tel:310-1818)
Call **911** if you or your family members are in immediate danger.



Self-Care

Our feelings, thoughts, and behaviours are all connected. When you're not at your best, you're not parenting at your best. Children copy or model what they see you do. Being a resilient parent or caregiver means taking care of yourself. This can help you feel better and it can lead to more healthy behaviour for you and your family too.

As a parent, it might feel like having time to practice good self-care is about as likely as winning the lottery. Here are some simple self-care strategies:

Find positive ways to handle stress. Find simple activities that decrease stress in your mind and body. Go for walk, spend time outside, listen to music or audiobooks, read, woodwork, journal, throw or kick a ball around, do breathing practices (e.g., deep breathing, even-paced breathing), meditate, practice gratitude or mindfulness.

Look after yourself. Get enough sleep (7-8 hours per night), eat well, drink water, and be active.

Ask for help. It's okay to ask for help when you need it from family, friends, cultural or faith groups, and healthcare providers.

Do things you like. Make time for your friends and interests so that you feel healthier and so that you model healthy habits to your child.

Unplug. Turn off your screens and electronics for some portion of your day. It's healthy to connect with nature or other people face-to-face.

Create a self-care plan. Having a self-care plan can help you take time for yourself. Write down a few things that you can do when you're feeling stressed or just need a break (e.g., who you can call, things that energize or calm you).



If you need support talk to your healthcare provider or call Health Link at 811.

There are also many supports available in your community, see page 30 for suggestions.

My Self-Care Plan

What things work for me?

- going for a walk
- watching a funny video
- deep breathing

Who can I call when....

I need a break

- Babysitter (555-6665)
- John (555-4321)

I need to talk

- Erik (555-1554)
- Joanna (555-3255)

Emotional Self-care Tips

Take a daily mood check. Your mood affects your relationship and communication with your child. Ask yourself: “What’s going on for me today?”, “How am I feeling?”, “Am I hungry?”, “Did I have enough sleep?”, “Have I had enough physical activity?”, “How’s this impacting my mood?”

Learn your stressors. Knowing what your stressors are can help you recognize when you are getting stressed (e.g., work, relationships, family, finances).

Learn your stress signs. Stress signs and symptoms can be physical (e.g., upset stomach, muscle tension), cognitive/thinking (e.g., difficulty concentrating, poor memory), emotional (e.g., irritated, frustrated), and behavioural/things we do (e.g., eat too much, stay up too late). What are your stress signs?

Identify and name your feelings. When you recognize you’re feeling stressed, take a moment to notice what you feel and name the feeling. Do this in your head or say it out loud (e.g., “I’m feeling annoyed.”).

Cope with strong emotions. If you know that something has upset you, before reacting emotionally, try to count to 10 in your head or take a couple of deep breaths in and out. Then allow yourself to be curious (e.g., “Am I missing something in this situation?”, “Is there another way of looking at this?”, “Is my child tired, hungry, thirsty?”, “How can I respond to this in a healthy and respectful way?”).



If you’re feeling overwhelmed or frustrated, need more information, or want to talk to someone call:

- Mental Health Help Line: [1-877-303-2642](tel:1-877-303-2642)
- Health Link: [811](tel:811)

You are your child’s first teacher. The early years of their life provide many experiences and teaching moments that support their brain development. By connecting with your child through serve and return interactions, helping them build their air traffic control skills, and teaching them how to cope with stress, you’re putting the building blocks in place for your child’s growth, learning, health, behaviour, and resilience.



**When it comes to being a parent we all do our best.
It's important to remember that there's
no such thing as a perfect parent.**



Supportive Relationships

Parents and caregivers play a very important role in helping their child learn about relationships. When you provide warmth, care, and consistency your child will feel more stable, connected, and loved. Building a helpful circle of loved ones, friends, community services, and programs will support you and provide positive role models for your child.

Tips

Express care, listen, and praise effort. Show your child that they matter to you and that you enjoy being with them (e.g., *"I love reading with you. This is the best part of my day!"*). Be dependable, listen, and believe in them. Praise and encourage them for their efforts and achievements (e.g., *"You worked for an hour on that drawing. You stayed focused and finished. Good job!"*).

Ask your child questions. Take interest in what your child is doing (e.g., *"What was the hardest part of your day?"*, *"Do you have a friend that you really like?"*, *"What do you like most about your friend?"*).

Connect with family and friends. They can strengthen your child's sense of belonging (e.g., celebrate birthdays, holidays, achievements).

Connect with neighbours. When you're walking or riding bikes around your local streets say hello and wave to your neighbours. Talk about how people in your neighbourhood work together to make it a safe and friendly place. Show your child the people they can go to for help (e.g., crossing guards, teachers, librarians, local shopkeepers, fire fighters, police officers).

Volunteer together. Volunteer in your community (e.g., spring clean-up, a school event). Talk to your child about how volunteering helps others and makes them feel good too. Take part in community events and programs (e.g., music, arts, cultural events, sports). Getting involved gives children a chance to build new skills and interests and helps them appreciate other languages, cultures, ways of thinking, and backgrounds.

Practice and point out kindness. Do kind things for others with your child (e.g., bring in the garbage and recycling bins, bake a treat). When someone does something kind for you, point it out (e.g., *"This person is holding the door for us. That's very kind. Thank you."*).

Teach responsibility and hopefulness. Talk about and do things with your child that respect the rights and property of others, help care for the environment, and talk about possible hopes for the future (e.g., different ways of seeing, being, thinking, doing).

Children who have strong social connections with supportive people are more likely to have:

- a sense of belonging
- a sense of hope and faith
- more chances to learn about getting along with others
- people to go to when they need help
- a network they can use to learn about new things, skills, and so on
- more contact with and empathy for all people (e.g., culture, gender, race, social class, sexuality)
- an increased sense of responsibility, confidence, and self-esteem

Helping Your Child Cope with Change

In life, your child will face normal challenges (e.g., starting school, changing schools, starting a new activity). There may also be bigger life changes as well (e.g., the loss of a loved one, a move, a divorce). The brain likes to feel safe with familiar people, things, and routines. When change happens it can leave adults and children feeling overwhelmed and with no sense of control. The good news is that after a change, with the support of a caring adult, a child's brain can get back a sense of balance. It can grow even stronger and more resilient.

Tips

Talk about the change. Discuss what will happen and what the change will mean (e.g., What's going to change?, What will stay the same?, What will be hard?, What will be fun?, What to expect?). Listen to and answer all of your child's questions, even if the same questions are asked many times.

Acknowledge your child's worries and fears. In times of change your child may act a little clingier or they may go back to things they did at a younger age. Be patient with these behaviours as your child is acting on their feelings rather than talking about them. Encourage and help them to name their feelings and respond kindly (e.g., *"You look worried to me. Is that how you're feeling?"*, *"Starting a new school is really hard. That makes me feel nervous too."*).

Stick to routines. Knowing what to expect helps your child feel secure and in control, especially during times of change. Keep expectations like chores, bedtime, meals, and screen time as close to normal as possible.

Cover the basics. Make sure your child eats well, gets plenty of physical activity, and enough sleep. When your child is healthy and well rested they can handle stress and change better.

Keep connected to your child. Your child needs to know that no matter what else changes, you'll be there for them and love them.

Play. Play is a great stress buster. Make time to do things they enjoy.

Involve them in decisions. During a big change, children may feel like they have no control over their lives. When possible, let your child make some decisions about the change (e.g., what to wear on the first day of school, school supplies, how to arrange their bedroom furniture).

Talk about other changes they've handled. Talk about things in the past that they've coped well with (e.g., starting school, making friends in a new class, getting a new sibling).

Read books about children who cope with change. Read and discuss books about children who are going through a change that is similar to your child's.



For book suggestions go to page 28.



Special Me Time

Schedule regular times when you can pay full attention to your child (e.g., no phone, television, computer, other people, things to do). Choose a length of time that will be good for you and your child (e.g., fifteen minutes, half an hour, half a day). Call this special time by your child's first name (e.g., Ella Time). Making special time for your child helps them feel valued and loved.

28 ideas to connect with your child

Talk about when they were little and show them photos.	Make homemade popsicles.	Learn a magic trick.	Make a bird feeder.
Go on a nature walk and collect leaves or rocks.	Work on a puzzle together.	Paint positive words on rocks and place them in public places for people to find.	Draw family portraits or take turns drawing each other.
Make paper airplanes and see which one flies the farthest.	Have a picnic. Lie on your backs and find animals in the clouds.	Go camping together.	Learn to skip stones on water.
Go on a special date (e.g., ice cream, movie, art show).	Make pizzas or bake something together.	Learn how to jump rope.	Have a pajama day.
Take a class together.	Fly a kite.	Make a time capsule.	Go snowshoeing.
Play a board game.	Cuddle and chat or read a book to your child.	Start a new family tradition like a gratitude jar. At the end of the year, read the notes together.	Play catch.
Make a fort (inside or outside).	Plant something in a garden or flower pot and watch it grow.	Go berry picking.	Create an obstacle course (inside or outside).

My Family Traditions Book

With your child, find photos or draw pictures of your family traditions. As you look through the photos or pictures you've drawn ask your child, *"What are your favourite things about this tradition?"*. Share your own answers to these questions too.

Use the photos or pictures you draw to make a book of your family traditions. Be creative.

Once you've made the book, ask your child: *"What's happening in this picture?"* and *"How were you feeling?"* Have your child write their answers on the book page. The writing doesn't have to be perfect.

What you will need:

- family photos or pictures
- construction paper
- crayons
- tape or glue
- scissors
- hole puncher
- string



Having different traditions makes each family special.

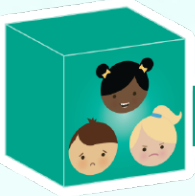
Talk with your child about how some families have the same traditions, but many families have different traditions.



Acts of Kindness

Here are several ideas for kind things you can do together:

- Give old items to families who have younger children (e.g., clothes, toys, games, books, shoes).
- Bring sidewalk chalk or bubbles to your local playground for everyone to share.
- Make cards for special holidays and deliver them to neighbours.
- Smile at 5 people you don't know in one day.
- Bring some flowers or make a card for someone.
- Ask your child what acts of kindness they would like to do and help them do it as needed.



Emotional Skills

Part of being resilient is about managing and responding to emotions in healthy ways. Feelings like frustration, excitement, sadness, jealousy, disgust, worry, anger, and embarrassment will be a part of your child's life. Having strong emotional skills can help them have better relationships. When your child understands what they feel, they can talk about their feelings more clearly, solve conflicts better, and move past uncomfortable feelings more easily.

Putting feelings into words can help your child calm down when they feel mad or upset. But, it's easier to talk about feelings when your child can:

- recognize and name emotions
- connect emotions with body sensations
- show emotions in socially appropriate ways

Things to teach your child about emotions

- Emotions are a natural and important part of life.
- Emotions aren't right or wrong or good or bad, they only tell you how you feel.
- Emotions can feel comfortable (e.g., happy) and uncomfortable (e.g., hurt, sad).
- Emotions can feel mild, moderate, or strong.
- All emotions are okay, but not all actions or behaviours are okay.
- You can control your actions and behaviours, even when your emotions feel strong.
- Although it may feel like they'll last forever, strong emotions eventually go away.
- Feelings can change (e.g., shock to anger, grief to sadness).
- You can have more than one emotion and your feelings may be mixed (e.g., nervous and excited).
- Emotions feel stronger when you're not at your best (e.g., tired, hot, thirsty, stressed).
- People can experience different emotions about the same thing (e.g., grief and relief).

Recognizing and Naming Emotions

Emotions aren't easy to understand. It's hard to describe how it feels to be excited, scared, or mad. Teaching your child the names of emotions can help them figure out what emotions look like in others and what they feel like in their bodies. A child who can say how they feel is less likely to act poorly on their emotions than one who can't.

Tips

Build emotion vocabulary. For example, the word angry might mean anything from a little mad to annoyed, irritated, or furious. Use an emotion word your child understands in a sentence with the new word (e.g., "*Aidan was angry. He looked furious. He was yelling, his face was red, and his hands were in fists. Furious means very angry.*").

When watching a show or reading a book look for emotions. Take time to talk about what happened, notice facial expressions, behaviours, body language, and name emotions (e.g., "*What happened?*", "*What does their face tell you?*", "*What does their body language say?*", "*What do you think the character is feeling?*", "*If this happened to you, how would you feel?*", "*What would your face and body look like?*").

Connecting Emotions and Feelings with Body Sensations

You experience feelings inside your body and it's tricky to share what that feels like. Your child will need your help to connect what they're feeling physically as a body sensation, to the emotions they're experiencing.

Tips

Talk to your child about how emotions can make their body feel. For example: *"If you're feeling angry you might feel your heart beating fast, your muscles feel tight, and your breathing get fast. You might also feel like screaming, running away, crying, or hurting someone. What you feel in your body helps you understand what emotion you're feeling."*

Talk about how the body feels when experiencing emotions (e.g., scared, angry). Ask your child to tell you about a time they felt a certain emotion and how their body felt. Share with your child a time that you felt that emotion and how your body felt.

Showing Emotions and Feelings in Acceptable Ways

Sometimes children can have trouble showing big or strong feelings in socially acceptable ways (e.g., they may scream, throw things, hit). Let your child know that they're in control of their feelings and that their feelings don't control them. It's not possible to always manage our feelings well, but we have a choice in how we act on them.

Tips

Your child needs to know what they're feeling before they can manage how they feel. Take time to name the feelings you think they're feeling. Describe what you see (e.g., *"Your face is red, your hands are in fists, and your muscles are tight. You look like you're feeling furious."*). When you notice how they're feeling, even if you get it wrong, they'll correct you, and that's okay. In doing this, your child will feel that you accept and understand them and their feelings.

Accept your child's feelings, set limits, and continue to stay calm. Accept how they feel, show empathy with your tone of voice, facial expressions, and actions—but set limits (e.g., *"I see that you feel mad. I know it feels uncomfortable when you feel mad. But, it's not okay to hit. Hitting hurts people."*).

Calmly suggest what they can do. Use short simple sentences (e.g., *"You look really mad. Go run around in the backyard 10 times."*, *"You look frustrated. Go scream into your pillow."*). If they don't like the suggestion, give them time to figure out what they want to do (e.g., a hug from you, time alone).

Praise effort. When your child has calmed down, praise what they did well and be specific (e.g., *"I could see that you were upset. I liked that you took a few deep breaths to calm down."*).

Show how you express your own feelings. Your child will learn by watching what you do when you experience strong emotions. Model by saying what you feel and how you're going to handle it (e.g., *"Oh no, I spilled the milk all over the floor. I feel frustrated because I don't have time for this right now. We need to get going. I'm going to take a deep breath first to calm down—then, I'll clean up."*).

Avoid trying to reason with your child when they're having an emotional reaction. It will only make the situation worse. For example:

Child cries, *"I have no friends, nobody likes me."*

Adult responds, *"Don't be silly, of course you have friends, stop crying."*

Instead, accept their feelings and use empathy (e.g., *"Oh honey, you feel alone and sad, that's so hard."*). When they are calm you can talk about the issue and problem solve.

Judging or making negative comments about your child's emotions (e.g., *"Stop crying. You're acting like a baby!"*, *"You shouldn't feel that way!"*) may make your child feel like their feelings don't matter to you.

Calming Strategies

Talk about calming strategies with your child when they're calm, focused, and ready to learn. Then, they can use them when they need them.

Calming Strategies			
Walk away.	Take time alone.	Relax before trying again.	Play music.
Scream into a pillow.	Find a different way to do something.	Run, jump, skip, dance.	Squeeze or kick a ball.
Quiet play (e.g., drawing, reading).	Play outside.	Ask for help.	Ask for a hug or cuddle.
Make a calm space or box, have things that let your child feel safe and calm (e.g., stress ball, blanket).	Talk to an adult about what they feel in their body (e.g., heart racing, butterflies in stomach).	Talk about the problem and how they can solve it (see page 18 for problem solving tips).	Calm breathing.



Help your child write down the calming strategies that work for them. Post them somewhere that they can look at them when they need to use them.



For more information on calming strategies and coping with anxiety go to: anxietycanada.com

*My Calm Things 😊
 go to my calm space
 cuddle with my kitty
 count to 10
 ask mommy or daddy for help
 call grandma or grandpa

Activities

Calm Breathing

Together with your child, practice breathing activities. Once they feel good at this, they'll be able to use this anytime they're feeling stressed, anxious, or overwhelmed by big feelings.

i Teaching this activity works best when your child is feeling rested, calm, and not distracted.

In through the nose, out through the mouth

In any position (e.g., seated, lying down, standing), practice this technique:

- Breathe in slowly through the nose.
- Breathe out slowly through the mouth.
- Repeat breathing this way 5 to 10 times.

Belly breathing

Practice this technique lying down, once your child is good at it, try it sitting or standing:

- Lie on your backs on a flat comfortable surface. Place your hands on your tummies or put a stuffy on your tummies.
- Breathe in deeply through your nose and feel your hands or the stuffy go up.
- Breathe out through your mouth and feel your hands or the stuffy go down.
- Repeat breathing this way 5 to 10 times.



Name that Feeling

Seeing what others look like when they feel emotions can help your child understand their own feelings. When you see emotions in others quietly point them out to your child. Talk about times when you felt these emotions. Try asking questions like:

- What were you doing?
- What happened?
- Do you think anything made the feelings stronger? Were you feeling hungry, tired, or sleepy?
- What sensations did you feel in your body?
- How did you act or what did you do when you felt like that?
- How long did the feeling last?
- When that feeling stopped, how did you feel?
- Would you do anything different if you feel that way again?

Emotion Draw

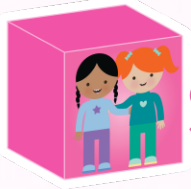
Sometimes it's hard to put feelings into words. Being creative can help.

Write emotion words on pieces of paper and put them into a container. Take turns picking an emotion from the container and share the word. Have everyone draw what that word means to them. It could be anything (e.g., colour(s), a picture, words, shapes).

Once everyone is finished drawing their picture, take turns talking about what they drew and why. Ask questions (e.g., *"Tell me about your picture. How does it show the sad feeling?"*, *"Tell me why you chose the colour blue?"*).

Strong social skills help your child build relationships that support their resilience. You can develop your child's social skills by helping them learn about empathy and friendship skills.





Social Skills

Empathy

Empathy is the ability to recognize and understand what someone else might think and feel and be able to respond in a caring way. It's important because it helps build close and caring relationships with other people. One of the best ways you can teach your child empathy is by modelling it.

To model empathy:

- Be present—stop what you're doing (e.g., phone, other people), and focus on your child.
- Go to your child's level (e.g., kneel, sit shoulder to shoulder).
- Look at the expression on your child's face and their body language to get a sense of what they're feeling.
- Help your child name their feelings.
- Use your own body language to communicate with your child (e.g., nod when you're listening or agreeing with your child, smile when they're talking about a happy event, make a sad face when they're sad).
- Ask your child what would help them feel better and comfort them.

Tips

Read stories together. Stories can help your child understand how others feel.

Encourage pretend play. When your child is pretending to be another person they're learning to understand others.

Use empathy to guide helping and giving. Before helping someone or getting them a gift ask your child to think about what they know about the person and what they think the person might need or like.

Show empathy to others. Help your child learn to show care for all people. Be friendly, hold doors open, ask questions about the well-being of others (e.g., "How are you?", "Is Daniel feeling better?"), and offer help (e.g., "Is there something I can do to help?").



For book suggestions go to page 28.



Friendship Skills

Friendship skills include **cooperation, communication**, as well as **understanding and managing emotions**. Having good friendship skills can help your child make and keep friends which is important throughout life for social and emotional support.

- **Cooperation** is playing or working together to reach a common goal (e.g., making a snowman, making a fort).
- **Communication** is being able to:
 - use polite, kind, and friendly words (e.g., please, thank you, excuse me).
 - use words to express ideas, needs, and wants.
 - use gestures (e.g., smiles, wide eyes, head nods, thumbs up).
 - take turns speaking and choosing what to play.
 - know the difference between **tattling** and **telling**.
- **Understanding and managing emotions** is knowing how you feel and showing it in a respectful way (e.g., feeling frustrated and taking a minute to be alone and breathe rather than hitting or yelling).

Tips

Explain how to be a good friend. For example: *“Ailee needs help cleaning up the art supplies, let’s work together and help her clean up. Working together is a way to be a good friend.”*

Praise their friendship skills. When you see your child acting like a good friend, tell them. For example: *“I noticed that you stayed calm and spoke in a calm voice when Jackson was upset today. You asked questions about what he’d like to do and told him what you’d like to do. You took turns. That’s a way to be a good friend.”*

Encourage play. Play helps your child practice friendship skills. Free play with other children lets them use their imagination and practice solving problems.

Be sensitive to temperament. Some children are more **extroverted** (e.g., outgoing, prefer to be with others rather than being alone). Other children are more **introverted** (e.g., less outgoing, prefer to be with one person or small groups, need quiet times to feel refreshed). For extroverted children, encourage them to invite others to play, offer choices, wait for others to speak, and take turns. For introverted children, encourage them to find ways to speak up, make choices, and take turns. Also keep play-dates smaller with fewer children.

Tattling: A Common Challenge In Learning Friendship Skills

As 5 to 8 year old children learn empathy, they’ll see that taking turns, sharing, and cooperating are the fair and kind thing to do. Help your child understand the difference between **tattling** and **telling**.

Tattling is telling to get someone into trouble when there is no danger or they can solve the problem on their own.

Telling is helping themselves, others, or animals stay safe if there is physical or emotional danger. Telling is also important if it’s a problem they can’t solve on their own.

How to help your child understand the difference between tattling and telling:

- There are times when it’s important to tell an adult. Ask your child to talk to a trusted adult if they don’t feel safe, if someone is hurting them or another child physically or emotionally, or if they’ve tried to solve the problem on their own but it didn’t work.
- Thank your child for telling when they should (e.g., *“Thank you for keeping Sophia safe. She’s too young to play with marbles.”*).
- Thank your child for problem solving on their own (e.g. *“You did a great job of finding a solution with your brother.”*).
- If your child tattles about rule breaking, connect with their feelings and encourage their own problem solving (e.g., *“I can see you’re frustrated that you didn’t get a turn. What could you do so that you both get a turn?”*).
- If your child tattles for attention or to get someone in trouble, ask them why they’re coming to you for help. Help them to problem solve. (e.g., *“Is this something that affects you?”*, *“Is there danger to you or someone else?”*, *“Have you tried to solve the problem yourself?”*).

Activities

Kindness Calendar

Make a Kindness Calendar in any style you like (e.g., using a calendar, journal, poster board). Choose a different coloured marker for each person in your family. Over the month, each person can write down all the kind things that they've noticed others doing. At the end of the month, talk about what everyone has done and thank each other. For example:

- How did you know what they would like?
- How did they look when you did that?
- What did you think they were feeling when you did that?
- How did you feel when... (e.g., you got a hug, the door was held for you)?

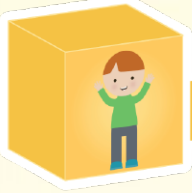
Guessing Others' Feelings

When you're out together, find a quiet place where you can sit and watch people without them knowing. Play a guessing game about what other people are feeling and explain the reasons for your guesses (e.g., *"See that boy? He's shouting at his brother and his eyebrows are tight together. His face is red. I think he looks angry about something. What do you think?"*).

Helping Hands

Children who take on responsibility learn to care for others and build their empathy. Give your child chores to be responsible for and gently remind them when they need to be done. For example, a five-year old could feed the dog, water plants, set or clear plates off of the table. As they get older, you can give them bigger chores (e.g., making their bed, packing their lunch or backpack, folding laundry). Thank them for being a helper (e.g., *"Thank you for feeding the dog and setting the table. You've helped because she was hungry and can't get food herself. Now I can get dinner ready faster so we can all eat sooner."*).





Problem Solving Skills

Your child will have many different types of problems (e.g., getting ready for school, disagreeing with friends or siblings, learning something new). In this process, strong emotions can make things more difficult. Learning to understand their own feelings and think about the feelings and opinions of others is an important skill your child will need to solve problems in life.

Tips

Learn from examples. If you're watching a show or reading a book when characters share, forgive, or solve problems, use it as a way to talk about the choices they made, how they felt, and how they solved their problems.

Disagree and handle strong emotions respectfully. Teach your child that if we disagree or feel mad we can still be kind and respectful to the other person (e.g., keep our hands to ourselves, talk in normal voices, walk away, get calm, look for solutions, apologize, ask for something to stop politely).

Create an accepting environment. Encourage your child to ask questions and share their ideas. Ask questions to help them look at things in new and different ways (e.g., *"Sounds interesting. If you do that, what might happen?"*, *"That's a really cool idea, tell me more about it."*, *"What do you think you could (e.g., do, build, make, design)?"*).

Model. When problems happen for you, talk out loud about how to work through the problem (e.g., *"I lost my keys. I'm feeling frustrated because we're already late. I'm going to breathe. Okay, now think... What did I do yesterday? I went to work. I came home. I opened the door. I..."*).

Problem Solving Process

The **problem solving process** helps your child to identify a problem or a goal, come up with ideas to solve the problem or reach the goal, and test out those ideas. The goal isn't to find the perfect solution or reach the goal as fast as possible—the most important learning is in the process. Allow for mistakes and failures and use them as a chance to learn.

i This strategy works best when you and your child are feeling rested, calm, and not distracted.

When you see that your child is having a problem, help them think of ways to solve their own problems.

1. Figure out the problem. Emotions are often part of problem solving. If your child is upset give them time to calm down. Once they are calm, find a quiet space where they feel relaxed or do something with them like walking and talking. Help your child name the problem (e.g., *"What's the problem?"*, *"How were you feeling?"*, *"How do you think the other person was feeling?"*).
2. Ask your child to think of different solutions (e.g., *"What do you think you could do to solve this problem?"*, *"What's another way you could do this?"*).
3. Ask your child to think about what may happen (e.g., *"If I do this, what will happen?"*, *"Will it be fair?"*, *"Will it be safe?"*, *"How will each person feel?"*).
4. Let them try it out. If needed, help them practice or think about what they are going to do (e.g., plan when, where, who, how).
5. Ask how it went (e.g., *"Tell me about it."*, *"What went well?"*, *"What didn't work and why?"*, *"What can you try differently next time?"*). Let them know that it's okay if problem solving doesn't work the first time. Sometimes they may have the right idea, but need to practice it. Other times, they may need to go back and see if they figured out the problem correctly.

Helping Your Child Make A Meaningful Apology

Telling your child to say *"I'm sorry"* when they're angry or frustrated doesn't help them take responsibility for their actions. Making a sincere apology means that your child understands how their actions have hurt another person and they feel sorry about it. Let your child calm down before trying these steps:

- Ask about what happened and name feelings (e.g., *"What did you do and how did you feel?"*, *"What did they do and how do you think they felt?"*). This can help your child understand how their actions might affect others.
- Don't rush your child. Sometimes it may take your child awhile to calm down and say sorry.
- Ask them to think about a time when something similar to happened to them.
- Think of other ways to solve the problem.
- Think of ways to make things better.
- Praise efforts. When your child says they're sorry, praise their effort (e.g., *"Thank you for saying sorry."*).
- Model. Your child will learn from watching you apologize to them or others. For example:
 - Name your emotion. *"I was feeling frustrated."*
 - Connect the feeling to the action. *"I yelled in a loud angry voice."*
 - Apologize for your action. *"I'm sorry I yelled."*
 - Say why it isn't okay. *"My yelling scared you. It wasn't kind."*
 - Offer help or comfort. *"What can I do to help?"*
 - Say what you will do next time. *"Next time I'm feeling angry, I will take a deep breath to calm down first and speak normally."*

Activities

Mission: Solve a Creative Problem

Gather some things that you have at home and give them to your child. Have your child pick one of the problems below and solve it using the things you've given them. They don't have to use everything you give them, just what they need to solve the problem.

- Make something that can move a small stuffy from one room to another without touching the ground.
- Make a slide for action figures.
- Make a musical instrument.
- Make a jump ramp for toy cars.
- Make something so two people can talk to one another.
- Use at least 3 supplies to make a device that can roll across the floor.
- Build a mini house.
- Use at least 4 supplies to build the tallest tower you can.
- Build a bridge.
- Make a piece of art.
- Make up a game. Decide on the rules of the game.

What you will need:

- crayons, pencils, markers
- paper straws
- cotton balls
- yarn, string
- paper cups
- clothespins
- sticky notes or paper
- tape
- popsicle sticks
- paper clips
- elastics

If you don't have these things—use other things instead. Be creative.

Cooking Time

Help your child learn to follow a simple recipe. Help as needed but let your child try to figure it out on their own. They'll strengthen their air traffic control skills by following the order of directions, focusing their attention when measuring and counting, and seeing how putting ingredients together can make something new.



For healthy recipes go to:
www.foothillsnetwork.ca/Foothillsnetwork/media/Files/Resources/fcwn-our-time-together-cookbook-compressed-web-format.pdf



What would you do?

Using the problem solving process outlined below, ask your child to solve the following problems:

- Someone in your class is using something that you want to use (e.g., toy, book).
- You want to watch a show at home, but your screen time is over for the day.
- You need to talk to your mom, but she’s on the phone with someone.
- You see a friend in the library, you really want to say hi but you’re supposed to keep quiet.
- You’re playing a game, you’re losing, and you want to quit playing.
- It’s quiet reading time in class but your friend keeps talking to you.
- Your friends are teasing you and it’s bothering you.

Problem Solving Process		
What’s the problem?	What feelings do you have about it?	
What are three ways to solve the problem? (Make two real solutions and one silly solution.)		
Solution 1	Solution 2	Silly Solution 3
What do you think will happen if you do each solution? How will everyone feel with each solution?		
Outcome 1	Outcome 2	Silly Outcome 3
Which solution do you think will work the best?		

Play Games

Playing games that have one winner or cooperative games (e.g., games that you have to work together for) can help your child learn how to win and lose, take turns, problem solve, and cooperate.

Here are some suggestions:

- One winner games:
 - Sequence for Kids™, Sorry!™, Scrabble Junior™, Go Fish, Uno™
- Cooperative games:
 - Race to the Treasure!™, Hoot Owl Hoot!™, Outfoxed!™

If your child gets upset about not winning, take a break. When they feel calm again, encourage your child to keep trying, even if things don’t go how they want.



Self-Esteem

Self-esteem is important to your child's happiness, health, and success. Children with positive self-esteem are more able to deal with peer pressure, responsibility, frustrations, and strong emotions. You can help build your child's self-esteem and resilience by giving your child chances to feel capable and showing them that they are loved and valued.

What is Self-Esteem?

Self-esteem is about liking yourself. This doesn't mean thinking you're better than others or being overconfident. It's about believing in yourself and knowing what you do well. Children with healthy self-esteem:

- feel proud of what they can do
- see the good things about themselves
- believe in themselves, even when they make mistakes
- feel liked and accepted

Tips

Every child is different. Self-esteem may come easier to some children than others. Some children face extra challenges that can lower their self-esteem. But, even if a child's self-esteem is low, it can be increased.

Free-play. Give your child time to play by themselves and with others. Let them come up with the ideas. Stand back, and let them play!

Let them take risks. As a parent, you can decide what a **healthy risk** is for your child. A healthy risk will depend on their age, abilities, and maturity as well as your own comfort level. Some examples of healthy risks might be: climbing up high on play equipment, going to a birthday party without parents, trying a new sport, or walking to school with a sibling or friend.

Strengthen their air-traffic control system. Help your child learn to do things on their own (e.g., shower, get ready for bed, make their own lunch). Break a big job into steps using a written or picture-based checklist (e.g., for bedtime: bath, brush and floss teeth, put on pajamas, go to the bathroom). Let them do it on their own, even if you can do it quicker and cleaner. With larger tasks, remind them to check their list. Planning ahead and staying on task strengthens their air-traffic control skills and builds their self-esteem because they are doing things by themselves.

Let them make decisions and speak for themselves. For example, let them order their food at a restaurant or answer when another adult asks them a question.

Focus on strengths. Learn your child's strengths by noticing what your child does well and enjoys. Give them chances to develop these strengths.

Encourage a growth mindset. Help your child take on a **growth mindset** or a belief that they can learn by trying, failing, and trying again. Encourage them to keep trying even if it's hard or they can't do it the first time (e.g., finishing a math problem, practicing a cartwheel). Model this yourself (e.g., when you make a mistake, point it out and ask them to help you problem solve). They will feel important and see that making mistakes is a normal part of learning.

Giving Praise

Praise can help improve your child's self-esteem and motivate them to keep trying, even when they fail. There are two main types of praise: **personal praise** and **effort-based praise**.

- **Personal praise** focuses on natural talents or strengths that come easily to your child (e.g., singing, being great at sports, good at math). Praise like *"You're a great dancer!"* or *"You're so smart!"* may leave your child thinking that their natural abilities can't be improved and are just a part of who they are. Too much personal praise may stop a child from trying to get better at something because they feel they are good enough at it already or worried that they aren't as good as the praise they've been given.
- **Effort-based praise** focuses on the hard work and practice that your child puts into learning something. For example: *"You worked really hard to learn new moves and practiced for so many hours. Good job! You should feel proud of that."*

Tips

Be honest. Overpraising might make your child think they can't do any better so they'll stop trying to improve. It can also make your child wonder if you're being truthful. For example: *"All the practicing you've done has really helped you get good at balancing and steering your bike well."* is better than, *"You're the best bike rider in the world!"*

Be specific. Say what you think they did well (e.g., *"I liked how you kept focused and put your finger under each word as you were reading."*). Being specific can help your child repeat things you would like them to do again.

Support a growth mindset. Praise effort in ways that support learning from mistakes. For example: *"Your throwing is getting stronger and faster. Did you learn something new that you're trying?"* is better than, *"You're throwing so well. Someday you'll be in the major leagues!"*

Use nonverbal communication. When your child is putting in a lot of effort to do something (e.g., smile, nod, give a thumbs up, fist bump, put your arm around your child) to let them know you see they're trying.

Activities

Goal Getters

When your child is learning something new and they can't do it yet, talk about it and set a goal (e.g., ride a bike, tie up shoes, read a chapter book).

What you will need:

- paper
- pencil
- crayons
- stickers

1. Create an **I can** statement about the goal and write it on a piece of paper (e.g., "I can tie up my own shoes.").
2. Below the **I can** statement, write the words **I'm trying**. Every time they try to tie up their own shoes, have them mark the **I'm trying** area (e.g., put on sticker, draw a happy face, draw a star).
3. While your child is working towards their goal, offer praise (e.g., "You keep trying! I am so proud of you!", "You're so close!"). Let them know it's okay to feel frustrated when they're learning something new and that they'll get it with time and practice.
4. Talk about the hard parts and help them to problem solve.
5. Once your child is able to do their **I can** statement, celebrate together.

I can	I'm trying	I did it!
ride my bike	✓ ★ 😊	♥
tie my shoes	♥ ★ ✓	😊

Tip: Keep your child's **I can** statements. If your child ever doubts their ability to keep trying, remind them of their **I can** statements. Once in a while, look through them together and talk about things they've learned through hard work and practice.

Reframing negative self-talk

Some children may use negative self-talk (e.g., "I can't _____," "I'm bad at _____," "I'll never _____"). Help your child change their language from negative to more positive self-talk. "Yet" is a more positive way to look at things. It can motivate them to keep trying. For example, if your child says, "I'm terrible at math," say "What you mean is that, you aren't good at math yet." Focusing on not being able to do something "yet" lets your child know that they can get there with practice.

Home Olympics

Help your child (with siblings or friends) create their own Home Olympics! Have your event outside or inside. The goal is to have FUN!

Ideas for events in your Home Olympics:

- **Obstacle Course**

Create a safe course to go over, under, around, and through.

- **Balloon Volleyball**

Players on either side of a tight string try to hit a balloon back and forth as many times as they can before the balloon drops.

- **Copy Me**

Use painter's tape or chalk to make the shape of a ladder on the ground. One player hops, skips, or jumps to make different foot patterns in the ladder. The other players take turns trying to copy the patterns that each player makes.

Have the children make Olympic medals for each other and hold a fun medal ceremony (e.g., Biggest Try, Most Effort).

Sharing Circle

Once a month have a family sharing circle. Get everyone together and sit in a circle (e.g., on the floor, around a table). The person who begins the sharing circle holds onto an item. When they're finished sharing something kind about the person next to them and about themselves, they pass on the item. This activity helps children wait for their turn to speak and practice being quiet when others are speaking. It also helps them see strengths in themselves and others.

What you'll need:
talking stick, feather,
teddy bear, or other
small item that you
can pass around.



Resources

Social and Emotional Milestones

Every child develops at their own pace, some may develop more quickly or slowly than others. However, you know your child best. Talk with your healthcare provider if you're concerned about the way your child plays, learns, speaks, acts, or moves. Getting help early can make a big difference for you and your child.

Age 5	
Emotional Development	Social Development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understands their own basic feelings (e.g., mad, sad, happy, excited, worried, scared) • Can describe how they feel • More able to accept and manage challenges • Learns to think before they react • Separates from caregivers without being too upset • Wants parent attention • Shows some empathy • Shows some jealousy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More likely to agree with rules and wants things to be fair • Wants to please and be like their friends • Likes to sing, dance, and act • Is aware of gender • Can tell what's real and what's make-believe • Shows more independence (e.g., feels comfortable at a friend's house without their parent there) • Is sometimes demanding—sometimes cooperative • Prefers to play with friends, more than playing alone
Age 6	
Emotional Development	Social Development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develops better self-control skills (e.g., waits patiently, takes turns, keeps hands to self) • Becomes more aware of emotions—their own and others • Begins to understand how it feels to be embarrassed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pays more attention to friendship and teamwork • Wants to be liked and accepted by friends • Shows more independence from family • Questions rules but wants to please and help out • Loves to show off talents • Wants to choose their own clothes, wash themselves, and comb their own hair
Age 7	
Emotional Development	Social Development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manages emotions better, especially in public, but may still act with aggression when upset • May overcome some early childhood fears, but is still afraid of the unknown • Can say what happened and how they felt (e.g., <i>"I got mad because I really wanted to go to the park."</i>) • Starts to use self-calming strategies (e.g., seeking alone time, taking deep breaths) • More able to understand the actions and feelings of others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Likes competing when playing games • When playing games, treats friends with respect • Will play with friends of the opposite gender • Shows an interest in joining a club or sports team • Starts showing a sense of humour and likes telling jokes • Pretend plays with other children • Helps out with chores at home (e.g., clearing the table after a meal, picking up toys) • May complain about friendships and other kids' reactions

Age 8

Emotional Development	Social Development
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Most can mask their true thoughts or emotions to spare someone's feelings• Develops a sense of self-identity and knows more about their own interests, talents, friends, and relationships• Begins to understand how someone else feels and is more able to put themselves in another person's shoes• Copes better with frustration, failure, and disappointment• May want physical contact from a parent when under stress, but may not like physical contact at other times	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Shows more social skills (e.g., being generous, supportive, kind)• Wants to be with friends• Keeps to rules and wants things to be "fair," which can sometimes start problems in group play• May want more privacy• Loves being a part of social groups and may mostly have friendships with peers of the same gender• May begin to express their opinions about people, events, news, and things around them

Book Recommendations

Most of these books will be available to borrow for free from your local public library. If the book is not at your local library, ask the librarian about inter-library loans.

Title	Author	Year	What is the book about?	Age
You Are My Happy	Hoda Kotb	2019	Relationship and love of parent	5-8
I Love You More	Laura Duksta	2001	Parent and child relationship	5-8
The Invisible String	Patrice Karst	2000	Love and overcoming the fear of loneliness or separation	5-8
Today I Feel Silly & Other Moods That Make My Day	Jamie Lee Curtis and Laura Cornell	2007	Teaching about different emotions	4-8
My Heart Fills With Happiness	Monique Gray Smith	2018	Emotions: happy	5
My Incredible Talking Body	Rebecca Bowen	2017	Understanding and managing emotions	6-7
Listening To My Body	Gabi Garcia	2017	Physical response to feelings	5-8
In My Heart: A Book of Feelings	Harry N. Abrams	2014	Physical response to feelings	5-8
The Great Big Book of Feelings	Mary Hoffman	2017	Situations that impact strength of feelings	5-8
A Book of Feelings	Amanda McCardie	2015	Situations that impact feelings	5-8
Grump Monkey	Suzanne Lang	2018	Coping with feeling grumpy	5-8
My Magic Breath	Nick Ortner	2018	Mindful breathing activities	5-8
I Am Peace: A Book of Mindfulness	Susan Verde	2017	Mindfulness practices	5-8
Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day	Judith Viorst	2009	Coping with bad days and big emotions	5-8
Remy The Rhino Learns Patience (Little Lessons From Our Animal Pals)	Andy McGuire	2010	Patience	5
What Should Danny Do?	Adir Levy	2017	Decision making and empathy	5-8
Rafa and the Mist	Kade Baird	2017	Social Skills: empathy	5-8
Be Kind	Pat Zietlow Miller and Jen Hill	2018	How to show kindness	3-6
Pay it Forward	Catherine Ryan Hyde	2014	Kindness	7-8
Have You Filled a Bucket Today?	Carol McCloud	2006	Social skills: kindness	5-8
Growing Up with a Bucketful of Happiness: Three Rules for a Happier Life	Carol McCloud	2010	Empathy, kindness, and positive environment	8
My Mouth is a Volcano	Julia Cook	2008	Friendship skills and air-traffic control skills (impulse control)	5-8
Wonder	R.J. Palacio	2012	Accepting differences	8
The Family Book	Todd Parr	2003	Understanding differences and uniqueness in families	5-8
This Is How We Do It	Matt Lamothe	2017	Understanding different cultures	6-8
What Do You Do with a Problem?	Kobi Yamada	2016	Problem solving	5-6

Title	Author	Year	What is the book about?	Age
My Day Is Ruined	Bryan Smith	2017	Flexible thinking and overreacting	5-8
Your Fantastic Elastic Brain: Stretch It, Shape It	JoAnn Deak	2010	Growth mindset	7-8
I Like Myself	Karen Beaumont	2004	Self-esteem	4-7
It's Okay to Make Mistakes	Todd Parr	2014	Making mistakes and to keep trying	6-8
The Little Pig, The Bicycle, And The Moon	Pierrette Dube	2018	Determination and to keep trying	5-8
Luigi And The Barefoot Races	Dan Paley	2015	Determination and courage	6-8
The Good Egg	Jory John	2019	Coping with worry and perfectionism	5-8
Drum Dream Girl	Margarita Engle	2015	Confidence building and to keep trying	5-8
Barnaby Never Forgets	Pierre Collet-Derby	2017	Perfectionism and accepting differences	5-8
There, There	Tim Beiser	2017	Coping when things aren't going your way	5-8
After the Fall-How Humpty Dumpty got Back up Again	Dan Satat	2017	Resilience and overcoming fear	5-8
Brand-New Pencils, Brand-New Books	Diane De Graot	2011	Starting school	5-6
Pete the Cat: Rocking in My School Shoes	Eric Litwin	2011	Coping with unknown and new things	5-7
Theo's Mood: A Book of Feelings	Maryann Cocca	2013	Mixed feelings about a new sibling	5-7
A Kiss Goodbye	Audrey Penn	2007	Coping with change: moving	5-8
Alexander, Who's Not (Do You Hear Me? I Mean It!) Going to Move	Judith Viorst	1998	Coping with change: moving	5-7
Inside Out & Back Again	Thanhha Lai	2011	Coping with change: moving	6-8
Moving Day	Ralph Fletcher	2007	Coping with sadness and moving	8
Missing Nimama	Melanie Florence	2015	Coping with loss of missing parent	7-8
When We Were Alone	David A. Robertson	2016	Coping with challenge and residential school	5-8
Stolen Words	Melanie Florence	2017	Coping with loss of culture and determination	6-8
Charlotte's Web	E. B. White	1952	Coping with loss	8

Community and Online Resources

Resource	About	Website
Alberta Family Resource Network	Programs and services for parents and caregivers, and their children.	www.alberta.ca/family-resource-networks
Alberta Family Wellness Initiative	Information and resources about early brain development and its connection to lifelong physical and mental health, including addiction.	www.albertafamilywellness.org/
Alberta Health Services Simple Connections, Stronger Families Toolkit	Printable activity pages, colouring sheets, puzzles, and handouts about increasing the resiliency of Albertan families.	www.albertahealthservices.ca/info/Page16039.aspx
Alberta Native Friendship Centres Indigenous supports and services	Culturally appropriate supports and services for parents, caregivers, and children. Contact the Friendship in your area for more information about available programs and services.	https://anfca.com/
Government of Alberta Parenting Resources	Parenting tips, resources, supports, and services	www.alberta.ca/parenting
Healthy Parents, Healthy Children	Provides current, reliable pregnancy and parenting information.	www.healthyparentshealthychildren.ca
Heart-Mind Online	Offers information, ideas, and resources to support you in caring for your child.	https://heartmindonline.org/resources/forfamilies
Otipemisiwak Métis Government	Culturally appropriate supports and services for Métis families to maintain and enhance connections with community, culture, programs, and services.	https://albertametis.com/programs-services/children-family-services/

References

- Addiction and Mental Health, Alberta Health Services. (2018). Stress and Youth. Retrieved from: <https://myhealth.alberta.ca/alberta/Pages/stress-and-youth.aspx>
- Alberta Family Wellness Initiative. (2018). Learning cards. Retrieved from: <https://www.albertafamilywellness.org/resources/doc/learning-cards>
- Anxiety Canada. (2007). How to teach your child calm breathing. Retrieved from: https://www.anxietycanada.com/sites/default/files/calm_breathing.pdf
- Attridge, D. M. (2010). *Early brain & biological development: A science in society symposium. Summary report.* (p. 82). Retrieved from: <http://www.albertafamilywellness.org/assets/Resources/EBBD-SUMMARY-REPORT.PDF>
- Baby Center Medical Advisory Board. (2017). The caring child: how to teach empathy (age 5). Retrieved from: https://www.babycenter.com/0_the-caring-child-how-to-teach-empathy-age-5_67146.bc
- Best Start: Ontario's Early Child Development Resource Centre & Health Nexus Sante. (2017). Building resilience in young children. Retrieved from: www.beststart.org
- Beyond Blue. (2019). Building resilience in children. Retrieved from: <https://healthyfamilies.beyondblue.org.au/healthy-homes/building-resilience>
- Beyond Blue. (2019). Focus on managing emotions. Retrieved from: <https://healthyfamilies.beyondblue.org.au/healthy-homes/building-resilience/focus-on-managing-emotions>
- Beyond Blue. (2019). Solving problems. Retrieved from: <https://healthyfamilies.beyondblue.org.au/age-6-12/raising-resilient-children/solving-problems>
- Booth Church, E. (n.d.). How you can help children solve problems. Retrieved from: <http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/articles/teaching-content/how-you-can-help-children-solve-problems/>
- Canadian Paediatric Society. (2018). How much for school-age children? (5 – 11 years). Retrieved from: <https://www.cps.ca/en/active-actifs/how-much-for-school-age-children>
- Caring for Kids, & Canadian Paediatric Society. (2017). Screen time and young children. Retrieved from: <https://www.caringforkids.cps.ca/handouts/screen-time-and-young-children>
- Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University. (2017). Resilience. Retrieved from: <https://developingchild.harvard.edu/science/key-concepts/resilience/>
- Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University. (2011). Building the brain's "Air Traffic Control" system: How early experiences shape the development of executive function. Working Paper No. 11. Retrieved from: <https://developingchild.harvard.edu/wp-content/uploads/2011/05/How-Early-Experiences-Shape-the-Development-of-Executive-Function.pdf>
- Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University. (2017). Serve and Return. Retrieved from: <https://developingchild.harvard.edu/science/key-concepts/serve-and-return/>
- Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University. (2017). Toxic stress. Retrieved from: <https://developingchild.harvard.edu/science/key-concepts/toxic-stress/>
- Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning. (n.d.). Social and emotional foundations for early learning. Retrieved from: <http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu/resources/www/www21.html>
- Centre for Studies on Human Stress. (2017). Biology of stress. Retrieved from: <http://humanstress.ca/stress/what-is-stress/biology-of-stress/>
- Centre for Studies on Human Stress. (2017). Stressors. Retrieved from: <http://humanstress.ca/stress/what-is-stress/stressors/>
- Ceridian Corporation. (2005). Helping children deal with change. Retrieved from: <https://fyi.extension.wisc.edu/wiomk/files/2012/10/KidsAndChange.pdf>
- Children's Hospital Boston, Beardslee, W. R., Ayoub, C. C., Avery, M. W., Sosin, D., Watts, C. L., & Stephenson, K. (2018). *The ability to cope: Building resilience for yourself and your child.* Retrieved from: <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/ability-to-cope.pdf>
- Cullins, A. (2019). How to explain growth mindset to kids: Neuroplasticity activities. Retrieved from: <https://biglifejournal.com/blogs/blog/teach-kids-growth-mindset-neuroplasticity-activities>
- Dress, A. (n.d.). How to get your kid to apologize (and mean it!). Retrieved from: <https://www.parents.com/kids/responsibility/teaching/how-to-get-your-kid-to-apologize-and-mean-it/>
- Elias, M. J. (2019). *Problem-solving in elementary school.* Retrieved from: <https://www.edutopia.org/article/problem-solving-elementary-school>
- Elias, M. J., & Clabby, J. F. (1988). *Teaching social decision making. Educational leadership.* 45(6), 52–55. Retrieved from: http://www.ascd.org/ASCD/pdf/journals/ed_lead/el_198803_elias.pdf
- Encourage Play at Home. (2019). Connect with your family & play! Retrieved from: <https://www.encourageplay.com/connect-through-play>
- Encourage Play. (2017). Creative problem solving activities for kids. Retrieved from: <https://www.encourageplay.com/blog/creative-problem-solving-activities-for-kids>
- Gamzo, M. (2015). 10 Essential non-verbal communication skills that will make you a better parent. Retrieved from: <https://afineparent.com/positive/non-verbal-communication-skills.html>
- Georgetown University Centre for Child and Human Development. (2019). Activity: Teaching problem solving. Retrieved from: https://www.ecmhc.org/tutorials/social-emotional/mod4_3.html
- Gottman, J., Declaire, J., & Goleman, D. (1998). *Raising an emotionally intelligent child the heart of parenting.* New York, NY: Simon and Shuster.
- Heart-Mind Online. (2014). 5-Step problem solving for young children. Retrieved from: <https://heartmindonline.org/resources/5-step-problem-solving-for-young-children>
- Heart-Mind Online. (2014). Friendship skills. Retrieved from: <https://heartmindonline.org/resources/friendship-skills>

- Hoffman Kaser, C. (n.d.). Teaching social problem solving to students. Retrieved from: <https://www.odu.edu/content/dam/odu/col-dept/cdse/docs/7-social-problem-solving.pdf>
- Hurley, K. (2016). How to teach frustration tolerance to kids. Retrieved from: <http://www.pbs.org/parents/thrive/how-to-teach-frustration-tolerance-to-kids>
- Hussong, A. (2017). What parents neglect to teach about gratitude. Retrieved from: https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/what_parents_neglect_to_teach_about_gratitude
- Kelly, K. (2019). Stress relief tips: 8 self-soothing techniques for young children. Retrieved from: <https://www.understood.org/en/friends-feelings/managing-feelings/fear/8-self-soothing-techniques-for-your-young-child#slide-5>
- Kelly, K. (2019). Teaching empathy activities. Retrieved from: <https://www.understood.org/en/friends-feelings/common-challenges/picking-up-on-social-cues/teaching-empathy-activities>
- Kids Helpline. (2019). Helping kids identify and express feelings. Retrieved from: <https://kidshelpline.com.au/parents/issues/helping-kids-identify-and-express-feelings>
- KidsHealth. (2018). Self-esteem (for kids). Retrieved from: <https://kidshealth.org/en/kids/self-esteem.html>
- Making Caring Common Project, Harvard Graduate School of Education. (2018). For families: 5 tips for cultivating empathy. Retrieved from: <https://mcc.gse.harvard.edu/resources-for-families/5-tips-cultivating-empathy>
- McCready, A. (2015). 7 Steps for apologizing to your child. Retrieved from: <https://www.positiveparentingsolutions.com/parenting/apologizing-to-your-child>
- McLean, D. S. (2017). *Helping children manage emotions*. Retrieved from: <http://www.fosteringdifference.com.au/images/Resources/ForFosterParents/Fostering-Difference-Managing-Emotions-finaldocx.pdf>
- Merrill, K. L., Smith, S. W., Cumming, M. M., & Daunic, A. P. (2017). *A review of social problem-solving interventions: Past findings, current status, and future directions*. Review of Educational Research. 87(1), 71–102. Retrieved from: <https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654316652943>
- Morin, A. (2019). The best way to praise kids who learn and think differently. Retrieved from: <https://www.understood.org/en/friends-feelings/empowering-your-child/celebrating-successes/ways-praise-can-empower-kids-learning-issues>
- Moyses, K. (2017). Helping children calm down. Retrieved from: https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/helping_children_calm_down
- Parent Tool Kit. (2019). Developing empathy in kids ages 5-8. Retrieved from: <https://www.parenttoolkit.com/social-and-emotional-development/advice/social-awareness/developing-empathy-in-kids-ages-5-8>
- Parent Tool Kit. (2019). Guide to social & emotional development. Retrieved from: <https://www.parenttoolkit.com/social-and-emotional-development/advice/parents-guide-to-social-and-emotional-development>
- Parent Tool Kit. (2019). Telling or tattling... is there really a difference? Retrieved from: <https://www.parenttoolkit.com/social-and-emotional-development/news/bullying/telling-or-tattling-is-there-really-a-difference>
- PBS KIDS for Parents. (2019). Create your own “my family traditions” book. Retrieved from: <http://www.pbs.org/parents/crafts-and-experiments/create-your-own-my-family-traditions-book>
- PBS KIDS for Parents. (2019). Learning resources for age 5. Retrieved from: <http://www.pbs.org/parents/learn-grow/age-5/social-skills>
- PBS KIDS for Parents. (2019). Learning resources for age 6. Retrieved from: <http://www.pbs.org/parents/learn-grow/age-6/social-skills>
- PBS KIDS for Parents. (2019). Learning resources for age 7. Retrieved from: <http://www.pbs.org/parents/learn-grow/age-7/social-skills>
- PBS KIDS for Parents. (2019). Social skills: friendship at age 5. Retrieved from: <http://www.pbs.org/parents/learn-grow/age-5/social-skills/friendship>
- PBS KIDS for Parents. (2019). Social skills: social problem solving at age 8. Retrieved from: <http://www.pbs.org/parents/learn-grow/age-8/social-skills/social-problem-solving>
- PBS KIDS for Parents. (2019). Build self-confidence with a goal-setting activity. Retrieved from: <http://www.pbs.org/parents/crafts-and-experiments/build-self-confidence-with-a-goal-setting-activity>
- PBS KIDS for Parents. (2019). Host a family olympics: Crafts for kids. Retrieved from: <http://www.pbs.org/parents/crafts-and-experiments/host-a-family-olympics>
- PBS KIDS for Parents. (2019). Is it tattling or telling? *Teaching your kids when to report a broken rule*. Retrieved from: <http://www.pbs.org/parents/thrive/is-it-tattling-or-telling-teaching-your-kids-when-to-report-a-broken-rule>
- PBS KIDS for Parents. (2019). Social skills: Empathy at age 5. Retrieved from: <http://www.pbs.org/parents/learn-grow/age-5/social-skills/empathy>
- PBS KIDS for Parents. (2019). Social skills: Friendship at age 8. Retrieved from: <http://www.pbs.org/parents/learn-grow/age-8/social-skills/friendship>
- Playworks. (2012). Teaching empathy to your child. Retrieved from: <https://www.playworks.org/resource/teaching-empathy-to-your-child/>
- Raising Children Network. (n.d.). About self-esteem: Children 1-8 years. Retrieved from: <https://raisingchildren.net.au/toddlers/behaviour/understanding-behaviour/about-self-esteem>
- Reeves, C. (2019). Stop a tattletale: 4 simple strategies. Retrieved from: <https://canadianfamily.ca/kids/child/4-strategies-to-stop-a-little-tattletale/>
- Rymanowicz, K. (2017). Children and empathy: Reading to learn empathy. Retrieved from: https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/children_and_empathy_reading_to_learn_empathy
- Schwarz, N. (2015). How art can help your kids express emotions. Retrieved from: <https://imperfectfamilies.com/help-child-express-mixed-feelings/>
- Siegel, D. J., & Payne Bryson, T. (2011). *The whole-brain child: 12 revolutionary strategies to nurture your child's developing mind*. Random House Inc. New York
- Williams, C. (2019). How to help young children cope with change—parent cue. Retrieved from: <https://theparentcue.org/how-to-help-young-children-cope-with-change/>



To order a copy of this resource go to:
<https://dol.datacm.com/>
Login ID: mentalhealthresources
Password: mh2016
Item Number: C-003

