

# **CORONAVIRUS MAINTAINING RESILIENCE**

# Dear parent/carer

Children need to be able to develop and foster resilience, even in difficult times.

Resilience is the ability to cope during challenging and difficult times, which we are all facing in this unusual and worrying time. When we experience stressful situations, it is common to experience feelings of anxiety, fear, low self-worth and low mood, all of which can contribute to the reduction of self-esteem.

Helping the children and young people in our care to maintain strong self-esteem and a sense of individual value is really important in developing and managing emotional well-being. Research continues to suggest that with greater resilience, we can cope better with stressful situations.

For children and young people, having a strong sense of resilience can provide them with an extra layer of protection from the stresses of life, reducing the chances of developing anxiety and low mood.

One of the main symptoms of anxiety and low mood is ruminating negative thinking. It is important for us to realise that the amount of attention we give to these negative thoughts allows them to intensify. Developing a resilient mindset helps us to interrupt these negative thoughts, replacing them with feelings of optimism, hope and positivity, allowing us to feel psychologically healthier.

The great thing about resilience is that we are all able to develop, strengthen and build it; it is not something we are simply born with or without.

Stay safe and well and remember, by doing what we are all doing collectively, we are showing a global love and care for each another, never before seen on this scale.

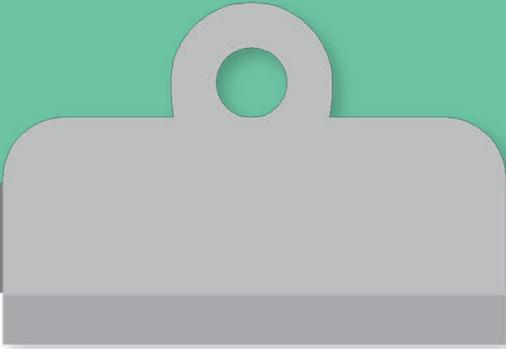
Take care

The Unravel Team

The logo for Unravel, featuring the word "unravel" in a lowercase, rounded, teal-colored font.

Experts in children & young people's  
emotional well-being

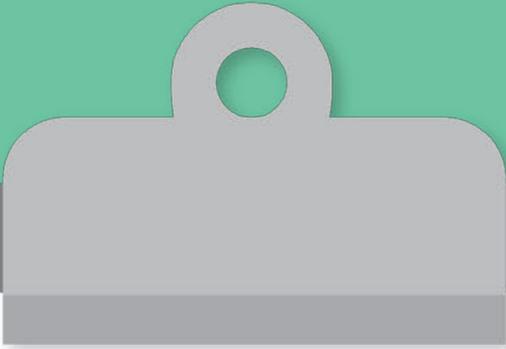
Supporting you on behalf of your child's school



## MAINTAINING RESILIENCE

- ✔ Encourage and allow children and young people to be problem solvers. This can be done in many ways, simply allowing young people to solve a problem can instil a sense of accomplishment and self-capability. As parents and carers, it is often difficult to hold back from answering a child's problem straight away, yet putting the onus back on them to solve, if appropriate, can be such an empowering moment.
- ✔ Boost children's self-esteem. Children's recognition that they are able to be self-sufficient is a huge boost for their self-esteem. As we cannot solve the present situation as quickly as we want to, it is useful to allow children to recognise this and work out what is not and is in their control, such as taking the recommended precautions.
- ✔ Continue to maintain connections, a sense of belonging and friendships. Building and maintaining positive interpersonal relationships helps to enhance resilience. However, during stressful times, our ability to focus on others is often disrupted, leading us to become more self-focused.
- ✔ Take time to reach out to others. Talking over the phone or sending letters, postcards or text messages may help to brighten someone's day. We know that the power of making someone else happy also has a huge impact on lifting our own mood and makes us feel happier too – it is a 'win-win' situation.

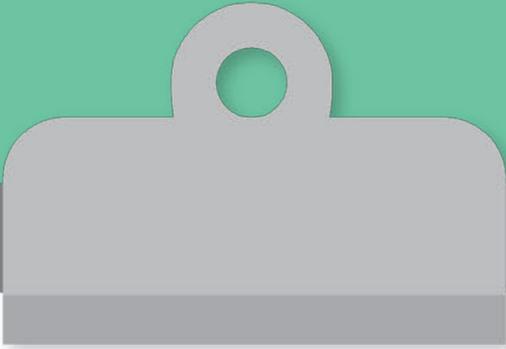




## MAINTAINING RESILIENCE

- ✔ Balance out the negatives with positives. Our brains are programmed to scan and identify danger quickly – this has been embedded in the human brain as far back as when we were cavemen and women, when we needed this ability much more. Our brains are now more attuned to recognising danger, threat and negative situations more readily than positives ones. Research suggests that because we place much more attention on negative thoughts and experiences, we need between a 3:1 and 5:1 ratio of positives to balance out negatives.
- ✔ Train your brain. Our brains have to work a little bit harder to seek out positives. Recognising or discussing five things you are grateful for each day is one way to do this. Go out for a walk and look for five good things you can see around you. The more we practise this skill, the easier and more natural it comes to us. It provides us with greater power to interrupt focusing on the negatives.
- ✔ Instil a sense of hope and optimism. Both are pathways to well-being and are key to enhancing resilience as they act as a stress buffer. Allowing children and young people to reflect on the steps they need to achieve their goals allows them to see that they are manageable and there is a path that leads them there, which instils a sense of purpose and motivation.
- ✔ Make your dreams a reality. Use this unusual situation as an opportunity to plan for things you've always wanted to do in the future. This could be planning and researching your perfect day out, a future holiday or a day trip.

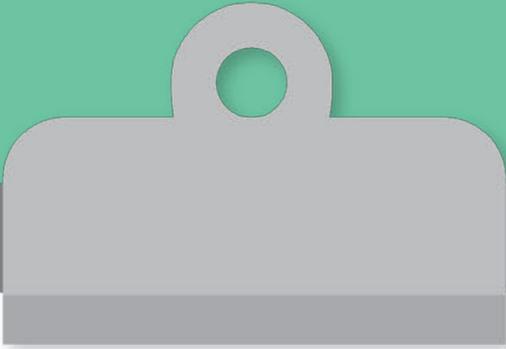




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- ✔ Embed a sense of purpose to increase resilience. Allowing young people to explore things they hope to achieve in the future and setting out plans for this can help build optimism and self pride. For example, if your child wants to become a professional footballer or sports person, maybe this time could be used to practise and fine-tune technique skills to provide a head start. For us adults, demonstrate resilience by spending time learning a skill you would never have the time to do, such as learning a new language or mastering an art technique.
- ✔ Promote a growth mindset and allow children to recognise that failure or mistakes helps us learn and develop stronger. It is useful to recognise key influential people that have encountered setbacks in their careers, and how this has helped shape them into the people they are today. When children are not afraid to fail or make mistakes, this allows them to challenge themselves and strive towards success, much easier than those with failure avoidance.
- ✔ Practise and use mindfulness techniques. Mindfulness is essentially the practice of being present and fully engaged with whatever we're doing at that exact moment – free from distraction or judgement, and aware of our thoughts and feelings without getting caught up in them. This can help us feel calmer and prevent us from ruminating negative thoughts. There are lots of great mindfulness resources out there, such as the 'Headspace' app.





## MAINTAINING RESILIENT

- ✔ Practise self-care, something we do deliberately in order to look after our mental, emotional and physical health. Research suggests that regular exercise and good quality sleep increases and enhances our capacity for resilience. Taking time to eat, sleep and exercise will help build a strong foundation for resilience.
- ✔ Take time to engage in a relaxing activity at least once a day, such as watching a favourite movie, reading a book or listening to music. This can help to manage stress and worry.
- ✔ Laugh. Look for opportunities to laugh as a great self-care strategy.



CORONAVIRUS

**TOGETHER WE CAN  
BEAT IT**

**Please keep yourselves  
and your children safe**

**unrassel**

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emotional well-being