

The Road to Resilience

Students achieving good educational outcomes despite adversity is the epitome of academic resilience and it enables young people to perform better than what their circumstances might have predicted. Hence, active promotion of this trait in schools is important and requires the entire school community to be involved in strategic planning and detailed practice.

What can you do in the classroom?

1. **Do not** provide answers immediately
2. **Avoid** spoon feeding for tests and exams
3. **Promote** friendly competition, leadership and responsibility
4. **Encourage** outward thinking
5. **Create** group work opportunities

Resilience beyond the classroom

Resilience is a lifelong skill. Encourage your students to start by practising one of these simple steps and adding more to their resilience skills bank along the way. You can encourage them to try one of the following methods:

SOCIAL

1. **Make connections**
Spend time with people you admire
2. **Ask for help**
It is a sign of strength to know what you do not know
3. **Do activities you enjoy**
Have fun while engaging with others

MENTAL

1. **Cultivate your strength**
Use them to boost your confidence
2. **Unplug at least once a week**
Notice your surroundings and try meditation
3. **Practise reflective thinking**
Reflecting on your actions and reactions can help you in future adversities

PHYSICAL

1. **Get outdoors**
Being in nature lowers stress, and improves mood and energy
2. **Exercise**
Helps your body adapt to stress and reduce anxiety
3. **Drink water**
Hydration increases energy and boosts the immune system



How resilient are you?

Want to know how adaptive you are to difficult or challenging life experiences?

(1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree)

I'm usually optimistic. Difficulties are temporary and I will overcome them.

Feelings of anger, loss and discouragement don't last long.

I can tolerate high levels of ambiguity and uncertainty about situations.

I adapt quickly to new developments. I'm curious. I ask questions.

I'm playful. I find the humor in rough situations and can laugh at myself.

I learn valuable lessons from others' and my own experiences.

I'm good at solving problems and making things work well.

I'm strong and durable. I hold up well during tough times.

I've turned misfortune into good luck and found benefits in bad experiences.

TOTAL RATING

1 in 3 students suffer from mental health issues, with 25% of these students having diagnosable illness.

Yet it is estimated that almost 40% do not seek help.



Your results

Less than 20: Low Resilience

You may have trouble handling pressure or setbacks, and may feel deeply hurt by any criticism. Consider seeking some professional counsel or support in developing your resilience skills.

20-30: Some Resilience

You have some valuable pro-resilience skills, but also plenty of room for improvement. Strive to strengthen the characteristics you already have and to cultivate the characteristics you lack.

30-35: Adequate Resilience

You are a self-motivated learner who recovers well from most challenges. Learning more about resilience will empower you to find more joy in life, even in the face of adversity.

35-45: Highly Resilient

You bounce back well from life's setbacks and can thrive even under pressure. You could be of service to others who are trying to cope better with adversity.

SCHOOL FACTORS

★ Teacher's Belief
School and Classroom Culture
Students' Economic Demographic
Safety and Discipline
Emphasis on Academic Success

STUDENT FACTORS

★ Educational Aspirations
Academic Performance
Bullying Experiences
Family Support
Social Background

Top Factors Promoting Resilience

Be sure to keep these in mind during brainstorming sessions!

Sources

- experiencelife.com/article/the-5-best-I-first-learned-about-Positive-Education-in-2012, a year before Westwood Primary School (WWPS) was established.
- During that period, I sensed that education in Singapore was at a crossroads - that we have to decide if excellence (e.g., success in academics, co-curricular activities) or well-being (e.g., values inculcation, growth mindset, positive emotion) should be the key focus of education. This observation prompted me to think about whether we really have to prioritize excellence over well-being or vice versa in education.
- I began exploring approaches to education that foster both excellence and well-being, and discovered Positive Education and the work of Geelong Grammar School www.ggs.vic.edu.au/School/Positive-Education/What-is-Positive-Education through my research. Coincidentally, not long after I embarked on this discovery journey, I learned that I would be leading WWPS the following year.
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