

# **RESILIENCE**

Parents wanting what is best for their children can sometimes rob their children of vital opportunities to develop personal resiliency.

Sometimes we can love our children just too much. As parents, I ask you to think about the “**RESILIENCE ROBBERS**” I discuss over the next few weeks, and ask yourself – “Am I doing these things?”

## **What is Resilience?**

"Resilience is the set of skills and behaviours needed to be successful in the midst of a fast-paced and continuously changing work environment. They are the skills that help you to cope and be able to deal with failure just as equally as success.

### **“Resiliency Robber #1”**

***Parents fight children’s battles for them and don’t give them a chance to solve their own problems.***

There’s nothing wrong with a parent going into bat for your children when they struggle or meet with difficulties inside or outside school, but solving your child’s problems for them should be the last resort – not the first option you take. Children will never learn how to deal with various issues and cope when things go against them if someone else does it for them. Being able to develop strategies to deal with problems is an integral part of growing up – Mum and Dad won’t always be there!

### **“Resiliency Robber #2”**

***“Parents take responsibility for their children’s problems”***

Sometimes parents can take too much responsibility for issues that are really up to the children to solve. Here’s a clue if you are wondering what I’m talking about – “*a jumper is something a mother puts on her son when she is cold*”

Some well-meaning parents get children out of bed each morning, carry their bags to school and neglect to develop real independence in their children. They do this for all the right reasons. They want their children to have the best, but by doing everything for them they are stopping them from developing independence.

### **Resilience Robber #3**

***“Parents give their kids too much choice.”***

In this era of giving children a voice some parents go too far allowing their children too much say. Kids will often take the easy option to avoid hard or unpleasant situations. For instance, some kids wouldn’t go to school on sports day if they weren’t involved if their parents gave them a choice. BUT this is an issue where parents need to be firm and make decisions for their children. Going to school is a non-negotiable, any day!

## **RESILIENCE ROBBER # 4**

***“Parents put unrealistic or relentless pressure on kids to perform.”***

Many children today experience excessive pressure to perform at continuously high standards. Expectations about success and achievement are important. Too low and kids will meet them. Too high and kids will give up. Too much and kids can experience anxiety. There are highly anxious kids sitting in each classroom. Talk to your children regularly about expectations, what they think they can achieve and what you think they can achieve.

## **RESILIENCE ROBBER #5**

***“Parents let children give in too easily”***

Parents can sometimes let children give up a learning or leisure activity too easily. Research shows that resilient learners link success with effort so allowing kids to give in too easily is poor parenting practice. Resilient learners don't give up because they don't like a teacher or when they're confronted with multi-step or more complex activities. Similarly, they don't bail out of a sporting team or other activity because the team is not winning or they are not enjoying it.

## **Resilience Robber #6**

***“Parents neglect to develop independence early.”***

Many parents are so anxious about their child's safety that they neglect to give opportunities for kids to develop independence outside their homes. For instance, many children are driven everywhere instead of walking or catching public transport, even when it's safe and readily available. Today's children have less freedom than those of past generations, which hinders their ability to assess risk.

## **Resiliency Robber # 7**

***“Parents rescue children from challenging or stretch situations.”***

There are many times when kids are put in situations outside their comfort zones. For instance, giving a talk, singing at assembly, or going on camp may be challenges for some children. Children often put pressure on parents to rescue them, so they make excuse or allow them to stay home. When parents rescue children from learning situations they are robbing them of opportunities to challenge themselves, and learn from these experiences.