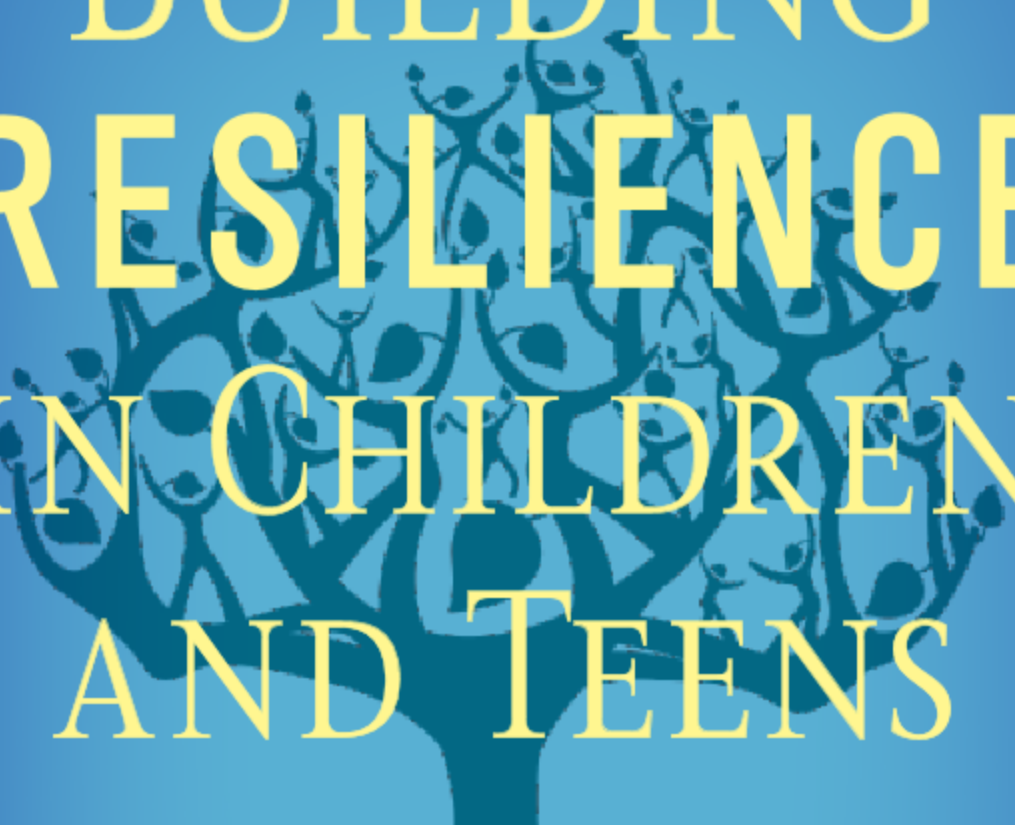


4TH EDITION

BUILDING RESILIENCE IN CHILDREN AND TEENS



Giving Kids Roots and Wings

KENNETH R. GINSBURG, MD, MS ED, FAAP
WITH MARTHA M. JABLOW

American Academy of Pediatrics

DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN®



Also Available From the American Academy of Pediatrics

Also by Dr Kenneth Ginsburg

Raising Kids to Thrive: Balancing Love With Expectations and Protection With Trust

Reaching Teens: Strength-Based, Trauma-Sensitive, Resilience-Building Communication Strategies Rooted in Positive Youth Development

Additional Books for Parents

Achieving a Healthy Weight for Your Child: An Action Plan for Families

ADHD: What Every Parent Needs to Know

Autism Spectrum Disorder: What Every Parent Needs to Know

Caring for Your Adopted Child: An Essential Guide for Parents

Caring for Your Baby and Young Child: Birth to Age 5*

Caring for Your School-Age Child: Ages 5–12

Co-parenting Through Separation and Divorce: Putting Your Children First

Family Fit Plan: A 30-Day Wellness Transformation

My Child Is Sick! Expert Advice for Managing Common Illnesses and Injuries

Parenting Through Puberty: Mood Swings, Acne, and Growing Pains

The Picky Eater Project: 6 Weeks to Happier, Healthier Family Mealtimes

Raising an Organized Child: 5 Steps to Boost Independence, Ease Frustration, and Promote Confidence

For more books for parents, visit the HealthyChildren Bookstore at shop.aap.org/for-parents.

*This book is also available in Spanish.



healthychildren.org

Powered by pediatricians. Trusted by parents.
from the American Academy of Pediatrics

4TH EDITION

BUILDING
RESILIENCE
IN CHILDREN
AND TEENS

Giving Kids Roots and Wings

KENNETH R. GINSBURG, MD, MS Ed, FAAP
WITH MARTHA M. JABLOW

American Academy of Pediatrics

DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN®



American Academy of Pediatrics Publishing Staff

Mary Lou White, *Chief Product and Services Officer/SVP, Membership, Marketing, and Publishing*
Mark Grimes, *Vice President, Publishing*
Kathryn Sparks, *Senior Editor, Consumer Publishing*
Shannan Martin, *Production Manager, Consumer Publications*
Sara Hoerdeman, *Marketing Manager, Consumer Products*

Published by the American Academy of Pediatrics
345 Park Blvd
Itasca, IL 60143
Telephone: 630/626-6000
Facsimile: 847/434-8000
www.aap.org

The American Academy of Pediatrics is an organization of 67,000 primary care pediatricians, pediatric medical subspecialists, and pediatric surgical specialists dedicated to the health, safety, and well-being of infants, children, adolescents, and young adults.

The information contained in this publication should not be used as a substitute for the medical care and advice of your pediatrician. There may be variations in treatment that your pediatrician may recommend based on individual facts and circumstances.

Statements and opinions expressed are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Any websites, brand names, products, or manufacturers are mentioned for informational and identification purposes only and do not imply an endorsement by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP). The AAP is not responsible for the content of external resources. Information was current at the time of publication.

The publishers have made every effort to trace the copyright holders for borrowed materials. If they have inadvertently overlooked any, they will be pleased to make the necessary arrangements at the first opportunity.

This publication has been developed by the American Academy of Pediatrics. The contributors are expert authorities in the field of pediatrics. No commercial involvement of any kind has been solicited or accepted in the development of the content of this publication. Disclosures: The author reports no conflicts of interest.

Every effort is made to keep *Building Resilience in Children and Teens* consistent with the most recent advice and information available from the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Special discounts are available for bulk purchases of this publication. Email Special Sales at aapsales@aap.org for more information.

Copyright © 2020 Kenneth R. Ginsburg, MD, MS Ed, FAAP, and Martha M. Jablow

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means—electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise—without prior permission from the publisher (locate title at <http://ebooks.aappublications.org> and click on Get permissions; you may also fax the permissions editor at 847/434-8780 or email permissions@aap.org). First edition published 2006 as *A Parent's Guide to Building Resilience in Children and Teens: Giving Your Child Roots and Wings*; second, 2011; third, 2015.

Printed in the United States of America.

9-450/0420 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
CB0118
ISBN: 978-1-61002-385-6
eBook: 978-1-61002-386-3
EPUB: 978-1-61002-387-0
Kindle: 978-1-61002-388-7
PDF: 978-1-61002-389-4

Cover design by Daniel Rembert
Publication design by Peg Mulcahy
Illustration on page 260 by Talia Ginsburg, age 10.
Back cover photo courtesy of Children's Hospital of Philadelphia
Library of Congress Control Number: 2019945547

Critical Acclaim for *Building Resilience in Children and Teens*

Awards

Book of the Year—Gold Award, *ForeWord Reviews*
Parenting/Family—Silver Award, Nautilus Book Award
Parenting/Child Care/Family—Silver Award, eLit Awards

What People Are Saying

Defining the seven “C’s” of resilience—competence, confidence, connection, character, contribution, coping, and control—[Ginsburg] teaches parents and other adults how to help kids become more capable of meeting life head-on. This is a thorough, sensible book filled with commonsense solutions for daily life.

Library Journal

Building Resilience in Children and Teens provides a rich and valuable resource for anyone who cares about overcoming the increasing pressures of student achievement. Dr Ginsburg has created a great way for adolescents to manage stress and offers effective strategies to prepare this often-overlooked age group to thrive. It was a super pick for our school and community book clubs—a must-read for any adult involved in middle schools!

David Schrag
Principal, Stanley Middle School, Lafayette, CA

This book is about recognizing your child’s strengths and parenting from a place of what you *can* influence. By helping parents understand what is normal developmentally, [Dr Ken Ginsburg] helps us refocus our impression of teens as difficult, and in the process helps us enhance our child’s feelings of competence, setting the groundwork for raising children who can cope on their own in today’s complex world. As a parent of 9- and 19-year-olds, and as someone who has brought Dr Ginsburg to speak to parents and teens in our community, I can tell you his genuine concern for children comes through on the pages of this book. Not only is he a parent himself, but he is on the front lines with teens in his office every day. There’s no magic answer, but this book gives parents well-thought-out advice on raising children so they have the tools they need for authentic success in life. This book is one you will keep on your shelf to refer back to and share with friends.

Sharon B. Greenstein
Parent Education Chairperson,
Los Altos-Mountain View PTA Council

Dr Ginsburg has focused on one of the most critical traits necessary for students on their path to self-actualization. This book provides a commonsense approach and time-tested exercises for stress reduction for students. *Building Resilience* can be the “spark” to assist students in their social-emotional growth.

Ray Piagentini

Professional school counselor and Past President,
Illinois School Counselor Association

Dr Ginsburg masterfully integrates cutting-edge theory and research with his rich, insightful, and compelling vision for enhancing the lives of youth. No book better serves parents, practitioners, policy makers, and educators in its respective effort to promote the health and positive development of children and adolescents.

Richard M. Lerner, PhD

Bergstrom Chair in Applied Developmental
Science and Director, Institute for Applied
Research in Youth Development, Tufts University,
and author or editor of more than 70 books,
including *The Good Teen: Rescuing Adolescence
from the Myths of the Storm and Stress Years*

Dr Ken Ginsburg’s work on resilience forms the basis of our entire adolescent medicine practice. Teaching young people to use their strengths to prevent and manage problems helps them to be in control of their own futures; teaching parents to recognize and build resilience in their children fosters productive family-based partnerships that last a lifetime and save lives. Whether 3 years old or 30, whether struggling with “normal” developmental issues or major medical or psychological stresses, Dr Ginsburg empowers parents to raise children who love, accept, and protect themselves. Isn’t that what we all want for our kids?

Susan Sugerman, MD, MPH, FAAP

President and Cofounder, Girls to Women Health
and Wellness

[Dr Ken Ginsburg’s] book...has become a vital part of our training and support resources for parents, professionals, and community volunteers. Over the years we have found...that Ken Ginsburg’s research-based and evidence-informed training and practical scholarship is an incredible asset in helping us support parents and expand the convoy of other supporting adults that understand the challenges of mobility and transition faced by America’s military-connected children and youth.

Mary M. Keller, EdD

President and CEO, Military Child Education
Coalition

*With love to my wife Celia,
who has taught me so much about good parenting,
and to Ilana and Talia,
who as young adults are the generous, compassionate,
and creative people I dreamed they would become.*

*I pray that
they will continue to find joy
in the simple pleasures
of life while remaining
strong enough to bounce back
from life's challenges.*

Contents

Acknowledgments	xiii
Introduction	xvii
Part 1 Be the Kind of Parent With Long-standing Influence	
Chapter 1 The Power of Loving Relationships.....	1
Chapter 2 Parenting the 35-Year-Old.....	7
Chapter 3 The Right Balance Tips the Scales Toward a Positive Future	13
Part 2 Resilience and Stress	
Chapter 4 Why Resilience?.....	25
Chapter 5 Stress and Its Effects	31
Chapter 6 Ingredients of Resilience: 7 Crucial Cs	39
Chapter 7 The Language of Resilience	49
Chapter 8 Not Letting Others Undermine Your Child's Resilience (or Psych You Out!).....	55
Part 3 Competence and Confidence	
Chapter 9 The Amazing Developing Brain	61
Chapter 10 Getting Out of the Way.....	73
Chapter 11 The Value of Play, Reflection, and Downtime.....	81
Chapter 12 Noticing, Praising, and Criticizing	85
Chapter 13 Authentic Success (This Includes Making the Most of Failure)	91
Chapter 14 Thinking Clearly	109
Chapter 15 No More Lectures	115
Chapter 16 "I Get It!"	121
Chapter 17 Changing Behavior Step-by-step.....	129
Chapter 18 Shifting the Blame to Save Face.....	137
Chapter 19 (Social) Media Literacy	141
Chapter 20 Not Being Broken.....	151

Chapter 21	Building Confidence	155
Chapter 22	Raising Youth of Color in a Complex World	165
Part 4	Connection	
Chapter 23	Protective Connections	175
Chapter 24	Take a Breath, You're Co-regulating	181
Chapter 25	The Art and Importance of Listening.....	189
Chapter 26	Strengthening Family Ties	197
Chapter 27	Widening the Circle	203
Chapter 28	Having Their Back, True Unconditional Love	207
Chapter 29	Preparing Our Families for Lifelong <i>Interdependence</i>	213
Chapter 30	Some Cautions About Connection.....	217
Chapter 31	Supporting Resilience in Military Families	223
Chapter 32	Nurturant Connections Protect Against Toxic Stress	227
Part 5	Character and Contribution	
Chapter 33	Character.....	233
Chapter 34	Grit: A Character Trait That Drives Performance	245
Chapter 35	Contribution.....	253
Part 6	Coping	
Chapter 36	Getting a Grip on Stress.....	259
Chapter 37	Taking Action.....	265
Chapter 38	Taking Care of Your Body.....	275
Chapter 39	Taking Care of Your Emotions	299
Part 7	Control	
Chapter 40	Styles of Discipline	315
Chapter 41	Positive Discipline Strategies	323
Chapter 42	Increasing Kids' Control	331
Chapter 43	Delaying Gratification	337
Chapter 44	One Rung at a Time	341
Chapter 45	Not Everything Is Within Our Control.....	345

Part 8	When Resilience Is Challenged	
	Chapter 46 Extreme Circumstances	349
	Chapter 47 Bringing Our Children Back	351
	Chapter 48 Turning for Help	359
	Chapter 49 When Your Own Resilience Reaches Its Limits	365
Part 9	Especially for Communities	
	Chapter 50 Community-Based Resilience-Building Strategies	371
	Parting Thoughts	381
	Index	383

Acknowledgments

It would not be possible to thank all the people who supported me in writing this book or inspired me to feel that it should be written. My colleagues at the Council on Communications and Media of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), formerly chaired by Donald Shifrin, MD, FAAP, deserve special mention because they had the wisdom to know it is insufficient just to suggest what we *don't* want children to do. They knew that we must make clear all the wonderful expectations we have of youth. I thank the AAP for trusting me to take on this important project. In particular, I thank Mark Grimes and Carolyn Kolbaba for the original vision to make this happen, and Kathryn Sparks for shepherding every step of this new edition with such care, passion, and skill.

I thank Martha Jablow for her wisdom, patience, and clarity of thought. She guided me through earlier editions and taught me so much about translating the best of what science teaches into actionable strategies people can apply in their daily lives. I also must thank the team at The Center for Parent & Teen Communication (Elyse Salek, MS Ed; Jacques Louis, MS; Eden Pontz; and Andrew Pool, PhD, MSc) for their deep understanding of resilience, their commitment to build a generation imbued with the strengths of character to lead us into the future, and, above all, their constant presence as supportive colleagues. Our Center is able to work to strengthen and deepen family connections because of the trust given to us to do so by the John Templeton Foundation, The Hive at Spring Point, and Kathy Fields, MD, and Garry Rayant, DDS.

I am so appreciative of the experts who contributed to portions of this work. Veronica Svetaz, MD, and Tamera Coyne-Beasley, MD, crafted a powerful chapter on "Raising Youth of Color in a Complex World." Susan Phelps, MS, the Director of Neuroeducation in The Evansville Vanderburgh School Corporation in Indiana helped me better understand how to build self-regulation skills in children and teens (Chapter 24). Angela Duckworth, PhD, MSc, whose work has inspired so many parents to raise children better prepared to be authentically successful, reviewed the chapter on Grit (Chapter 34) to ensure that I captured some of her core messages. Mary Keller, EdD; Patty Shinseki; Donna Earle; and Avlyn Bolton of the Military Child Education Coalition offered critical appraisal and guidance that helped me to write Chapter 31. I am deeply grateful to Jed Michael, MOM (Master of Oriental

Medicine), for contributing heavily to Chapter 38. We worked together at Covenant House Pennsylvania to facilitate the healing of youth. He is one of the most gifted practitioners I have ever witnessed. I am also grateful to Princess Skyers, MD, for the wisdom and perspective she shared in the section about avoiding prejudice in Chapter 33.

I offer my heartfelt thanks and respect to the leaders of the positive youth development and resilience movements who have inspired me. In particular, Rick Little and his team at the International Youth Foundation first elucidated the importance of the primary ingredients needed for healthy youth development—competence, confidence, connection, character, and contribution. Although I have modified these a bit to include coping and control, they originated and solidified the core ideas. I have been honored to know Richard Lerner, PhD, of Tufts University, who was part of that team and is one of the great developmental psychologists of our time. Dr Lerner has spent decades demonstrating that positive youth development efforts indeed work and that caring is another core trait we must actively nurture through our own demonstrations of caring. In my own field of adolescent health and medicine, Robert Blum, MD, FAAP, and Michael Resnick, PhD, have led the way and motivated me to shift from a risk-based to a strength-based approach to youth, and Karen Hein, MD, FAAP, has made us understand we need to support youth so they can reach their full potential. I was always deeply impressed by how Peter Benson of the Search Institute helped communities and parents understand that we need to develop core assets in children and not just bemoan their deficits. Karen Pittman of the Forum for Youth Investment has called for our nation to understand quite simply that “problem free is not fully prepared.”

I thank my professional mentors, Gail B. Slap, MD, and Donald Schwarz, MD, FAAP, who had the experience to guide me, the knowledge to enlighten me, and the passion and love of youth to transmit to me. Above all, they repeatedly demonstrated they cared not just about my academic career but about me. I also thank the best teacher I ever had, Judith Lowenthal, PhD, who inspired me (when I was an adolescent) to grasp the potential in every young person. I also thank my colleagues at the Craig-Dalsimer Division of Adolescent Medicine at The Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia for teaching me so much about compassionate care and being uniformly supportive of these efforts. In particular, one could only dream of having a division chief like Carol Ford, MD, who cares so deeply about work that supports youth and families.

I have been blessed to work in regional, national, and international settings to promote resilience. I must highlight, however, the opportunity I have had to work with The Hive at Spring Point, an inspirational group of strength-based youth development organizations in Philadelphia. I am learning from

colleagues in each of these organizations how best to engage youth and families in strategies that will help them to THRIVE. We hope to take all that we are learning to help the people, programs, and systems that touch the lives of young people throughout the nation understand the power of respectful, loving adult relationships in the lives of youth. Joanna Berwind and The Hive at Spring Point are my partners along this journey. None of it would be possible without Joanna's vision for the Hive—to amplify voice, choice, and opportunity for all young people.

My first mentors and first teachers were my parents, Arnold and Marilyn Ginsburg. I learned much of what I have come to see as good parenting in their home. I was also blessed to learn about the strength of family from my grandmother, Belle Moore, who demonstrated unconditional love better than anyone I have known, except for her daughter Marilyn. They were two of a kind. I hope that I have passed along, in some small measure, what I learned from them to my own daughters.

Above all, I thank the young people and their families who have let me into their lives. I am awed by the love I see every day by parents who bring their children to me at The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, and I hope that I have served them well. I am moved by the resilience of many of my patients, but, in particular, the youth of Covenant House Pennsylvania, who serve as a constant reminder of the tenacity and strength of the human spirit.

Introduction

We limit our goals, and young people's potential, when we see children only in the moment. We rarely view a cute 5-year-old or a texting preteen as the 35-, 40-, and 50-year-olds they will become. If we are to prepare children to become the healthy, productive, contributing adults that will repair our world and lead us into the future, we must set our vision for the long term. For them to thrive over their lifetime, we need to consider their happiness and achievement today, as well as the skills they'll need to navigate an increasingly complex world tomorrow. We want them to be able to overcome adversity and view challenges as opportunities for growth and innovation. We need them to be *resilient*.

How This Book Stands Out

Building Resilience in Children and Teens: Giving Kids Roots and Wings translates the best of what is known about positive youth development and resilience into strategies parents can apply in their homes. Because children thrive best when they have many layers of support, we have created a body of work that will also be useful to other caring adults critical to building a child's resilience. When I speak to parents and young people throughout the nation, I am always enriched by their feedback. I learn about the additional information they desire and gain from their pearls of wisdom. It is important that this work evolves to meet their needs and that it shares their wisdom and experience. In addition, research continues to advance our understanding of how best to prepare children to thrive. Parents and communities deserve to know the latest in thinking, and this fourth edition keeps them abreast of some of the latest strategies. Furthermore, much of *Building Resilience* content has always focused on prevention—preparing your child to succeed, and to make wise decisions, even when times are tough. In response to an expressed need from so many parents, this fourth edition offers a deeper dive into what to do *during* those tough times. It prepares us to be the kind of adults who can fully support young people during those times, restore our relationships if they've been challenged, and bring our children back to be their best selves.

Our *multimedia* approach in partnership with HealthyChildren.org and parentandteen.com does so much more than update information; it expands the reach of how that information can be delivered. Videos can reinforce and solidify the strategies offered in the book. This allows book clubs in schools

and parenting organizations to begin their debriefs or meetings with videos to initiate or serve as focal points of discussion. Further, this vitally important message of building youth resilience can now reach people whose learning style is better suited for watching or listening than reading. It also allows ideas to be offered in “snackable” portions to spouses and teens who may not be able to invest the time and energy in reading a work as comprehensive as *Building Resilience*.

Finally, *Building Resilience* can serve as a companion to the comprehensive body of work prepared for professionals, *Reaching Teens: Strength-Based, Trauma-Sensitive, Resilience-Building Communication Strategies Rooted in Positive Youth Development*, 2nd Edition. This multimedia work helps professionals apply the best of what is known from the positive youth development, resilience, and trauma-informed movements. It has 95 chapters and more than 400 videos and offers continuing education credits. It offers tailored experiences for educators, foster care parents and professionals, health care professionals, and youth-serving professionals who work in juvenile justice or substance use settings. Schools, health practices, and youth programs throughout the nation are using it. *Building Resilience* allows parents and other caring adults to easily get on the same page as professionals to create the kind of partnerships that best serve youth.

If we all work together as parents, schools, communities, and policy makers to nurture our children today, they will become the strong, compassionate, creative adults we need tomorrow.

Using This Book

I hope you think about the ideas on these pages, try them on for size, and see how they fit your individual children, depending on each one’s character, temperament, likes and dislikes, and strengths and opportunities for growth. I hope you return to this book as your children grow because examples apply to different stages of development.

You’ll also probably need to go back from time to time to review skills and adapt guidelines as your child backslides or moves to a new developmental milestone. Kids need ongoing support—not nagging, lecturing, or criticism, but gentle reinforcement and practice. Like developing a good jump shot or mastering a musical instrument, skill-building takes time, practice, and patience.

You’ll also discover (although you probably already know it) that children mature in fits and starts. Whenever an important, new situation is about to occur, such as entering a new school, moving to a different community, or

starting summer camp, your child will probably regress a bit. You may notice this pattern with some children in even less momentous circumstances, such as going to a sleepover for the first time. They may behave as they did last year or lash out at you or your spouse. This is normal!

Think about how you'd leap across a chasm. You wouldn't stand on the edge and just jump across. You'd take several steps backward to get a running start before you leap, and then cover your eyes as you soar across. Visualize every major developmental stage or challenge as a chasm that children worry about crossing. Don't be surprised when they take 2 or 3 steps backward before their next attempt to move forward. And don't be shocked if they sometimes leap with blinders on.

Please don't feel defeated if you do your best to help your children across that chasm and your efforts seem to fall short. Children are listening, even when they roll their eyes or ask, "Are you done yet?" Know that you can make a difference even when it feels like they've slipped backward.

Be flexible as you apply the guidelines offered here. The standard line I was taught over the years was, "Consistency is the most important ingredient in parenting." If that means consistency of love, I agree. But I wasn't completely consistent raising my own children. Each of my daughters had her individual temperament. On any given day, they may have lived the same experience, but each required a different response from me.

I don't mean we have to just go with the flow. We certainly need to have clear, unwavering values, and our love for our kids has to be the most consistent, stable, and obviously expressed force in our homes. Children benefit from knowing that there are reliable routines in their lives. But life is always changing. To be resilient, we must adapt as circumstances require, for our own sake as well as to model this valuable quality for our children.

We want to make crossing that chasm a bit easier when we can. We know our children need to get across on their own, but we'd like to help them build a bridge. This book is about giving kids the tools they need to construct that bridge while maintaining the kind of relationships that will make them more likely to welcome our presence alongside them.

Why Me?

My life's work is about guiding youth toward a socially, emotionally, and physically healthy life. I am a pediatrician who has degrees in child and human development and who has specialized in adolescent medicine since 1990 at The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia and the University of Pennsylvania Perelman School of Medicine. Early on, most of my guidance

tended toward telling kids what not to do. I learned pretty quickly that this problem-focused approach sometimes instilled shame and rarely worked. On the other hand, when youth are noticed for their strengths and expected to rise to their potential, they become self-motivated to overcome their challenges. While my service could spark their motivation, it was really their parents' support that made the long-lasting difference. In short, there is nothing I can do that carries even a fraction of meaning compared with what parents do at home and what communities do to support children and youth. Outside of medicine, my purest joys have included teaching in nursery school, where I learned more than I ever taught. Much of what I believe about resilience was absorbed on a Lakota Native American reservation in South Dakota. There, I learned about the strength of community to support individuals.

I am a qualitative researcher—that is, I learn about children and teens from kids themselves. I developed a method with one of my mentors, Gail B. Slap, MD, that helps adults learn from the wisdom of youth. This research allows young people to teach us how they determine whether adults are trustworthy and what they think makes a difference in whether they will thrive. The majority of my knowledge has been acquired from working directly with young patients and their parents. I have a medical practice that is widely varied—I treat suburban and urban youth, children of college professors and children in poverty, some who have thrived despite social inequities and some who have not.

From families, children, and youth experiencing homelessness, I have learned great lessons about individual strength and the extremes from which people can recover. As the health services director of Covenant House Pennsylvania, I work with youth who have survived lives that would have destroyed me. I am showered with their wisdom about what it takes to move beyond pain and what ingredients could have been in place that would have enabled them to thrive. From them, I know that children and teens have the capability to overcome almost anything. Because many have absorbed a great deal of condemnation and low expectation, some begin to see themselves as problems. I help them identify and build on their strengths. While I may serve as a guide, they do the heavy lifting. They possess a different kind of credential, one that is earned through survival. I am consistently amazed by how many of them want to devote their lives to guiding children to overcome difficulty. With the right kind of investment in them, we will find many of the healers of tomorrow. From my colleagues who work at Covenant House, I have learned that a loving, strength-building environment that offers structure permits young people to flourish and move beyond a troubled past.

I have been blessed with the opportunity to translate what is known from research and best practices into *applied* efforts to optimize resilience in youth and their families. As Founding Director of The Center for Parent & Teen Communication, I am devoted to helping families strengthen and deepen their connections. As a lead content expert for The Hive at Spring Point, an inspirational group of strengths-based youth development organizations in Philadelphia, I learn from colleagues how to amplify voice, choice, and opportunity for all young people. I was named the National External Resilience Expert in 2014 for the Boys & Girls Clubs of America to support resilience strategies in their programs. The mission of the Boys & Girls Clubs of America is “To enable all young people, especially those who need us most, to reach their full potential as productive, caring, responsible citizens.” It has also been an honor to work on building resilience among the children, adolescents, and families of those who serve our nation in the military. I have travelled extensively over the last decade to support military communities but have always left genuinely inspired by the strengths I witness in these families. In particular, it has been a pleasure to work with the Military Child Education Coalition in helping to design resilience-based strategies to support the emotional health and well-being of military-affiliated children. Especially because so much of what I know to be true about resilience I learned from the Lakota people, I am humbled to have worked with the National Congress of American Indians to further develop resilience-building strategies for our indigenous youth.

Read This Book With 2 Lenses

Resilience is a wonderfully positive concept, but it should never be confused with invulnerability. Just as children can reach their limits of resilience, so too can the adults who love and care for them. As you read this, for your own sake and for that of the young people in your lives, please read this with an eye to building your own resilience as well.