

### ***3 Ways to Raise Resiliency in Kids***

There's a lot of conversation and research about how to build resilience in kids these days. Our kids have experienced a lot of life in the short amount of time they've been on this planet. You may be wondering if they have the mental capacity to not only handle what's happening right now, but how they'll hold up for what's to come. If you're looking for ways to help nurture strength and mental flexibility in your kids...



Here are three game-changer questions you can ask to help your kids use setbacks as opportunities to grow [DCE Tim's additions in brackets]:

#### **01 - What is happening?**

Asking this question first gives your kid an opportunity to share what they're experiencing, which gives you the opportunity to lean into it. When your kid can regularly verbalize their struggles, challenges, and disappointments, they start to see setbacks as an accepted part of life and that they're not alone. Having at least one caring adult a kid can trust is the key to building their resilience. [For many families this may be easier to do when kids are younger. This question can also be asked by another trusted adult; teacher, coach, grandparent, etc.]

#### **02 - What is true no matter what?**

Guide your kid back to what is true. The American Psychological Association suggests trying "to identify areas of irrational thinking, such as a tendency to catastrophize difficulties or assume the world is out to get you, and adopt a more balanced and realistic thinking pattern." Help to recenter them on what is true—like how much you love them, how brave and strong they are—and invite them to pause and take a deep breath to remind them to be present. [This dialog can also be an opportunity to reinforce the truth that God is also involved and loves your child. He will help them, but may not take away the struggle. Maybe this can be an open door to pray together over a specific situation or issue.]

#### **03 - What can I do?**

This question is a reminder that no matter what happens, you've got your kid's back. Even if all you can do is offer a hug or help them find their school library book, offering your help is essential for building resilience. Research from the Mayo Clinic acknowledges that "being able to reach out to others for support is a key part of being resilient." By offering to help, your kids are learning that they can reach out for support. [A community of support is vital for kids to mature. The church is a community intended to be just such a support for young people to find help and support. Are there some in your church you can enlist as prayer support? Are there some you and your child can confide in who will promise to pray? We often put on a front that

everything is fine, but this is just not true for anyone. We need each other and miss out on some blessings when we fail to enlist brothers and sisters in Christ as our circle of support.]

A kid's inner world has the power to shape everything, from their social lives to their academics to their overall mental state. The likelihood that your kid or teenager may suffer from a mental health challenge one day is high—one in five kids suffers from an anxiety disorder.

The brand new Parenting with Mental Health in Mind: A Parent's Guide for Every Kid course will help you learn the psychology of what's going on in your kid's brain and science-based, practical tools to help your kid navigate a mental health challenge. Upon completion of the course, you'll feel empowered and equipped to meet your kid's mental health challenges head-on and support them in the way they need most.