

2.5 Resilience

Definition of the skill

Resilience is the ability to adapt to challenges through mental, emotional, and behavioural flexibility. It is not just a personal trait but arises from the interaction between individuals and their environment, like family, community, and society. Resilience is the process and outcome of successfully adapting to difficult or challenging life experiences, especially through mental, emotional, and behavioural flexibility and adjustment to external and internal demands. A number of factors contribute to how well people adapt to adversities, including the ways in which individuals view and engage with the world, the availability and quality of social resources, and specific coping strategies.

Complexity of the skill



- **emotional regulation and acceptance:** children can calm themselves after experiencing frustration or failure (e.g., losing a game or resolving a conflict).
- **self-control:** in order to overcome failure and emotional pitfalls, the children must be able to establish a vision for the future (future-orientated mindset), control their thoughts and actions in order to achieve their goals, and be able to block out factors that might disturb them from reaching their goals. This requires a high degree of goal-orientation.
- **problem-solving:** they look for ways to overcome obstacles, like completing homework independently.
- **maintaining relationships:** they build and nurture supportive friendships or family bonds to help them through tough situations.
- **future-oriented mindset and optimistic outlook:** they remain hopeful for a positive outcome even when facing difficulties.
- **flexibility:** they adapt quickly to changes, such as a new teacher or classmates.

Importance of the skill for lifelong well-being

Resilience is vital in nearly every aspect of adult life, as challenges arise in various areas. In the workplace:

- It helps manage stress.
- Adapt to changes like new technologies or roles.
- Avoid burnout by balancing work and personal life.

In family life:

- Resilience supports effective parenting.
- Navigating relationship difficulties.
- Overcoming hardships such as financial issues or health crises.

It also plays a key role in maintaining physical and mental health during illnesses or emotional struggles, while fostering strong social relationships and coping with isolation or community conflicts. Resilience is critical during crises, from natural disasters and wars to economic instability, as it aids in processing trauma and rebuilding life. In education and personal growth, it helps individuals overcome learning challenges, adapt to career uncertainties, achieve goals, and build self-confidence through adversity. Essential resilience factors include optimism, acceptance, problem-solving skills, self-control, responsibility, relationship-building, and a future-oriented mindset, which can all be cultivated from childhood.

Manifestation and development of this skill in ages 6-10

Resilience is already present in children aged 6-10, as it is part of a developmental process that often starts earlier, during preschool years. The level of resilience they exhibit depends largely on their temperament, family background, and the support provided by their environment.

At this age, resilience can appear in various ways, such as:

- Emotional regulation: children can calm themselves after experiencing frustration or failure (e.g., losing a game or resolving a conflict).
- Self-control: in order to overcome failure and emotional pitfalls, the children must be able to establish a vision for the future (future-orientated mindset), control their thoughts and actions in order to achieve their goals, and be able to block out factors that might disturb them from reaching their goals. This requires a high degree of perseverance, self-control and goal-orientation.
- Problem-solving: they look for ways to overcome obstacles, like completing homework independently.
- Maintaining supportive social relationship: they build and nurture supportive friendships or family bonds to help them through tough situations.
- Future-oriented mindset and optimistic outlook: they remain hopeful for a positive outcome even when facing difficulties.
- Optimistic outlook: they remain hopeful for a positive outcome even when facing difficulties.
- Flexibility: they adapt quickly to changes, such as a new teacher or classmates.

Developing resilience at this age lays a foundation for children to successfully adapt to life's challenges as they grow into adulthood.

Children aged 6-10 with developed resilience are able to handle challenges and adapt to various situations confidently.

- They can regulate their emotions, calming themselves after setbacks such as losing a game or facing disappointment, which helps them avoid becoming overwhelmed.
- They are able to solve problems independently, using critical thinking to complete tasks or resolve conflicts with peers.
- These children can build and maintain supportive relationships, relying on social connections for emotional support during tough times and resolving disagreements constructively.
- With an optimistic outlook, they are able to stay motivated and hopeful, even when facing challenges or experiencing failure. They see setbacks as opportunities to learn, rather than obstacles.
- They can also adapt to changes, such as adjusting to new routines, environments, or meeting new classmates. Their flexibility helps them remain calm in unfamiliar situations. They approach challenges with confidence, persistence, and the ability to seek help when needed, balancing independence with support.

Overall, these children use their emotional, social, and cognitive skills to navigate life's difficulties. Their resilience enables them to manage current challenges and prepare for future ones, allowing them to grow and achieve their goals.

Observation parameters for establishing class level

Level 1: Children with low resilience often react with frustration or emotional outbursts to minor challenges. They tend to avoid difficult tasks, lacking confidence in their problem-solving abilities, and may struggle to ask for help. Social relationships can be fragile, with difficulty recovering from conflicts. For example, they might avoid group work or quit tasks after making mistakes.

Level 2: Children with moderate resilience manage frustration with support and are willing to face challenges, though they often need encouragement. They seek help but may rely on adults for reassurance. Their confidence varies by situation, and they may struggle with complex tasks or resolving conflicts independently. For example, they may need assistance to complete new or difficult tasks.

Level 3: Children with high resilience handle frustration well, learning from mistakes without distress. They take on challenges eagerly, find solutions independently, and adapt easily to change. They show confidence, persist through difficulties, and maintain stable relationships, resolving conflicts constructively. For example, they correct mistakes independently and approach tasks with enthusiasm.

Interconnections with other skills

- Emotional regulation: managing emotional responses to challenges, helping maintain focus and calm during setbacks.
- Problem-solving: finding solutions to obstacles, directly supporting the ability to overcome challenges.
- Self-confidence: believing in one's abilities, allowing persistence and a positive approach to challenges.
- Optimism: staying hopeful and motivated in adversity, fostering perseverance and a positive outlook.
- Adaptability: adjusting to changes and new situations, helping to thrive in unpredictable environments.
- Growth mindset: viewing challenges as opportunities to learn, which enhances resilience through continuous self-improvement.
- Self-awareness: understanding one's strengths and weaknesses, helping manage stress and adapt effectively.
- Stress management: using techniques to manage stress, preventing burnout and enhancing overall resilience.
- Perseverance: continuing to pursue goals despite setbacks, indirectly supporting long-term resilience.

Communication skills: resolving conflicts and building strong relationships, which help provide support during tough times.

Didactical tips for teachers

- Use an emotion wheel to help students identify and understand their feelings, promoting emotional awareness, regulation and communication.
- Encourage students to view mistakes as learning opportunities, fostering a growth mindset.
- Have students regularly reflect on their achievements to build self-confidence ("What I Did Well" Journal).
- Create opportunities for students to share experiences and practice empathy (Empathy Circle).
- Incorporate brief mindfulness or breathing exercises to help students manage stress.
- Promote resilience by encouraging students to persist after setbacks.
- Use storytelling to help students understand and overcome challenges creatively.
- Model resilience by showing students how to handle challenges constructively.
- Create a praise-based classroom culture and systematically praise the process, not the results. Teach children how to give and receive process praise.
- Integrate growth mindset activities into the lesson.