

Better Parenting: Kids Who Beat the Odds

How Parents Can Make the Difference Creating Resilience in Their Kids - Part 2

By Sonia Spackman MA, MFT

Children today seem to experience more stress filled situations that hinder their thinking and behaving in everyday life. They are developing coping patterns that can hinder them now and as adults. Yet, other children that suffer are able to use their resiliency. This explains why some kids overcome overwhelming misfortune while others become victims of their early experiences.

Join me in Part 2 as we examine the last 7 of 13 ways that we as parents or adults can make the difference in a child's life.

#7 Do not overindulge your child, teach "delayed gratification"

It's OK for kids not to have everything they want or what their friends have. They can learn to earn some of the things they want. It is OK for kids to wait – to prove they are responsible.

I will tell you a story about how well to do and caring parents handicapped their kids. These boys were considered good kids, graduating with honors from Grant High School, one was president of the senior class. The boys shocked the community when they were arrested for a series of robberies in Portland. When asked why, they replied that their parents would not buy them stereos for their cars. Their faulty thinking was they didn't have money or a job, so they thought robbery was the fastest way to get the stereos.

Many parents give generously

to their kids but fail to teach them about delayed gratification and responsibility.

#8 Love your child unconditionally

Love your children for who they are not for what they do well. Love them even if they don't get good grades or are good in sports – even when your kids are not keeping up with the Joneses' kids or are dressing weird and full of piercings and tattoos. Many children mistake parents' disappointment for lack of love.

A long-term psychological study of infants found that those who did not get enough love and attention ended up as adults with broken relationships and in trouble with the law.

#9 Hand over control to your child when it is reasonable

Let children in an age-appropriate way, have as much power, and as many choices and opportunities to fail - or succeed as possible – without parent disapproval or swooping in to take control or rescue them.

Children learn flexibility and cooperation and gain confidence from chores or a part time job. In the process, they have to manage their time, solve real-life problems and be more independent. Surveys show that children who have chores at home do better in school. A child needs to feel she is an important member of the family with something real to give. Then he needs praise, but only for a job well done. Some children have so much done for them that they

Resilient kids usually become resilient adults, able to roll with the punches of being human in an imperfect and unfair world.

miss out on the opportunity to become competent.

#10 Help your child develop a talent

To build resilience in a child does not require a super kid. What is needed is to find one or two places where a child can succeed and feel some self-confidence. Adults can encourage a kid to get good at something even if he does poorly at school – like art, music, sports where he feels he/she has a value.

The difference between kids that have one or more talents or hobbies and those that have none is major. Adults who help a child gain skills (and possibly a career path as an adult) can help their

lives be more positive.

#11 Teach (and model) for your kids to do the right thing.

Show your child how to stand up for him or herself and others. Teach them how to be caring and do thoughtful things for others each day. Teach manners and how to become the person they want others to be. If the adults in a child's world will act this way the kids will follow suit. This can be the best thing your child learns at home to produce a successful life.

#12 Give your child information

At age 2, like many children Joey was afraid of the roar of the vacuum cleaner. His mother opened the inside so he could see there was nothing scary inside.

At any age information can

be the tool against the terror of the unknown. A child needs to be prepared for a crisis, like going to the hospital to get his tonsils out. If you tell your child the truth about what is going to happen and tell him you will be there and give him a chance to ask questions and he will have a better sense of control.

#13 Give your child hope for the future

Why do some kids from abusive homes become abusers themselves, while others become model parents? Researchers have found one overriding trait: "a basic view of optimism and hope." So if you hope, dream and plan, chances are your child will too.

The difference between an emotionally strong and resilient child and a weak one can be how well the parent expectations match the child's know how, a mismatch can leave a child devastated.

In closing, it is the individuals who use resiliency to comfort and empower themselves that are able to persevere through their own adversity, become stronger because of it, and help others do the same

Resources Sam Goldstein, Ph.D., Robert Brooks, Ph.D., Raising Resilient Children, Robert Sullivan, What Makes a Child Resilient? Denise Allen, OT, Lori Day Consulting, Claire Safran, Kids Who Beat the Odds. soniaspackman@msn.com

The Gun Doctor: The Four Basic Rules of Firearm Safety

By Wolfgang Rotbart

This is the first in an ongoing series on firearm safety, proper usage, maintenance, etc. In these articles, I will not advocate firearm ownership and will avoid political issues such as gun control. I will, however, try to cover issues one should consider before acquiring a firearm, especially for self-defense.

I chose this topic as the lead because it is the foundation for the safe handling and use of all firearms in general, whether for hunting, target or self-defense.

By possessing a firearm, you are continually making a series of life-or-death decisions every time you use or even handle it. It is a grave responsibility

that should not be taken lightly.

The Four Basic Rules, if followed unflinching, all but eliminate the possibility of a serious or fatal unintentional discharge. So let's get to them.

The Four Basic Rules of Firearm Safety:

1) ALWAYS assume ALL firearms are loaded. A surprising number of people have been killed with what they thought were "unloaded" firearms.

2) Never point a firearm at anything you are not willing to kill, maim or destroy. Stated another way, keep it pointed in a safe direction at all times except in cases of extreme self-defense.

3) Keep your finger off the trigger until your sights are on target and you have made the decision to shoot.

4) Be sure of your target and what is beyond it. You are legally and morally responsible for everything that occurs from the moment you pull the trigger until the bullet stops.

I like this set of rules better than some of the others out there because it is short and easy to remember. Most of the other sets of rules are just variations and combinations of these four. Another reason is that you pretty much have to break two or more of the rules at one time before someone gets hurt. *However, I don't mean to imply that anyone should ever break ANY of these four rules at*

ANY time, but rather that they have a bit of built-in redundancy to them.

These rules do not adequately address the subject of firearm safety in and around the home, especially regarding children. That is a topic that will require its own article.

I welcome ideas for topics for these articles. Please email them to: Wolfgang@WolfgangTheGunDoctor.com or call me at (503)429-7342, 10:00 – 5:00 M – F.

Wolfgang Rotbart is an AGI-certified Master Gunsmith and a NRA-certified Basic Pistol Course Instructor. He works as a gunsmith and as an Oregon Concealed Handgun Safety Course Instructor. You may visit The Gun Doctor website for more information at: <http://www.wolfgangthegundocor.com/>

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