

# RAISING RESILIENT CHILDREN/TEENS...



Research supports that GRATITUDE promotes resilience - the ability to “bounce back” from difficulty.  
*Gratitude is way of thinking that can be practiced.*

## To promote GRATITUDE Tip #1

Tell your children/teens what YOU are thankful for, even during this difficult time.

*Ask... What are YOU grateful for? Discuss.*



**This question can promote important conversations at the dinner table and at other times. This reflect and respond discussion stimulates the cortical part of the brain, increasing the potential for being grateful and less stressed.**

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## To promote **GRATITUDE** Tip #2

Encourage your children/teens to keep a **Gratitude Journal**.



Research shows that writing down even brief thoughts about things, large and small, for which we are thankful promotes gratitude. The action of writing integrates thoughts, building a grateful mindset.

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Research supports that **FORGIVENESS** promotes resilience - the ability to "bounce back" from difficulty. **FORGIVENESS** means letting go of anger and resentment when an individual feels wronged. Forgiving doesn't mean forgetting or condoning hurtful behavior.

## FORGIVENESS Tip #1

Forgiving has physical and emotional benefits

Much research shows that **not** forgiving and holding a grudge activates the amygdala, the part of the brain that is the site of emotions. This activation releases cortisol, a stress chemical in the



brain, agitating the nervous system, compromising the immune system, elevating blood pressure, and increasing heart rate. *Forgiving is associated with physical and emotional well-being.*

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## To Promote FORGIVENESS Tip #2

Parents teach forgiveness by modeling it.



When your child or teen makes a choice that hurts your feelings, calmly tell them how it affects you, stating "I feel...hurt, angry, etc." If you need a sincere apology, ask for one. Make it clear you forgive them. Demonstrate forgiveness by letting go of negative emotions and by not bringing it up again.

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## To Promote FORGIVENESS Tip #3

Children can learn to forgive when parents apologize.



Children and teens need to hear their parents say they are sincerely sorry for their behavior, e.g. losing their temper, and admit when they are wrong. Parents can be powerful models of forgiveness.

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# RAISING RESILIENT CHILDREN/TEENS...



Research supports that **EMPATHY** promotes resilience - the ability to “bounce back” from difficulty.

**EMPATHY** - means being able to put ourselves in “other people’s shoes” and imagine how they feel.

## To Promote EMPATHY: Tip #5

Recognizing kind behavior can increase a child/teen’s capacity to be empathetic.

I’m  
**proud**  
of you

When parents acknowledge the considerate actions of their children and teens toward others, e.g. by stating “that was so kind of you,” they encourage empathetic behavior. The development of empathy is an unfolding process during the childhood years.

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