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# Sustaining Your Resilience in Stressful Times Part II: Understanding and Addressing the Cascade of Youth Risk

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The purpose of life  
is to prepare the  
next generation for  
their future.





# Survival of the Species



- Salmon and snakes are born with sufficient instincts to survive.
- Bear cubs require at least one or two years with their mother to ensure survival.
- Higher primates require three or four years.
- Humans require at least ten years.





We have perpetuated the 19th century perception that raising children is a process by which information is dumped into a black box lying mysteriously within the human brain.



We have also assumed a Stepford Wives model that all black boxes are identical.

# Through the Eyes of Innocence







Preschool Graduation Part I





Preschool Graduation Part II





Biology is not destiny, but it does affect probability. In every risk group, there are those who manage to transition successfully into adult life despite their adversities.



We fail to appreciate that children are genetically endowed with certain patterns of behavior and thought. We call these instincts.



# What are examples of these instincts?

- The drive to help
- The drive to mastery
- Intrinsic motivation
- Intuitive optimism
- Altruism
- Problem-solving
- Social connection
- The drive to acquire knowledge
- Fairness



I'm not afraid about my girlfriends and myself, we'll squeeze through somehow, though I'm not too certain about my math.

- Anne Frank, June 21, 1942





I have lots of courage, I feel so strong and as if I can bear a great deal, I feel so free and so young! I was glad when I first realized it, because I don't think I shall easily bow down before the blows that inevitably come to everyone.

- Anne Frank, July 15, 1944

# Resilience



- A process leading to good outcome despite high risk
- The ability to function competently under stress
- The ability to recover from trauma and adversity



# Four Waves of Resilience Research

1. Identifying person and variable-focused factors that make a difference.
2. Identifying and understanding the operation of these factors within systems with a process focus.
3. Intervening individually to foster resilience.
4. Creating community-wide programs.



Caregivers are the architects of the way in which experience influences the unfolding of genetically preprogrammed but experience-dependent brain development.

- Daniel Siegel, *The Developing Mind*



The secret of education lies in respecting the student.

- Ralph Waldo Emerson





The experience of growing up absent success steals away opportunities to develop a resilient mindset.



# Resilience Is Predicted by Factors Within:



The Child



The Family



The Culture



# Risk and Protective Factors: In the Individual

## Risks

- Female gender
- Early puberty
- Difficult temperament: inflexibility, low positive mood, withdrawal, poor concentration
- Low self-esteem, perceived incompetence, negative explanatory and inferential style
- Anxiety
- Low-level depressive symptoms and dysthymia
- Insecure attachment
- Poor social skills: communication and problem-solving skills
- Extreme need for approval and social support

## Protective

- High IQ
- Positive social skills
- Willingness to please adults
- Religious and club affiliations
- Positive physical development
- Academic achievement

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (2009). Risk and protective factors for mental, emotional, and behavioral disorders across the life cycle. Summarized from: [http://dhss.alaska.gov/dbh/Documents/Prevention/programs/spfsg/pdfs/IOM\\_Matrix\\_8%20x11\\_FINAL.pdf](http://dhss.alaska.gov/dbh/Documents/Prevention/programs/spfsg/pdfs/IOM_Matrix_8%20x11_FINAL.pdf)



# Risk and Protective Factors: In the Individual

## Risks

- Low self-esteem
- Shyness
- Emotional problems in childhood
- Conduct disorder
- Favorable attitudes toward drugs
- Rebelliousness
- Early substance use
- Antisocial behavior
- Head injury
- Marijuana use
- Childhood exposure to lead or mercury (neurotoxins)

## Protective

- High self-esteem
- Emotional self-regulation
- Good coping skills and problem-solving skills
- Engagement and connections in two or more of the following contexts: school, with peers, in athletics, employment, religion, culture

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (2009). Risk and protective factors for mental, emotional, and behavioral disorders across the life cycle. Summarized from: [http://dhss.alaska.gov/dbh/Documents/Prevention/programs/spfsig/pdfs/IOM\\_Matrix\\_8%205x11\\_FINAL.pdf](http://dhss.alaska.gov/dbh/Documents/Prevention/programs/spfsig/pdfs/IOM_Matrix_8%205x11_FINAL.pdf)



# Risk and Protective Factors: In the Family

## Risks

- Inadequate or inappropriate child-rearing practices
- Home discord
- Maltreatment and abuse
- Large family size
- Parental antisocial history
- Poverty
- Exposure to repeated family violence
- Divorce
- Parental psychopathology
- Teenage parenthood
- A high level of parent–child conflict
- A low level of positive parental involvement
- Family dysfunction
- Poor parental supervision
- Sexual abuse

## Protective

- Participation in shared activities between youth and family (including siblings and parents)
- Providing the forum to discuss problems and issues with parents
- Availability of economic and other resources to expose youth to multiple experiences
- The presence of a positive adult (ally) in the family to mentor and be supportive
- Family provides structure, limits, rules, monitoring, and predictability
- Supportive relationships with family members
- Clear expectations for behavior and values

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (2009). Risk and protective factors for mental, emotional, and behavioral disorders across the life cycle. Summarized from: [http://dhss.alaska.gov/dbh/Documents/Prevention/programs/spfsig/pdfs/IOM\\_Matrix\\_8%20x11\\_FINAL.pdf](http://dhss.alaska.gov/dbh/Documents/Prevention/programs/spfsig/pdfs/IOM_Matrix_8%20x11_FINAL.pdf)



# Risk and Protective Factors: In Peers

## Risks

- Spending time with peers who engage in delinquent or risky behavior
- Gang involvement
- Less exposure to positive social opportunities because of bullying and rejection

## Protective

- Positive and healthy friends to associate with
- Engagement in healthy and safe activities with peers during leisure time (e.g., clubs, sports, other recreation)

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (2009). Risk and protective factors for mental, emotional, and behavioral disorders across the life cycle. Summarized from: [http://dhss.alaska.gov/dbh/Documents/Prevention/programs/spfsg/pdfs/IOM\\_Matrix\\_8%205x11\\_FINAL.pdf](http://dhss.alaska.gov/dbh/Documents/Prevention/programs/spfsg/pdfs/IOM_Matrix_8%205x11_FINAL.pdf)



# Risk and Protective Factors: School and Community

## Risks

- Poor academic performance
- Enrollment in schools that are unsafe and fail to address the academic and social and emotional needs of children and youth
- Low commitment to school
- Low educational aspirations
- Poor motivation
- Living in an impoverished neighborhood
- Social disorganization in the community in which the youth lives
- High-crime neighborhoods

## Protective

- Enrollment in schools that address not only the academic needs of youth but also their social and emotional needs and learning
- Schools that provide a safe environment
- A community and neighborhood that promote and foster healthy activities for youth

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (2009). Risk and protective factors for mental, emotional, and behavioral disorders across the life cycle. Summarized from: [http://dhss.alaska.gov/dbh/Documents/Prevention/programs/spfsig/pdfs/IOM\\_Matrix\\_8%205x11\\_FINAL.pdf](http://dhss.alaska.gov/dbh/Documents/Prevention/programs/spfsig/pdfs/IOM_Matrix_8%205x11_FINAL.pdf)



Can we create experiences  
in children's lives to nurture  
these instincts?





# Five Strategies to Reduce Teen and Young Adult Risk-Taking Behavior

- **Support positive behaviors of non-risk-taking individuals.** Declines in risk-taking mean that the share of students taking no risks has increased. These youth need support and expanded opportunities to continue making responsible and healthy decisions as they mature.
- **Target efforts to reduce specific risk behaviors toward multiple-risk students.** Recent public health and policy efforts to reduce the prevalence of key risk behaviors, such as smoking or violence, cannot address these behaviors in isolation from other risk-taking.
- **Encourage positive behaviors of risk-taking youth, such as time spent on extracurricular or faith-based activities.** These behaviors connect students to adults and social institutions and offer opportunities to prevent risk-taking among some students or reduce risk-taking among others.
- **Expand efforts to reach multiple-risk youth in nontraditional settings.** Teen participation in settings such as the workplace, the criminal justice system, and faith-based institutions offers innovative opportunities for health services and education programs and the development of personal relationships with positive adult role models that can reduce risk-taking.
- **Take new steps to reduce risk-taking among Hispanic students.** Further research is needed to better understand both risk-taking and development of this growing group of youth. Programs that are responsive and sensitive to the current ethnic and social diversity of Hispanic youth need to be developed and implemented.



# School-Wide Programs



## How **BARR** Works

**Eight interconnected strategies** help schools accomplish their goals by creating intentional connections between staff and students to address barriers to success.



### **Focus on the whole student**

Educators work to build students' strengths and proactively address nonacademic reasons why students fall behind in school as well as what they need to thrive. Every discussion with or about the student includes a 360-degree perspective.



### **Provide professional development for staff**

Training for teachers, counselors, and administrators starts before implementation and continues throughout the school year. Professional development focuses on enhancing achievement through student-teacher relationships.



### **Use I-Time Classroom Curriculum to foster learning**

I-Time is an interactive weekly lesson taught by core teachers where students work together to strengthen their social and emotional skills, including communication and goal setting. They also work on discussing sensitive issues such as grief, substance use, and bullying.



### **Create cohorts of students**

Groups of students take core courses (typically math, English, and science or social studies) together as a cohort. Each cohort is assigned to a team of teachers to cultivate connections and enhance learning relationships.



### **Hold regular teacher team meetings**

Teachers in a cohort meet weekly for a 360-degree discussion about each student in the cohort. Teacher teams identify student strengths and any interventions a student might need.



### **Conduct Risk Review meetings**

A Risk Review team meets regularly to discuss strategies for students who need more support than the cohort teacher teams can provide. This team identifies and coordinates additional internal or external resources that can best help students thrive.



### **Engage families in student learning**

With *BARR*, families become active partners in helping students be their best. Teachers call and meet with parents and other family members regularly, and parents are invited to join an advisory council.



### **Engage administration**

Administrators receive training, ongoing coaching, and tools to help them best integrate *BARR* into their school culture and reach their school-specific goals.



The background of the slide is a photograph of several children standing in a circle on a grassy field, holding hands. They are wearing colorful clothing, including a red shirt, a blue and white striped shirt, and a purple and white striped shirt. The image is slightly blurred and has a dark overlay to make the text stand out.

# The Developmental Assets® Framework

Search Institute has identified 40 positive supports and strengths that young people need to succeed. Half of the assets focus on the relationships and opportunities they need in their families, schools, and communities (external assets). The remaining assets focus on the social-emotional strengths, values, and commitments that are nurtured within young people (internal assets).

# The Mindset of a Resilient Youth

- Are optimistic and hopeful.
- Feel special and appreciated in the eyes of others.
- Set realistic goals and expectations.
- View mistakes, hardships, and obstacles as challenges.
- Solve problems and make decisions.
- Have internal locus of control.
- Believe you can and set out to solve problems.
- Possess empathy.



# General Conclusions

- An early history of developing competence, along with supportive, consistent care, serves as a powerful and enduring buffer throughout childhood and increases probability of resilience.
- The pathways that lead to resilience are complex.
- There is a great need to map the interaction of personal and environmental factors.

# General Conclusions

*(cont.)*

- Longitudinal research needs to be conducted on a large scale and gene–environment focused.
- We require a broader cross-cultural perspective.
- We need to know more about individual dispositions and temperament as well as sources of family support.





Only then will we begin to know what makes the young of our species survive and thrive despite life's adversities.





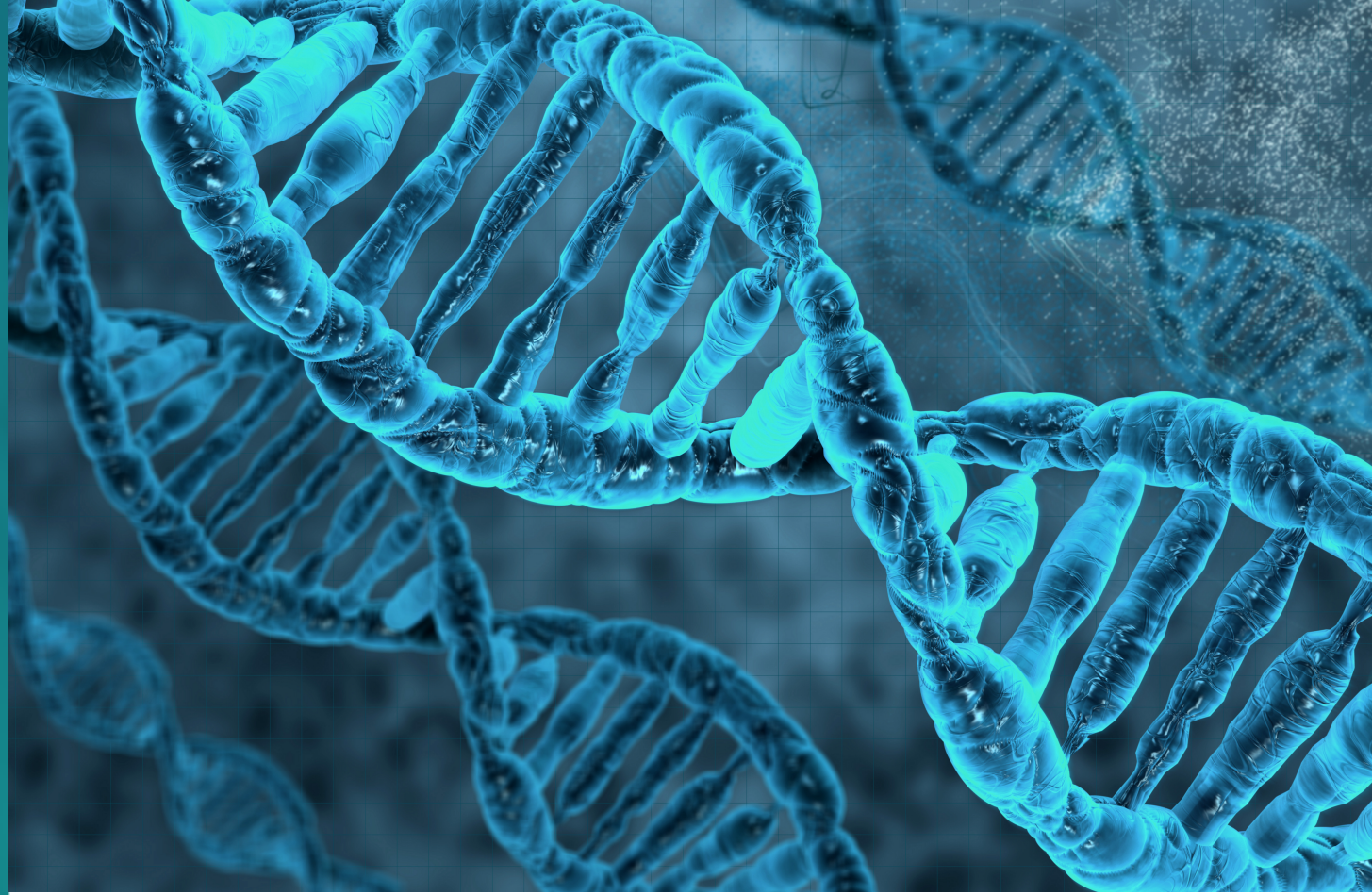
Adopt a Learning-To-Swim Mindset!



# Goldstein's Axiom



Through intelligent and ethical educational and therapeutic practices, we can foster self-discipline, mental health, resilience, and build educational proficiency in all children without stealing away their dignity and hope.



Our ancestors raised the next generation by drawing upon seven important instincts that evolved over tens of thousands of years in our species. Today, these instincts are more important than ever in preparing children for tomorrow's successes.



A photograph of a paved road winding through a desert landscape with red rock formations in the background. A large, semi-transparent white arrow is superimposed on the road, pointing towards the horizon. The words "KEEP GOING" are written in large, bold, white capital letters across the middle of the road.

**KEEP GOING**

We call these the Seven Critical Instincts of TENACITY!





TENACITY is defined as perseverance, doggedness, resolution, patience, endurance, and stamina.



Tenacity provides the mental and emotional fuel  
driving resilience and self-discipline.

**KEEP  
CALM  
AND  
NEVER  
YIELD**

# These instincts are:

- Intrinsic motivation
- Intuitive optimism
- Practical intelligence
- Compassionate empathy
- Virtuous responsibility
- Genuine altruism
- Measured fairness





A tenacious mindset may be comprised of seven instincts, but for these to develop and flourish, they require the nurturing and support of caring adults.

# Questions?



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 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=isfw8JJ-eWM>



# Additional Resources Available by WPS:

- **Telepractice Page:** <https://pages.wpspublish.com/telepractice-101>
- **WPS Content Hub:** <https://www.wpspublish.com/content-hub>
- **WPS Video Resources:** <https://www.wpspublish.com/webinars>
- **Part 1: Sustaining Your Resilience in Stressful Times: Guidelines for Pediatric Mental Health Professionals:**  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=3&v=vjBpcidSCs8&feature=emb\\_logo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=3&v=vjBpcidSCs8&feature=emb_logo)