



TEENS CAN

Be Resilient!

A Parent's Guide

Parents, you play a vital role in helping your teen become more resilient.

Resiliency is the ability to handle life's ups and downs in positive ways.

Resilient teens can:

- find solutions
- make good choices
- adapt to change
- cope with challenges



When your teen develops their resiliency, it supports their mental health.

To become more resilient teens need:

S Supportive Relationships

H Healthy Coping

O Optimistic Thinking

E Emotional Awareness

S Skills for Living

Supportive Relationships:



A positive connection with a caring adult (such as a parent, grandparent, teacher or coach) will benefit your teen.

When your teen feels loved, valued and supported they are better able to handle life's ups and downs in positive ways.

Things you can do:

- Have family meals together.
- Give support and guidance.
- Turn off distractions and give your teen your full attention.
- Have routines and limits with fair consequences if rules are broken. For example, if they break curfew by one hour, they have to be home one hour earlier next time.
- Accept your teen for who they are.
- Get to know their friends.
- Find shared interests and do them together.



Healthy Coping:



Good coping skills will help your teen better respond to stress.

To cope with the big physical, emotional and social changes, teens need:

- A good night sleep with consistent bed and wake-up times:
 - 5-13 year olds need 9-11 hours of uninterrupted sleep per night.
 - 14-17 year olds need 8-10 hours of uninterrupted sleep per night.
- Nutritious food to fuel the mind and body.
- 60 minutes of physical activity daily.
- Positive ways to deal with their feelings.
- Opportunities to express their feelings and share emotions.

Things you can do:

- Help your teen make their bedroom a better place to sleep.
- Have healthy snacks on hand.
- Shoot hoops or play catch together.
- Help your teen identify the source of their stress and together find ways to reduce or manage it.
- Be ready to listen when your teen is ready to talk.
- Let them know that you recognize it can be hard and you are there to help.



Optimistic Thinking:

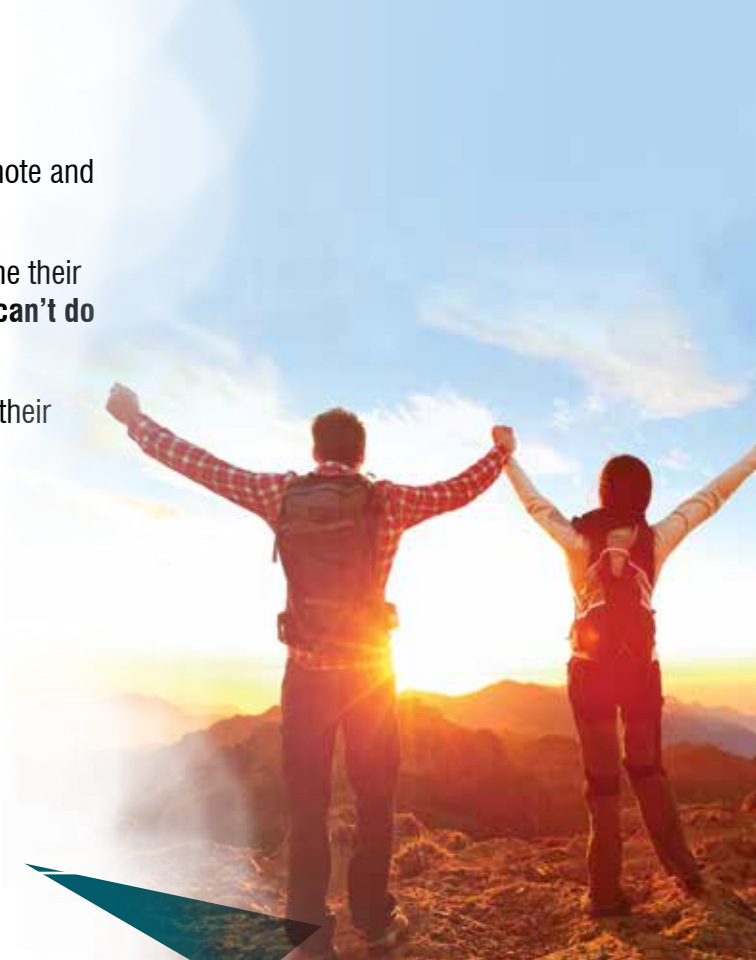


Looking for the hopeful side of things can help your teen see challenges as opportunities.

- Optimistic thinkers are shown to have better health.
- As part of a teen's normal development they often see problems as being worse than they are. They need to hear that you agree that things can be difficult but that you have confidence in them.
- Optimistic thinkers realize that things don't always come easily but are worth working for.
- Balancing positive thinking with hard work, practice and training can help your teen to achieve their goals.

Things you can do:

- Write a positive thought on a sticky note and put it where your teen will see it.
- Suggest to your teen that they reframe their thoughts from, **“I can’t do it,”** to, **“I can’t do it, yet.”**
- Be your teen’s cheering section and their biggest fan.



Emotional Awareness:

Understanding emotions helps your teen respond well to their own feelings and to others.



Understanding their emotions helps teens to:

- Use good judgment.
- Have empathy and practice kindness – caring about another person’s wellbeing has benefits for your teen. It can lower stress, increase optimism, improve self-esteem and build confidence.
- Resolve conflict – conflict is a normal part of life. Your teen can learn strategies to resolve it. Some tips to resolve conflict: stay calm and take a few deep breaths, focus on the problem and not on the person, give each side a chance to share their point of view, think together of win-win solutions for everyone.

Things you can do:

- If your teen seems sad or angry, ask them how they are feeling and if there is anything you can do to help.
- Talk with your teen about volunteering and sharing their skills with others.
- Explore things like deep breathing, counting, yoga, martial arts or meditation. They can help your teen manage intense feelings.



Skills for Living:



Solving problems, making decisions, and learning new skills will help your teen succeed in life. Teens feel more competent when they gain skills for living.

Competent teens:

- Think things through and find solutions.
- Adapt to change in positive ways.
- Assess risks and set limits.
- Know when to ask for help.
- Learn from experiences – remember, mistakes and difficult times can be positive learning experiences.

Things you can do:

- Give your teen opportunities to show that they can be trusted – for example, going to the mall or taking public transit to an event. Ask them to call or text you when they get there.
- Help your teen develop life skills – have your teen help out around the home with jobs like laundry, vacuuming, and cooking.
- Help plan a meal with your teen, shop, cook and eat it together.

Remember, learning new skills takes time and practice. Going through the steps to figure things out is as valuable as the outcome.



Teens also need to learn skills for online living.



As a parent you can:

- Stay informed about the internet and new technologies.
- Talk openly with your teen about the risks – such as sharing of personal information or bullying.
- Set limits – such as homework and chores need to be done first. Turn off electronics at 10 p.m.
- Get help for your teen if needed, such as a principal, school guidance counselor or the police.

Encourage your teen to **“think before posting”** – remind them often that what they share online can’t be taken back.

Consider questions like:

- Am I sharing too much?
- Am I hurting anybody?
- Am I being fair?
- Will this affect my future?
- Would I want my family to see this?



Parents' Self-Care:



As a parent, you manage many demands. These can be rewarding, challenging and also stressful.

- It's important to know that we all have limits.
- Looking after yourself will help you become more resilient and in turn, better respond to your teen's needs.
- Supportive relationships, healthy coping, optimistic thinking, emotional awareness and skills for living are as important for you as they are for your teen.

Things you can do:

- Make time for yourself and do things you enjoy.
- Consider letting some things go when the demands on your time become a struggle to juggle.
- Spend time with the people you enjoy.
- Pick your battles with your teen (such as safety concern versus getting them to clean their room).
- Note something you are thankful for each day.



Say, 'I Love you'

Ask your teen, 'What is

Laugh Have your teen put their
Together, watch a YouTube

Turn off your phone and watch your teen's game

Turn off all electronics at bedtime

Teach your teen to do

Celebrate your teen's individuality

Shoot some hoops or play catch

Do something

Bake muffins together

Eat dinner together tonight

the latest trend in social media?'

activities & school projects on a family calendar

clip on how to tune-up your bike

Touch base with a text

Plan a family outing this weekend & invite your teen to bring a friend along

the laundry Say, 'I'm proud of you'

Admit when you're wrong and make ammends

Ask to hear your teen's favourite music

fun with your teen

Listen Give a hug



**HEALTH
DEPARTMENT**

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Durham Health Connection Line
905-668-2020 or 1-800-841-2729

durham.ca/teenscan

If you require this information in an accessible format,
contact 1-800-841-2729



YouTube

