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Mental Health Services for Schools

Raising a Resilient Child

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Agenda

- Learn about factors that contribute towards building resilience
- Discuss the role of the parent-child relationship in supporting resilience
- Learn practical tools to integrate into family life, to help young people respond to challenges and build resilience

What is resilience?

resilience:

“an ability to recover from or adjust easily to misfortune or change.”

—Merriam-Webster Dictionary

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Power of vulnerability

It is really normal for all of us to avoid uncomfortable feelings such as shame, disappointment, anger or sadness. Sometimes if we find any of these feelings difficult, we can unconsciously avoid or dismiss these feelings in our children.

This means that children don't learn how to manage those feelings and they can develop unhealthy coping mechanisms, express them through challenging behaviour and feel alone with difficult feelings.



Not now Bernard by David Mckee

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A safe Harbour and launching pad

As mammals we are dependent on our caregivers from birth.

We need **safety**, to be **seen** and **soothed** to feel **secure**.

Childrens relationships with their caregivers are the greatest source of these conditions.

These elements are the building blocks of resilience.



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Strategies for developing resilience

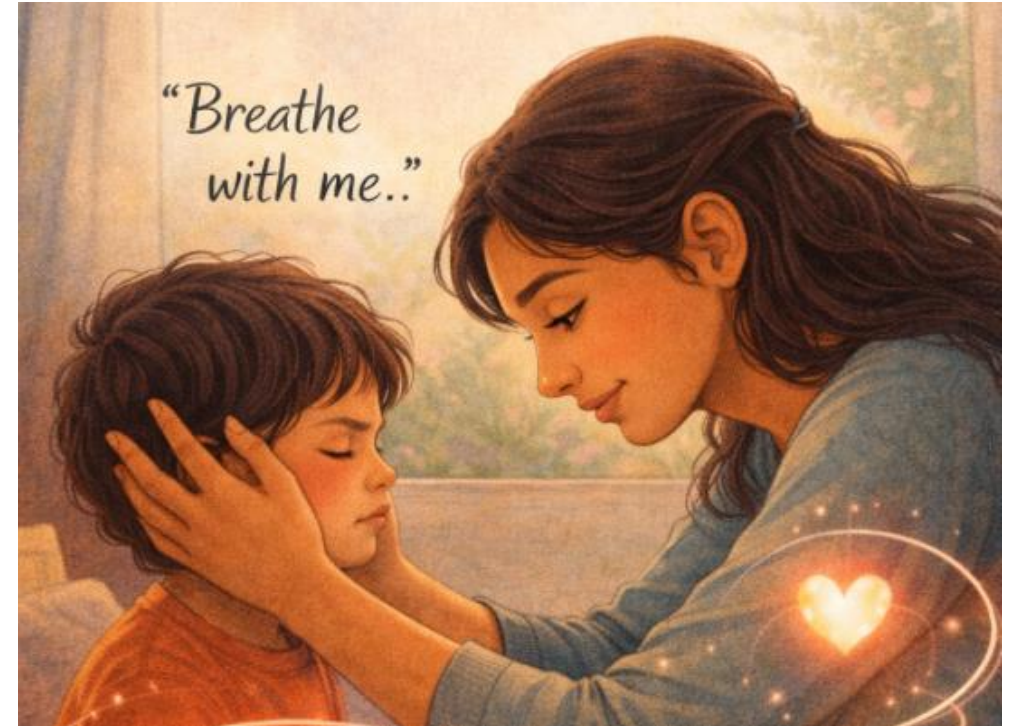
1. Support children through difficult experiences and feelings. Resilience grows from a place of resource.
2. Say yes to **all** feelings
3. Teach children to name their feelings (Modelling is an important way of doing this).
4. See setbacks and challenges as opportunities for learning and growth. It's not about being perfect or happy all the time. True resilience is developed from finding ways to support yourself through challenging periods.
5. Once children have made it through a difficult period, acknowledge this with them.

Active Listening

- Give your child your full attention
- Maintain eye contact and if appropriate, get down on their level
- Listen carefully to what is being said
- Use encouragers to show that you are interested (“I see,” “uh huh,” “mmm,” etc.)
- Reflect back the feeling (this demonstrates empathy and helps with clarification)
- Don’t be afraid of silence
- Ask open-ended questions
- Maintain an open, non-judgemental approach

Your state matters

- Children learn how to manage their feelings and behaviour from the adults around them.
- We can **model** to children things like: it's ok to be upset sometimes, to make mistakes, or to keep trying something until you get it.
- These warm interactions help them to feel **safe** and **build resilience**.



It takes two to tango!

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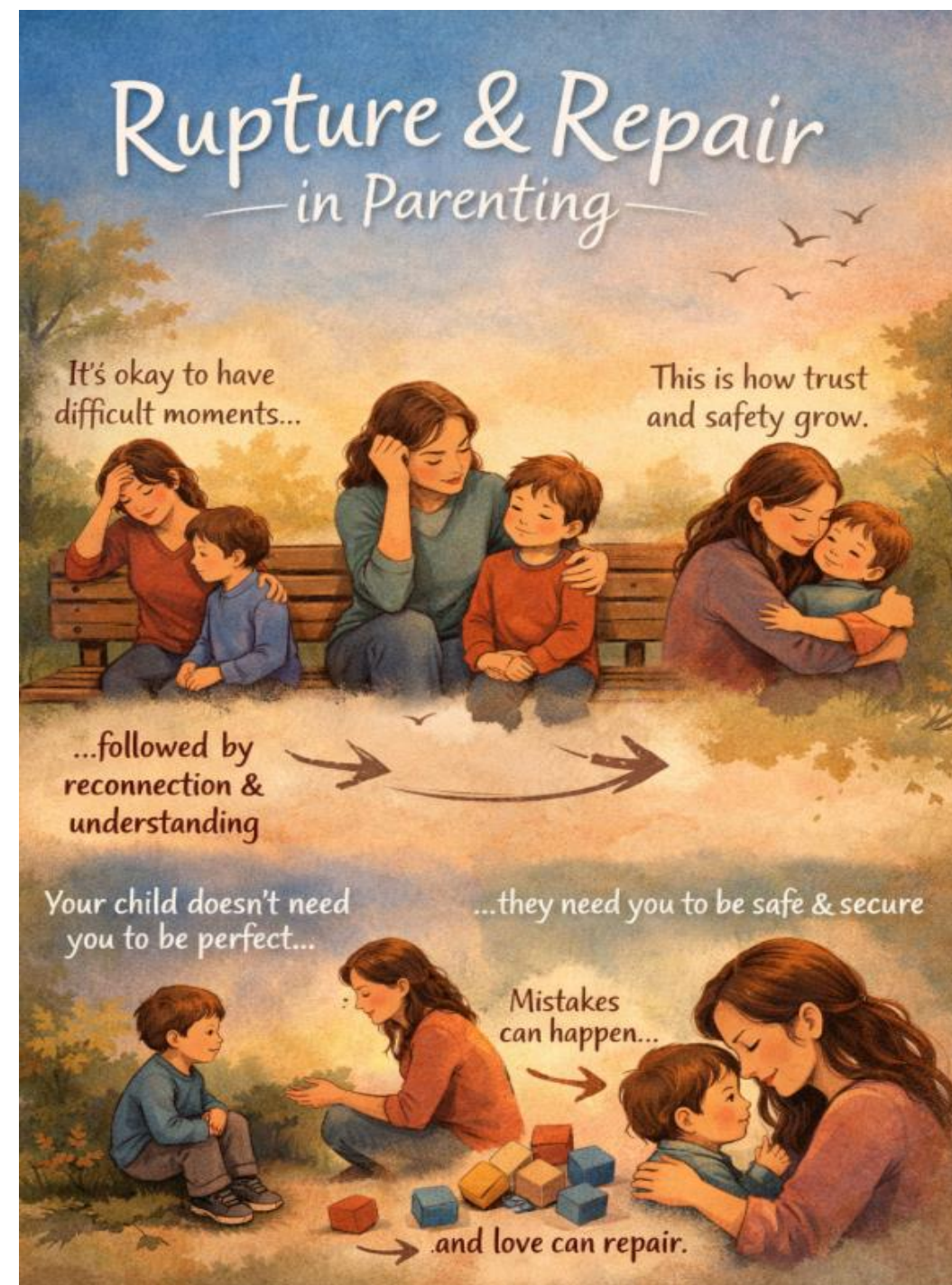
Sentence Starters

Instead of....	Try this...
What's wrong?	I notice you seem upset/worried/sad/angry/annoyed right now, can you tell me more about how you feel?
Don't cry, it's OK	I can understand why you feel sad, I'm here with you
Stop being silly	You and your feelings are important to me
Don't be angry, you'll have a turn next	I can see you are angry because you want a turn and that's OK but it's not acceptable to push
I can't talk to you now - I'm talking to the class	I can't speak with you right now, but I can see you're worried/upset and I can speak to you at breaktime

Rupture and repair

Rupture and repair are vital in a parent-child relationship because moments of disconnection, when followed by genuine acknowledgement and reconnection, teach a child that relationships can withstand difficulty and that trust and safety can be restored.

Your child doesn't need a perfect parent - they need a safe, secure one who shows that mistakes can be worked through and relationships repaired with care.



Check out:

Dr Karen Treisman, Clinical Psychologist, Author and Trainer- www.safehandsthinkingminds.co.uk



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