

Building Resilient Families



We know that certain kinds of significant stress in children's lives can affect their overall health. There are plenty of resources to help kids who have experienced stress. Our psychiatry department offers counseling for kids and adults: please call Fairfield 707-366-3600, Vallejo 707-645-2700 or Vacaville 707-624-2830 if you think your family needs this. No referral needed.

We want the families in our community to be resilient and be able to overcome stress in their lives. Please read below for more information and thoughts on how to practice resiliency with your family. (adapted from Families without Violence)

You Are a Good Parent

As a caregiver of children, you want the best for your kids.

For kids to get the best from you it helps:

- ✓ To be in a good place yourself
- ✓ To have tools and ideas that support your wellbeing
- ✓ To have a backup plan for bad days

Strong Families

Relationships, both past and present, affect all of us. But even when we've had bad experiences there is hope. There are strategies to help us become stronger.

What does it mean to be strong, resilient, or come back from bad experiences?

- ✓ Knowing how to navigate stress and use tools to help you cope
- ✓ Being able to step back from your emotions when things get hard
- ✓ Coming back after bad experiences and helping your kids do the same
- ✓ Studies show that caring relationships and positive parenting build resilience and strength in us and our kids.

Difficult Childhood

Many adults (about one in four) grew up in homes where there was abuse or other problems.

- ✓ Maybe someone was hurting them
- ✓ Maybe they saw a parent or caregiver being hurt
- ✓ Maybe someone at home was abusing drugs or alcohol
- ✓ Maybe things like this happened to you or your child

These experiences can affect your health, relationships and how you parent. No one deserves to have things like this happen to them.

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Health Effects

Difficult childhood experiences can put you and your children at higher risk for:

- ✓ Repeating the cycle even if you're not aware of it
- ✓ Asthma, chronic pain, obesity
- ✓ Smoking, drinking, prescription and street drug abuse
- ✓ Anxiety, depression, suicide
- ✓ Adult relationships where you're being hurt or hurting your partner

But that's not the end of the story—the good news is that you can find your strength, work on your health and turn things around. For more information go to: www.acestoohigh.com

Simple Steps Reduce Stress

What can you do right now, today, to help yourself and your kids?

-  Stop what you're doing for a few minutes and take some deep breaths until you feel calmer. Check out "Tactical Breather Trainer," a free cell phone app.
-  Identify parenting issues that are especially stressful (like potty training, homework, or bedtime) and if someone can help or do those things for you.
-  Talk with a trusted friend, family member, or find a support group for mothers or fathers to connect with other parents. Join an online parenting community (www.healthypace.com/parenting).

Positive Parenting

Sometimes you forget there are simple things you can do to connect with your child and help them feel loved. These activities also help build their brains and social skills and help them do better in school.

- ✓ Read, play imaginary games, and laugh with your child.
- ✓ Help your child talk about how they are feeling and find the words to describe their emotions.
- ✓ Help your child find something they are really good at.

Write down 3 positive things you did today with your child. You'll be able to see how your choices help you be a better parent and help your child thrive.

Every parent needs support at some point. There are great confidential, helpful, and nonjudgmental numbers to call 24/7.

Child help: 1 800-4A-CHILD (422-4453)

If you are feeling frustrated or angry with your child or just need to talk

Treatment referral: 1 800-662-HELP (4357)

Referral service for substance abuse and mental health issues

National [Fatherhood Institute: www.fatherhood.org](http://www.fatherhood.org)

