

Roundtable Safety Moment

Helping Youth Build Resilience

The ads make it look so easy to be a teen—everyone seems to be laughing, hanging out with friends, wearing exactly the right clothes. But if you work with young adults, you know that life can be pretty tough sometimes. They can face problems ranging from being bullied to the death of a friend or parent. Why is it that sometimes people can go through really rough times and still bounce back? The difference is that those who bounce back are using the skills of resilience.

The good news is that resilience isn't something you're born with or not—the skills of resilience can be learned. Resilience—the ability to adapt well in the face of hard times, disasters like hurricanes, earthquakes, or fires, tragedy, threats, or even high stress—is what makes some people seem like they've “got bounce” while others don't. As leaders we have the opportunity to help the youth we serve learn the skill of resilience.

How to Build Resiliency

- Get together with friends and family. Connect to your community.
- Cut yourself some slack. It is hard enough being a teen, but adding something bad can make the stress worse.
- Create a hassle-free zone. Make your room a hassle-free zone—a haven, free from stress and anxiety.
- Stick to your routine. Maintaining consistency at home can help reduce stress during difficult times.
- Take control. Take it one step at a time. When you make the decision to take that step, you are taking control of your life.
- Express yourself. If you are facing a challenging situation, do not bottle it up. If you do not feel comfortable talking about it, consider journaling or creating art as alternative ways to express your feelings.
- Help somebody. When we focus on others, it helps get our minds off our problems. Try volunteering in your community, school, or helping a friend.
- Put things in perspective—This won't last forever. Remember, you have what it takes to get through the tough times and be resilient.
- Turn it off—There are many things that can add more to the already hard situation you may be experiencing. If possible, turn it off—take a vacation from the news and social media. Give your mind and body the break it needs to build that resilience.

Help your youth understand that resilience can be learned but that does not mean they won't feel stressed or anxious. They might have times when they aren't happy—and that's OK. Resilience is a journey, and each person will take his or her own time along the way. You may benefit from some of the resilience tips above, while some of your friends may benefit from others.

The skills of resilience you learn during really bad times will be useful even after the bad times end, and they are good skills to have every day. Resilience can help you be one of the people who've "got bounce."

Resources:

[American Psychological Association—Got Bounce? Resilience for Teens](#)



<https://www.apa.org/topics/resilience/bounce-teens>

