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Dear Parents and Caregivers,

Part of I Do It!, our Social Skills program, is Virtues Valley. Here we learn all about confidence, resilience and persistence.

Resilience is our ability to “bounce back” after something upsetting, disappointing or embarrassing happens to you. Kelly Kangaroo is the character who shows us how she bounces back from difficulties. It is a vital life skill that we can begin to develop in our children from a very early age.

Beyond Blue has some helpful ideas on support children to develop resilience.

Here are a few of their tips:



- Encourage your child’s independence. Have them involved in preparing meals, dressing themselves or giving money to the checkout person. Start small and build up to more challenging tasks.
- Before solving a problem *for* your child, ask them questions about how they might solve it themselves and support them to talk through a solution.
- Use self-talk when working through problems yourself. A really simple example might be “I was planning to make spaghetti bolognaise for dinner but there’s no spaghetti in the cupboard! Hmm... what can we do instead” and then talk through your problem solving. The most powerful people in a child’s life are the adults closest to them and seeing you model this will help them to start putting it into action too.
- Name your child’s feelings. When your child is upset say “I can see you’re feeling sad. It’s okay to cry”. This will help them to be able to identify their feelings. As your child is calming down, talk about their feelings and what made them feel sad.
- Encourage your child to use calming strategies in the moment. Deep breathing is a really easy tool, you can talk about them blowing their tummy up like a balloon and then slowly letting all the air out.
- Talk to your child about how they can prepare for change or for a stressful event. Talk to them about what is coming up and come up with a plan together for how they can manage if



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they feel anxious. This is particularly relevant as we approach the end of the school year, especially for Year Ones.

- Teach your child to “have a go”. At school we talk about the power of “yet” – just because we can’t do something now, doesn’t mean we won’t ever be able to. Frank the Frog is our character who “sticks with it”. We know that things don’t always work the first time, but we learn and practice until we can do it.
- Failure is a powerful learning tool. It’s important to allow children to fail at some things – it helps them learn that they have a chance to try again, to view their mistakes as an opportunity to grow, and as they become more comfortable with failure or losing it can help minimise performance anxiety.



If you’d like to read more of their tips the website is:

<https://healthyfamilies.beyondblue.org.au/healthy-homes/building-resilience>

Maggie Dent also has a fantastic short video about resilience on her website where she talks through embracing failure, developing independence and persistence, and relationships:

<https://www.maggiedent.com/blog/things-that-build-resilience-in-kids/>

Regards,

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