

Rationale

Why is resilience significant? Why should we foster and develop it at this age?

Resilience is important in achieving better outcomes. As educators, we have a responsibility to ensure that students are presented with as many opportunities as possible to learn, develop and practice resilience. It is an integral component of Social and Emotional Learning (SEL), and provides students with the ability to manage everyday adversities they may face.

Being able to practice resilience in the presence of challenges is an indicator of an individual's ability to cope. Managing and navigating challenges, and achieving a positive outcome from being resilient, also is an important component of health and wellbeing. Where young people can be resilient, they also enhance their mental health and wellbeing.

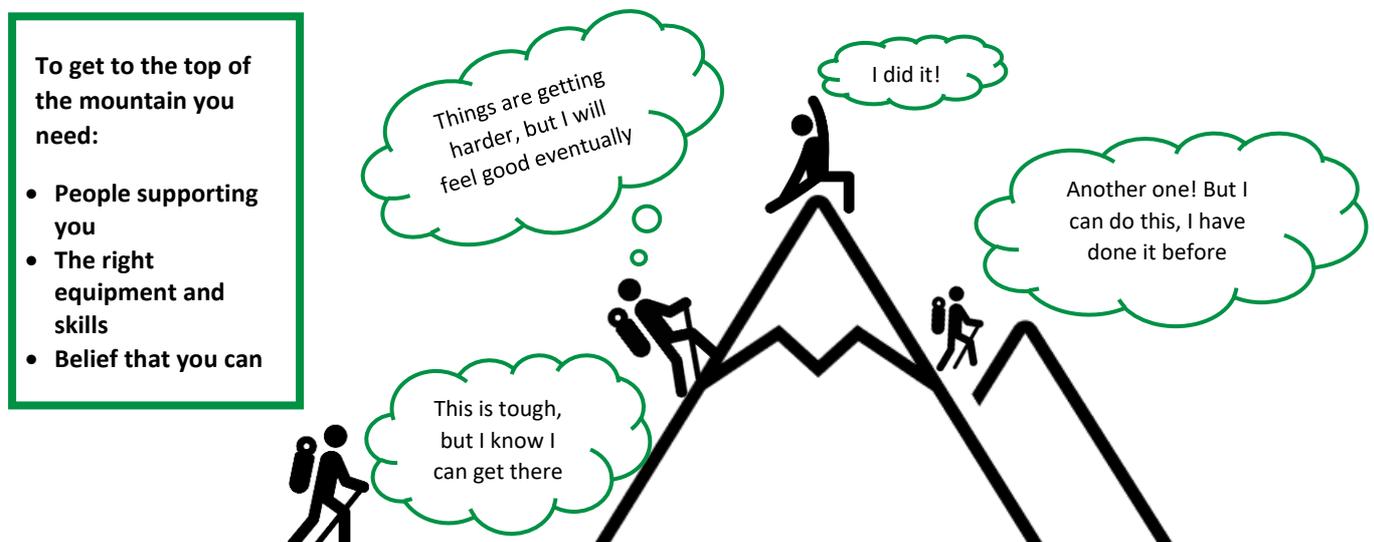
Dream Seeds recognises the importance of building resilience in young people aged 11-12 as they enter adolescence, as this is a crucial time in their development.

Definition

What is resilience? How to explain resilience to your students.

Resilience is *overcoming challenges and the ability to 'bounce back' when things get tough*. Resilience is both a skill and mindset that young people should be supported in developing. When explaining why resilience is important to young people it is important to explain that resilience helps us achieve our goals when things aren't going to plan and that life is full of challenges that we need to have the skills to overcome.

Resilience Mountain



Integrating resilience into your classroom – incidental vs intentional

When it comes to integrating resilience into your classroom it can be both incidental (using everyday opportunities) or intentional (planned lessons).

1. Dialogue: promoting resilient thinking and language.

- Growth mindset dialogue aligns directly with resilient self-talk.
- ‘Resilient talk’ – promoting the use of resilient language in the classroom
 - “This is hard, but I know I will get there”
 - “This is getting really difficult; I know who can help me do it”
 - “I have done this before, I know what helped me get there, I can do it again”
- Use the phrase “bounce back” when talking about resilience with students. For example, a student might be approaching a learning task for the second time after already struggling with it, the student may say that they do not want to try this task again. You can tell this student “This is your chance to bounce back and try again, how can we do this together?”

2. Teachable moments: incidental opportunities to teach resilience to students

Students may be challenged in a number of places and situations in school and to overcome these challenges will need to draw upon resilience. As an educator, it can be really effective to use these times to foster resilience and teach students how to face their challenge with a ‘bounce back’ attitude. Some places where this can happen include:

- School yard
- Parent communication, such as Parent/Teacher Interviews
- Learning tasks
- Practical activities
- School competitions

3. Creating a culture of resilience: making resilience a known value within your classroom

- “Have a go” attitude
- Failing is normal, mistakes are great – create a classroom motto about failing and have it ‘loud’ in the classroom for students to see.
- Problem solving – individually and collaboratively
 - When students are solving problems they are also developing skills to be able to think creatively in challenging situations and ultimately, bounce back. Provide a variety of problem-solving tasks in your classroom, both individual and group tasks, as ways to build resilience within students.
- Support network – who is in your circle?
 - It is important for students to be aware of their support networks. One good way for them to discover this is to draw a circle and write/draw all the important people in their life in that circle. Explaining to students that having these people in their lives are helpful in achieving their dreams and goals, especially when things get tough and they might need help bouncing back.
- Meaningful moments
 - Providing students with the opportunity to make meaningful choices or contribute in a meaningful way to something, helps students see themselves as capable contributors in their world. This adds a sense of purpose and enhances their ability to be resilient.
- Resilience diary
 - Provide students with a resilience diary. This is a space where they can share the challenges they are facing and reflect on how they managed these challenges. As their teacher, where possible, it can be helpful to respond to students in their diaries to encourage resilience, reflection and recognition.

4. Curriculum opportunities: areas within the curriculum that resilience can be linked to plan intentional lessons

- Social and Emotional Learning (SEL)
- Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL)
 - Self-awareness and management – understanding personal strengths and emotions to develop resilience, build confidence and adaptability to develop resilience
 - Social awareness and management
- Health & Physical Education Domain

For further content descriptors visit the [Victoria Curriculum website](#).

5. Maintaining the conversation: making conversations about resilience a normal part of your classroom.

- Reflective practices – how were you resilient today? What challenged you today? How did you overcome this challenge?
- Am I being resilient? Self-check in.
 - Using a question like the one above to use when students may be lacking in resilience is effective in fostering the ongoing development of resilience in your students.

Teach by example – role modelling resilience for your students

By role modelling the following thinking, attitudes and actions, students can learn more about resilience in action. Young people’s wellbeing and resilience benefit from having just one supportive adult outside of their family, and as a teacher, you are likely to be this person.

- Healthy thinking
- “Have a go” attitude and mindset
- Problem solving and decision making – use mistakes in the classroom, lessons not going to plan or personal challenges as opportunities to model resilience for your students. For example "I know when I'm facing a challenge like this, asking my friends for help is a good way to overcome this", or "I remember what I did last time I faced a challenge/felt like this, I did _____ to help me feel better"
- Share stories of adversity
- Develop positive relationships

6. Resilience metaphor (from Be You):

Be You is a national mental health initiative for educators (lead by Beyond Blue) which aims to promote and protect positive mental health in children and young people in every early learning service and school in Australia. [See their many resources here.](#)

Below is a metaphor provided by Be You that you can use:

Imagine a plane encountering turbulence mid-flight. The turbulence, or poor weather, represents adversity. Different planes respond to poor weather conditions in different ways. Some are unfazed and fly on without any problem, while others struggle to navigate the challenging conditions. In much the same way, young people respond to the same adversity in different ways.

In the metaphor, the ability of the plane to get through the poor weather and reach its destination depends on:

- the pilot (the young person and their piloting skills i.e. their social and emotional skills)
- the flight crew (family, friends, the community, educators and health professionals)
- the type of plane (the young person's individual characteristics such as age and temperament)
- the equipment available to the pilot, co-pilots and ground crew (the resources available to the young person, family, services and health professionals)
- the severity and duration of the poor weather (the negative life events);
- and the way the young person uses all these skills and resources.

What can we learn from this metaphor?

The pilot can't handle the poor weather adequately without the assistance of the flight crew. In other words, a young person's resilience depends on the support they get from the people around them.

The pilot and flight crew rely on the equipment available to them to ensure the plane gets through the poor weather safely. This is, the people around the young person need appropriate resources to support them.

Although the plane itself can't be made stronger by the adversity, the pilot will likely have improved flying skills as a result of his or her experiences.

The moral of the story? Resilience is learning to fly solo from time to time, provided young people supported to develop their resilience. But it's also about making the most of those around them to help them fly and avoid crashing."

Extracted from [Be You \(Beyond Blue\)](#)

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