

## **Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health (IECMH) Guide for Professionals: Resiliency**

### **Here is what we know about resiliency:**

- It is the ability to steer through life's challenges and bounce back from adversity in a positive way.
- Helps people deal with stress, overcome childhood disadvantages and reach out to new opportunities.
- It is not a personality trait and develops throughout your life.
  - Develops through the interaction of supportive relationships, biological systems and gene expression.
- Research demonstrates that it can be linked to higher levels of happiness, positive relationships and greater success in school, work and life.

### **Within your professional role and considering the social determinants of health, how do you:**

- Share strategies with parents? Examples:
  - Calming strategies such as deep breathing, hugs, movement, a drink of water, music, art, taking a break, sensory play, etc.
  - Modeling and nurturing the development of positive thinking habits and reaching out for support as needed.
  - Encouraging children to keep trying even when it is hard. Helping them learn that mistakes are okay.
  - Giving children opportunities to help out and contribute to the needs of others through meaningful tasks such as: getting a band aide for a friend, help cleaning up, help with mealtime preparation.
- Discuss how the parent or caregiver is coping and their support system.
- Explore opportunities for connecting to informal and formal supports (community, neighbourhood, resources, groups).
- Support the parent or caregiver to have realistic, age appropriate expectations for their child.
- Administer an appropriate screening tool to ensure that the child is meeting their expected developmental milestones and refer if applicable.

## Where can you find more information?

- [Parenting in Ottawa](#)
- [Parent Resource Centre](#)
- [211 Ontario](#)
- [Community Navigation of Eastern Ontario](#)
- [Encyclopedia on Early Childhood Development: Resilience](#)
- [Reaching IN ... Reaching OUT: Road to Resiliency Factsheet and Video](#)
- [Harvard University, Center on the Developing Child, Harvard: 8 Things to Remember about Child Development](#)
- [Best Start: Building Resilience in Young Children](#)
- [MindMasters 2](#)
- [Public Health Agency of Canada: Social Determinants of Health](#)

## References:

- [Encyclopedia on Early Childhood Development: Resilience](#)
- [Reaching IN ... Reaching OUT Resiliency Guidebook](#)
- [Harvard University, Center on the Developing Child: Key Concepts, Brain Architecture](#)
- [Harvard University, Center on the Developing Child: The Science of Resilience](#)
- [Harvard University, Center on the Developing Child, Harvard: 8 Things to Remember about Child Development](#)
- [Best Start: Building Resilience in Young Children](#)