How Does My Child Cope With Stress and Adversity?

(Age 6-preteen)

Resilience in children can change dramatically as they grow. One day they are having temper tantrums in the grocery store and the next they are sharing their toys with friends. As a result, it’s hard to know how they may respond to adversity or hold up under severe stress. There are, however, a few traits and indicators that can help predict how children will cope during stressful times.

Answer each question by circling the appropriate answer for each statement that best matches your beliefs about your child, age 6 to preteen. There are no right or wrong answers, so just answer each question honestly.

1. **My child gets along (plays) well with other children.**
   - Agree=1 point
   - Disagree= 0 points

2. **In our family we listen to each other’s problems.**
   - Agree=1 point
   - Disagree= 0 points

3. **My child worries too much about one or more of the adults in his or her life.**
   - Agree=0 points
   - Disagree=1 point

4. **It’s easy for my child to get my undivided (positive) attention.**
   - Agree=1 point
   - Disagree= 0 points

5. **My child tells me (or his or her other parent) when he or she is sad or afraid.**
   - Agree=1 point
   - Disagree= 0 points

6. **I have at least one meal a day with my child, at least five days per week.**
   - Agree=1 point
   - Disagree= 0 points

7. **My child is too clingy for his or her age.**
   - Agree=0 points
   - Disagree=1 point

8. **My child is able to play independently (find things to keep busy) without much of a problem.**
   - Agree=1 point
   - Disagree= 0 points

9. **When my child is upset and crying, it is difficult to comfort him or her.**
   - Agree=0 points
   - Disagree=1 point

10. **My child is able to make and maintain friendships well.**
    - Agree=1 point
    - Disagree= 0 points

11. **My child will throw temper tantrums to get what he or she wants.**
    - Agree=0 points
12. Being active and learning new things are encouraged in our family.
Agree=1 point
Disagree= 0 points

Results

For children, the ability to cope with stress and adversity is dependent on numerous combinations of genetics, environment and learning. Total your score. If your child’s score is:

9-12 points: The score on this questionnaire suggests that your child feels secure, has learned how to have positive relationships and can act independently when necessary. These characteristics are highly correlated with resilient children. During times of adversity these children generally have a healthy sense that things will work out. Consequently, they are more likely to maintain their normal level of functioning during hard times.

6-8 points: Feeling secure, the ability to develop positive relationships, and autonomy are characteristics often found in resilient children. The score on this questionnaire suggests that your child has some of these characteristics but is lacking in others. How well he or she will fare under specific stressors or adversity may depend on the environment and how the significant adults in his or her life respond.

0-5 points: Feeling secure, the ability to develop positive relationships, and autonomy are characteristics often found in resilient children. The score on this questionnaire suggests that few of these characteristics are currently present. How well your child will fare under specific stressors or adversity may depend a great deal on the environment and how the significant adults in his or her life respond.

Sources:


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