

# Raising a Resilient Elementary Schooler

Resilient children  
are better able to  
handle life's ups  
and downs.

A new school year can bring on new challenges. Your child is adjusting to new teachers, a new classroom, a new schedule and new friends—which can be both exciting and overwhelming at the same time! How children deal with challenges depends on their resilience. With your help, your child can develop tools to manage and cope with her emotions. Here are some tips to help your elementary age child build resilience and get her school year off to a great start.

## Dealing with school anxiety

What might seem like a small problem to you may be overwhelming for your child. Here are some communication tips to help support your child.

Communication Strategy	Say This	Avoid This
<b>Avoid minimizing feelings.</b> Even if you don't agree with how your child is feeling, those feelings are still very real to her.	"I know it's hard when you're learning a new math concept!"	"You'll be fine. You're good at math."
<b>Model healthy coping skills.</b> Model positive ways you handle stress and involve your child in practicing healthy coping skills.	"I've had a difficult day at work. I know you had a big project today too! Want to join me on a walk to relax?"	"I need you and your brother to stop whining about your day."
<b>Keep your cool.</b> Be careful not to pass along any anxiety you have about your child's experiences.	"I am so excited that you are making new friends with your classmates!"	"You aren't going to know anyone in your new classroom! I hope you can find a friend."

# Fun ways to get your child to talk about his day

Ask specific, open-ended questions about school.

“ Tell me the funniest thing that happened today! ”

“ Who did you eat lunch with today? ”

“ What was the hardest thing you had to do today? ”


## Getting rest to be your best

Getting enough sleep helps your child's brain recharge and can improve his attention span, memory and mood.

- ✓ Set a bedtime based on wake-up time. Use the age guidelines below to determine how much sleep your child needs and set a bedtime that allows him to get the right amount.
- ✓ Follow a routine. A consistent, structured bedtime routine signals to your child's brain and body that it's time to sleep. Prepare for the morning by working together to pack backpacks, prepare lunches and talk about plans for the next day.
- ✓ Power down 1 hour before bed. Bedrooms should be a screen-free zone (no TV, tablets, gaming systems or phones), and it's important to avoid screens before bedtime. The blue light from screens affects the ability to fall (and stay) asleep.

### Testing Corner

Create strong routines and study habits now to build your child's test-taking skills. Hang a family calendar where all family members can see it, so everyone can be aware of what projects, deadlines and tests are on the horizon. This will help everyone prioritize tasks and stay organized.

 **Sleep** Children age 5 typically need 10 to 13 hours of sleep in a 24-hour period. Children ages 6 to 12 typically need 9 to 12 hours of sleep in a 24-hour period.

## Be your child's cheerleader

Even though your child spends a lot of her time at school, you still know her best.

- Avoid waiting until there is a problem before you talk to someone at your child's school.
- Frequently check in with your child's teacher and be open and honest about your child's strengths and needs.
- If your child is facing challenges outside of school, let the staff know what is going on and that she may need extra support throughout the day.