EmberHope YOUTHVILLE

Find Your Fit. Ignite Your Passion. Change a Life.

At EmberHope Youthville, our dedication lies in nurturing resilience within every young individual we serve - whether a child or teen. This ability to rebound from challenging situations equips our youth to navigate an imperfect world while moving forward with optimism and confidence.

The 7 C's of resilience advise and shape our resilience framework. Please reflect on these principles as a benchmark for the nurturing environment you're creating. It is also a mirror to recognize your achievements and areas for growth. Celebrate your triumphs and the meaningful change you make in our youth by adopting a trauma-responsive and resilience-focused approach to care.

Foster families play a crucial role in nurturing competence in youth. Know when to intervene and when to step back. Balancing involvement and independence is integral to helping foster youth become competent, confident individuals.

Competence – *Handle Situations Successfully.*

- **Step Back When Necessary:** Allowing youth to solve problems on their own fosters a sense of self-reliance and self-worth.
  - Step aside when it's appropriate—guide youth to think through situations wisely and safely.
- **Encourage Play:** Play is essential for development. Offer chances for youth to learn social skills and self-advocacy through free play.
  - Allow plenty of free, individual-driven playtime. Undirected play allows them to learn how to work in groups, share, negotiate, and advocate for themselves.
- **Communicate Effectively:** Positive reinforcement enhances competence, while constructive criticism boosts learning and growth. Communicate in ways to empower rather than lecture. Promote autonomy and understanding.
  - New skills and abilities are reinforced when you notice and praise them.
  - When criticism is offered as constructive, compassionate and targeted feedback, it can enhance growing competence. The best constructive criticism is aimed at helping to improve negative behaviors and is given in a kind and encouraging manner.
- **Promote Real-World Skills:** Beyond academic or extracurricular achievements, foster families should nurture resilience, creativity, and practical skills like anger management and stress reduction. Help build authentic skills to make them competent in the real world.
  - Skills: Communication, educational & study, interviewing & work, independent-living (cooking, cleaning, budgeting), social, coping (anger management and stress-reduction)
- **Encourage Critical Thinking:** Teach youth to approach problems realistically, which boosts confidence and competence.
- **Cultivate Media Literacy:** Assist youth in understanding and critiquing media messages—aids in forming independent opinions and a healthy self-image.
  - Youth need to be able to sift through media-driven messages so they can be in control of their own opinions and self-image.
  - Prepare youth to be media literate so they can properly understand, interpret, and reject media messages.

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- **Communication:** Do we convey information in a format that resonates with their level of understanding? *(i.e. Do we, "meet them where they are?")* Do our communication methods empower youth to make decisions independently? Do we avoid a lecturing tone? When we lecture, we can diminish a youth's self-efficacy *(i.e. their confidence in their ability to exert control over their own motivation, behavior, and social environment).*

Confidence – *Believe in Your Abilities.*

- Actively highlight youth's strengths. Give praise often to reinforce their sense of contribution. Celebrate small successes.
- Guide them in recognizing their genuine survival skills.
- Urge them to push their boundaries. Let them know you believe in their potential.

Connection – *Build Secure Ties With Each Other.*

- Be mindful of how we step into the lives of youth. Earn their trust rather than assuming it.
- Actively promote self-esteem among young people. Celebrate their cultural, religious, and ethnic identities.
- Know that stable family attachments may be absent in the lives of our most vulnerable youth. Doing so heightens our significant role as consistent and compassionate adults.

Character – *Identify Between Right and Wrong.*

- Provide avenues for them to identify and understand their own moral compass.
- Create space for them to ponder over matters of right and wrong beyond their immediate desires.
- Assist them in comprehending the impact of their actions on others.

Contribution – *Make a Positive Impact.*

- Convey our confidence in the youth's potential and establish channels for them to make meaningful contributions.
- Communicate and value the importance of serving others.
- Support our youth in realizing their experiences with adversity uniquely equips them to lead others toward betterment.

Coping – *Positively Manage Your Stress.*

- Acknowledge youth often engage in risky behaviors to alleviate stress or pain. Guide them toward positive coping mechanisms.
- Assist youth in recognizing when they're overthinking problems. Encourage realistic evaluations and expectations.
- Foster an environment where they feel comfortable expressing themselves. Ensure they can talk, write, or play music in a safe, constructive setting.

Control – *Control Your Actions. Take Responsibility.*

- Help youth recognize they're not to blame for their tough situations. In building trauma-responsive practices, acknowledge restoring a sense of control. This is crucial for their healing.
- Teach that positive choices can change our outcomes even if we can't control everything.
- Help youth set goals. Identify the small steps needed to accomplish their long-term goals. Empower youth to accomplish their goals by providing assistance when needed.
- Focus on teaching rather than punishment. Help them see actions have consequences.

From Building Resilience in Children and Teens; Giving Kids Roots and Wings by Kenneth R. Ginsburg, MD, MS ED, FAAP with Martha M. Jablow.