



Activities to Promote Resilience in Toddlers

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Focusing on the protective factor of Self-Regulation

Self-Regulation is a child's ability to gain control of bodily functions, manage powerful emotions, and maintain focus and attention (*Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000*). Here are three ways that parents and families can help their toddler build this protective factor.

1

Accept mistakes.

Children make mistakes. Adults make mistakes. It is how we all learn and grow! Talk through mistakes with children. Example: *"Andrew, you pulled yourself up and plopped back down. Let's try again!"* Example: *"Paula, your juice spilled. Let's get some paper towels to wipe it up."*

2

Offer calm guidance.

Remain calm and supportive during your toddler's struggles with independence. Example: *"Karina, you want to take your animals for a ride in the wagon. We need to keep the wagon on the sidewalk."* Then, comment when your toddler follows limits: *"Karina, you remembered to keep the wagon on the sidewalk when you walked your animals. Thank you!"*

3

Watch, wonder and respond.

Listen and watch for the ways your child tells you he is hungry, bored, wet and so on. This will help you know how to respond. Example: *"Oh, Joshua, you sound tired. Let me hold you for a while."* As your child grows, he will learn to notice the signs himself and will be able to get a snack, engage in a fun activity, or go to sleep when he is tired.

**Want to learn more about building the resilience of young children?
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