

# Resilience for Life



Building Strong Mothers & Strong Sons  
Across the Bridge of Adolescence

*Anne Murray M.Ed., A.T.C.*

# Inspiration

“The central issue in the lives of adolescent boys seems to be how to get mothers off the bridge and fathers onto it. ....the challenge for mothers is to let go the hands of their beloved sons and to allow them to walk onto the bridge at their own pace and in the company of other males.”

Celia Lashlie

He'll Be Ok: Growing Gorgeous Boys into Good Men, page 144

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What would make this  
workshop a success for you?

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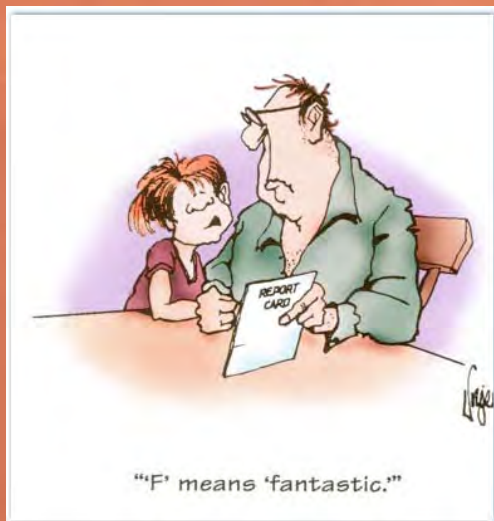
# Topics to Share

- Rationale for implementing programme
- Background of programme
- Research on resilience
- Experiential activities
- Evaluation
- Q and A

# Resiliency is...

“... an ability to spring back and adapt to life’s challenges

... an attitude of hope and optimism.”



Wayne Hammond, Ph.D.  
Resiliency Canada/Initiatives

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# Resilience

“...embraces the ability of a child to deal more effectively with stress and pressure, to cope with everyday challenges, to bounce back from disappointments, adversity and trauma, to develop clear and realistic goals, to solve problems, to relate comfortably with others and to treat oneself and others with respect.”

Robert Brooks and Sam Goldstein

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# Intention of Programme

- Raise awareness in mothers of values, strengths, and how they want to 'be' with their son
- Develop skills for son's transitions with decision making, choices, and relationships
- Develop strategies for being with their adolescent
- Provide place for boy, school and home to work together
- Build a community of support for mothers

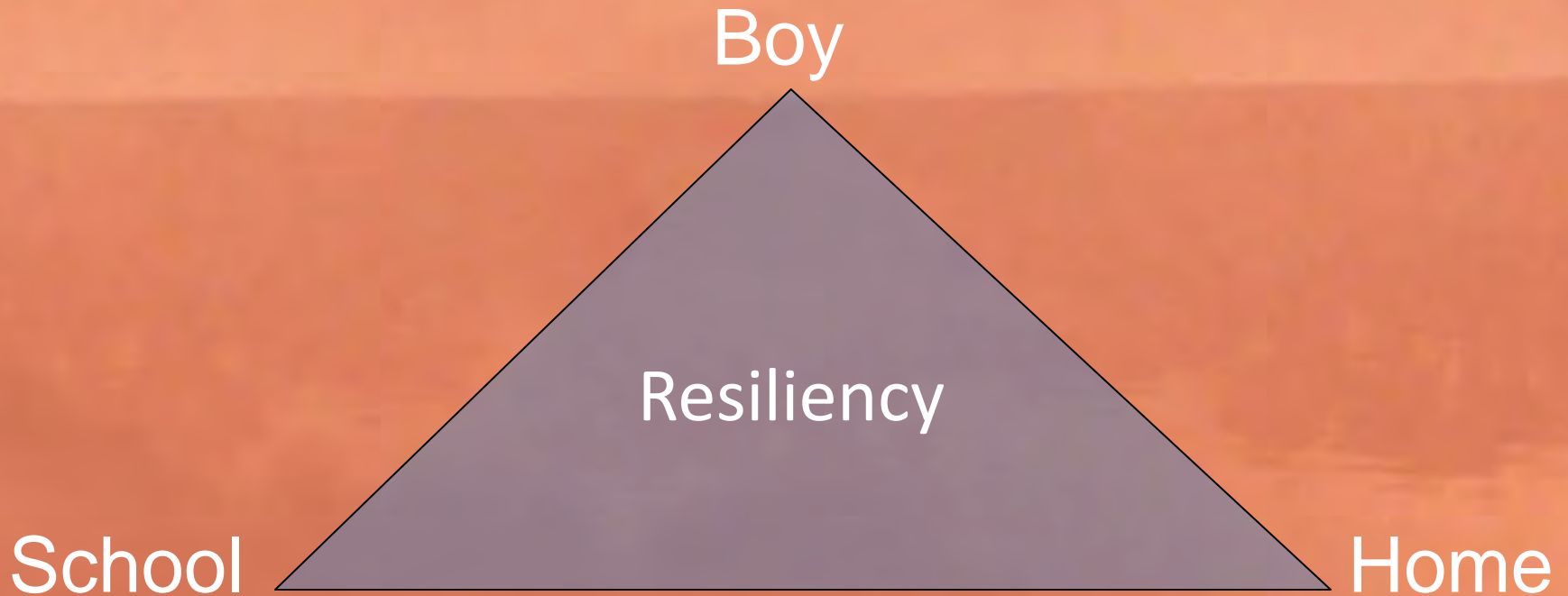
# Reasons for Schools to Implement

- Develop whole boy
- Develop partnership with parents
- Support adolescence as time of 'letting go'
- Build trust in school and support for school strategies
- Reinforce adversity as important learning





# Alignment for the Whole Boy



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# Outline

## **Session 1**

Ourselves as Mothers -values, strengths, goals

## **Session 2**

Building Strong Sons – developmental tasks,  
supporting them through the transition

## **Session 3**

Crossing the Bridge Together

# Session One

# Ourselves as Mothers

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# Reflection

Take a moment to reflect on a time when things were going really well for you and your son (at any age).

What was happening, who was there, what made it so special?

# In Dyads

- Identify 2-3 words that best capture what was important in it.
- Take one word from it that is most meaningful to you.



# Strengths

- Reflect on a time when you were challenged.
- What got you through this time?
- What strengths did you draw upon?
- Identify the word on *Personal Resiliency Builders* handout.



# Homework (optional)

- Wear an elastic and snap each time you are using your strengths to get you through or are living your value.

OR

- Identify a goal for yourself of what you want to start/stop/continue in your life as mother.

# Session Two

## Building Strong Sons

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# Goals of Adolescent

- Adapt to the physical and emotional changes of puberty
- Transform his relationships with his parents
- Move out into his wider social circle
- Begin to integrate his feelings of lust and his need for relationship and intimacy
- Create a new identity that can take him into manhood

It's A Boy, page 241

Michael Thompson Ph.D.

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# Principles of Strength Based Practice

- Establish a relationship based upon validation and trust
- Listen to his story and validate his challenges
- Look for and identify strengths
- Ask questions about survival, support, positive times, interests, dreams and goals

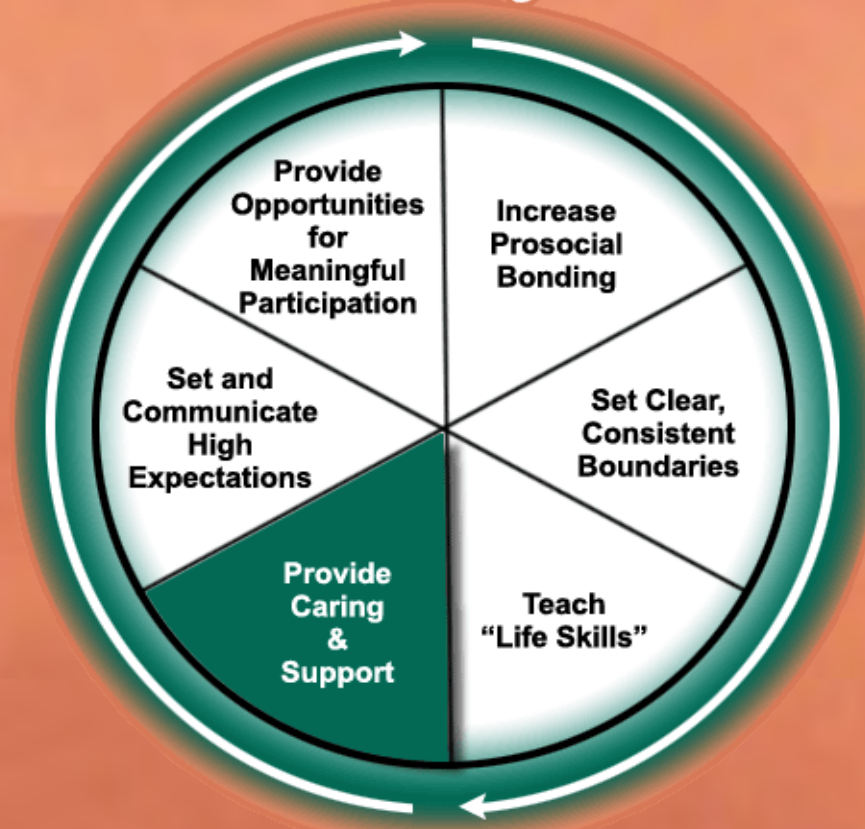
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## The Resiliency Wheel



*Adapted from the book **Resiliency in Schools: Making it Happen for Students and Educators** by Nan Henderson and Mike Milstein, published by Corvin Press, Thousand Oaks, CA (1996)*

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# Session Three

## Crossing the Bridge Together

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**If we want to change the  
situation, we first have to change  
ourselves.”**

Stephen Covey

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# Learner – Judger Model

- Tool for awareness
- Judger and learner are part of all of us
- Always a choice about mindset
- Shifting is possible- but not always easy

Marilee Goldberg

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# Resilient Mindset

## Learner

- What's right?
- What am I responsible for?
- What are my choices?
- What's useful about this?
- What can I learn?
- What's possible?

## Judger

- What's wrong?
- Whose fault is it?
- How can I stay in control?
- How could I lose?
- How could I get hurt?
- Why bother?

Marilee Goldberg

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# Shifting Mindset

- **Be aware**

Ask am I a Judger? Is that where I want to be?  
Will this get me the results I want?

- **Explore choices**

Where would I rather be? How can I get there?  
How else can I think about this? What is my choice right now?

- **Commit to your choice and act on it.**





# Activity

Think of a challenging situation with your son.

What is your mindset?

What might be possible if you shifted your mindset?

During a time of adversity for your son (e.g.; not on team, forgot homework, not invited to friends, etc.) what would be the impact on him if you said:

**“That’s too bad – how can you fix it?”**

**“That’s too bad- let me fix it?”**

What would be the impact on you?

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# Resiliency Approach

- Paying attention to what works
- Focuses on what is important
- Process and relationship oriented
- Partnering in order to help youth identify and use their own strengths and resources to overcome obstacles and live empowered lives

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# What are Mothers Taking Away?

- Better sense of who I am. How to deal with situations that occur.
- Affirmation for a lot of my own behaviours with relation to parenting, I was unsure of.
- Analyzing ourselves helps to understand how we decide things or deal with situation.
- The Resilience Wheel, a very useful tool to orient us as parents.
- New skills, topics to discuss over dinner with the family. Importance of working as a team.



# What are Mothers Taking Away?

- Lots!
- Strategies to help children stand up after a fall
- Insight into the changes in boys during adolescence
- Confidence and new ideas
- How to be stronger, consistent, caring and compassionate mom
- How to let our boys be who they are
- New strategies, new parenting goals, new ideas, perspectives



# Handouts on IBSC website

- Booklist
- Learner-Judger Model
- Guideposts for Resilience
- When Children Turn into Cats
- The Resiliency Quiz
- Resiliency and Teen article
- 10 Ways to Build Resilience



# Websites

[www.resiliency.com](http://www.resiliency.com) Site for Resilience in Action organization and source of many valuable articles.

[www.resiliencyinitiatives.ca](http://www.resiliencyinitiatives.ca) Canadian organization that provides model, and resources.

[www.authentichappiness.org](http://www.authentichappiness.org) This is a tool to help you identify your signature strengths which are values in action. Also available for children and youth.

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