



The Resilience Tree

24 Ways to Resilience

For infants, children and youth exposed to intimate partner violence (IPV)

Each year, close to a million children in Canada are exposed to IPV.¹ This experience can set children down a difficult path, causing trauma and affecting development.² But no two children respond the same way. This is where resilience comes in.

What is resilience?

Resilience is a process of navigating through adversity using internal and external resources (personal qualities, relationships, community and culture) to support healthy adaptation, recovery, and successful outcomes over the life course.

As a process, resilience is not something children have or don't have. Check out the Resilience Tree with 24 ways to resilience. A child doesn't need them all and many can be fostered.

Every child can be supported to navigate through the adversity of IPV exposure.



Safe, non-violent, nurturing families and communities are the bedrock of healthy child development.

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Child's Qualities

Although some of these qualities are fairly stable, many can be learned, supported or strengthened.

- 1 Easy temperament, agreeable
- 2 Socially competent
- 3 Self-confident, independent
- 4 Intelligent, academically successful
- 5 Emotionally regulated, self-controlled
- 6 Positive, optimistic
- 7 Motivated, goal focused
- 8 Good problem solver, resourceful
- 9 Skills, talents, humour
- 10 Can retreat and distract self—sports, reading
- 11 Accurately assigns abuse responsibility
- 12 Committed to breaking cycle of violence

Child's Relationships

Relationships, inside and outside the family, old and new, can be encouraged and fostered.

- 13 Close to one safe person (e.g. parent, sibling, teacher)
- 14 Protective mother with warmth, sensitivity, good mental health
- 15 In-home social network
- 16 Peer support

Child's Context and Culture

Family, culture, school and community offer pathways for connectedness, opportunities, skill development, and more.

- 17 Family cohesion
- 18 School connectedness
- 19 Social cohesion
- 20 Safe haven, accessible community resources
- 21 Educated mother with stable employment
- 22 Exit options—post-secondary education
- 23 Connection to spirituality, faith
- 24 Inter-cultural exposure, influence

This Fact Sheet is for professionals working with children and families coping with IPV.

Brought to you by Make Resilience Matter, a research project led by Ramona Aloggia, PhD., Factor-Inwentash Chair in Children's Mental Health, Faculty of Social Work, University of Toronto, Canada. We develop and share knowledge to support children and families in the aftermath of IPV. Contact: ramona.aloggia@utoronto.ca

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¹ Sinha, 2010

² Fallon et al, 2015

