



In sickness and in health™

Building Resiliency Across the Lifespan: Considerations and Implications for Schools

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What is Resilience?

According to Psychology Today,

- *Resilience is that ineffable quality that allows some people to be knocked down by life and come back stronger than ever. Rather than letting failure overcome them and drain their resolve, they find a way to rise from the ashes.*

Distress Tolerance

- Lack of crisis survival strategies
- Underdeveloped skills to manage feelings such as disappointment, anger, and sadness
- Difficulty applying coping strategies to stressors

Emotional Regulation

- Difficulty managing emotions
- Lack of self soothing techniques
- Poor impulse control

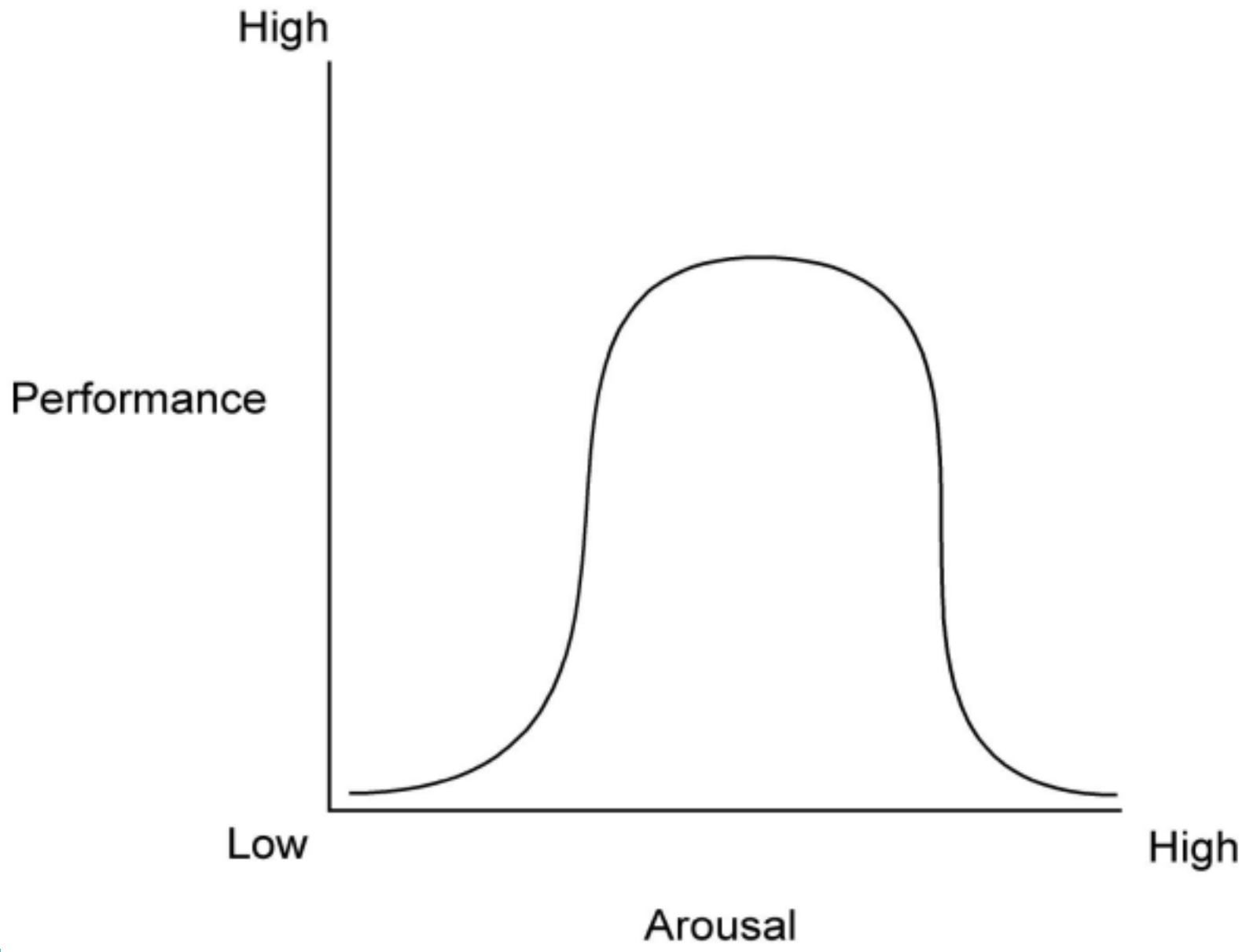
What is Anxiety?

Normal, natural, built in through evolutionary processes

Response to the perception of future threat or danger

We need this to prepare for future potential difficulties

Some anxiety is actually good for performance
(Yerkees-Dobson)



Anxiety Disorders are:

Highly prevalent (most common class of mental disorder)

Real & potentially disabling

Found in all groups of people

Under-recognized & under-treated

Variable in presentation

Treatable

Factors that Contribute to Anxiety

Difficulties with...

- Managing feelings of discomfort
- Experiencing disappointment
- Applying conflict resolution skills
- Communicating needs effectively to school staff

Common Negative Thoughts

Severity

- It will be the worst thing in the world and I will die

Probability

- It will definitely happen, no question

Efficacy

- I will not be able to handle it

What Heightens Anxiety

Avoidance

Reassurance seeking

Distraction

Stressors in School- Why Developing Resilience Is Key

Bullying

Peer Pressure

Academic Pressure

Culture of Perfectionism

Conflict at Home

Adjusting to New Schedules/Teachers

****Resilience is about Behaviors, Thoughts, and Actions****

Developing Resilience in School

Definition: the ability to adapt well to adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats, or even stress

It is learned and dependent on bond with a caring adult who models, teaches and reinforces skills to deal with life's ups and downs

It can be taught at school and at home!

Developing Resilience in School

Resiliency does not mean kids will not experience difficulty or distress

Challenge is to protect our kids and give them unconditional love but not exacerbate their stress or fear

Tips for Fostering Resiliency

1. Make Connections- join clubs and organizations
2. Volunteer- not just because you have to!
3. Maintain a Daily Routine outside of school
4. Take a Break
5. Teach Self-Care
6. Set Realistic, Reasonable Goals
7. Nurture Positive Self-Esteem
8. Keep Things in Perspective

Tips for Fostering Resiliency

9. Look for examples of resiliency via past experiences

10. Change is inevitable

****Talk but also listen! Seek professional help if needed****

Resource: Resilience Guide for Parents and Teachers
([APA.org](https://www.apa.org))

What Schools Can Do to Foster Resilience

Individual Behaviors, Attitudes, Competencies- promote physical health and social emotional health

Family, School, Community Support- foster a sense of belonging, positive parent/teacher/student relationships

Nurture Positive Qualities in Students

What Schools Can Do to Foster Resilience

Notice/Reinforce Qualities of Resilience

Avoid focusing on failure or negative behaviors

Teach by example and set expectations

Teach reflection/empathy/compassion/social justice

Foster feelings of competence and self-efficacy

Resource: www.childtrends.org

What Schools Can Do to Foster Resilience

Academic Efficacy- provide support and frequent feedback

Behavioral Self-Control- provide clear rules for students and structure

Academic Self-Determination- focus on individual strengths and foster autonomy

Promote positive relationships between students/teachers/parents

Resource: www.cmhnetwork.org

Verbal Communication

- Provide child with choices
- Language such as “It is your choice” vs. “You have to”
- “What do you think you could do” vs. “you’ll be ok”
- Look for teaching opportunities that work towards goal attainment
- Use language that is purposeful
- Less is more

Further Suggestions

- Work with parents to set goals for their child based on family values
- Goals should be both long and short term
- Goals should be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timely (SMART)
- The expectations should be clear and consistent
- Avoid power struggles

Contact Us....

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