

There are important skills that our children need to learn and schools play a major role in teaching many of them. Any parent who has tried to teach their child math or literature knows that it is better taught by a professional math or English teacher than by a parent who “used to understand it pretty well”. But there are also lessons that can be taught by parents only.

Resilience and optimism are as important as any skill developed at school. However, it is only at home that children develop these personal strengths. Here are some thoughts:

- We teach resilience and optimism by our model, not by our sermons.
- Our children will know if we are resilient and optimistic by how we handle the small disappointments of everyday life.
- Do we inadvertently teach them that the only times to feel good are when absolutely everything is going exactly the way we want it to go?
- When we talk about our day, is it possible that we sound like we are whining about the less than perfect parts of the day?
- It is therefore a great opportunity when our days don't go smoothly because it is on those days when we can best model resilience and optimism.

Since we cannot guarantee our children the smooth road that we wish for them, it is comforting to know that we can help them develop the skills they will need for the times when their road is rocky.