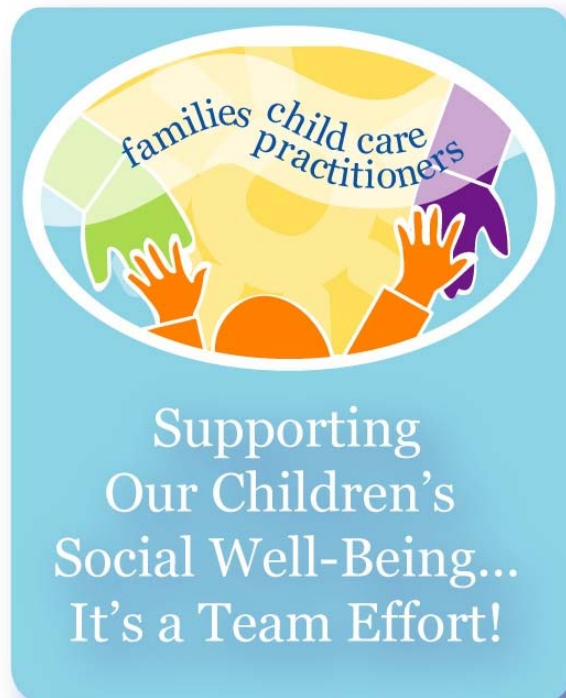


Workshop: Preparing Children to Meet Challenges



Produced by the *Canadian Child Care Federation*



CANADIAN
CHILD CARE
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**Free full-colour posters
to everyone who hosts a workshop
and submits evaluation forms**

Return forms by fax or mail to:
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Ottawa, ON K1Y 4R4
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Facilitator's Information

Focus

Ways that families and child care practitioners can work together to enhance children's resilience and problem-solving skills.

Learning objectives

- Understanding what is meant by "resilience"
- Exploring strategies to build young children's self-confidence, emotional awareness and creativity through play
- Strengthening empathy and accurate thinking skills in preschoolers
- Demonstrating a problem-solving approach in the parent-practitioner partnership
- Being a resilient adult

The following workshop outline suggests one way to achieve the learning objectives listed above. It is designed to be delivered to a **mixed group** of practitioners and parents (or other family members) in about **1½ hours**. Feel free to adapt it to the group and to the time period you have available. Whatever combination you choose, always begin with the bouncing ball, which introduces the concept of resilience and also serves as an icebreaker, and finish with the summary and evaluation, which includes further references and future plans.

Overview of the workshop

1. **Introductions** - Introduction of trainer, subject, goal and objectives (*5 minutes*)
2. **What is resilience?** - Game to introduce participants and the concept of resilience, comparing it to a ball that bounces back (*10 minutes*)
3. **Self-confidence** - Short presentation on teaching children their actions have an effect on the environment; discussion with partner about effective toys; group discussion about offering choices and assigning responsibilities (*15 minutes*)
4. **Awareness and control of emotions** - A series of structured activities in

the large group to demonstrate and practise songs and games for encouraging the awareness of emotions, controlling impulses and calming oneself *(20 minutes)*

5. **Creativity and flexibility** - Craft activity in small groups to demonstrate the importance of process over product *(10 minutes)*
6. **Problem solving skills** - Stories, books and puppet plays to help children develop empathy and accurate and flexible thinking habits *(15 minutes)*
7. **Resilience in partnerships** - Stories about practitioners and families using empathy and accurate thinking skills to solve problems together *(5 minutes)*
8. **Resilience in caregivers** - Demonstration of how to model skills by talking out loud; discussion of the importance of adults looking after themselves and seeking help when needed *(5 minutes)*
9. **Summary, additional resources, future plans, and evaluation** *(5 minutes)*

Materials

- copies of all handouts for each participant
- workshop feedback forms
- flip charts, transparencies or PowerPoint presentation of focus and learning objectives
- two tennis balls, one new one and one wrapped up in sticky tape so that it doesn't bounce well (section 2)
- words to the songs you choose to sing (section 4 (a) and (c))
- playdough and an assortment of "loose parts" (popsicle sticks, small boxes, feathers, straws, paper clips, etc.), materials for the activity about "process, not product" in section 5
- copies of any additional handouts you wish to use from the online resources listed in handout 4.

List of handouts

- What Is Resilience?
- Fostering Self-Confidence
- Awareness and Control of Emotions
- Sources and Further Resources



The Workshop

1. Introductions (5 minutes)

Introduce yourself and show a flip chart, transparency or PowerPoint slide on which you have written the **focus and learning objectives** for the workshop. Read them aloud for participants. If you are using a flip chart, leave it posted on the wall for the rest of the workshop to remind participants of what they have come to accomplish. You will come back to the focus and objectives at the end when you summarize what you have covered.

2. What is resilience? (10 minutes)

Participants will play a game with a tennis ball to introduce themselves to one another and to present the concept of resilience. Tell participants they will pass the ball around the group and when the ball comes to them, they will state their name and the ages of their children (if they are a parent) or the ages of the children they care for (if they are practitioners). Before they pass the ball to the next person, they will add, "And when I drop my ball, it bounces back." They will bounce it once, then hand it on to the next person. Point out that the game is about bouncing, not catching, so if they miss the ball, they can just pick it up from where it has rolled to and pass it on. Demonstrate what you want them to do and hand the ball to the person beside you. When the ball comes back to you, take the other tennis ball, which you have covered in sticky tape. Repeat your name and try to bounce this ball. Follow your name with, "And when I drop my ball, it has trouble bouncing back!"

Use this activity to introduce a definition of resilience: the **ability to "bounce back" when things go wrong**. Some people are like the first ball, able to carry on, even when they meet difficulties. Other people are like the second ball and can't seem to recover when things go badly. The ability to continue on in spite of setbacks is called "resilience." We all have resilience in us; it just needs to be developed. Parents and child care practitioners play a large role in helping children learn the skills that will develop their resilience. Life brings challenges to everyone, but resilience helps people take the attitude, "If life gives me lemons, I'll learn to make lemonade."

Explain that research shows that children who are able to develop their resilience have a **warm, nurturing relationship** with at least one person who believes in their ability to succeed. The security of such a relationship allows children to learn the attitudes and skills that will help them “bounce back” like the new tennis ball. The main ways that children learn to cope with challenges is **through play and by watching others model resilience in their daily interactions.**

This workshop will concentrate on how parents and practitioners can work together to provide play activities and demonstrations that will build some of these attitudes and skills in children:

- **self-confidence**
- **emotional awareness and control**
- **flexibility**
- **empathy**
- **accurate thinking**

Taken together, these are important factors in helping children become **good problem solvers**, a key to being able to meet challenges. The time to lay down this foundation starts when babies are very young. Later, when they are about four, they can use the foundation to start solving their own simple problems. Point out that parents and other caregivers play an essential part by providing the **sense of security** necessary to support children's development of resilience. They can also actively foster the skills that will make children successful adults who can “bounce back” from stressful times.

Distribute **handout 1**, which summarizes the definition of resilience and the factors which contribute to it.

3. Self-Confidence (15 minutes)

Take the two tennis balls, one in each hand, and bounce them both. The one without the tape will bounce higher and longer. Tell participants that people who believe that they can make things happen are like that tennis ball. Because they believe they can influence how a situation will turn out, they find it easier to bounce back and keep on going in the face of obstacles. Present the idea that babies learn that **their actions have an effect on their environment** when they cry and someone responds, when they smile and someone smiles back. Interactions with caring adults

are the first step in giving babies a sense of confidence in their ability to make things happen. This "I-can-do-it" attitude is also called a **sense of efficacy or agency**.

Children also learn this life lesson through their interaction with things in their environment. Ask participants to choose a partner and talk about toys they give to babies and toddlers that allow children to see the effect of their actions. Give an example to start their discussion, for instance, a baby activity centre where the baby hits a lever and a bell rings. After a short time, ask them to think of toys that have a similar effect for children aged two to four. Give the partners a few minutes to do this activity, then bring the whole group back to share ideas. Distribute **handout 2**. Encourage participants to add to it any ideas they hear that they would like to try out in their own home or child care setting.

Children also develop confidence in their ability to influence what happens when they are given opportunities to make **choices**. Adults should offer a choice between two equally acceptable possibilities. More than two possibilities can be confusing to young children. Ask participants to give you some examples of choices they might offer to different ages of children. Choose the age ranges depending on the ages of the children that participants live or work with. Emphasize that the choice must be a real one and that the adult must be ready to act on the child's decision. "Do you want to take a nap now?" is probably not an appropriate choice to offer to children, but "Do you want to go to take your teddy bear or your doll to nap with you?" would work. "Do you want to leave the park now or shall I just leave you here?" is a threat, not a real choice, and in any case, it cannot be carried through. Give participants a moment to note on handout 2 any choices they would like to offer children in their home or child care setting.

Children also learn that their actions make a difference when they are given **meaningful tasks** to do. They gain confidence in their own abilities when they are given opportunities to make a contribution to the well-being of their family and their child care group. Ask participants to tell you what jobs they might give to a three-year-old. Note their answers on a flip chart. Practitioners tend to give young children more responsibilities. Parents may be surprised by what three year olds can do, either on their own or with help and guidance. If we don't give children the opportunity to take responsibility for age-appropriate tasks, we could be giving them a subtle negative message such as, "I don't think you can do this, so don't even try." Instead, we can show our confidence in children's abilities by asking them to contribute and take responsibility. This will help them gain the self-

confidence they need to respond to challenges with a resilient attitude. Give time for participants to make notes about assigning responsibilities on handout 2..

Remind participants that tasks need to be adjusted to a child's developmental level: they should be hard enough to evoke pride when the child succeeds, but not so hard that he or she is bound to fail. Frequent communication between parents and practitioners will help everyone to set realistic expectations.

4. Awareness and control of emotions (20 minutes)

Repeat the demonstration of how the two tennis balls bounce. Tell participants that one reason people may get stuck, like the ball with the tape, is that they get overwhelmed by their emotions. The next section of the workshop presents some techniques parents and practitioners can use to help children deal with their emotions.

a) **Words for feelings (5 minutes)**- Becoming aware of feelings is an important part of controlling emotions that could block our resilience. Just as we name objects for babies and children who are learning to talk, we can **name feelings**: sad, happy, frustrated, afraid, excited.... This is best done in everyday situations, for instance, "You are disappointed because you wanted to go out to play and now it's raining." Gradually, children will learn to recognize and name their own feelings. This is the first step to understanding their own and other's feelings. Another way to teach words for feelings is in a song. Invite participants to join you in singing the **song** "If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands." Ask them to suggest other feelings and other gestures, and sing a few verses. Thank everyone for their suggestions, even if you don't have time to sing them all.

You can take advantage of this activity to reinforce the message from the previous section of this workshop. Ask people how they felt about having the group sing the verse they suggested. Did they like having their idea accepted? Did it feel good to contribute?

b) **Separation anxiety (5 minutes)**- Especially when they begin child care, young children often feel anxious about being left with a new person. Recognizing and naming this feeling for the child will make it easier for them calm down enough to "bounce back" and participate in activities. Both parents and practitioners can play games that help children deal with their feelings by teaching that separation is

temporary and the parents will return. **Peek-a-boo** and **hide-and-seek** are two classic games that do this. Ask participants what other strategies they use to help children deal with separation.

If you have participants from a **variety of cultures** who speak other languages with their children, encourage them to find games and songs from their own traditions that correspond to those suggested here. For instance, parents in many, many cultures play peek-a-boo with their baby, but they say a different word when they appear again. Practitioners can strengthen the connections between home and the child care setting by learning words and games from the child's home culture. Children's self-esteem is also enhanced when their cultural roots are validated.

c) Controlling impulses (5 minutes) - When we are faced with difficult circumstances, we often become overwhelmed by strong feelings and act on our impulses. These impulses are not always the best solutions for "bouncing back." For instance, if you are three years old and another child in your child care is always taking toys away from you, you may become angry and start hitting the other child. This will likely make the situation worse. Controlling our impulses means we are able to stop to think before we act. In order to think clearly enough to use a better strategy, you need to be able to calm down and control your impulse to hit. Impulse control can be challenging for children to develop. As with many social skills, the best way for children to practise their impulse control is through play. For example, freeze tag is a game that requires children to learn to stop running when they are touched. There are also **singing games** that give children practice with waiting, starting, and stopping. One such song is "Sleeping Bunnies." Invite participants to sing this song and do the gestures with you. This song is a favourite with toddlers and preschoolers, but it can also be used with babies in an adult's arms. It has been used in play therapy with older children who have difficulty controlling their impulses. (See reference section for words and actions to this song.)

d) Calming (5 minutes) - Controlling impulses and calming down go hand in hand to help children "bounce back." Taking a few **deep breaths** is often all it takes to bring clear thinking techniques to the fore. Ask participants to imagine that they have a big balloon in their hand. They will put their hand in front of their mouth

and blow into their imaginary balloon to inflate it. Encourage them to empty their lungs then squeeze their hand closed to keep the air in the balloon while they fill their lungs with air. Get them to relax their hand while they again blow into the balloon, squeezing all the air out of their lungs. Repeat this three times and then have them tie an imaginary knot in their balloon and let it float away. Ask participants if they feel any differently after this simple breathing exercise. Deep breathing has an effect on many processes in the body and can also affect a person's mental state. Tell participants that this activity should be taught to children in a calm moment. Then it can be used any time they need to slow things down and lower the level of excitement. If the child is angry, they can suggest that the child is filling the balloon with angry feelings, and then releasing them to float away so they can deal with the cause of their anger more calmly.

Distribute **handout 3** and invite participants to add their own ideas on the lines provided. Sum up this section by repeating that learning to recognize and manage emotions is an essential skill that will help children "bounce back" like the new tennis ball. Solutions to problems come more easily when we are able to both control our impulses and keep calm in stressful situations. Parents and practitioners can cooperate to use the techniques they have practised here to support children's learning.

5. Creativity and flexibility (10 minutes)

Bounce the two tennis balls again. Tell participants that another reason that people get stuck like the ball with the tape is that they can only see their problems from one angle and can only imagine one solution. When that one solution doesn't work, they get discouraged and can't move forward. It takes creativity and flexibility to be able to see different perspectives and many possible solutions. Children can develop these characteristics when they do **craft activities** that are oriented to the process of discovery, rather than the production of a particular product. Ask participants to break into small groups of three or four. Give each group some playdough and an assortment of "**loose parts**" (popsicle sticks, small boxes, feathers, straws, paper clips, etc.). Explain that "loose parts" are things that can be put together in different ways. Ask each group to assemble their "loose parts" in whatever way they want to. Give participants about five minutes to do this, then ask them to look at what the other groups have done. Of course, all the constructions will look different. The participants will have tried different possibilities before coming up with their "final" product.

Some adults expect that children's craft projects will follow a model and be "pretty." It is important that both parents and practitioners understand the value of playful experimentation in developing children's creativity and flexibility. The results may not be "beautiful," but much learning will have happened along the way.

Point out other examples of "loose parts" that parents and practitioners can provide: equipment like blocks (of all sizes); material like homemade playdough; props like small versions of tools; costumes like capes and hats; bits of "junk" collected in the park. All these allow children to play with ideas and explore possibilities while constructing their own toys. Other materials are listed in the resource sheet "Process, Not Product," referenced in handout 4. Be sure to mention that when doing crafts with children under age 3, "loose parts" must not be choking hazards.

6. Problem solving skills (15 minutes)

Having good problem solving skills will help children to figure out: "When at first I don't bounce back, how can I tackle the difficult situation to get myself going again?" So far, this workshop has covered a number of factors in babies and young children that lay the foundation for being able to solve problems later in life. By the age of four, most children are able to start developing some more advanced emotional and cognitive skills related to problem solving. This section of the workshop will cover two of these: empathy and accurate thinking.

(a) Empathy (5 minutes)- Explain to participants that empathy is the ability to **put yourself in someone else's shoes** and imagine how they are feeling. Before the age of about four, most children have not developed the social and cognitive skills to be able to do this. They cannot see things from someone else's point of view. They will, however, already have learned about empathy from parents and child care practitioners who have demonstrated empathy towards them. This happens when adults have responded to their emotions, given them names for their feelings and helped them to calm themselves.

As children get older, adults can continue to foster the development of empathy by talking about their own and other people's feelings. An easy way to do this is through **reading and storytelling**. Choose any children's book you are familiar with in which the characters' feelings are important to the story. Read an extract from

the book to participants, demonstrating how this might be done with children. Pause from time to time to ask them how they think the characters are feeling. Ask them how they can guess the feelings. Point to possible clues in the illustrations, such as facial expressions and body posture. Emphasize that sometimes this kind of discussion around the story in a book may be more important than getting to the last page every time. In fact, sometimes you don't even have to read the story. Just looking at pictures and imagining how the person in the picture is feeling can be a wonderful way to develop children's empathy.

(b) Accurate thinking (10 minutes)

Ask participants to imagine the following scenario:

You are shopping in the mall. You see a neighbour coming towards you. The day before, you brought her a casserole because her husband hasn't been well. You start to smile to say hello, but the neighbour walks right by you as if you weren't there. You think, "She's pretending she doesn't see me, I guess she didn't like the casserole." How do you feel? Do you want to bring her more food?

Now imagine that you think, "She didn't even see me, she must be really worried about her husband." Now how do you feel? What will you do?

This scenario shows the **link between our thinking, our feelings and our actions**. It is hard to solve problems if we have developed thinking habits that lead us to believe that nothing will ever get better, or that there is nothing we can do about it anyway. Parents and practitioners can help children think about their experience in ways that will help them "bounce back" from potentially negative events.

At their level of cognitive development, young children tend to see things in terms of black and white: something is either all good or all bad. They also live in the moment, so if something is happening now, it will always happen. If something is happening here, it will happen everywhere. For instance, children may think that if one friend doesn't want to play with them now, they will never have anyone to play with...ever! This kind of "always" thinking can become a habit that makes children feel discouraged about their ability to make friends and enjoy activities. Adults can coach children to **check their beliefs against reality**; in fact, many disappointments and setbacks are only temporary. In the example above, just because the friend is busy doing something else right now, that doesn't mean they

will never play together again. With adult support, children can develop more accurate thinking habits and a more positive outlook.

The Reaching In ... Reaching Out program, which promotes resilience in young children includes a **puppet play** about Always/Not always thinking (see references in handout 4). You can use it or tell a similar story with puppets to demonstrate one way to coach children in more accurate thinking.

7. Resilience in partnerships *(5 minutes)*

Bounce the new tennis ball again. Point out that it is not just the characteristics of the ball that determine how it will bounce, but also the nature of the surface that it bounces off of. Just as the ball needs a solid surface, children need a solid sense of security to support them when they encounter difficulties. When **families and child care practitioners work together smoothly**, they provide the **firm foundation** on which children can build their resiliency skills.

The following anecdote, told by a practitioner in a child care centre, illustrates how accurate thinking and empathy can be applied to strengthen the parent-practitioner partnership. Recount it, or a similar one from your own experience, emphasizing how an improved relationship between the significant adults in his life has a positive effect on the child.

I used to be really down on one young mother who started bringing her son late for the program at least four days out of five. Sometimes he'd eaten his breakfast on the bus on the way here, and he was often grumpy and aggressive with the other kids. I figured she just couldn't get up early enough in the morning to get everything done on time. Then I found out that her mother was staying with her after a knee operation that didn't go as well as expected. This young woman was helping her mother bathe and getting her breakfast every morning, as well as getting her son ready. When we found that out, we sat down to talk to her about how we could help her through this difficult time for her and her family. We also paid special attention to her son and talked to him about how he felt about his normal home routine being so changed. It made a big difference when we found out what was really going on. He was much more relaxed in his play and he could cooperate much better with the other children in the program.

Ask participants if they have ever experienced a similar situation when a problem was solved in a child care setting thanks to more information and better mutual understanding.

8. Resilience in caregivers (5 minutes)

This workshop has concentrated on how children's **play activities** provide opportunities to learn and practise attitudes and skills related to resilience. Point out to participants that children are also keen observers and imitators. Children as young as two or three may already take on the thinking styles of the adults around them. It is therefore very important that they see the **skills of emotional control, empathy and accurate thinking being demonstrated by their parents and child care practitioners.**

Give participants a demonstration of how talking to oneself out loud can show children how to use the skills in everyday situations. Pretend that you have misplaced your keys and say:

I can't find my keys and we need to leave right away or we'll be late!!! I'm getting really upset. Hold on, rushing isn't going to help me find my keys. I am going to stop and take three deep breaths. Then I'll be able to think more clearly. [Here you take three deep breaths, slowly.] Now that I'm calmer, I will try to remember what I did when I came in the house yesterday. I'm sure my keys are just where I left them.

Babies and children of all ages benefit from seeing this kind of example, even if they may not be able to imitate the behaviour until they're older.

Acknowledge to participants that it is hard to give an example of resilience when one's own foundation isn't firm. Parents and child care practitioners need to **care for themselves**, in order to be able to care for young children. If they find that they are not "bouncing back" from difficult experiences, this is a signal that they need to look after their own needs. These may be physical (more sleep, more exercise), emotional (more support, more outlets), social (more fun, more time with friends), cognitive (more stimulation, more information), or spiritual (more time for reflection). Ask participants to think of something that they do to rebuild their own energy when they're feeling low. Emphasize that resilience helps people **reach out for help** from family, friends and community resources. Everyone needs

support from others to keep their ball bouncing back.

9. Summary, additional resources, future plans, and evaluation *(5 minutes)*

Go back to the focus and the learning objectives for this workshop. Read them out loud to remind participants of all the points that you have touched on. Pass out handout 4 about further resources.

Before leaving, ask participants to tell their partner from the section 3 of the workshop one thing they will do in the next week to strengthen or foster resilience in children, or in themselves, in the context of the parent-practitioner partnership.

Distribute the **comment forms** for participants to provide feedback. Thank them for their participation.

What Is Resilience?

Resilience has been defined as the ability to “**bounce back**” when things go badly for us. Resilience helps people carry on, even when they meet difficulties on their path.

Research shows that **children can learn to be more resilient**. They benefit from having at least one person around them who believes in their ability to succeed. Then they can learn the attitudes and skills that will help them “bounce back” from negative experiences.

Parents and practitioners can work together to build some of the attitudes and skills that will contribute to resilience in children:

- **self-confidence**
- **emotional awareness and control**
- **flexibility**
- **empathy**
- **accurate thinking**

Taken together, these are important factors in helping children become **good problem solvers**, a key to being able to meet challenges.

Children learn the skills that will make them resilient **through play** and by **imitating** the important people around them. The time to lay down the foundation for resilience starts when babies are very young. Later, when they are about four, they can use the foundation to start solving their own simple problems.

Parents and other caregivers play an essential part by providing the **sense of security** that children need to develop resilience. They can also actively foster the skills that will make children successful adults who can “bounce back” from stressful times.

Fostering Self-Confidence

Self-confidence is an important ingredient of resilience. People who believe they can **make things happen** are more likely to bounce back and keep on going in the face of obstacles. This "I-can-do-it" attitude is also called a **sense of efficacy or agency**.

Interactions with caring adults are the first step in giving babies a sense of confidence in their ability to make things happen. Babies learn that their actions have an effect on their environment when they cry and someone responds, when they smile and someone smiles back.

Children also learn this by interacting with the **toys and materials** in their environment.

Toys or materials in my home or child care setting that give children a chance to see their effect on their environment are: _____

Another way for children to influence what happens is by **making choices**. Offer a choice between two equally acceptable possibilities; more than two can be confusing to young children. The choice must be a real one and you must be ready to act on the child's decision. "Do you want to go to take a nap now?" is probably not an appropriate choice to offer to children, but "Do you want to take your teddy bear or your doll to nap with you?" would work

Choices I offer to children are: _____

Children also learn that their actions make a difference when they are given **meaningful tasks** to do. They gain confidence in their own abilities when you give them opportunities to make a contribution to the well-being of your family or your child care group. You need to adjust tasks to a child's developmental level: they should be hard enough to make the child proud when he or she succeeds, but not so hard that he or she is bound to fail. Frequent communication between parents and practitioners will help everyone to set realistic expectations.

Responsibilities I give to children are: _____

Awareness and Control of Emotions

It is hard to “bounce back” from difficulties when we are overwhelmed by emotions. Parents and child care practitioners can help children learn to deal with their emotions

The first step in learning to cope with emotions is to become aware of them. Just like you name objects for babies and children who are learning to talk, you can **name feelings**. For instance, you can say “You are disappointed because you wanted to go out to play and now it’s raining.” Gradually, children will learn to recognize and name their own feelings.

You can also teach words for feelings **with a song** like, “If you’re happy and you know it, clap your hands.” Ask children to suggest other feelings and other gestures to express them.

Other songs I know that name emotions are: _____

An important part of emotional control is learning to **control impulses**. If you are three years old and another child is always taking toys away from you, you may become angry and start hitting the other child. This will likely make the situation worse. In order to think clearly enough to find a better strategy, you need to be able to calm down and control your impulse to hit.

Children can learn to control their strong impulses through **games and songs**. Freeze tag is one example of a game and “Sleeping Bunnies” is one example of a song.

Other songs and games I know that give children a chance to practise controlling their impulses are: _____

Learning to take a few **deep breaths** will help children stay calm so they can think more clearly and find solutions. Here is a way to teach deep breathing. Ask children to imagine that they have a big balloon in their hand. Get them to put their hand in front of their mouth and blow slowly into their imaginary balloon. Encourage them to empty their lungs then squeeze their hand closed to keep the air in the balloon while they fill their lungs with air. Get them to relax their hand while they again blow into the balloon, squeezing all the air out of their lungs. Repeat this three times and then have them tie an imaginary knot in their balloon and let it float away. Teach this at a time when children are calm, then use it any time they need to slow things down and lower the level of excitement.

Here is a time I could use this technique: _____

Sources and Further Resources

Books

Reivich, Karen and A. Shatté (2002) *The Resilience Factor*. New York: Broadway Books.

Seligman, Martin, (1995) *The Optimistic Child*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company.

Booklets

The Bounce Back Book: Birth to 2 Years and *The Bounce Back Book: Building Resiliency Skills in Your Preschooler*, published by the Alberta Mental Health Board, are two booklets that suggest activities to help parents and caregivers nurture children to be strong and resilient. The first one focuses on building the relationship between parents/caregivers and the child and the second one focuses on four core areas known to increase resilience in toddlers and preschoolers: self-confidence, emotional regulation, problem solving and empathy. Both may be downloaded in pdf format from www.amhb.ab.ca/Publications or ordered for a small price in hard copy.

Web Sites

www.reachinginreachingout.com - The Reaching IN...Reaching OUT Project (RIRO) is a Toronto-based initiative which takes research about resiliency promotion and adapts and evaluates the Penn Resilience Program (PRP) school-age model for use with children six years and younger. From its website, you can download its *Resiliency Guidebook* and *Skills Videos*, resources for content covered in RIRO's skills training program. Under "Parent Resources," it offers a parent information handout and several lists of storybooks that can be read to young children to give examples of resilient characters.

<http://resilnet.uiuc.edu> - This site includes a virtual library of online articles about resilience and a list of links to other Internet sites dealing with resilience.

www.kidshavestresstoo.org - The Web site of the *Kids Have Stress Too!*[®] program developed by the Psychology Foundation of Canada. This is a broad-based primary prevention program to provide parents, caregivers, and communities with the knowledge, awareness, and skills to help young people become healthier and more resilient through learning how to manage their stress.

Sources for activities, handouts and songs

Not Always Nessie (A Puppet Play about Always/Not Always Thinking)

<http://www.reachinginreachingout.com/documents/Guidebook%20-%20Guide9.pdf>

"Process, Not Product" resource sheet from the Canadian Association of Family Resource Programs, www.parentsmatter.ca, under "Resources for parents."

If you're happy and you know it...

If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands.

If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands.

If you're happy and you know it, and you really want to show it,

If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands.

If you're mad and you know it, stomp your feet...

If you're sad and you know, say boo hoo...

If you're confused and you know it, scratch your head...

Sleeping Bunnies

See the little bunnies, sleeping until noon.

Can we wake them with a merry tune?

Oh, so still.... Are they ill?

Wake up sleeping bunnies, hop, hop, hop!

Wake up sleeping bunnies, hop, hop, hop!

Wake up sleeping bunnies, hop and stop!

The children lie quietly on the floor for the first part of the song. When they hear the words "Wake up," they get up and start hopping or jumping. When they hear the word "stop," they immediately stop and lie down again.