

INSIGHTS

by Michael Grose – No. 1 parenting educator



Make the most of teachable moments to promote resilience

How they cope will be determined by their resilience and the mindsets of the significant adults around them.



Kids live in the NOW. Fun comes before work in their dictionaries.

It's easy for parents to get tied up in the NOW particularly when kids experience hardships, frustrations and difficulties. We just want to take away their pain!

When we focus solely on making the situation better we miss some massive opportunities to help kids learn and grow.

The big learning opportunities are usually hidden as problems. Most commonly they are: change, loss, rejection, failure, disappointment and conflict.

Perhaps your child has experienced one of these common challenges:

- ▶ Been snubbed by a classmate or friend
- ▶ Missed being picked for a team even though they tried hard
- ▶ Worried about going to school camp
- ▶ Had something stolen from them
- ▶ Been taught by a teacher they don't get on with

I am not suggesting we want bad things to happen but developmentally life throws up these types of curve balls all the time for kids.

How they cope will be determined by their resilience and the mindsets of the significant adults around them.

When parents and teachers have mindsets for resilience then they see these situations as TEACHABLE MOMENTS.

A teachable moment is usually disguised as a problem and is easily missed when we focus on the now.

When faced with a TEACHABLE moment ask yourself:

- ✓ **How can I teach my child to cope?**
e.g. Encouraging kids to talk about problems is a great coping skill.
- ✓ **What can my child learn about himself for next time?**
e.g. A child may learn when he goes on a school camp that he was dreading that he can spend time away from home and still survive.
- ✓ **What can my child learn to avoid or turn this situation around?**
e.g. A child may learn that he can reduce conflict with less than pleasant peers by ignoring nasty comments and actively spending more time with friendly kids.

Parenting has always required an exceptionally strong set of skills, including carer, nurturer, leader and negotiator. That's why it is such a hard job.

BUT the longer I am involved in parenting the more I am convinced that Parenting is fundamentally about TEACHING.

The ability to pass on skills, knowledge and attitudes is the most important skill of all.

We teach by modelling but we also teach kids explicitly. That means we talk to kids about 'stuff' and help them to work out how they may cope or manage different situations they meet.

First we need to be on the look out for TEACHABLE MOMENTS. Then make the most of these opportunities so that kids can grow and learn from some of the challenges they face.

Mastering these teachable moments is how parents help their kids become resilient and bounce back from some of the setbacks they encounter now and, importantly, in the future.