

SEL article for Superintendent's Newsletter

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By Laurie Stillman

Intro

I have adapted an informative article, appearing in the South Shore's Youth Connection newsletter, to help parents understand how promoting **Resilience** and **Grit** in their children are key predictors for their success. As the District's SEL Facilitator, I hope you also find the content beneficial:

Resilience and Grit

by Dr. Barbara Greene, Medical Director

I would like to focus our attention on promoting Resilience and Grit. Dr. Ned Hallowell, a well known psychiatrist recently said that, after making connections, the most important thing we need to give our youth is the *ability to handle life's ups and downs*. Similarly, Al Moscaritolo, a social worker on the South Shore, challenged parents with the notion that if your child were dropped by parachute in a foreign land, would they have the skills and psychological framework to be able to function safely and effectively.

We know that life without challenge is not reality. We know, and research underscores, the power of resilience, and what many of us term, grit. Resilience is the concept of the ability to bounce back, to right oneself, to get up and "shake off the dust from a scraped knee".

If we, as adults, serve as "helicopters" or "lawnmowers", we are actually denying our children the necessary experiences to develop resilience and grit. It is very easy to want to step in, sometimes "overstep in", particularly when we are brought to a "Mother Grizzly Bear" mode wanting to protect and keep our children safe and secure. There are definitely times when that action is appropriate and critical.

However, as a steady diet, it denies our children the experiences and feedback that help to develop the following aspects of resilience: • Positive Attitude • Optimism • Emotional Regulation • Outlook and Mindset • Seeing mistakes as an opportunity to learn and reset I am challenging all of us to examine our own personal sense of resilience and grit. Do we positively role model to our children how to face challenges, learn, grow, get back up and take a new step forward? This is one of the most powerful tools we have for teaching. My sister has given me the nickname "The Unsinkable Barbara Green". I get back up, I reach out for help, I count my blessings, I keep a positive mindset, I embrace imperfection, I love how life's lessons are learned. Resilience and grit empower us to live full lives and not be afraid.