

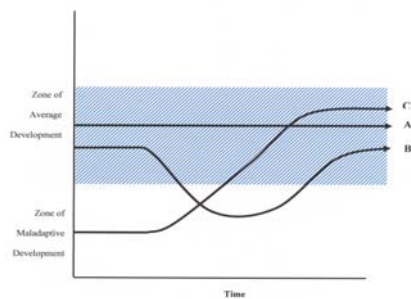
Resilience in Development: The Power of Ordinary Magic

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What is resilience?

- ▶ Positive patterns of adaptation in the context of past or present adversity
- ▶ Doing OK despite risk or adversity
 - ~ Positive outcomes from high risk contexts
 - ~ Recovery from trauma
 - ~ Overcoming adversity to succeed in life
 - ~ Unexpectedly positive development

Varieties of Developmental Resilience



Cousins of Resilience

- ▶ **Resiliency**
The capacity to recover from stress
~ better for rubber bands than people?
- ▶ **Coping, adaptation, transformation**
Responses of living systems to disruption or stress
~ not necessarily positive or successful
- ▶ **Positive Youth Development**
A broader topic, sharing similar emphasis on positive development ~ not necessarily focused on high risk or adversity contexts
- ▶ **Human and Social Capital**
The resources for positive adaptation or development found in people and their connections to other people

Resilience is Inferential

- ▶ Two judgments always required
 - ~ A person's life is going OK
 - ~ Serious adversity or risk has occurred
- ▶ The capacity for resilience
 - ~ A resilient child or family
 - ~ Not necessarily inside the person or family

Resilience & Violence Prevention

- ▶ Violence, risk and adversity are related in many ways
- ▶ The greatest threats to human development often come in the form of violent destruction in families, neighborhoods, communities, or wars
- ▶ Recovery from violent experiences, both in wars and in families, appears to draw on many of the same protective systems as recovery from other adversities
- ▶ Promoting resilience reduces risks for violence

A Brief History of Resilience Science

- ▶ Not a new idea ~ human fascination with stories of overcoming adversity
- ▶ Pioneers in resilience research
 - ~ Lois Murphy
 - ~ Emmy Werner
 - ~ Norman Garmezy
 - ~ Michael Rutter

Harbinger Of Change



“It is something of a paradox that a nation which has exulted in its rapid expansion and its scientific technological achievements should have developed in its studies of childhood so vast a problem literature.”

~ Lois Murphy (1962)

The Great Insight of the Pioneers

From the study of resilience we can learn how to improve outcomes for children and adolescents at risk...

Defining Resilience For Research

- ▶ Criteria for “doing ok” in life
- ▶ Measures of risk or adversity
- ▶ Measures of what might make a difference
 - Attributes of person or environment
 - Assets and protective factors

Doing OK ~ A Developmental View

- ▶ Competence
 - ~ A pattern of effective functioning as demonstrated by successfully engaging and achieving developmental tasks for people of a given age, culture, and time in history
- ▶ Well being
 - ~ the inside story
- ▶ Who decides?

Major Developmental Task Examples

Early childhood

- Attachment
- Language
- Emerging: compliance, self-control, peer relations

School age (through adolescence)

- Academic achievement
- Getting along with peers and having friends
- Conduct according to rules and laws
- Emerging: romantic relationships, work

Threats To Adaptation & Development

Risk factors

- Predicting undesirable outcomes
- From risk markers to causes
- Cumulative risk and the pile-up of adversities

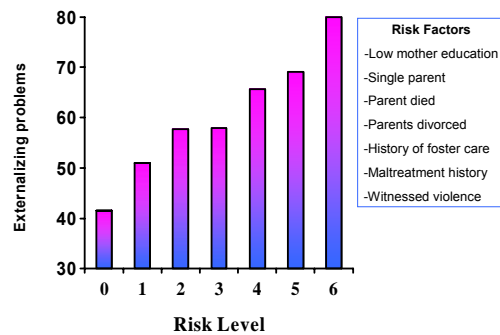
Adverse life experiences

- Acute and chronic
- Independent and controllable
- In family and community
- Massive trauma

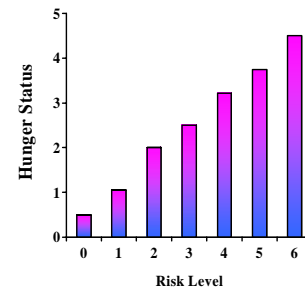
Risks and problems tend to snowball

- ▶ Risk factors often pile up in children's lives
- ▶ Transitions (divorce, school entry, puberty, leaving home, war, relocation) often pile risks on children in a concentrated time window
- ▶ Emotional, behavioral, educational, and health problems rise as risk levels rise
- ▶ Developmental cascades occur
~ one kind of problem can lead to another

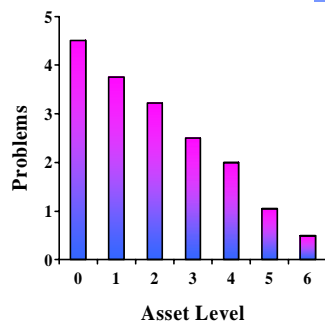
Cumulative Risk Gradients: Example from a Homeless Study



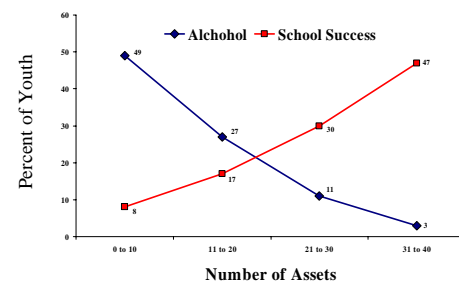
Risk Predicts Risk



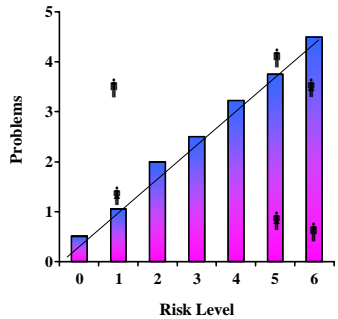
Risks or Assets?



Search INSTITUTE Asset Gradients



On and Off a Risk Gradient



Project Competence Studies

- ▶ Longitudinal study of ordinary children
205 school children followed up after 7, 10, 20 years
- ▶ Homeless children
Living in shelters for families
- ▶ War survivors
Cambodian youth
Refugees
- ▶ Collaboration, Consultation
 - ~ Desistance from youth offending and violence
 - ~ Prevention for children experiencing domestic violence
 - ~ Prevention for children experiencing divorce
 - ~ Prevention for alcohol and substance abuse
 - ~ Injuries to farm children

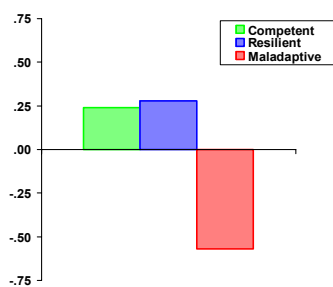
Defining Resilience in Project Competence Studies

- ▶ **Competence in age-salient developmental tasks**
 - School age children and youth: academic, conduct, social
 - Early adulthood: work/academic, conduct, social, romantic, parenting (when a parent) ~ *what young adult participants think*
- ▶ **Adversity**
 - Negative and traumatic life events questionnaires
 - Life chart and ratings approach ~ independent clinical ratings
DSM-III scale (from 1 to 7 where 7 is catastrophic adversity)
 - Cumulative risk
- ▶ **Measures of what makes a difference**
 - In the child ~ cognitive skills, motivation, personality, etc
 - In relationships and resources ~ parenting quality, SES, etc

Diagnosing Resilience in the Longitudinal Study

		Competence Level	
		Low	High
Adversity Level	Low	Highly Vulnerable	Competent/Doing Well
	High	Maladaptive	Resilient

The Basic Pattern of Findings



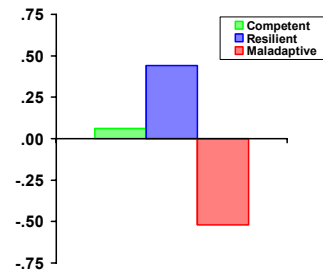
Predicting Resilience at 20

- ▶ Good intellectual and attentional skills
- ▶ Agreeable personality in childhood
- ▶ Achievement motivation and conscientiousness
- ▶ Lower stress reactivity
- ▶ Parenting quality in childhood and adolescence
- ▶ Positive self concept
- ▶ Competence in childhood ~ conduct, academic, social
- ▶ The correlates of competence in childhood

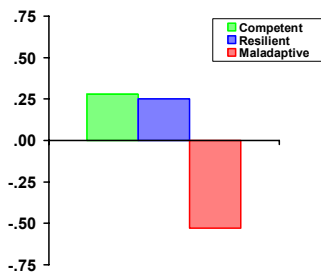
Successful Transitions to Adulthood

- ▶ We expected resilience to endure
- ▶ Positive change is possible during the transition to adulthood
- ▶ What should predict new resilience?
 - Planfulness
 - Motivation and aspiration to achieve
 - Connections to adult mentors & support

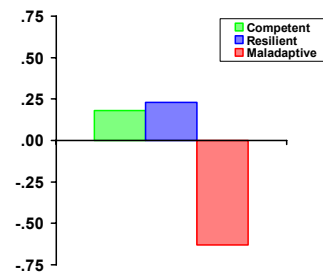
Work Competence ~ Age 30 for Groups Diagnosed ~ Age 20



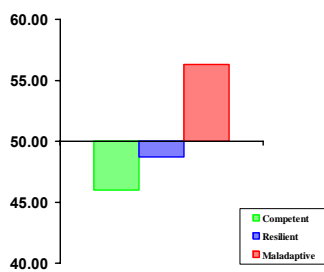
Civic Engagement ~ Age 30



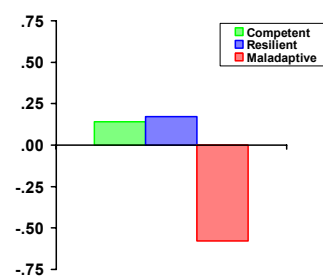
Self Worth Around Age 30



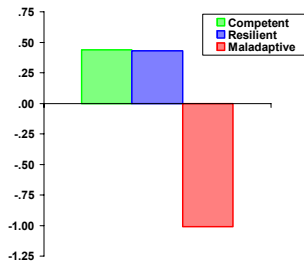
Externalizing Symptoms ~ Age 30



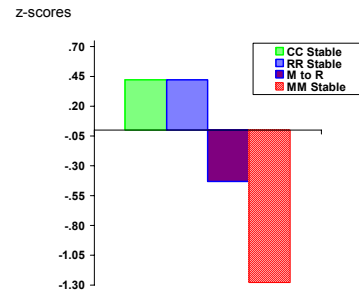
Happiness Around Age 30



Age 20 Planful/Motivated for Future



Stable and Change Groups age 20→30 on Planful/Motivated age 20



Cases who Overcame Violence: Pathways to Resilience

- ▶ The lethal mix of alcohol & family violence and the power of positive relationships with adults
Early path ~ Boy mechanic
Late path ~ Loving a policeman's daughter
- ▶ The devastating effects of war and the power of meaning
A Cambodian Girl's epiphany ~ from Criddle & Butt Mam, *To Destroy You is No Loss* (1987)

Overall Conclusions From Project Competence Studies

- ▶ Resilience is associated with more resources, in the child, the family, and the community
- ▶ Maladaptation is associated with high risk and low resources
- ▶ Competence in developmental tasks at one age forecasts good future development
- ▶ Academic achievement is very important in US society

More conclusions...

- ▶ Conduct problems cascade over time
- ▶ Resilience tends to endure
- ▶ Late resilience is possible
- ▶ Emerging adulthood may be an important window of opportunity for changing direction

Conclusions from the World Literature

Short List ~ Clues to What Matters

Ordinary parents ~ perfection not required
Connections to competent & caring adults
Good thinking, attention, problem-solving skills
Positive self-perceptions
Spirituality, faith, or religious affiliations
Social attractiveness
Talents valued by self or others
Socioeconomic advantages
Effective Schools
Effective communities

What matters is not rare or extraordinary ...

Attachment relationships and social support
A human brain in good working order
Opportunities to learn and experience effectiveness
Self-efficacy ("I can do it" motivation)
Regulation of emotion, arousal, behavior
A sense of belonging or meaning in life

Violence Threatens Protective Systems for Human Development

- ▶ Destruction of parenting adults or harm to parent functioning
- ▶ Distortion of the secure base when parents are violent
- ▶ Self-regulation & brain development altered by recurrent fear, stress
- ▶ Physical and psychological handicapping effects of violence
- ▶ Faith or meaning shattered
- ▶ War destroys or damages community or cultural support systems

Ordinary Magic

- ▶ Resilience does not require something rare or special
- ▶ Children who make it have more resources in their minds, bodies, families, and communities
- ▶ The greatest threats to children happen when the adaptive systems that normally protect development are harmed or destroyed

There are many roads to travel and many forks along the way

- ▶ It is easier to start kids down the good roads
- ▶ It is possible to change course at many points
- ▶ It is easier to get back on the good roads if people haven't gone too far down the bad ones
- ▶ Late turns in good directions are possible

No child is invulnerable

- ▶ The greater the risk, the less common resilience will be
- ▶ There are situations where no child can flourish

We need to understand how youth change and how to promote positive change

- ▶ Study natural resilience and desistance
- ▶ Intervene and evaluate to test what works for whom
- ▶ Figure out what strategies work for different youth **WHEN** along the developmental paths toward and away from success, violence and other destinations

Resilience can be promoted

Successful prevention programs alter the balance of risks and assets and mobilize powerful systems for human development

Interventions that work often combine strategies that promote competence with those that reduce problems

Cumulative risk calls for cumulative protection

Previewing Part 2 ~ A Resilience Framework for Action

Mission ~ frame positive goals

Models ~ include positive factors & processes

Measure ~ positives as well as problems

Methods ~ include the promotive & protective

We can grow resilience



Promoting positive development also prevents problems

Resilience can be facilitated by strategic intervention



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