

Resilience Through Art Handout

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Do you teach children or adults who:

Have experienced a pandemic?	Lack access due to physical disabilities?
Give up efforts to succeed?	Have learning disabilities?
Engage in defiant rebellion?	Have experienced trauma from neglect or abuse?
Exhibit negative thinking?	Have family members who are incarcerated?
Involved with alcohol or drugs?	Have experienced violence?
Self-abuses?	Are homeless or in transition?
Keeps other people at a distance?	Have experienced extreme poverty?
Are hostile or aggressive?	Are gifted and suffer in silence?
Are being bullied or bullies others?	Are truant or tardy?

What Can Art Teachers Do?

We can strengthen protective factors that foster resilience by implementing innovative curriculum that is centered on strengthening protective factors and utilizing nurturing pedagogy. We can empower students by giving them choices, engaging them in authentic learning experiences and collaborative community art-based initiatives that celebrate individual and collective strengths. **By understanding the characteristics of resiliency, teachers who are advocates for learners who have experienced trauma can help students avoid the cycle of failure and low expectations that can lead to adverse outcomes.**

RESILIENCY is the ability to bounce back, to successfully adapt, to cope, to develop social, academic, and vocational competence despite exposure to the stress that is inherent in today's world.

Resiliency Theory is the belief in the ability of every person to overcome adversity if important protective factors are present in that person's life.

Protective Factors that the arts provide (Heise & MacGillivray, 2013, 2012, 2010):

Resourcefulness	A sense of purpose
Personal accomplishment	A sense of humor
Creativity	Belonging
Persistence	Connection
Vision for the future	Relationships
Contributing to the well-being of another	Optimism
Metacognition - awareness and understanding of one's own thought processes (thinking about what you are thinking)	

Conditions that nurture resilience:

1. A **safe place to express** feelings, concerns and to have fun
2. Opportunities for **meaningful participation**
3. Safe place where **mistakes are encouraged** and are educational
4. Personal **strengths are acknowledged** and supported
5. **Reasonable expectations** for success

6. Opportunities to **connect with others**
7. **Healthy role models**
8. Available **guidance** and help
9. Communication is clear with **consistent** expectations and boundaries
10. Having at least one caring, nurturing person in life
11. **Accomplishments are celebrated**

CHARACTERISTICS OF RESILIENT ART CLASSES:

- art making based on **real life issues** that are relevant and important to student
- engages students in **problem solving** and provides students **choices** in process
- teachers use **inquiry** method to stimulate critical and creative thinking in students
- students actively **engaged** rather than listening to teacher
- students obtain **mastery** over medium or process
- students have **fluency** and **flexibility** – multiple solutions to an [art] problem
- students develop/exhibit **vision, sense of purpose**
- art assessment goes **beyond** product assessment and evaluation of principles and elements of design, but evaluates the students' depth of thinking
- Students participate in **service learning** activities that include learning about and contributing to the **solution of real issues of concern** to the student and the community.

Selected Readings

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