What is Resilience?

- A set of qualities or protective mechanisms that contributes to successful adaptation and competent functioning despite challenging circumstances (Benard, 1991; Luthar, Cicchetti, & Becker, 2000; Masten & Coatsworth, 1998).
- Those characteristics that enable children “to work well, play well, love well, and expect well” (Gates, 1996).

Methodological Issues

- Multiple conceptions and definitions of resilience
- Resilience as a dynamic process, not a fixed attribute
- “Overall” resilience vs. domain-specific resilience
- Distinction between internal and external protective factors
- Shortcomings of current measures

Study 1: Purpose

- Select target population
- Identify resilience constructs
- Generate survey items to develop a preliminary instrument
- Conduct a pilot test of the instrument and make appropriate revisions

Study 1: Five Resilience Constructs

A. Interpersonal Connections
   - Supportive and caring relationships with other people and organizations.

B. Skills and Competencies
   - The ability to do something well and take pride in your accomplishments.
Study 1: Five Resilience Constructs

A. Interpersonal Connections
   • Supportive and caring relationships with other people and organizations.

B. Skills and Competencies
   • The ability to do something well and take pride in your accomplishments.

C. Hope/Optimism
   • A positive view of the future and belief in the ability to influence it.

D. Giving Back to Others
   • Balancing your own interests with the interests of others.

E. High Expectations
   • Receiving positive support and encouragement from others to succeed.

Study 1: Selected Items

A. Interpersonal Connections
   Item #04: “At my school there is a teacher or another adult who really cares about me.”

B. Skills and Competencies
   Item #31: “I get along well with others.”

C. Hope/Optimism
   Item #39: “I think I will have a happy life as an adult.”

D. Contributions
   Item #42: “I enjoy helping other people.”

E. High Expectations
   Item #49: “My family expects me to get good grades.”

Study 1: Procedure

• The EARS was administered to young adolescents (N = 58) at four summer camps.
• Sample characteristics:
  – 53% male
  – 68% White
  – Mean age of 13 years

Study 1: Results

• Good reliability in the form of internal consistency:
  – Interpersonal Connections = .891
  – Skills and Competencies = .770
  – Hope/Optimism = .645
  – Contributions = .772
  – High Expectations = .838
• Negatively-worded items were unclear
Study 2: Purpose

- Measure statistical differences in factor scores by demographics
- Assess the instrument’s measurement model

Study 2: Method

- Based on results from Study 1, the EARS was shortened from 72 to 55 items.
- Research staff administered the modified EARS to young adolescents ($N = 397$) at 16 child-care programs.
- Sample characteristics:
  - 49% male
  - 42% White
  - Mean age of 13 years

Study 2: Results

Average Factor Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Connections</th>
<th>Competencies</th>
<th>Hope/Optimism</th>
<th>Giving Back</th>
<th>Expectations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.90</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>4.36</td>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>4.42</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Average Scores on "Interpersonal Connections"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Parent</th>
<th>Sibling</th>
<th>Peer</th>
<th>Adult</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.90</td>
<td>4.28</td>
<td>3.95</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>4.99</td>
<td>3.70</td>
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</table>

Average Factor Scores by Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Connections</th>
<th>Competencies</th>
<th>Hope/Optimism</th>
<th>Giving Back</th>
<th>Expectations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.05*</td>
<td>3.50*</td>
<td>3.89*</td>
<td>3.99</td>
<td>4.81*</td>
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</table>

Average Factor Scores by Race

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Connections</th>
<th>Competencies</th>
<th>Hope/Optimism</th>
<th>Giving Back</th>
<th>Expectations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>Nonwhite</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.90</td>
<td>3.96*</td>
<td>3.10*</td>
<td>4.43*</td>
<td>4.64*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. *p < .05.
Conclusions

- The EARS shows promise as a tool that measures the multifactorial construct of resilience.
- Results can be used to develop programs and social policies that benefit young adolescents.
- Low scores on connections to school are of concern.
- Categorical disparities in factor scores should be investigated further.

Resources

Article:

Websites:
http://www.resilnet.uiuc.edu/
http://www.resiliency.com/
http://www2.cce.umn.edu/nrrc/research.shtml