

Edith Grotberg defines resilience as a 'universal capacity which allows a person, group or community to prevent, minimize or overcome the damaging effects of adversity'

The work of the [International Resilience Project](#) fits well into this approach. By investigating this construct at an international level, the project enables some understanding of the combination of factors that result in resilience in children. Edith Grotberg has managed to turn a set of concepts into practical tools that can be incorporated into the everyday work of development projects. Thus, it also serves as an example of how theory and research can be turned into practice.

The main factors that make up resilience are grouped under three headings: I HAVE, I AM, I CAN. Such headings may appear overly assertive in some societies where, for example, the prevailing belief is that 'children should be seen but not heard'. However, it is up to each reader to take what he or she can from this Guide and adapt it to the people, the setting and the culture. Whatever the society, there can be no argument that children should feel loved and lovable, should be respectful and responsible, and should know who they can approach in times of need. This may seem to be self-evident but the research has found that most parents and care givers do not know about resilience or how to promote it in children. Thus, too many adults inhibit and even thwart the development of resilience, leaving countless children feeling helpless, sad and unloved.

The Foundation, has gained new understandings through membership on the Advisory Committee of the International Resilience Project, and are pleased to be able to publish this Guide in the hope that it will inspire development workers to examine their own work with new eyes and to incorporate those aspects they find relevant into their work with children and families.

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