

YOUNG AND RESILIENT



2020 has been an extraordinary year so far. COVID-19 has presented many challenges to countries around the world and tested our resilience as individuals and as a society. However, it is also an opportunity to teach our children how to stay strong, rise above our challenges and unite as a society. As parents, we cannot always shelter our children from challenges. Research shows that when children are young, this is the best time to build coping skills and increase the brain's resiliency and response to stresses and challenges.

In this issue, we explore how parents and educators can work with community partners to help children build resilience and respond to challenges positively. Adults, too, need to build inner strength as we face multiple stressors. Some practical strategies, for both adults and children, include reframing thoughts, regulating

emotions, building relationships and confidence, as well as creating opportunities to discuss challenges and how to solve problems.

Even as we contend with COVID-19, we are pressing on with the government's efforts to improve access to affordable and quality preschools to support families. From January 2020, the enhanced preschool subsidies took effect. From 2021, we aim to appoint more preschools to the Partner Operator scheme, with lower fee caps to benefit families. Additional support will also be provided to lower-income families via the scaling up of KidSTART. Preschools will continue to improve their quality with retraining programmes. These and other measures signify the government's continuing commitment to give every child a good start, regardless of background.

Helping our children develop lifelong socio-emotional skills, like how to build emotional resilience in their early years, is key to a strong foundation for their future. As the saying goes, "Educating the mind without educating the heart is no education at all". Let's work together to create opportunities for children to develop strong hearts and strong minds for a stronger society ahead.

MS JAMIE ANG
Chief Executive Officer
Early Childhood Development Agency (ECDA)



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