

# Tipping the scale is **EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS**

**CHILDREN THRIVE** when we all work together to add positive supports ('green boxes'), reduce adversity ('red boxes'), and build skills and abilities, to boost resilience.



The **Resilience Scale** shows that by enabling children to build skills and abilities across time we can shift the base towards a more resilient position.

How can we use the Resilience Scale metaphor in our work?

Start by watching our 7-minute explainer animation: 'What Surrounds Us Shapes Us'



The Resilience Scale, developed by the FrameWorks Institute in partnership with the Harvard Center on the Developing Child, has been tested in Australia. Palix Foundation have mobilised it in communities for over a decade.

Created as a partnership resource for Child Protection Week (starting first Sunday of September) [www.childprotectionweek.org.au](http://www.childprotectionweek.org.au)



# An Introduction to the Resilience Scale for Practitioners Working with Children and Families

**What is the tool?** The Resilience Scale is a tool that gives us a common language to talk about how experiences shape our lives now and into the future.

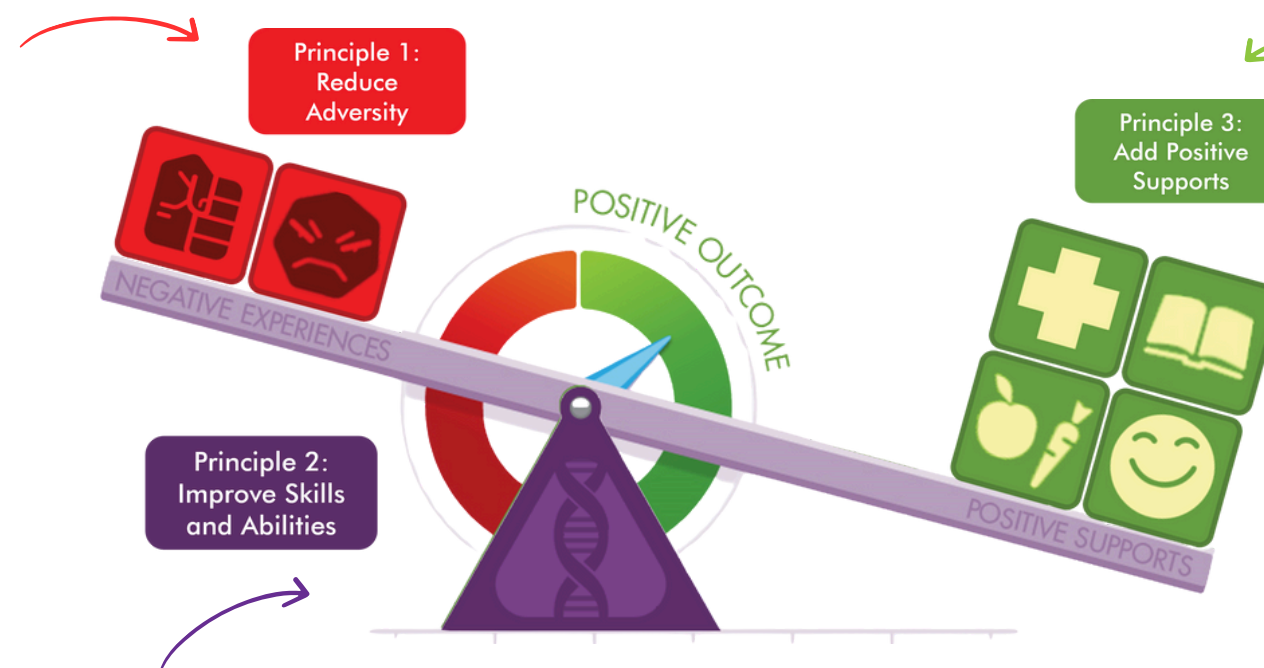
**Who is it for?** It's especially useful for professionals working with children and families, as it provides a straightforward way to visualise and talk about what children, families and communities need. It can support how we work at an individual, an organisational and at a systems level.

**What is resilience?** Resilience is the process and outcome of being able to adapt to difficult or challenging life experiences. Rather than being an innate characteristic, resilience is an ability that can be strengthened or weakened over time in response to our experiences and our environments. It can also be defined as "The ability to respond positively in the face of adversity." (Palix Foundation)

The Resilience Scale is a way to explain how three factors - sources of adversity, our positive supports and our skills and abilities - interact to determine our capacity for resilience.

**The Resilience Scale is a beam on a fulcrum (the purple triangle).**

**Negative factors**, which are represented by red boxes, can include experiences like abuse, neglect, parental addiction or mental illness, divorce, or other sources of toxic stress. These red boxes are added to the left side of the beam, and if they pile up, the scale can tip towards a poor outcome marked by illness and adversity.



**Positive factors**, which are represented by the green boxes, include safe, stable, and supportive relationships and safe, stable, and supportive environments. These green boxes can pile up on the right-hand side of the beam, tipping the scale toward positive outcomes including good health, and wellness.

**The initial position of the fulcrum** - whether it is to the right or the left of centre - is partly determined by our genetic dispositions. Think of it as the biological starting position of the Resilience Scale. Where we start matters and we know that environmental and systemic factors also influence this: 'What surrounds us shapes us' (Harvard Centre on the Developing Child). But the position of the fulcrum can change over time based on our experiences, and in this way the fulcrum can also represent our skills and abilities. If the fulcrum is positioned to the left, it means you have good skills and abilities of serve and return, air traffic control and reward motivation systems meaning any red box which falls on your Scale is going to have less leverage making the Scale more likely to tip towards a positive outcome. If the fulcrum is to the right, it means you have less developed skills and abilities and as a result, adverse experiences have more leverage making the scale more likely to tip towards a poor outcome.

**For more explanation about the Resilience Scale:**

[www.albertafamilywellness.org/what-we-know/resilience-scale](http://www.albertafamilywellness.org/what-we-know/resilience-scale)

**Find out more about  
evidence behind the  
Resilience Scale**



**Watch a real-life  
application of the  
Resilience Scale**



**Find 100+ learning  
resources on our  
Enabling Workforces  
Toolkit**



**Interested in connecting with Thriving Queensland Kids Partnership to  
promote the use of the Resilience Scale?**

Contact us via [www.tgkp.org.au/resources/resilience-scale-poster](http://www.tgkp.org.au/resources/resilience-scale-poster)