



A GUIDE TO UMBRELLA PARENTING

HELPING YOUR CHILDREN THRIVE IN ALL OF LIFE'S WEATHER

The Umbrella Project is a response to the rising tide of anxiety and depression faced by children today. I haven't spoken to a teacher or doctor in the last few years who doesn't feel this turn in the climate of childhood wellbeing. Our power as parents comes, not from protecting our children, but from teaching them to protect themselves by building an umbrella of skills that will see them through life's stormy days. Here's how to get started:

STEP 1. TALK ABOUT THE RAIN AS IF IT IS A NORMAL PART OF LIFE

No matter how hard we try there is 100% chance of rain some days. We will not escape this and neither will our children. The best thing you can do is help your children understand that everyone faces adversity sometimes and that adversity is normal. This can help them feel like less of a victim in tough times.

STEP 2. SHOW YOUR CHILDREN HOW PEOPLE THRIVE IN SPITE OF THE WEATHER

It is possible to thrive, even on the rainy days, with the right set of skills. It is not the rain alone that dictates our wellbeing. It is the ratio of rain to the size of our umbrella of coping skills. Children learn through role modelling so sharing examples of people using their umbrella skills is a powerful way to improve your child's wellbeing.



STEP 3. GET FAMILIAR WITH THE UMBRELLA SKILLS

The umbrella skills are a set of skills known to improve our wellbeing and help us cope with stress. Follow the Umbrella Project as we focus each month on one of these essential tools. Through examples you can watch with your child at home, family challenges, and tips to build the skills, we will help you act on the Umbrella Project at home and have fun building your family's umbrella of wellbeing.

STEP 4. BUILD THEIR SKILLS THROUGH PRACTICE

In order to build umbrella skills we need practice and this comes from exposure to situations that allow us this practice. Avoiding stressful situations for our children is not the answer. When you see your child struggling with a situation, help them use it as a chance to practice the skills needed to thrive and build themselves a strong umbrella.

