

◆ M S C I A C A D E M Y ◆

A F R E E G U I D E F O R P A R E N T S

The Parent's Guide to Building Confidence and Emotional Strength

Simple ways to help your child handle hard moments, believe in themselves, and keep trying.



SIX

short sections

ONE

practice to start tonight

7 DAYS

to make it stick

*Practical support for parents,
as they help their children grow.*

M I C H A E L H E R N A N D E Z · M S C I A C A D E M Y

Six short sections you can read in one sitting

Every section ends with one thing you can try tonight. You do not have to do all of them. Read straight through, pick the section that sounds like your house right now, and start there.

01 What confidence really is

Why confidence is built, not praised into a child.

02 Notice the moment before the shutdown

The few seconds that matter more than the tears.

03 Change the words your child hears

Small swaps that leave room for growth.

04 Make room for feelings

Emotions are real. They do not have to run the show.

05 Practice resilience in ordinary moments

Struggle does not get the final word.

06 Four small practices for this week

One repeatable habit, seven days.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Read one section a night with your phone in the other room. Six nights, six small experiments. Then use the practice page at the back to run one of them for a week.

What confidence really is

Confidence is not believing everything will be easy. It is believing, “I can face this even when it is hard.”

Confidence is built through experience, not handed to a child as praise.

It grows when children learn:

- that feelings are real without having to control every action,
- that mistakes are information,
- and that asking for help is a skill.



TRY THIS TONIGHT

Ask your child: “What is something that felt hard today, and what did you do next?”

Listen without rushing to solve it. The goal is to help them notice that they can move through a difficult moment.

Notice the moment before the shutdown

The important moment is usually not the tears, anger, or refusal. It is the few seconds before.

Look for patterns:

- “I can’t do this.”
- Going quiet when something feels difficult.
- Getting angry at a small mistake.
- Avoiding something they once enjoyed.
- Calling themselves dumb or incapable.

These are not character flaws. They are signals that a child needs support.

TRY THIS TONIGHT

Instead of saying, “Don’t give up,” ask: “What part feels hard right now?”

That turns a moment of defeat into a problem the two of you can understand together.

Change the words your child hears

Children borrow our words before they know how to use their own.

The words adults use can either turn a hard moment into a verdict or leave room for growth. “You’re so smart” can make a child afraid of the next mistake. Naming what they did gives them something they can do again tomorrow.

SAY THIS INSTEAD

“You stayed with that even when it was frustrating.”

“I can see this feels big. Let’s take it one step at a time.”

“What could we try differently?”

TRY THIS TONIGHT

Pick one replacement and use it the next time a hard moment starts. Naming what they did gives them something they can do again tomorrow.

Make room for feelings without letting them run the show

A child can feel disappointed, angry, embarrassed, or scared and still learn what to do next.

Social and emotional skills include:

Naming feelings

Calming down before reacting

Listening

Asking for help

Handling disappointment

Taking responsibility

They are **skills, not personality traits**. That means they can be practiced.



TRY THIS TONIGHT

When emotions are high, begin with: “I can see you are upset. We can talk about what happened when you are ready.”

This makes room for the feeling while holding a calm boundary.

Practice resilience in ordinary moments

Resilience is not never struggling. It is learning that struggle does not get the final word.

Children learn resilience through many small chances to try again:

- A disagreement with a friend.
- A mistake.
- An unfamiliar activity.
- A plan that did not work.

They need to see that recovery is possible, not that adults can remove every hard thing.



TRY THIS TONIGHT

Let your child see you work through something difficult. Say it out loud: "I don't know how to do this yet, but I can learn."

Children need proof that struggle is normal, even for adults.

Four small practices for this week

You do not have to change everything at once. Start with one small, repeatable practice.

01

Ask one better question*“What was the hardest part of your day?”*

02

Name effort you can see*“You kept going after that mistake.”*

03

Pause before solving*“What do you think would help right now?”*

04

Repair after a hard moment*“That was tough. What could we try differently next time?”***TRY THIS TONIGHT**

Pick one practice and use it for seven days. Consistency matters more than getting the words exactly right.

Seven days, one practice

Print this page or copy it onto paper. Write down the one practice you chose, then check off each night you used it. You are not grading yourself — you are noticing what changes.

THE PRACTICE I AM USING THIS WEEK

.....

SEVEN NIGHTS

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Night 1	Night 2	Night 3	Night 4	Night 5	Night 6	Night 7

WHAT I NOTICED

Seven days is enough to notice something. It is not enough to fix everything — and that is fine.

You do not have to have every answer

Start by noticing. Ask one better question. Make room for your child to be frustrated without deciding that frustration means failure.

I am not a psychologist, and if your child needs one I will tell you that straight.

If concerns are affecting sleep, friendships, safety, or the way your child talks about themselves, speak with your pediatrician, school counselor, or a qualified mental-health professional.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Michael Hernandez

I hold a master's in elementary education and wrote a children's book series about confidence. MSCI Academy exists to give parents practical support as they help their children grow.

JOIN THE COMMUNITY

This guide is free and there is nothing to sign up for. MSCI Academy is a community for parents who want to build a better future for their children — you are welcome in it.

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