

JOURNEY OF HOPE

Resilience Skills

Think about This

No child lives without risk to traumatic experiences. Whether it's chronic poverty in the community or a devastating tornado, providing children with immediate and long-term emotional support enables their recovery while fostering resilience.

Across the United States, children face a wide array of risk factors – each with the potential to disrupt healthy social, emotional, academic and physical development. According to the National Center for Children in Poverty, large numbers of children across the United States are faced by one or more risk factor that have been linked to academic failure and poor health.

For children and youth, in addition to health problems, consequences of trauma include difficulties with learning, ongoing behavior problems, impaired relationships, and poor social and emotional competence.¹

Save the Children provides schools and communities with structured programs designed to support emotional. In 2007, in post-Katrina New Orleans, Save the Children developed a child-informed, strengths-based program to support childhood resilience. The *Journey of Hope* program has since been delivered to more than 85,000 children in the United States. *Journey of Hope* helps children and adults cope with traumatic events, develop their natural resiliency and strengthen their social support networks.

The Journey of Hope Program

Our signature *Journey of Hope* program offers five grade- and age-specific curricula designed to build resiliency among children, youth and their caregivers, while helping them understand their feelings. The *Journey of Hope* (JoH) program:

- Helps children identify emotions and understand that it's normal to feel angry, sad or frustrated during scary or difficult situations.
- Gives children the words they need to express their feelings in a safe, small group setting.
- Helps children develop healthy coping skills through structured games, stories and creative activities.
- Offers an encouraging environment that recognizes children's individual strengths and positive behaviors.
- Is implemented by trained mental health professionals who can identify children who may need additional help or support.

Through cooperative play, literacy, discussion and art, children are provided a small-group setting to explore and normalize their emotions. As trained mental health facilitators lead the structured activities, children are allowed the space and encouragement to develop healthy coping mechanisms and identify internal and external social support systems.



Children whose families and communities were affected by Hurricane Sandy participate in the Journey of Hope program in partnership with the Staten Island Mental Health Society.

¹ National Center for Children in Poverty. (2007). Facts about trauma for policymakers: children's mental health. New York, NY: Cooper, Janice L.

Evidence-based Programming

Journey of Hope works. Save the Children has an established evaluation design for *Journey of Hope* and has been accepted for review for the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) National Registry for Evidence-based Programs and Practices (NREPP).

Through rigorous evaluation efforts, Save the Children has identified the following outcomes for *Journey of Hope* participants:

1. Teaches children to recognize and manage their emotions, which builds confidence, self-esteem, and “I believe I can” attitudes.
2. Develops positive peer relationships, which help children experience a collaborative environment based on respect and understanding.
3. Decreases disruptive behaviors, which creates more concentrated learning time in class.

Building Local Capacity

Save the Children works in the communities across the United States with the highest needs and the fewest access to resources. We invest in capacity building to ensure children will be reached with sustainable quality programming.

The *Journey of Hope* training model is a train-the-facilitator design, which offers communities the opportunity to expand their capacity to deliver high-quality, school-based psychosocial programming for years to come.



We learned [about emotions] like anger, when you're fearful, and how to solve your problems. The main things we talked about were what makes you feel safe...my home and my family make me really safe."

- Larissa, 8, JoH participant in Alabama following the Tuscaloosa tornadoes that demolished her school in 2011

For More Information

- Visit: www.savethechildren.org
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Save the Children is the leading independent nonprofit relief and development organization helping children in need in the United States and in more than 50 countries around the world. Save the Children/USA is a member of the International Save the Children Alliance, a network of 28 independent, national organizations working in more than 120 countries to ensure the well-being of children everywhere.