



## Helping Children Cope During Conflicts: Lessons in Resilience from Anne Frank

In today's digital world, children are constantly exposed to global crises. News of war and conflict reaches them through screens and conversations. Even when conflict feels distant, the fear can feel very close.

Children may not understand geopolitics, but they understand danger and uncertainty. They may ask:

- Why did this happen to us?
- Are we safe?
- Why do people fight?

Even indirect exposure can lead to anxiety, sleep disturbances, stress, clinginess, or withdrawal.

When existential fears arise, history offers guidance through Anne Frank and her diary. Written during one of history's darkest periods, her reflections reveal timeless lessons in resilience.

The goal is not to remove fear entirely, but to help children process it in healthy ways.

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### Lessons in Resilience

#### 1. Expression Reduces Fear

Encourage children to journal, draw their worries, or complete prompts like "Today I felt..." or "Three things that made me feel safe...". Naming feelings makes them more manageable.

#### 2. Finding Goodness

Help children notice helpers and acts of kindness. Recognizing goodness restores emotional balance.

### **3. The Power of Routine**

Maintain consistent sleep, meals, schoolwork, and bedtime rituals. Routine creates emotional safety.

### **4. Encouraging Hope**

Encourage children to imagine their future, draw their goals, or write a letter to their future self. Hope counters catastrophic thinking.

### **5. Safe Conversations**

Avoid dismissing fears. Instead say, "I understand why that feels scary. Let's talk about it." Validation builds security.

### **6. Limiting Media Exposure**

Set boundaries: no news before bedtime, preview content, and offer age-appropriate explanations. Children need clarity, not graphic detail.

### **Building Inner Strength**

Anne Frank did not choose her circumstances, but she chose hope over despair.

Our children cannot control global events either. But with structure, emotional expression, open conversation, and reassurance, they can build resilience.

Resilience is not the absence of fear — it is learning to face fear with support, meaning, and hope.

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