



# 5 Superpowers You Can Give Your Children

## 1. Immunizations



Staying caught up on all your child's immunizations (</English/safety-prevention/immunizations/Pages/Recommended-Immunization-Schedules.aspx>) is one of the most powerful ways you can shield your child from a variety of dangerous, infectious diseases. They train your child's immune system to stop a variety of villainous germs that once sickened and killed thousands of people each year. In addition to routine childhood immunizations, families can now fight COVID-19 with vaccines available (</English/health-issues/conditions/COVID-19/Pages/The-Science-Behind-the-COVID-19-Vaccine-Parent-FAQs.aspx>) for teens age 12 and up. They're expected to be available for younger teens and children soon.

## 2. Resilience

[Back to Top](#)

Some stress is just part of life, but when it's severe or ongoing, it can morph into "toxic stress." Toxic stress can actually change the way children's brains and bodies develop. But you can help your children develop the power of resilience, the ability to cope with and bounce back from stressful experiences (</English/healthy-living/emotional-wellness/Building-Resilience/Pages/ACEs-Adverse-Childhood-Experiences.aspx>). Help them gain confidence in their abilities, for example, and build a network of strong, supportive relationships—with you, and with other adults and peers. Think of it as their personal legion of allies.

### 3. Empathy



You may not be able to give your child telepathic abilities, but helping them build empathy can be a powerful tool in life. Empathy is the ability to understand someone else's thoughts, feelings and experiences. It helps children connect and relate to others in positive ways, which can reduce stress. It even helps prevent harmful bias (</English/healthy-living/emotional-wellness/Building-Resilience/Pages/Talking-to-Children-About-Racial-Bias.aspx>) and racism. Reading (</English/healthy-living/emotional-wellness/Building-Resilience/Pages/using-books-to-talk-with-kids-about-race-and-racism.aspx>) with your child is one way to help build empathy.

## 4. Fitness



Physical activity (</english/healthy-living/fitness/StopWatch-Tool/pages/default.aspx>) and exercise has a mighty effect on children's bodies and brains. It builds strong muscles and bones, coordination and flexibility. It also helps combat rising rates of childhood obesity, which can lead to diabetes and heart disease. Physical activity also reduces stress, boosts mood and helps children focus at school. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that kids 6 years and older get 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity on most days of the week.

## 5. Earth Awareness



Give your children the knowledge that they can literally help save the planet! Nurture a respect for nature by spending time outdoors when possible. Discuss (</English/safety-prevention/all-around/Pages/Talking-with-Children-about-Climate-Change.aspx>) news they hear about climate-change-fueled disasters like wildfires (</English/safety-prevention/at-home/Pages/Wildfires-Information-for-Parents.aspx>) and hurricanes. Mostly, help them focus on solutions. This can help

reduce stress about the future and gives them the power to take action. Remind them that families, communities and nations have tools to take climate action right now, and using them can have immediate benefits for our health. Brainstorm together for ways to reduce your carbon footprint, and other actions your family can take.

[Back to Top](#)

**Last Updated** 5/12/2021

**Source** American Academy of Pediatrics (Copyright © 2021)

The information contained on this Web site should not be used as a substitute for the medical care and advice of your pediatrician. There may be variations in treatment that your pediatrician may recommend based on individual facts and circumstances.