

Growing Up Resilient

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Children in densely populated and under-resourced areas often need inspiring and thoughtful teachers. Margaret Beale Spencer researches how children build resiliency, identity, and self-esteem, and how well-trained teachers can set a solid example for students. Her experiments identified that children as young as three years old learn discriminatory tendencies, but that these tendencies can be reversed with training. Spencer designed a CNN study to test racial bias in children. In addition to other major sources of recognition, she was awarded the 2006 Fletcher Fellowship, which recognized work that furthers the broad social goals of the US Supreme Court's *Brown v. Board of Education* decision. Her vulnerability and resiliency focused human development theorizing guides an ongoing program of research on how effective coping strategies can result in healthy outcomes for adolescents in stressful environments, and how teacher/student interactions can be guided to maximize learning.