

# Resilience in Children

October 20, 2011



Silvia Koller's research focuses on children who have experienced homelessness, sexual abuse, or familial violence. Koller explores the impact of these circumstances on psychological development, and uses this information to better characterize the concept of resilience. Her hope is that understanding resilience, which she defines as a process rather than an individual trait, will lead to programs and policies that help children cope with adversity and prevent future generations from experiencing such hardship. Koller uses an ecological approach, viewing children's development in the context of their family, community, school, and society. Using this framework to understand development and resilience, she has identified several factors, including a strong social support system and a high capacity for experiencing and expressing emotions, that aid the process of resilience. Her findings have helped shape child protection policies in Brazil, changing how authorities investigate child maltreatment and help children cope with abuse, and informing child maltreatment prevention programs.