



KNOW WHO YOU ARE

Knowing your identity is a powerful predictor of resilience.

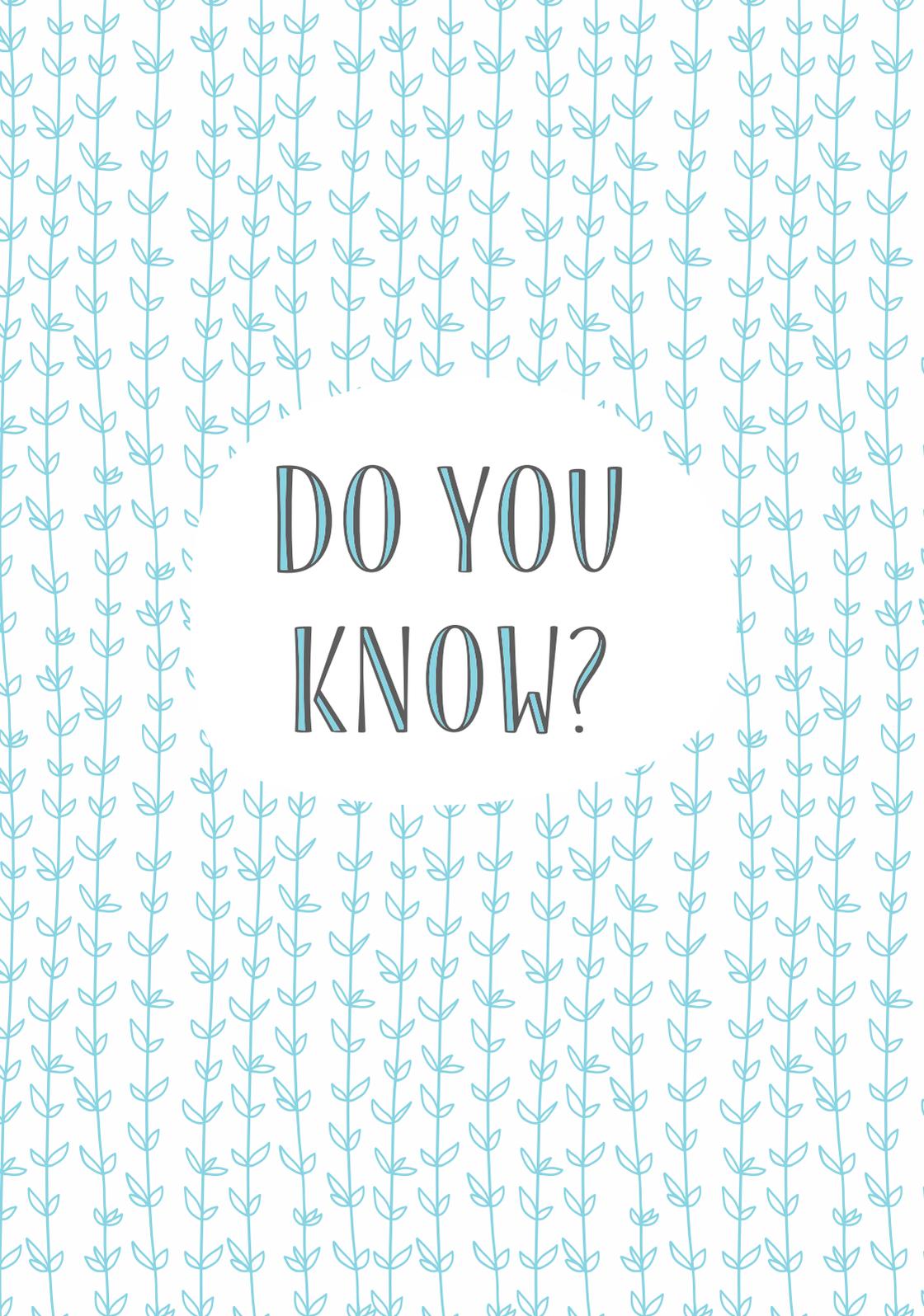
When our children are young, they're not too concerned about big questions like "Who am I?" But knowing who you are, where you're from, and how you fit in – in other words – knowing your identity is a powerful predictor of resilience.

Children with a strong sense of identity are more likely to be confident and enjoy positive social interactions, do well in a variety of situations including at school (and later in life, at work), behave pro-socially, avoid alcohol and other drugs of abuse, and choose good friends who also know who they are and make positive, safe, healthy decisions.

So how do our children work out who they are?

The answer might surprise you. It is often through being challenged and experiencing adversity that our children begin to question the stuff they're made of. Challenges grow character.

But for younger children, we want to cocoon them. The best way to build resilience in our younger children is to teach them about their roots. When they know who their parents are, and where their family comes from, they can begin to construct their own personal identity in powerful ways.



DO YOU KNOW?

Your activities for the next week are simple, and are based around time in conversation with your child. The “Do You Know” Scale is reprinted here with permission from Professor Marshall Duke, it’s author. It will form the basis of your first activity.

1. Do you know how your parents met?
2. Do you know where your mother grew up?
3. Do you know where your father grew up?
4. Do you know where some of your grandparents grew up?
5. Do you know where some of your grandparents met?
6. Do you know where your parents were married?
7. Do you know what went on when you were being born?
8. Do you know the source of your name?
9. Do you know some things about what happened when your brothers or sisters were being born?
10. Do you know which person in your family you look most like?
11. Do you know which person in the family you act most like?
12. Do you know some of the illnesses and injuries that your parents experienced when they were younger?
13. Do you know some of the lessons that your parents learned from good or bad experiences?
14. Do you know some things that happened to your mum or dad when they were in school?
15. Do you know the national background of your family (such as English, German, Russian, etc)?
16. Do you know some of the jobs that your parents had when they were young?
17. Do you know some awards that your parents received when they were young?
18. Do you know the names of the schools that your mum went to?
19. Do you know the names of the schools that your dad went to?
20. Do you know about a relative whose face “froze” in a grumpy position because he or she did not smile enough?

ACTIVITY 1: Do You Know?

Each night at dinner, pick one or two of the items from the Do You Know scale and talk about them. Show photos, share memories, and tell stories. Invite your children to tell their stories as well. Did you discover anything interesting? Write about it here:

ACTIVITY 2: Create a Vision

Have a family night where you talk about the kind of family you want to be. You may want to create a list, or perhaps get crafty and create a collage to illustrate it (it's even better if you can use your own photos), and then set some goals so that you can be that family!

