



**Ronald Mah, M.A., Ph.D.**

Licensed Marriage & Family Therapist, MFC32136

Psychotherapy, Parent Education, Consulting & Staff Development

433 Estudillo Ave., #3.5, San Leandro, CA 94577-4915

(510) 614-5641 Office - (510) 889-6553 fax - E-mail: [Ronald@RonaldMah.com](mailto:Ronald@RonaldMah.com) - Web: [www.RonaldMah.com](http://www.RonaldMah.com)

---

## HEALTHY TRANSITIONS FOR CHILDREN & TRAITS OF RESILIENT CHILDREN

---

### SEVEN STEPS TO HEALTHY TRANSITIONS FOR CHILDREN

- 1) Acknowledge Stress
- 2) Acknowledge Anxiety (& Deal with It!)
- 3) Identify & Accept Development
- 4) Identify & Accept Temperament
- 5) Plan
- 6) Inform
- 7) Support

First, **acknowledge the stress**. Some parents avoid planning help for their child because it is too distressing for them to consider that their child may have anxiety. Parents invalidate their children when they ignore their children's stress. This may come from not knowing what they can do, so they just hope for the best.

Second, **Acknowledge your own anxiety (& its origins)**, and do whatever it takes to deal with it. Children are extremely sensitive and attuned to their parents' anxiety. If your anxiety is excessive, the message you give is that they are not going to be okay! Express and model excitement with confidence that it will be great! And, that your child will be fine.

Third, **identify and accept your child's developmental stage**

Fourth, **identify and accept your child's temperament**. Instead of focusing on why your child has that temperament and trying to change it, focus on how he/she expresses that temperament. Since your child's behavior is predictable,

Fifth, **plan how to prevent, mitigate, and guide that behavior in a positive manner**. For example, if your child usually takes a long time to adapt to a new situation, plan on giving your child many exposures to the situation- begin the adaptation process earlier. This means visiting the Kindergarten room, the school, the playground, and the teacher (if available) often before the beginning of school.

Sixth, **inform the teachers & other key individuals** about your child's temperament, especially his/her **high or low sensitivity to stimulation** (school and other new things are very exciting and stimulating!), whether he/she tends to **jump into things or holds back**, how long he/she takes to **adapt(action) to new circumstances**, and **how he/she expresses any anxiety or excitement** (by acting out, getting hyper, withdrawing, and so forth). When your child behaves as predicted, the teacher or individual will not be surprised, but instead feels prepared to deal with his/her needs.

Seventh, **support your child- love and nurture your children before, during, and after transitions**. This is not just about a specific issue- starting or returning to school. It is about parenting. Research about resilient children who bounce back well from stress identify four areas that parents strongly influence.

### TRAITS OF RESILIENT CHILDREN

#### **Resilient children:**

- 1) have good relationships with emotionally supportive parents;
- 2) have personally, and also seen their parents and siblings face previous social challenges successfully;
- 3) have less overall stress in the family;
- 4) have been supported and been successful in other areas such as sports or music.



**Ronald Mah, M.A., Ph.D.**

**Licensed Marriage & Family Therapist, MFC32136**

Psychotherapy, Parent Education, Consulting & Staff Development

433 Estudillo Ave., #3.5, San Leandro, CA 94577-4915

(510) 614-5641 Office - (510) 889-6553 fax - E-mail: [Ronald@RonaldMah.com](mailto:Ronald@RonaldMah.com) - Web: [www.RonaldMah.com](http://www.RonaldMah.com)

---

## **Biography**

Ronald Mah, therapist and educator, combines concepts, principles, and philosophy with practical techniques and guidelines for effective and productive results. He uses humor and stories from his many experiences to illustrate important points in a stimulating and highly motivating and engaging style.

A Licensed Marriage & Family Therapist, his experiences include: Asian-American community mental health, Severely Emotionally Disturbed mental health & school partnership programs, vocational programs for at risk youth, welfare to work programs, clinical consulting & cross and multi-cultural training for Head Start, other early childhood education programs, social services organizations, & mental health agencies, supervising a high school mental health clinic, training and supervising therapists, private practice in Castro Valley, author of the Asian Pacific Islander Parent Education Support curriculum.

Professional Education experiences include: 16 years in ECE, including owning and running a child development center for 11 years, Kindergarten, elementary, & secondary teaching credentials and experience, ethnic studies curriculum writer, community college instructor, Masters of Psychology instructor, and former member Board of Directors of the California Kindergarten Association and of the California Association of Marriage & Family Therapists.