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Detroit, Michigan Sep 8, 2025 ([IssueWire.com](https://www.issuewire.com)) - [Muzzammil Riaz](#), a registered nurse and wellness advocate, urges society to rethink how it prepares children and young adults for life. Known for his grounded perspective on mental health, Riaz argues that emotional resilience deserves the same level of attention and early training routinely given to physical fitness. In his view, building mental strength should not be a remedial step only after a crisis, but a proactive practice taught from the beginning.

“Physical education is woven into school systems worldwide, but emotional resilience is often left to chance,” says Riaz. “We teach kids how to stretch, run, and play sports, but rarely how to identify stress, manage setbacks, or recover from emotional strain. Yet these skills are equally vital for long-term health.”

The Case for Early Training in Resilience

Riaz points to growing rates of anxiety, depression, and burnout among young people as evidence that resilience training can no longer be considered optional. Children as young as elementary age report stress related to school performance, social expectations, and family dynamics. By high school, those pressures compound into sleep disruptions, social withdrawal, and unhealthy coping mechanisms.

“Just as muscles weaken without exercise, our ability to recover emotionally suffers when not nurtured,” Riaz explains. “The earlier we normalize resilience as a skill, the stronger the foundation becomes.”

He compares resilience training to building cardiovascular endurance. Both require gradual, consistent effort, improve with practice, and reduce long-term risks, whether those risks are chronic illness or chronic stress.

Why Current Models Fall Short

Despite rising awareness around mental health, [Muzzammil Riaz](#) says current interventions often start too late. Schools may add mindfulness workshops or mental health weeks, but these initiatives are frequently reactive, fragmented, and underfunded. They lack the same structure, repetition, and consistency physical fitness programs receive.

“Imagine if kids only had gym class once a year during a themed week,” Riaz notes. “We’d never expect them to build lifelong habits that way. Yet that’s often how we approach emotional well-being.”

Core Elements of Emotional Fitness

Riaz envisions a model where emotional resilience is treated like a fitness curriculum, with core components practiced regularly. These include:

- **Self-awareness:** Learning to identify emotions and triggers early.

- **Recovery strategies:** Breathing exercises, journaling, and other techniques to bounce back after stress.
- **Problem-solving:** Building confidence in navigating challenges rather than avoiding them.
- **Connection:** Encouraging healthy communication and support-seeking.
- **Flexibility:** Teaching that change and setbacks are part of growth, not signs of failure.

“These are not abstract skills,” Riaz emphasizes. “They are as practical and teachable as learning to do a push-up.”

Cultural Barriers to Resilience Training

One barrier, Riaz says, is the cultural emphasis on toughness over tenderness, especially for young men. Children are often told to “shake it off” or “man up,” creating a belief that resilience means suppressing emotions rather than processing them. This, he warns, leads to unprocessed stress that accumulates over time.

“True resilience is not about ignoring pain, it’s about integrating the experience and moving forward,” he explains. “If we only focus on appearances of strength, we risk raising generations who look strong on the outside but are crumbling inside.”

Long-Term Benefits

Riaz believes that prioritizing resilience early on pays dividends across a lifetime. Adults who develop these skills better manage workplace stress, relationship challenges, and unexpected crises. They are less likely to turn to destructive coping mechanisms and more likely to contribute positively to their communities.

“In healthcare, we know prevention is always more effective than treatment,” he says. “The same principle applies here. It’s easier to build resilience early than to repair damage later.”

A Call to Action

Riaz calls for schools, parents, and policymakers to rethink priorities. He envisions resilience training embedded into classrooms alongside physical education, reinforced at home, and supported through community programs.

“The world will always present obstacles,” he concludes. “We owe it to the next generation to prepare them physically and emotionally. A resilient child grows into a resilient adult, and that strengthens families, workplaces, and society as a whole.”

About Muzzammil Riaz

Muzzammil Riaz is a registered nurse, wellness advocate, and founder of *Trust The Process*, a platform dedicated to mental health and authentic growth. Through writing, speaking, and advocacy, he shares insights on resilience, healing, and community.

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