

What is resilience?

Fostering the 'ordinary magic' of resilience

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Resilience is the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats or significant sources of stress. -Center on the Developing Child (2015)

Why is it 'ordinary magic'?

Resilience is not a rare or extraordinary characteristic that some people have and other people don't. Resilience comes from common and ordinary experiences and has a variety of protective factors.

Resilience comes from common and ordinary experiences!

What are protective factors?

Protective factors are the experiences that protect or buffer us from the adverse effects of stress, and promote resilience. The more access we have to these protective factors during hard times, the more resilient we're likely to be.

- Stable and committed relationships with a supportive caregiver or other adult
- Social supports & community identity
- Social/emotional competence
- Problem-solving skills
- Parental resilience
- Caregiver knowledge of development
- Concrete supports- food, housing, finances, school/child care

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Resilience Myths

Resilience is a characteristic some people have and other people don't.



Your ability to be resilient is consistent across your life.



If you're resilient during one kind of hardship, you should be resilient during all kinds of hardships.



Resilience only happens when you face extreme adversity.



If you're resilient you don't experience trauma. And if you experience trauma you aren't resilient.



Resilience Truths

Resilience is not a characteristic or trait. Resilience is something we can all experience.

Resilience fluctuates over time, depending on the level of adversity you are experiencing, and on your ability to access protective factors in your life.

Though you may be resilient in many situations, resilience during one experience does not guarantee resilience in every type of experience.

Resilience is built, strengthened, shaped and expressed over time through all kinds of experiences - the typical ups and downs of life, and extreme adversity.

Resilience is not black and white; everyone is resilient to some degree. Resilience does not keep you from experiencing stress/trauma but rather shapes how you adapt in its presence.

How can adults help?

There are many ways adults can promote resilience in young children. Adults can:

- **Connect**, listen, express care.
- Provide **structured and predictable** environments.
- Help children **solve problems** without taking over.
- Keep a **positive** outlook and remain **hopeful**.
- Actively teach and model **healthy coping strategies**.

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How do these actions promote resilience?

When adults:

Connect, listen, express care

Provide predictable rules & structure

Help solve problems without taking over

Keep a positive outlook; hold hope

Model healthy coping strategies

Children learn:

My needs matter, and adults are here to help me when I feel upset.

I know the rules and what to expect, and that makes me confident.

I am smart, I can solve problems, and adults help me when I'm stuck.

I believe there is purpose in life, and good things can happen.

I can name my emotions and control my behaviors.