

# A BRILLIANT ME IN ACTION ONE PAGE GUIDE TO...

## 'ORDINARY MAGIC'

*“Resilience is not a trait that children have or don't have — it's built through everyday experiences, relationships, and opportunities.”*

*Ann Masten, 'Ordinary Magic'*

**'Ordinary Magic'** is a term coined by psychologist Dr Ann Masten. By 'Ordinary Magic' she meant that the factors that help children thrive despite adversity are not rare or extraordinary, but common, everyday systems of support and strength found in most children's lives.

### WHAT?

Resilience comes from everyday things that help us grow, like having a healthy brain, strong relationships with caring adults, supportive families, good schools and communities, chances to do well, and believing in ourselves, which is built through positive experiences with others.

These systems, Masten argued, develop through **ordinary human experiences** — such as being loved, learning, playing, and belonging — rather than extraordinary interventions.

Resilience is not about being impervious to stress, but about the ability to adapt successfully to adversity and challenging life circumstances.

Masten's '**Ordinary Magic**' perspective is incredibly empowering for SEL in primary schools.

**'Ordinary Magic'** recognises that every child can be resilient if they experience supportive relationships and chances to develop coping skills.

### WHY?

**'Ordinary Magic'** reminds us that we can all help identify the good things and coping strategies already present in the children's lives. In the same way we can nurture children's innate resilience through strengthening SEL, supporting connections and creating a sense of belonging. Without being a therapist or a mental specialist...

Through the idea of **'Ordinary Magic'** we can now see a Whole School Approach can be 'Everybody's Business'

### SEL?

The idea of **'Ordinary Magic'** and the power of the 'everyday' is threaded throughout all of the SEL competencies.

### FIND OUT MORE

- [Ordinary Magic on the Headstart Kernow website](#)
- [How Resilience is Built](#) (Centre on the Developing Child at Harvard - short video series).
- **Book**
  - Ordinary Magic: Resilience in Development by Ann Masten, 2014

### SEE ALSO

- The Boingboing Resilience Framework
- Bronfenbrenner
- Oracy

