

WELCOME

**THE IMPACT OF COMMUNITY
VIOLENCE ON INFANTS AND
YOUNG CHILDREN**

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1

Goals

- 1 • Identify the neurological impact that community trauma can have on young children and their development
- 2 • Examine how repeated exposure to community violence can influence the formation of positive and trusting relationships necessary for children to explore their environment and develop a secure sense of self
- 3 • Identify strategies to positively support children's social/emotional development when they are exposed to community violence

2

Goal #1
**Neurological impact community
trauma can have on young children
and their development**

3

Question

What is community violence?

Does it differ from other types of violence (IPV, personal violence)

4


Community Violence

Community violence is exposure to intentional acts of interpersonal violence committed in public areas by individuals who are not intimately related to the victims, such as homicides, sexual assaults, robberies, and weapons attacks (e.g., bats, knives, gun)

- bullying
- gangs
- shootings in public areas
- "war-like" conditions
- terrorist attacks

5

**What do we know about impact of
community violence on early
childhood?**



6

9th Annual Early Childhood Mental Health Conference – We Can't Wait!

Find your ACE

While you were growing up, during your first 18 years of life:

1. Did a parent or other adult in the household often or very often...
Swear at you, insult you, put you down, or humiliate you?
or
Act in a way that made you afraid that you might be physically hurt?
Yes No If yes enter 1 _____
2. Did a parent or other adult in the household often or very often...
Push, grab, slap, or throw something at you?
or
Ever hit you so hard that you had marks or were injured?
Yes No If yes enter 1 _____
3. Did an adult or person at least 5 years older than you ever...
Touch or fondle you or have you touch their body in a sexual way?
or
Attempt or actually have oral, anal, or vaginal intercourse with you?
Yes No If yes enter 1 _____
4. Did you often or very often feel that...
No one in your family loved you or thought you were important or special?
or
Your family didn't look out for each other, feel close to each other, or support each other?
Yes No If yes enter 1 _____
5. Did you often or very often feel that...
You didn't have enough to eat, had to wear dirty clothes, and had no one to protect you?
or
Your parents were too drunk or high to take care of you or take you to the doctor if you needed it?
Yes No If yes enter 1 _____

7

Find your ACE - continued

6. Were your parents ever separated or divorced?
Yes No If yes enter 1 _____
7. Was your mother or stepmother:
Often or very often pushed, grabbed, slapped, or had something thrown at her?
or
Sometimes, often, or very often kicked, bitten, hit with a fist, or hit with something hard?
or
Ever repeatedly hit at least a few minutes or threatened with a gun or knife?
Yes No If yes enter 1 _____
8. Did you live with anyone who was a problem drinker or alcoholic or who used street drugs?
Yes No If yes enter 1 _____
9. Was a household member depressed or mentally ill, or did a household member attempt suicide?
Yes No If yes enter 1 _____
10. Did a household member go to prison?
Yes No If yes enter 1 _____

Now add up your "Yes" answers: _____ This is your ACE Score.

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8

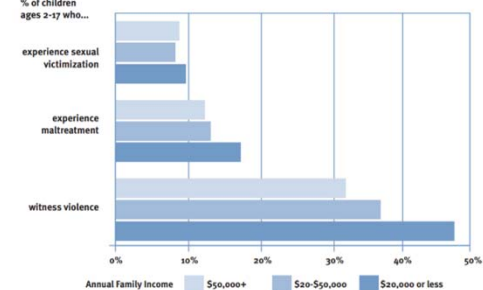
Assessing ACEs -National Survey of Children's Health

Survey questions/categories:

- Somewhat often/very often hard to get by on income
- Parent/guardian divorced or separated
- Parent/guardian died
- Parent/guardian served time in jail
- Saw or heard violence in the home
- Victim of violence or witness violence in neighborhood
- Lived with anyone mentally ill, suicidal, or depressed
- Lived with anyone with alcohol or drug problem
- Often treated or judged unfairly due to race/ethnicity

9

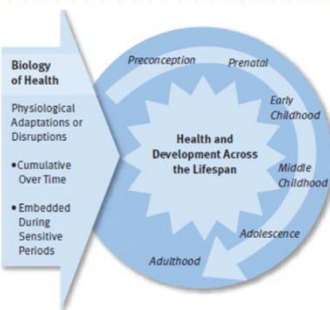
Fear-Inducing Events Disproportionately Affect Children in Low-Income Environments



10

Foundations of Health

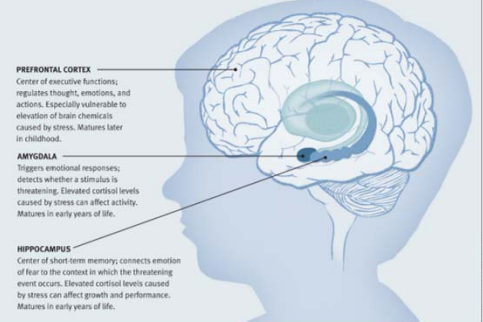
- Stable, Responsive Relationships
- Safe, Supportive Environments
- Appropriate Nutrition



Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University (2010). The Foundations of Lifelong Health Are Built in Early Childhood. <http://www.developingchild.harvard.edu>

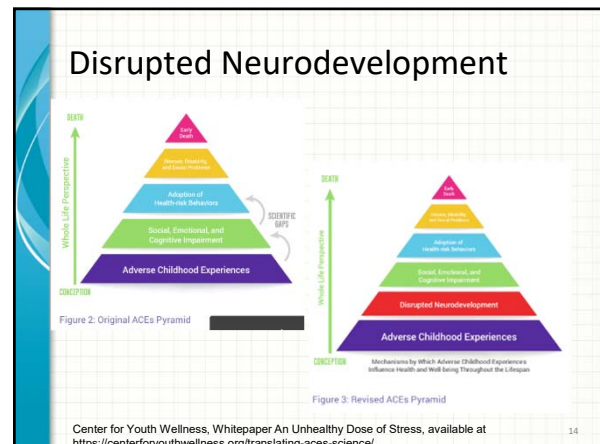
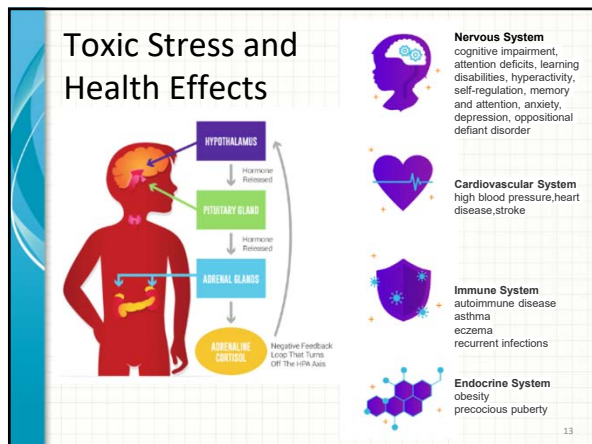
11

Fear and Anxiety Affect the Brain Architecture of Learning and Memory



National Scientific Council on the Developing Child (2010). Persistent Fear and Anxiety Can Affect Young Children's Learning and Development: Working Paper No. 9. <http://www.developingchild.net>

12



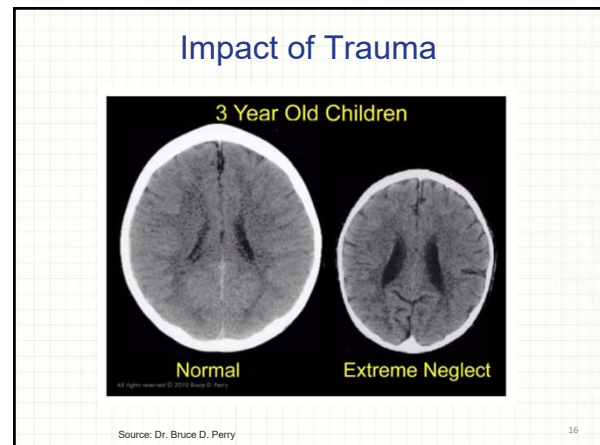
ACEs Impact Early Social/Emotional Development

- Children ages 3 to 5 who have had 2 or more ACEs are over 4 times more likely to have trouble calming themselves down, be easily distracted, and have a hard time making and keeping friends.
- More than 75% children ages 3 to 5 who have been expelled from preschool also had ACEs.

Bethels et al. Issue Brief: A national and across state profile on adverse childhood experiences among children and possibilities to heal and thrive. Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, October 2017. <http://www.cahmi.org/projects/adverse-childhood-experiences-aces/>

	All Children	White, NH*	Hispanic	Black, NH*	Asian, NH*	Other, NH*
% of all US children	51.9%	24.5%	12.7%	4.5%	6.3%	
% 1+ ACEs	48.3%	40.9%	61.4%	63.7%	25.0%	51.5%
% 2+ ACEs	23.7%	19.2%	23.9%	33.8%	6.4%	28.3%
% among children with 1+ ACEs	46.0%	27.0%	17.4%	2.4%	7.1%	
Income < 200% of Federal Poverty Level (43.7% of all US children; 58% of children with 1+ ACEs)						
% 1+ ACEs	61.9%	63.3%	57.0%	70.5%	36.4%	70.6%
% 2+ ACEs	31.9%	34.7%	25.1%	39.9%	9.0%	44.4%
Income 200-399% of Federal Poverty Level (26.8% of all US children; 25.2% of children with 1+ ACEs)						
% 1+ ACEs	43.2%	39.7%	46.8%	59.1%	24.8%	50.7%
% 2+ ACEs	19.0%	17.2%	19.8%	29.4%	7.0%	24.5%
Income ≥ 400% of Federal Poverty Level (29.5% of all US children; 17.0% of children with 1+ ACEs)						
% 1+ ACEs	26.4%	24.4%	35.5%	41.2%	14.3%	27.3%
% 2+ ACEs	9.2%	8.6%	12.1%	14.1%	3.6%	10.5%

*Non-Hispanic



What infants and young children may not have words, but adolescents can give insight

In therapy sessions, children use art to describe their lives. "Children in a Violent Society," Edited by Joy D. Osofsky, The Guilford Press.

Adolescents teach us that...

Here are ways that youth have described the impact of violence in their lives:

- I don't know who to trust anymore.
- I'm afraid all the time. On edge...like something's going to happen to me and I can't be caught off guard.
- I have to watch what's going on around me when I'm out in the neighborhood.
- I'll do anything to stay safe. That's why I carry a gun or knife, like my friends do.
- I don't expect to graduate school. I'll probably die young anyway.
- Yeah, being in a gang makes me feel safe. But now they want me to get back at somebody in another gang...What happens then?
- If I stay in my house I feel safe...but who knows, someone could break in or bullets could come flying through the window.
- I worry most about my little brother and sister getting shot.
- My friends say I'm different since the shooting.
- It's hard for me to sleep because I have nightmares about that fight.
- Sometimes thoughts pop up in my head and I'm right back to the night my world changed.
- Sometimes I can see, feel, smell, and hear the whole thing going down again.
- It's hard for me to pay attention in class or doing my homework.
- I'm "out of it" all the time...but I need to focus on surviving so I won't be shot.
- My stomach and head always hurt, even though the doc says I'm good.
- I'm more tempted to get drunk or high to numb it all.
- I feel angry even when nobody is messing with me.
- I get jumpy or nervous at the smallest things or little sounds.
- Just can't stop thinking about all the violence, how it's never going to end and that I can't help my family stay safe.

www.nctsn.org/sites/default/files/resources/fact-sheet/community_violence_reactions_and_actions_in_dangerous_times.pdf

9th Annual Early Childhood Mental Health Conference – We Can't Wait!

CYW ACE-Q Teen SR (13-19 yo) @ Center for Youth Wellness 2015

Please DO NOT mark or indicate which specific statements apply to you. ☐

Section 1: At any point since you were born...

- Your parents or guardians were separated or divorced
- You lived with a household member who served time in jail or prison
- You lived with a household member who was depressed, mentally ill or attempted suicide
- You knew or heard household members hurt or threaten to hurt each other
- A household member was at, involved, humiliated, or put you down in a way that scared you (if a household member acted in a way that made you afraid that you might be physically hurt)
- Someone touched your private parts or asked you to touch their private parts in a sexual way that was unwanted, against your will, or made you feel uncomfortable
- More than once, you went without food, clothing, a place to live, or had no one to protect you
- Someone pushed, grabbed, slapped or threw something at you OR you were hit so hard that you were injured or had marks
- You lived with someone who had a problem with drinking or using drugs
- You often felt unprotected, unsafe and/or unprotected

Section 2: At any point since you were born...

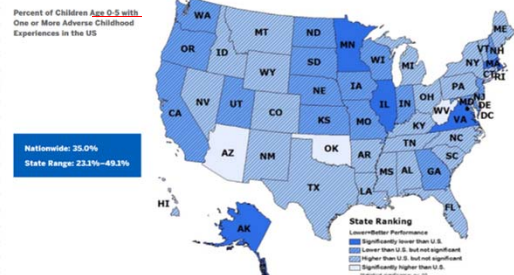
- You have been in foster care
- You have experienced harassment or bullying at school
- You have lived with a parent or guardian who died
- You have been separated from your primary caregiver through deportation or immigration
- You have had a serious medical procedure or life threatening illness
- You have often seen or heard violence in the neighborhood or in your school neighborhood
- You have been detained, arrested or incarcerated
- You have often been treated badly because of race, sexual orientation, place of birth, disability or religion
- You have experienced verbal or physical abuse or threats from a romantic partner (i.e. boyfriend or girlfriend)

Section 3: Of the statements in section 2, HOW MANY apply to you? Write the total number in the box.

19

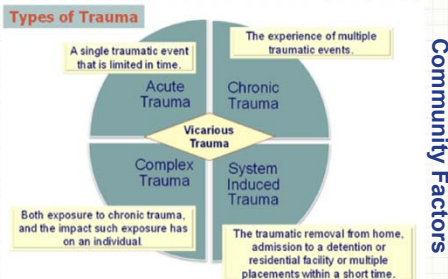
Who has ACEs?

- more than 46% of US youth (34 million children) have 1 ACE and 20% have 2+ ACEs



Types of Trauma

Environmental Factors



21

Reflection



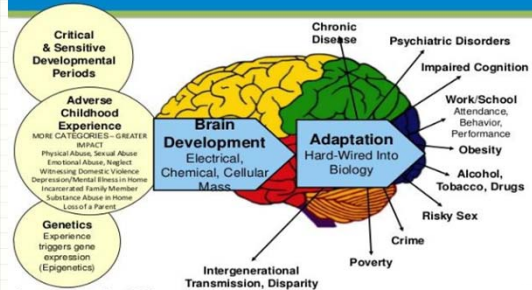
22

Goal #2

Examine how repeated exposure to community violence can influence the formation of positive and trusting relationships necessary for children to explore their environment and develop a secure sense of self

23

Lifespan Impacts of ACEs



24

Polyvagal Theory (Porges, 1995, 2001, 2009)

SAFETY	DANGER	LIFE THREAT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Engagement • Optimal Arousal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hyper arousal • Flight/Fight, Rage, Panic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hypo arousal • Freeze, Dissociation

25

Developmental Disruption

Safety Zone 1 - "Optimal State"

- Able to receive input
- Able to use logical reasoning and thinking
- Able to use effective and appropriate communication

Ample time to provide intervention services.

Danger Zone 2 - "Threatened State"

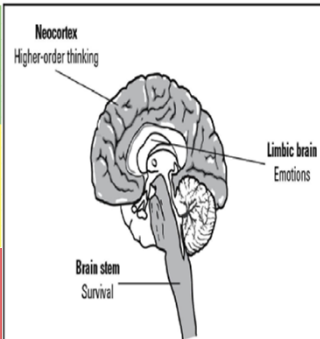
- Stress arousal
- Emotions are beginning to overcome logical thinking
- Output and input is blurred

Ample time for patience and listening

Life Threat Zone 3 - "Shut Down State"

- Complete emotional takeover
- Unable to receive input
- Unable to control output


Ample time for calming techniques



26

Question

- What does it look like, how do infants and young children "tell" you they are traumatized?



27

Behaviors Associated with Early Childhood Trauma



<p>Ages: 0-2 years old</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dysregulated eating Sleeping patterns Developmental regression Irritability, sadness, anger Poor appetite; low weight Increased separation anxiety; clinginess 	<p>Ages: 3-6 years old</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased aggression Somatic symptoms Sleep difficulties/nightmares Increased separation anxiety New fears Increased distractibility/high activity level Increased withdrawal/apathy Developmental regression
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NICTSN.org/earlychildhoodtrauma

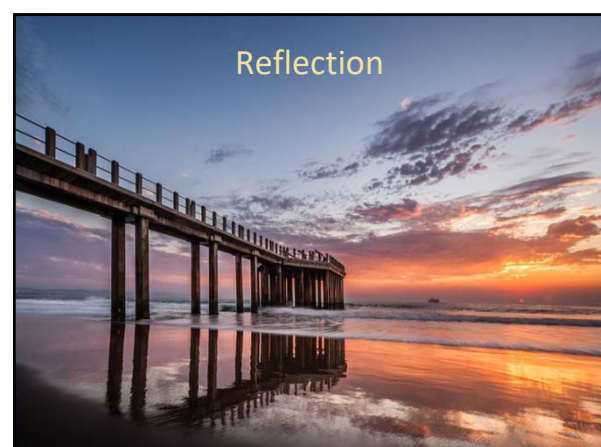
28

Question

- How might parent/caregiver respond or interpret the behavior?

29



Goal #3
Strategies to positively support children's social/emotional development after exposure to community violence

Building Resilience



When trauma comes to our attention...

- Parent asks
- Child's behavior or symptoms
- Provider asks



Responding to the Family Brief Intervention

Educate about signs and symptoms trauma related stress/disorders

Control what can be controlled:

- avoid repetitive graphic images and sounds (tv, radio, social media)
- Provide accurate information at the appropriate developmental level

Allow for play/talk about traumatic events

Enrich home environment to promote sense of security

- emotionally available and responsive caregiving
- routines, routines, routines

Guidance: Personal Safety

- Be aware of your surroundings. Walk or drive on main, well-lit streets with lots of traffic
- Know the "hot spots" and "safe spots" in the neighborhood
- Keep your phone charged and with you, or know where to find one if you need it. Dial 911 in an emergency
- Avoid taking the same route all the time as much as possible
- Go with a friend or group (who will not put you in danger)

Identifying and Building upon Strengths - Caregiver and Child

- Competence
- Confidence
- Connection
- Character
- Contribution
- Coping
- Control

Bright Futures 4th Ed. American Academy of Pediatrics
Example Pre-visit screening form

	Things I do well as a parent	Things I would like to discuss today
Feeding my child	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Understanding what to expect next from my child	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Managing my child's behavior	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Helping my child sleep	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Creating a safe environment for my child	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Using resources in the community to help my child	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Supporting my child's speech and language development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Helping my child fit into our family/ get along with others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Helping my family handle stress	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Helping my child learn through play and be physically active	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Managing my child's moods	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Managing my child's special health care needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Kenneth R. Ginsberg. Building Resilience in Children and Teens, 3rd ed.

Universal Support - Identify and Promote Resiliency

- caring relationship
- healthy sleep routines
- responsive feeding
- responsive parenting/discipline
- reading together daily
- eating meals together
- family based problem solving

37

How to Build Resilience



38

Facilitating the Conversation

SESAME STREET in Communities

Professional Development Topics Search

Coping With Incarceration

The incarceration of a loved one can be overwhelming for both children and caregivers. Because of the feeling of stigma, it takes special effort to start important conversations and answer kids' questions. But parents can comfort children and guide them through difficult moments just by talking with love and support, the family can cope with the challenges of incarceration together.



39

What is Self-Care?

"Activities and practices that we can engage in on a regular basis to reduce stress and maintain and enhance our short- and longer term health and well-being"



Source: School of Social Work : State University of New York, University at Buffalo

40

Key Concepts of Self-Care

- ❖ To care for others, we must first care for ourselves
- ❖ Reframe old messages of "indulgent" or "selfish"
- ❖ Apply Self-Care - every day and throughout the day

41

Self-Care Strategies & Techniques



Make Time for Yourself. You are Important!

Image: www.shelleymancosurgery.co.uk

42

Just Breathe Link

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RVA2N6IX2g>

43

Contact Information

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44

Resources

- ❖ Access and Crisis Line
Phone: (888) 724-7240
- ❖ 2-1-1 San Diego
Phone: 211
- ❖ San Diego Trauma-Informed Guide Team
San Diego County ACEs Connection
<http://www.acesconnection.com/g/san-diego-county-aces-connection-group>



45

A Collective Impact



And Many More...