

Working Together: The Role of Development in Our Work

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WCW 2018

Introduction

- Me
- Us

The Big “Why”

I believe that if you understand
development and know what happened
to a child and when, you can help repair
most troubled functions.

I also believe that this requires close
personal relationships to aid the
IMPLICIT and EXPLICIT learning

Development in the first 5 years
of life

We are very lucky

- Lots of knowledge about development
- Better integration of this knowledge across different fields

Some insight into development

- In utero development is controlled by our DNA and our mother's body's environment
- Early childhood development is controlled by our DNA and our experiences
- We are terrifically responsive beings
 - Whatever experiences are stimulated in us in a repetitive manner and what ever functions are exercised in a rhythmic and repeated way stimulate the formation and strengthen of nerve connections and brain circuits

Baby's neurodevelopment

- 1st year of life
 - Eat, sleep, and make brain connections
- Start with billions of brain cells, each with few connections
 - By age 3, each cell can have thousands of connections with other cells

Neurodevelopmental Processes

- If a cell is not stimulated, it will likely be reabsorbed
- The connections that are stimulated, grow more connections
 - These connections start to integrate parts of the brain (excitement in one area excites another)
 - Motor function
 - Sensory experiences
 - Emotional experiences

Integration leads to Influence

Influence becomes mutual
regulation*

In a “good enough” environment...

- Sensitive responsiveness
- Mutually confirming interactions

- Brain size is normal
- “Wires” connect to the right spots
- Each circuit has the right “dial” to turn it up or down as needed

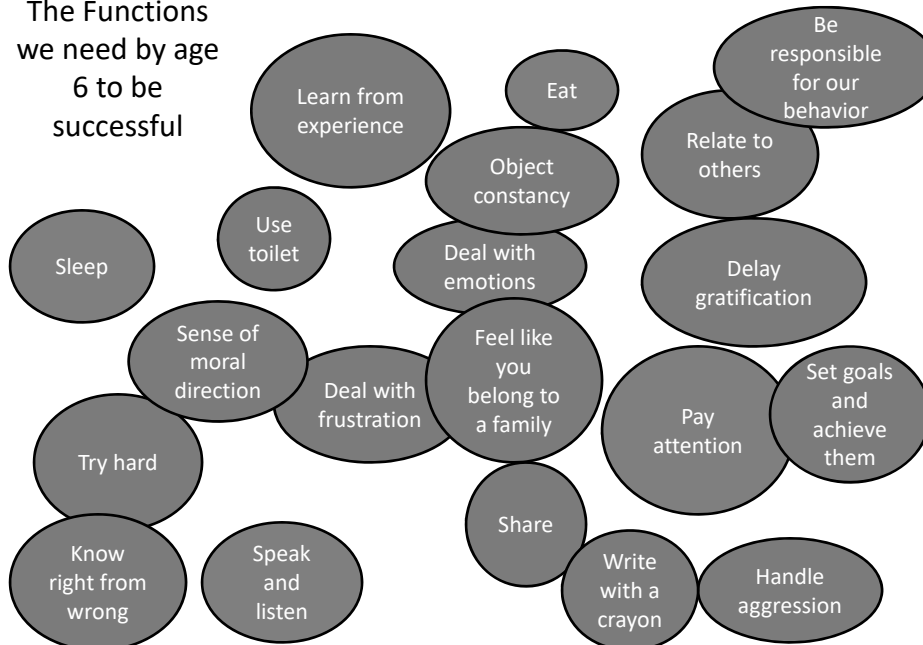
EARLY RISKS LEAD TO INTERRUPTION OF DEVELOPMENT*

First 6 years of life “build the foundation” for the
functions we need to do well.

Interruptions in development impair these basic
functions and this leads to problems

Some of the functions can be restored, some cannot

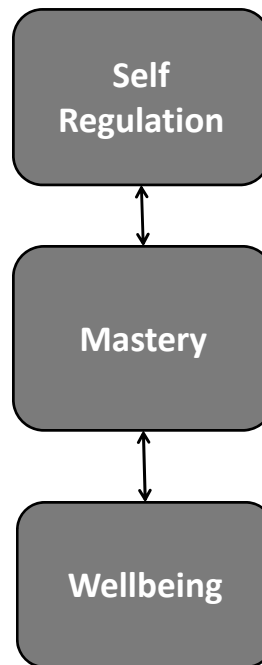
The Functions
we need by age
6 to be
successful



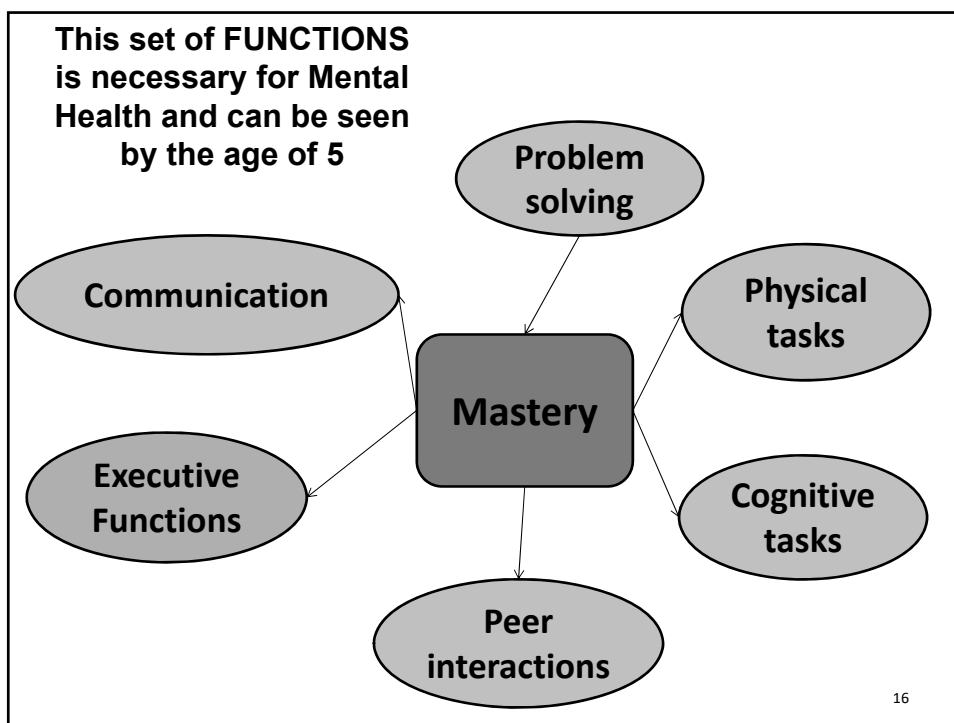
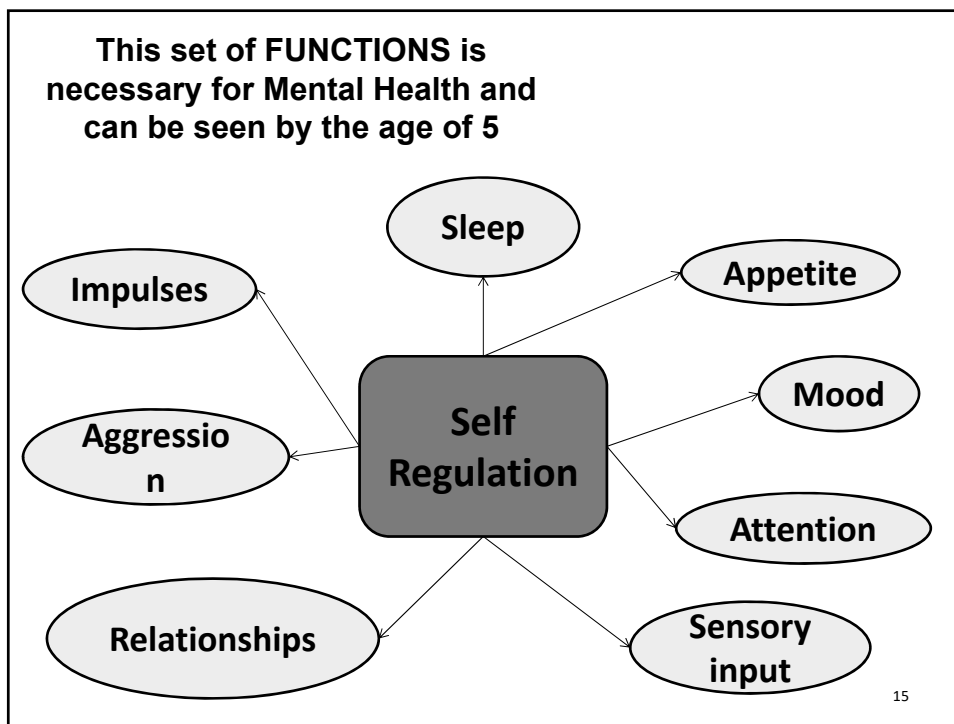
**THE FUNCTIONS WE NEED BY AGE 6 TO
DO WELL AT SCHOOL, AT HOME, AND
IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD CAN BE
“CHUNKED” INTO 3 BASIC CATEGORIES***

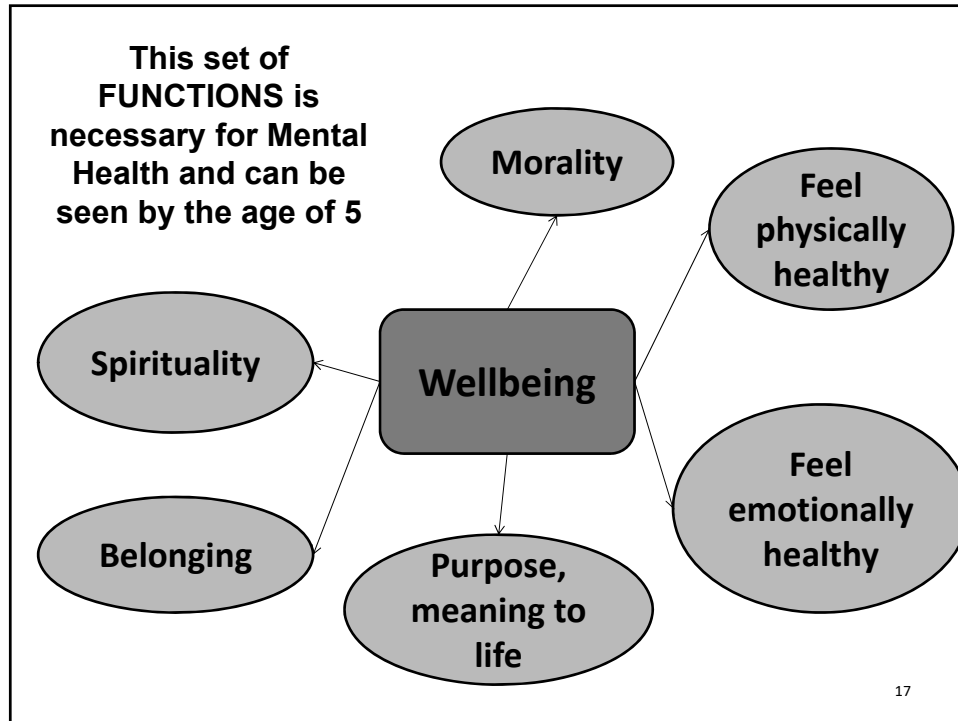
**Self-Regulation
Mastery (+Executive Function)
Wellbeing**

**These 3
FUNCTIONS are
necessary for
Mental Health
and can be seen by
the age of 5**

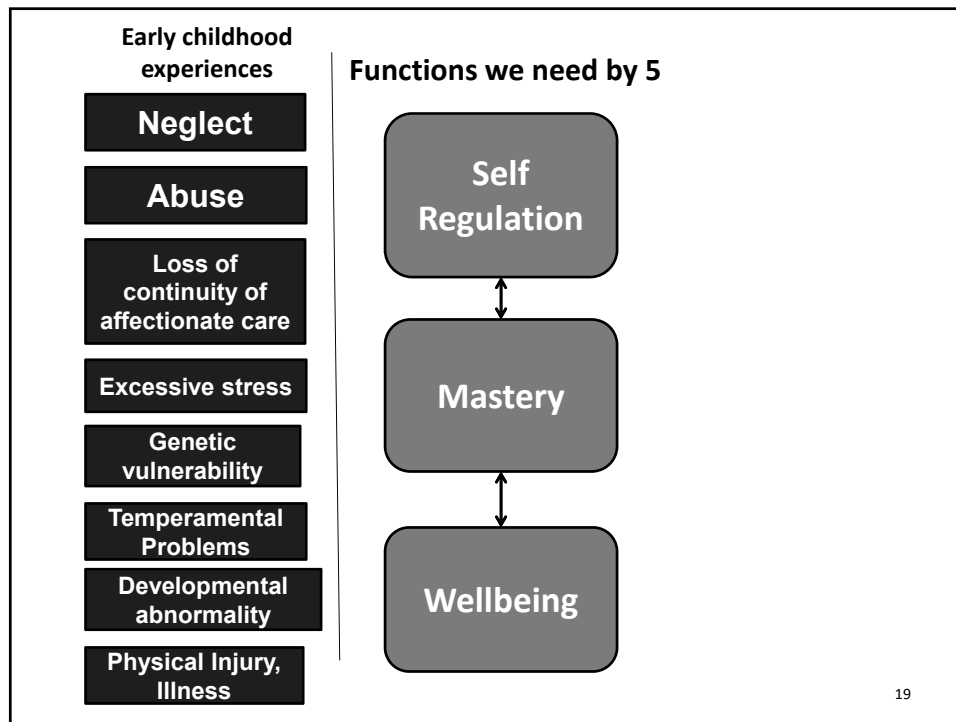


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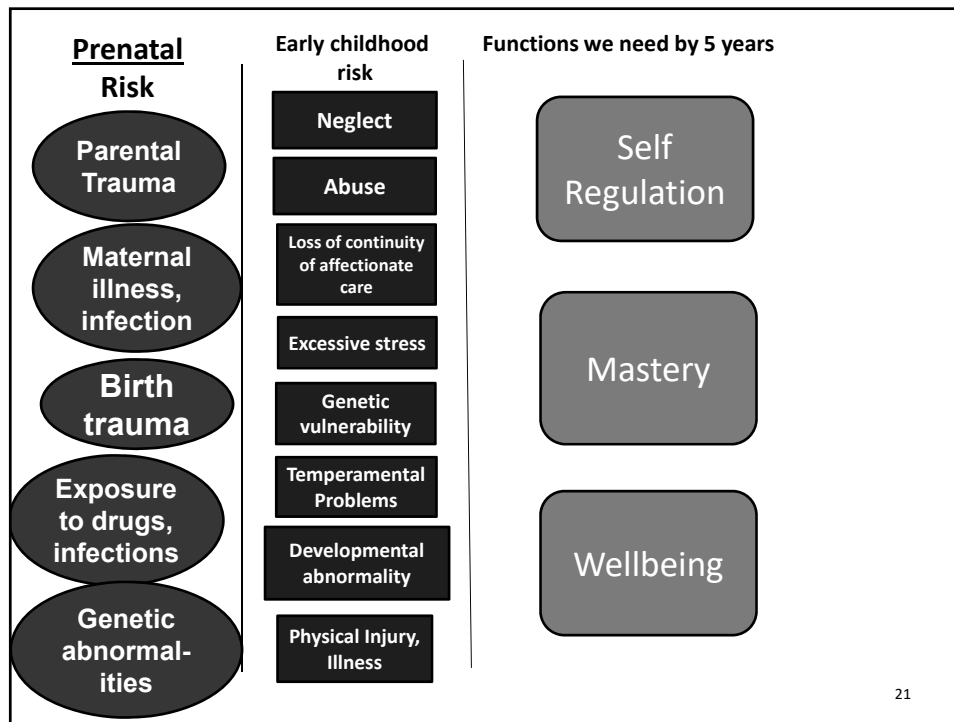




**WHAT CAN HAPPEN, BEFORE AGE 5,
TO INTERFERE WITH THESE 3
FUNCTIONS?***

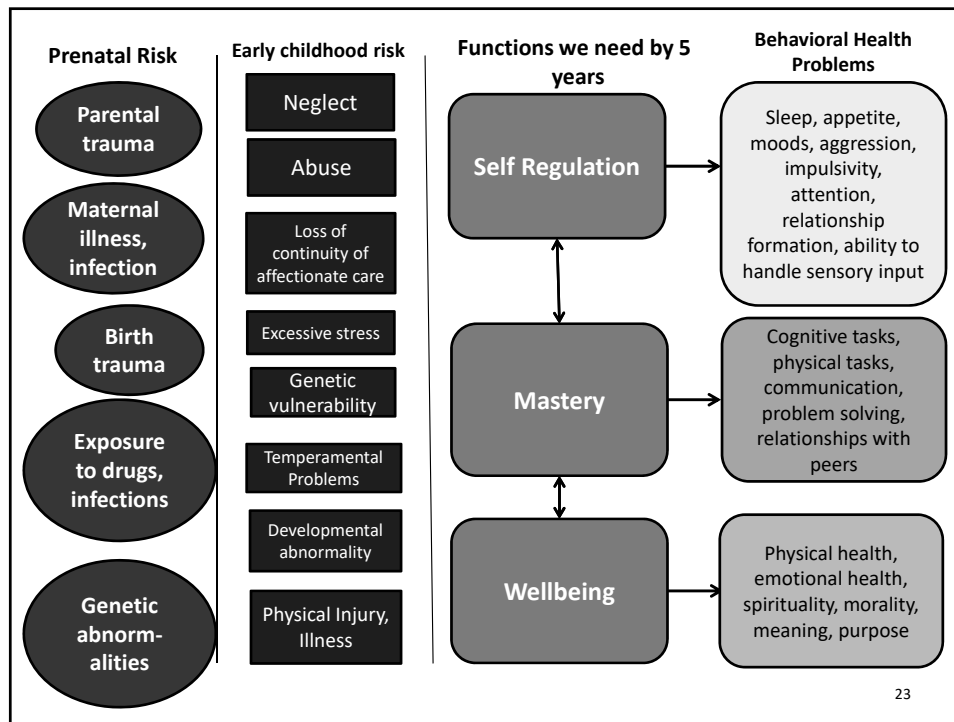


There are even things that can happen before we are born, that impact our MH FUNCTIONS*



Most of the troubles children have by the age of 5 have to do with difficulties related to these areas.*

What are the specific functions that get disrupted?



What is our role when there are problems?

- Essential elements
 - Relationship formation
 - Sensitive responsiveness
 - Mutually confirming interactions
 - Accurate understanding of the abilities and disabilities of the child
 - Specific interventions focused on the targets

An Example

- Strabismus, poor vision
- Difficulties sleeping, picky eater, always on the “go”
 - Tired his parents out
- Aggressive when frustrated
- Poor articulation
- Anxious

The Help We Can Each Give

- Early care providers
- Early education providers
- Clinical intervention
- Pediatric intervention
- Speech and Language Therapist
- Occupational Therapist

How can we work together to help a
child grow and develop normally?

Working together

- None of us has all the answers
- None of us can do all of the interventions
- Each of us is an expert at what we do
- Each of us can learn from the other
- Sensitive responsiveness to each other
- Mutually confirming interactions with each other