DIGITAL DIALOGUE
TRAUMA & RECOVERY

Balancing ACEs with HOPE
The Role of Positive Experiences in Child Development
Join the National Conversation on Child Abuse and Neglect

Speakers

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- Reviewers: Cohen (CSSP), Dreyfus (Alliance), Klevens (CDC), Langford (CSSP), Tait (AAP), Whitaker (Temple University)
- In memory of Paula Duncan, MD who inspired this work
Experience shapes brain growth and development

Especially during rapid periods of brain growth and
- early childhood
- adolescence

Adverse experiences can derail healthy development
Adverse Childhood Experiences Lead to Poor Health

- Children react to their environments
- Severe, chronic, unbuffered stress leads to changes in the child’s physiology
- e.g., obesity, high blood pressure, poor decision-making
- Trauma-informed treatment

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And . . . Think About Someone You Know

**Adversity** is only one aspect of a child's experience
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Learning About the Health Effects of Positive Experiences (HOPE)

- What are the **short-term** effects of positive parenting practices and maternal health?
- What are the **long-term** effects of positive experiences?
- What do American parents **already** believe and do?
- What about our larger **systems** can promote positive childhood experiences?
What are the short-term effects of parenting practices and maternal health?

- **Home** environments can promote child wellbeing
  - Sharing meals
  - Spending time together
  - Parent participation in children’s activities

- **Maternal health** is tightly associated with child wellbeing

- Applies normally developing children, and those with special health needs

Resource: www.childhealthdata.org
What are the long-term effects of positive experiences on mitigating the effects of ACEs?

Adults with >3 ACEs Selected Positive Childhood Experiences Reduced Rates of Depression (all p<0.05).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experience</th>
<th>% with Depression</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family stood by me*</td>
<td>27.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felt supported by friends*</td>
<td>31.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sense of belonging at high school*</td>
<td>29.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoyed community traditions*</td>
<td>27.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Jones et al., WI BRFSS 2016
What do Americans already believe and do?

Source: Yougov.com national survey, courtesy of JoAnn Klevens, CDC
The Four Positive Experiences that Matter

1. **Living, playing, and learning** in safe, stable, protective and equitable environments

2. **Engaging** in constructive social / civic activities that develop a sense of connectedness

3. **Learning** social and emotional competencies

4. **Being** in nurturing supportive relationships

Source: Sege and Browne. Responding to ACEs with HOPE: Health Outcomes from Positive Experiences. Academic Pediatrics 2017; 17:S79-S85
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Living, Playing, & Learning Environments

Policies and Practices

- Safe outdoor space for play
- Equitable support for high quality early care and education
- Positive school environments
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Engaging in Activities that Develop a Sense of Connectedness

Ideas:

- Personal support for participation
- Family fun days
- Join activities with churches, community groups, etc.
- Ask parents for their ideas

Implications for practice

- Social support for both children and adults is an essential ingredient in the creation of positive experiences
- Connect with ethnic, faith, neighborhood and occupational communities
- How can family resource centers serve as a hub for connection?
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Learning Social & Emotional Competencies

Ideas:
• Opportunities to play and learn with peers
• Give and take interactions with parents and siblings
• Opportunities for art, drama, music, and physical activity with others

Implications for practice
• Training and support for program staff
• Materials (books, etc.) to support this idea
• Ongoing training and support for early child educators
• Links with other organizations that offer early childhood programming
Being in Supportive Relationships

Parents can create positive experiences – *and create lifelong memories of supportive relationships*

**Ideas**

- Interactive activities: talk, play, read, sing
- Include fathers, grandparents, other adults who parent the child
- Build relationships with other children [and their parents]

There is plenty of evidence to begin now with programmatic changes that incorporate HOPE

**Resources:**
Healthychildren.org
https://www.cdc.gov/parents/essentials/
Systemic Approaches: Lessons from Research

Systems that support HOPE prevent abuse and neglect

**Ideas:**

- Help all children access needed concrete supports
- Paid parental leave supports infant attachment
- Improve access to quality early childhood education
- Helping parents protect their own mental and physical health

There is widespread awareness, and broad willingness, to support programs and ideas that prevent child abuse and neglect.
Action Steps for Workers

1. Identify the **strengths** that the parents bring with them – and help link these to promoting the positive experiences discussed today

2. Acknowledge the difficulties created by parents’ own adverse childhood experiences

3. Identify **community resources** that can help parents create positive experiences for their children

4. Understand the relationship between **community environment**, family strengths, and childhood experiences
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Resources

• Balancing Adverse Childhood Experiences with HOPE
  http://www.academicpedsjnl.net/article/S1876-2859(17)30107-9/fulltext

• The Adverse Childhood Experiences Study
  https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/acestudy

• National Survey of Children’s Health www.childhealthdata.org

• Essentials for Childhood https://www.cdc.gov/parents/essentials/
Thank You & Next Steps

- Participate in one of our other NCAPM Digital dialogues

- Download the handouts to learn more. Click on the files in the “Handouts” box on your screen.

- Do you have innovative ideas, questions or concerns about trauma and resilience? Tell us about your work. Send an e-mail to hello@CANTASD.org with “Trauma and Resilience” in the subject line.

Upcoming:

April 11th. Family Success Centers as a prevention strategy

April 18th, Engaging business and other partners in CAN prevention