

Connecting Trauma to Schoolwide Positive Behavior Support

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Attention Signal

Call and Response:



School-wide

We say... School-wide

You say... PBS



PBS

Session Outcomes

- Review the basics of brain development and be able to describe how trauma can negatively impact this development.
- Review the body's physiological response to trauma and explain the costs associated with persistent activation of these systems.
- Discuss how function-based thinking and effective classroom practices can create a foundation for trauma-informed practices.

Connection Activity

Make sure that you have 4 post it notes.

Write down the name of a very close loved one.

Write down your favorite activity.

Write down your favorite place to go.

Think about a secret that you have that may be embarrassing or that you may be ashamed to the point very few, if any, know about it. Write down a symbol on the last card that represents your response, just something that will trigger you to remember.

The meaning of trauma

Importance, Prevalence, and Definition

Our Reality

- In 2014 there were 5,297 substantiated reports of child abuse and neglect in Missouri.¹
- In a national sample (2009), 17-year-old age cohort, 1 out of 5 girls and 1 out of 20 boys had experienced a sexual assault.²
- In a national sample (2009), approximately 2 of 5 adolescents (38%) reported ever witnessing 1 or more serious incidents of community violence, and 1 in 10 (9%) had witnessed serious violence between parents or caregivers.²
- In 2011/12 almost 50% of children ages 0-17 experienced one or more adverse events (traumatic event).³

Why should we know about trauma?

- Trauma is highly correlated with poor health and social outcomes.
 - **Childhood trauma victims are more likely to develop physical ailments as adults and have a much shorter lifespan.**
 - **Childhood trauma victims are more likely to engage in risky and illegal behaviors.**
 - **Childhood trauma victims are more likely to struggle with friendships and romantic relationships.**

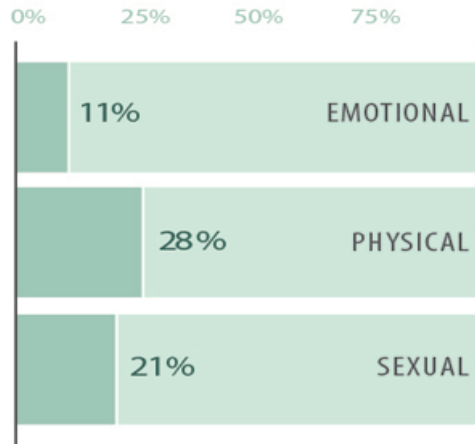
Understanding trauma

- Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study

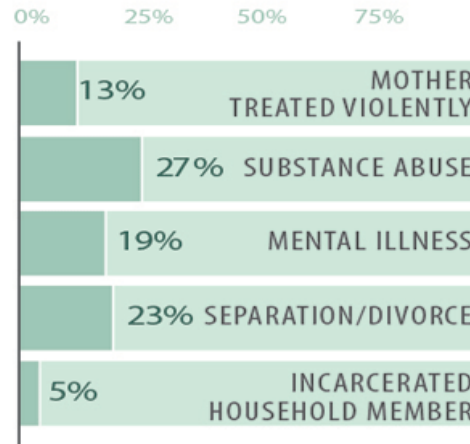
TYPES of ACES

The ACE study looked at three categories of adverse experience: **childhood abuse**, which included emotional, physical, and sexual abuse; **neglect**, including both physical and emotional neglect; and **household challenges**, which included growing up in a household where there was substance abuse, mental illness, violent treatment of a mother or stepmother, parental separation/divorce or had a member of the household go to prison. Respondents were given an **ACE score** between 0 and 10 based on how many of these 10 types of adverse experience to which they reported being exposed.

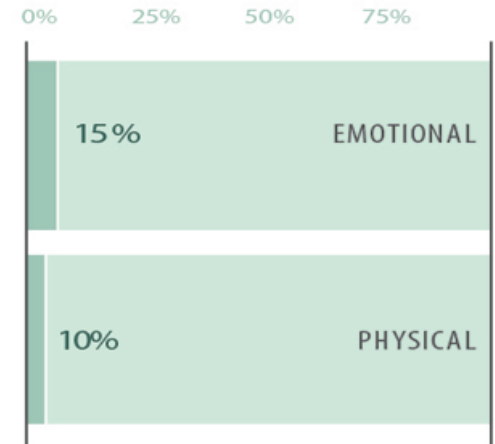
ABUSE



HOUSEHOLD CHALLENGES



NEGLECT



[What is your ACEs Score?](#)

What are the effects of trauma?

ACES can have lasting effects on....



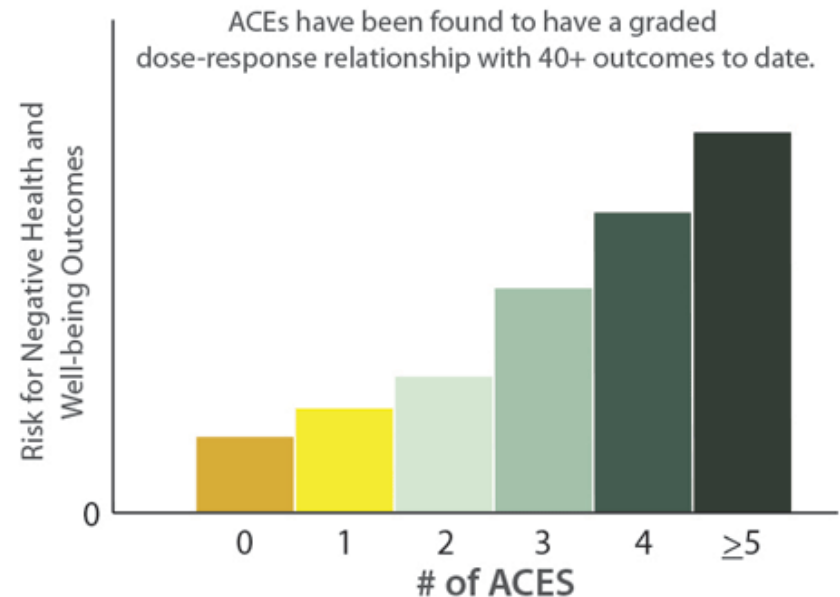
Health (obesity, diabetes, depression, suicide attempts, STDs, heart disease, cancer, stroke, COPD, broken bones)



Behaviors (smoking, alcoholism, drug use)



Life Potential (graduation rates, academic achievement, lost time from work)



*This pattern holds for the 40+ outcomes, but the exact risk values vary depending on the outcome.

What are the effects of trauma?

HOW *do* ACES AFFECT OUR SOCIETY?

LIFE EXPECTANCY

People with six or more ACEs died nearly **20 years earlier on average** than those without ACEs.



ECONOMIC TOLL

The CDC estimates that the lifetime costs associated with child maltreatment at **\$124 billion**.



What is trauma?



“Traumatic events are extraordinary, not because they occur rarely, but rather because they overwhelm the ordinary human adaptations to life”
– Judith Herman, Trauma and Recovery

What is trauma?

According to SAMHSA (2014):

*Individual trauma results from an **event**, series of events, or set of circumstances that is **experienced** by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or life threatening and that has lasting adverse **effects** on the individual's functioning and mental, physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being.*

What is trauma?

- Acute Trauma
 - Usually a one-time event (e.g., accident, natural disaster)
- Complex (Chronic) Trauma
 - According to NCTSN: *The term complex trauma describes both children's exposure to multiple traumatic events, often of an invasive, interpersonal nature, and the wide-ranging, long-term impact of this exposure.*

Multiple traumatic events happening to the same person

OR

Multiple instances of the same traumatic event


OR

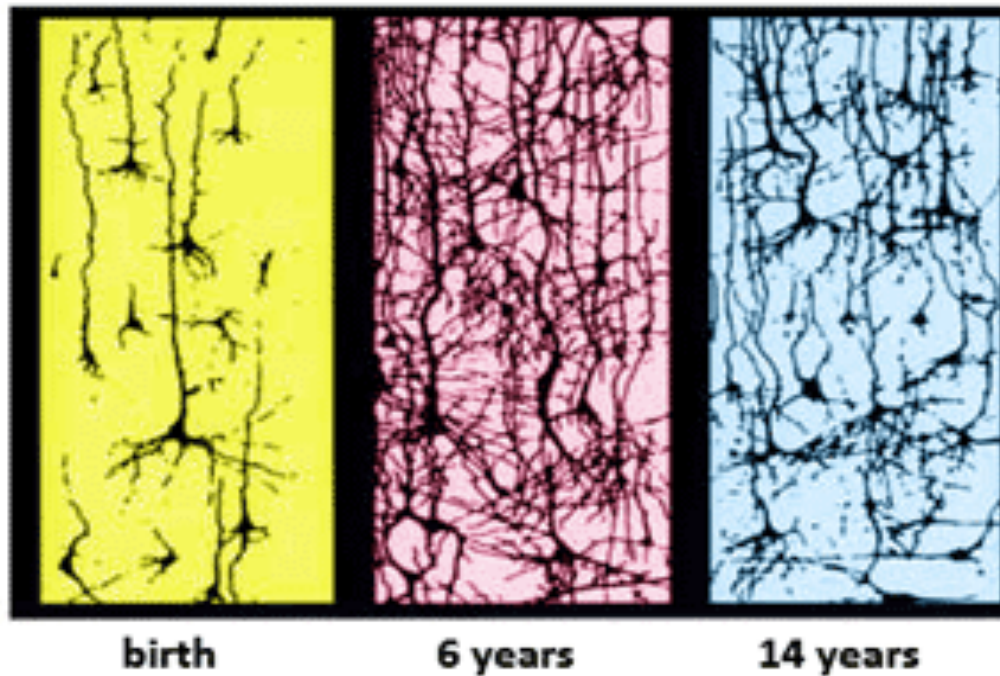
Environmental or community trauma

The Impact of Trauma

Brain architecture

Experience Shapes Brain Architecture by Over-Production Followed by Pruning

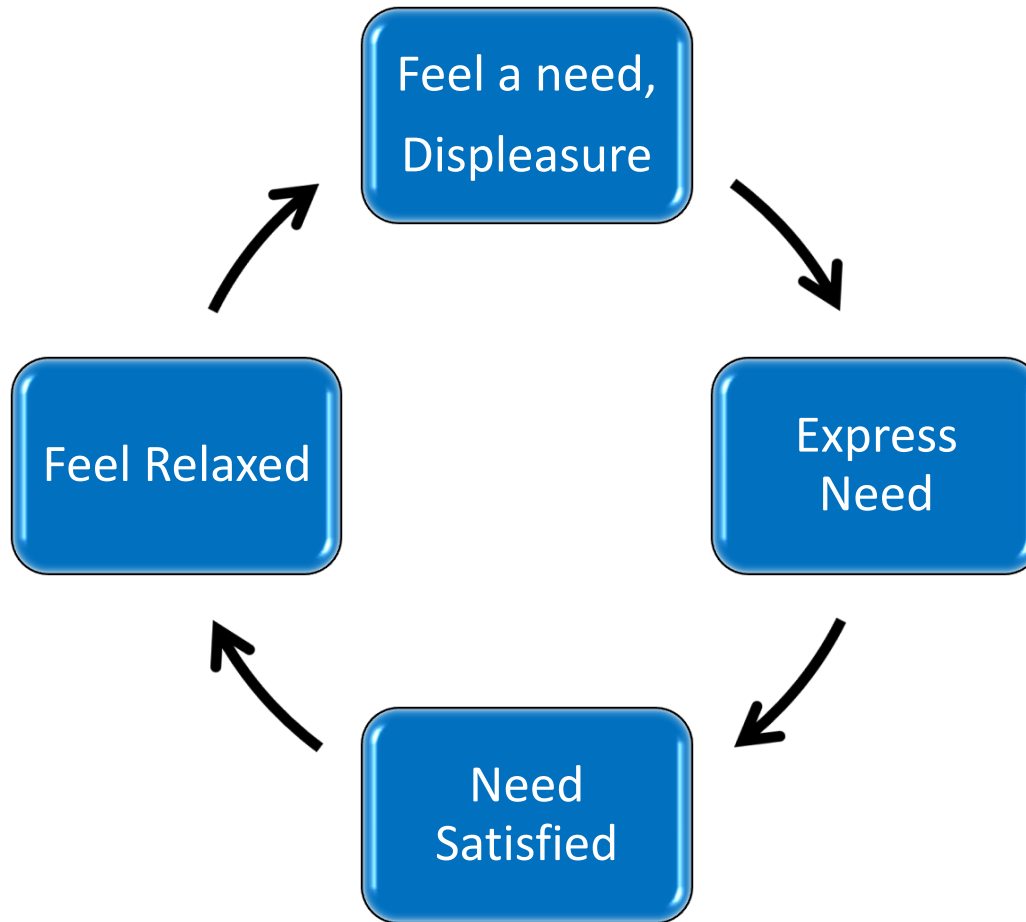
Center on the Developing Child  HARVARD UNIVERSITY



Source: Shonkoff, J. P. (2008) **

- Fixed amount of neurons
- Period of rapid proliferation
- Pruning
- Experiences shape connections

Developing neural connections

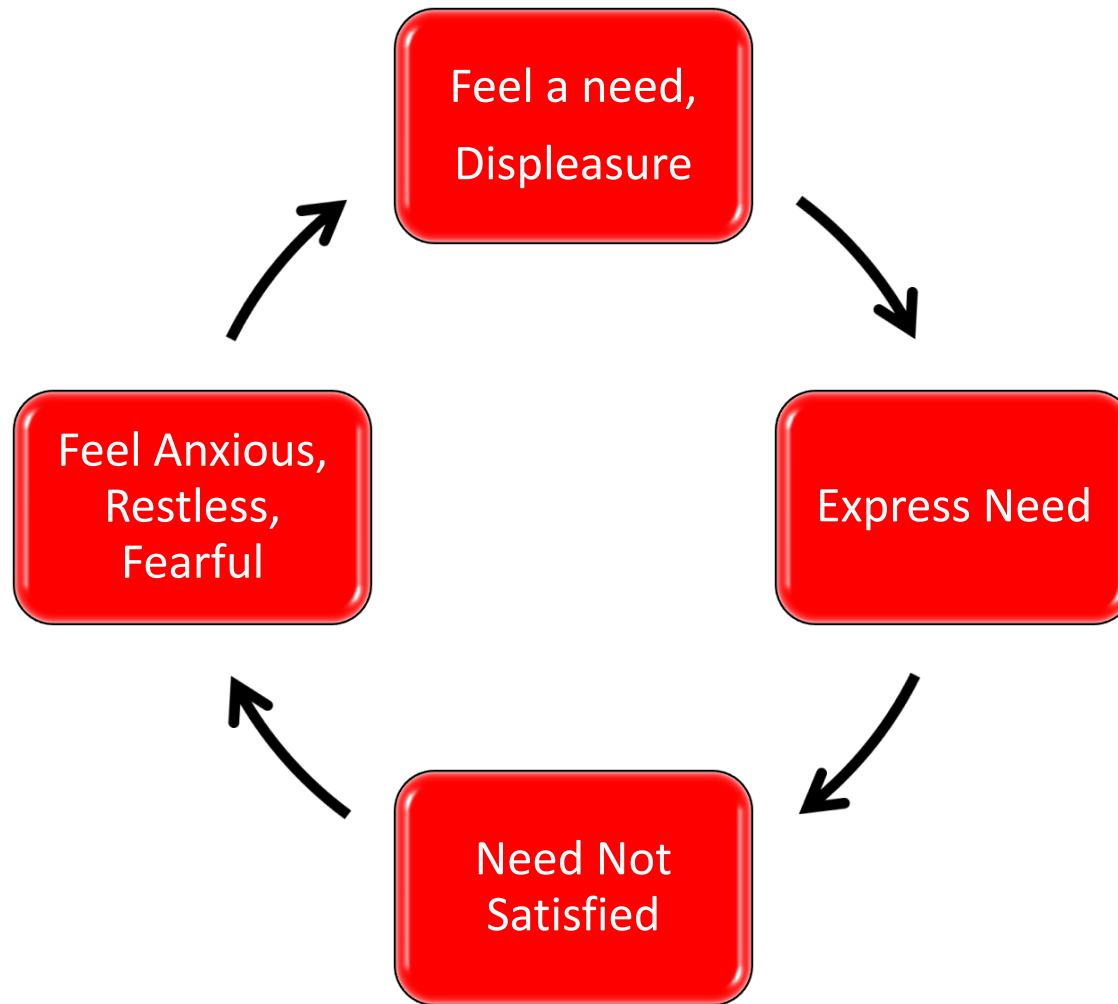


Impact of Relationships

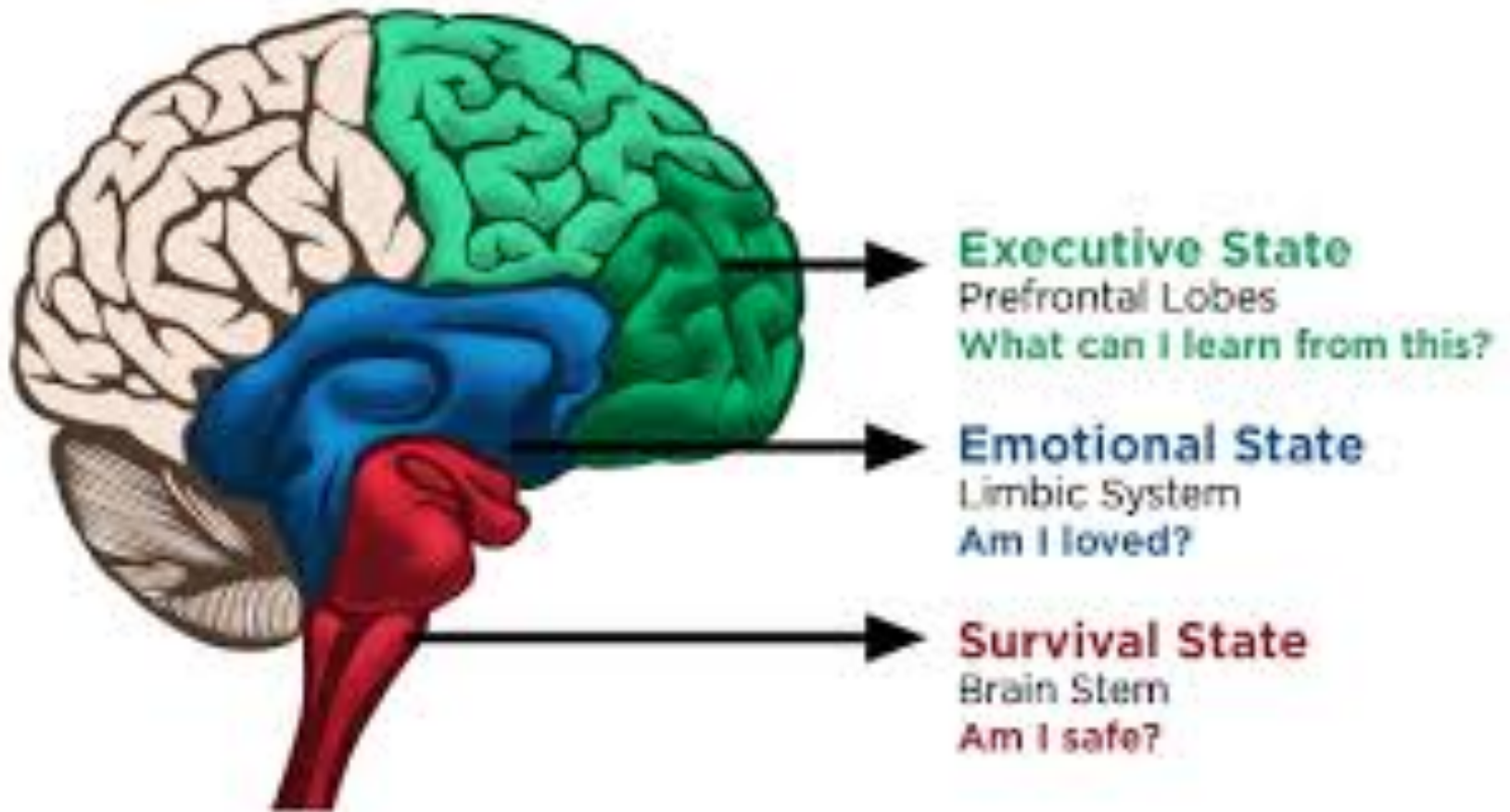


- Relationships are developed through the emotional bond between the child & primary caregiver. It is through this relationship we learn to:
 - Regulate emotions/“self soothe”
 - Develop trust in others
 - Freely explore our environment
 - Understand ourselves & others
 - Understand that we can impact the world around us

Developing neural connections

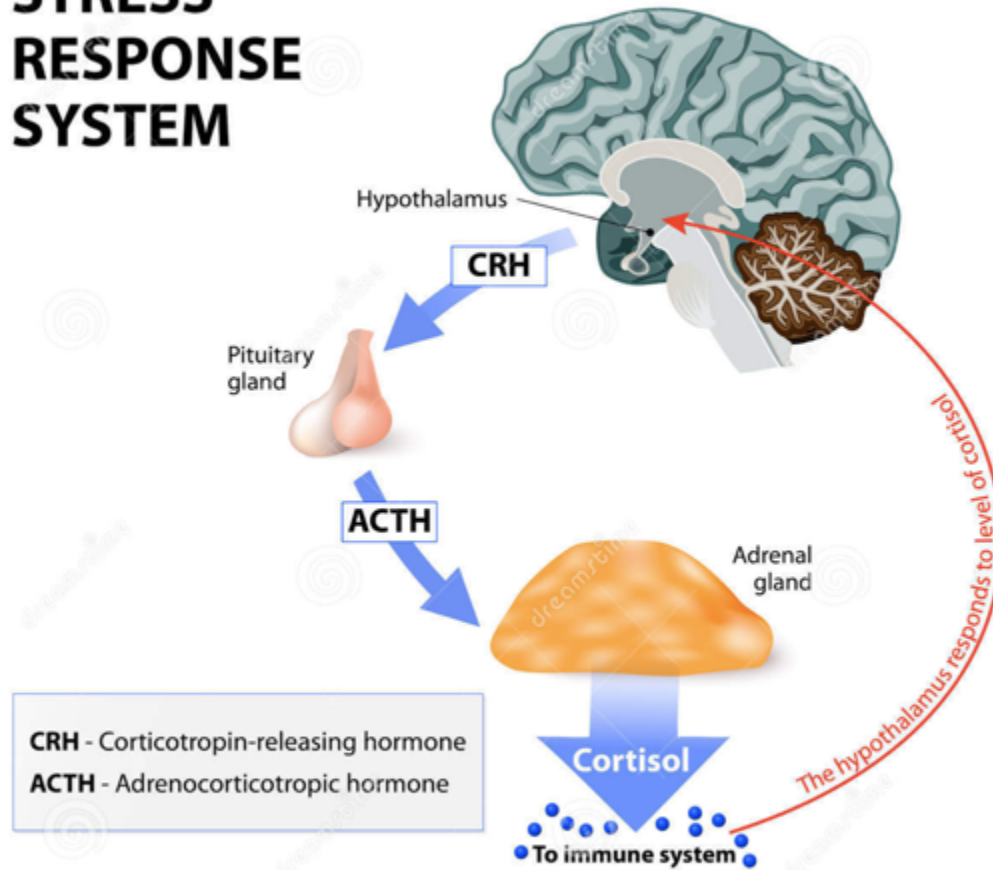


Brain anatomy



Physiological response to stress

STRESS RESPONSE SYSTEM



- Amygdala perceives threat
- Hypothalamus responds to amygdala; releases intermediary hormones
- Adrenaline & Cortisol are ultimately released



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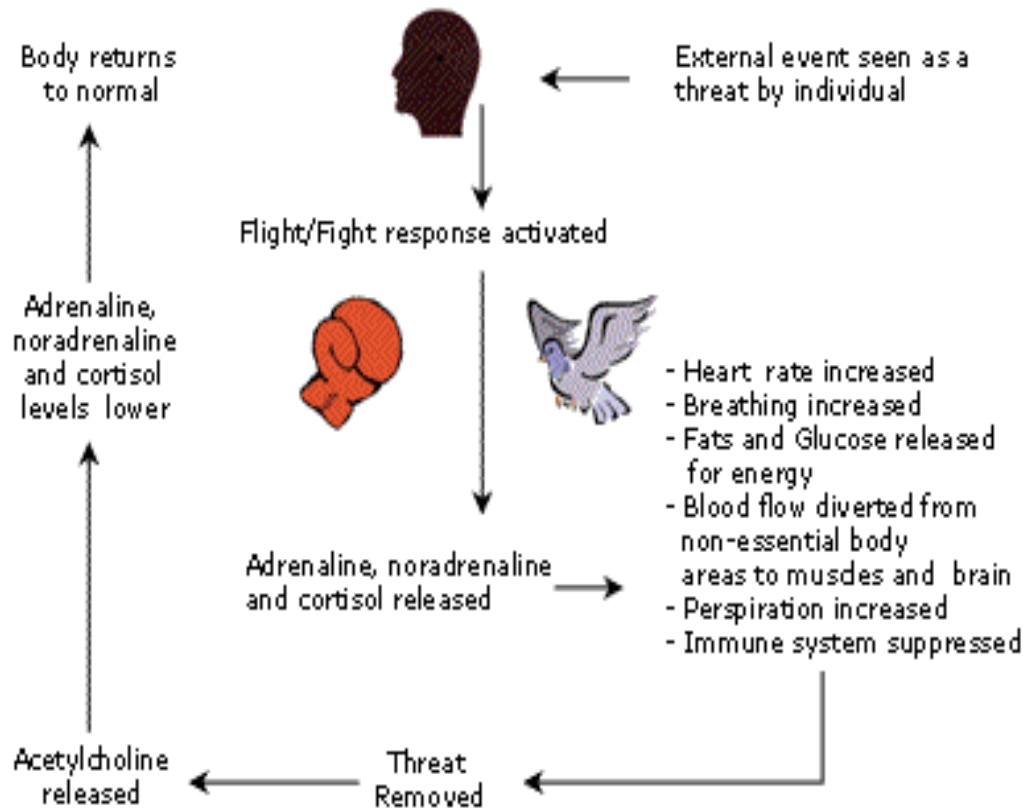
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MO SW-PBS & MTSS:

BRIDGING THE GAPS

Physiological response to stress



Fight: Physical Arousal

- Aggression
- Trouble concentrating
- Hyperactivity

Flight: Withdrawal and Escape

- Social isolation
- Avoidance of others
- Running away

Freeze: Stilling and Constricting

- Constricted emotional expression
- Stilling behavior
- Over compliance and denial of needs



Stored early implicit memories can cause

AMYGDALA HIGHJACK

Without the person's conscious knowledge

SURVIVAL TRUMPS EVERYTHING!

Allostatic load

Acute Stress Response

- increase blood glucose
- increased blood pressure
- modulation of immune response
- reduced motivation for rewarding stimuli
- vigilance and arousal
- consolidation of aversive memories

Effect of Persistent Stress

- excessive insulin secretion, type II diabetes
- hypertension, coronary heart disease
- vulnerability to inflammatory diseases
- loss of interest, depression
- hyperarousal and anxiety disorders
- preponderance of aversive memories (PTSD)

Neurological Effects

Increase

- Size of amygdala (increased interpretation of stimuli as fearful)
- Fight/Flight/Freeze
- Startle response
- Stress hormones (cortisol levels)
- Inflammation
- Blood pressure, resting heart rate, respiration
- Weight gain
- Trembling/shaking

Decrease

- Amount of stress required to trigger a stress response
- Hippocampal volume
- Corpus callosum volume
- Cortex volume
- Short-term memory
- Verbal recall
- Calming system
- Ability to form attachments
- Ability to regulate mood and affect

Felter (2014)

Triggers

Seeing, feeling, hearing, smelling something that reminds us of past trauma

Activates the alarm system...



The response is as if there is current danger.

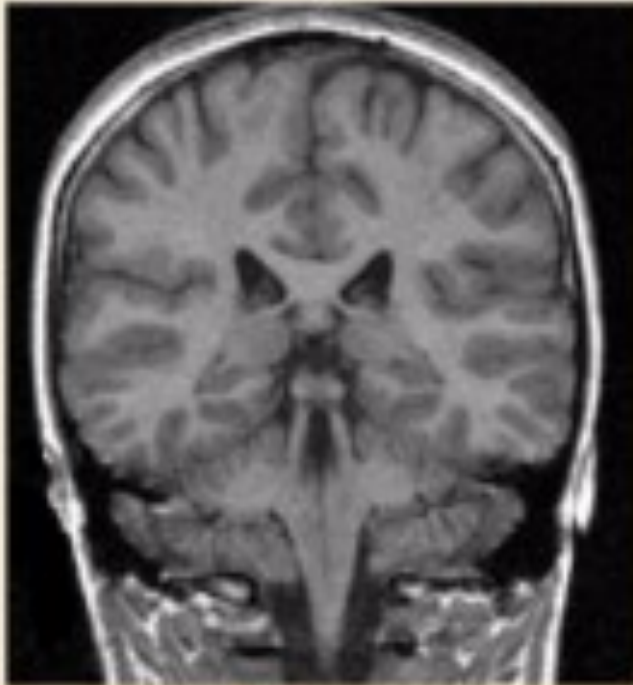
Thinking brain automatically shuts off in the face of triggers.

Past and present danger become confused.

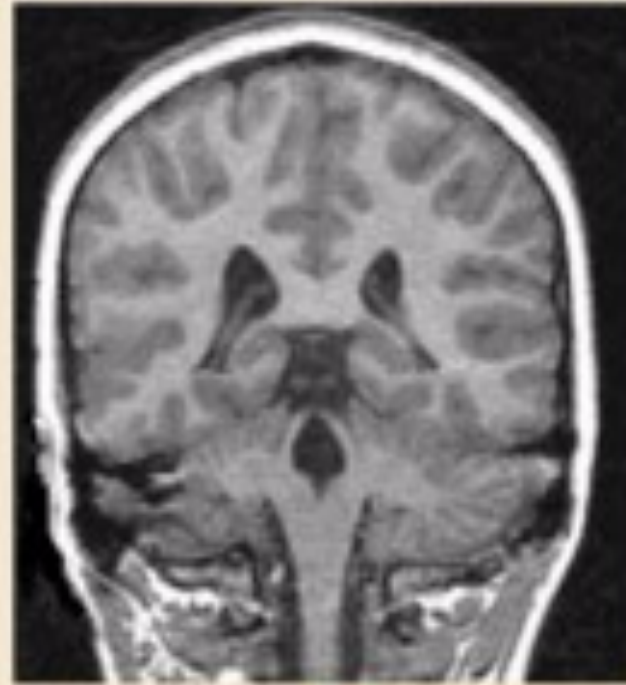
Toxic Responses

Impact of Trauma on the Brain

Healthy Brain



Brain of Abused Child



DE BELLE ET AL., 1992

56

Application to SW-PBS

Under The Surface



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AZ-pU7ozt3g>

“Be kind. Everyone you meet is fighting a hard battle”

– T.H. Thompson & John Watson

Would It?

If you had knowledge of another person's experiences...

What they see...

What they hear...

What they feel...

Would it change the way you respond?

Changing the Question from:

What's wrong with you?
to

What happened to you?

Common Lenses

Core Principles of TIC

Safety

Trustworthiness

Choice

Collaboration

Empowerment

Five Domains of Wellbeing

Social Connectedness

Stability

Safety

Mastery

Meaningful Access to
Relevant Resources

PBIS application

Effective Classroom Practices

- Classroom Expectations
- Classroom Procedures & Routines
- Encouraging Expected Behavior
- Discouraging Inappropriate Behavior
- Active Supervision
- Opportunities to Respond
- Activity Sequencing & Choice
- Task Difficulty



PBIS application

Effective Classroom Practices

- Classroom Expectations
 - when we know what to expect, we then feel better prepared or more to handle that situation
 - maintaining clear expectations that are the same as peers, being held to different expectations can lead to a sense of “I’m not valued or the same worth as others”.

PBIS application

Effective Classroom Practices

- Classroom Procedures & Routines
 - Predictability and sharing of information can increase one's sense of safety

PBIS application

Effective Classroom Practices

- Encouraging Expected Behavior
 - increases predictability that student will have a positive adult interaction for following expected behaviors
 - increases trust and safety – providing encouragement and reinforcement throughout the day can help students feel safe.

PBIS application

Effective Classroom Practices

- Discouraging Inappropriate Behavior
 - consequences need to be done in a way that is respectful, consistent, and non-violent
 - approach this area with a positive presumption that ‘children are always doing the best that they can, working from where they are emotionally, intellectually, and developmentally right now’; avoid ‘criminalizing’ children
 - de-escalation and redirection should be the first line response
 - BE CONSISTENT
 - understand that behavior is a form of communication and that understanding what might be causing it can help prevent future problems.

PBIS application

Effective Classroom Practices

- Active Supervision
 - appropriate use can lead to help students feel an increase in safety and trust with the adult

PBIS application

Effective Classroom Practices

- Opportunities to Respond
 - can help students feel more engaged and connected with others and the content, making it more meaningful

PBIS application

Effective Classroom Practices

- Activity Sequencing & Choice
 - breaking things down into sequential steps that don't lead people to fear a negative 'snowballing' effect or things getting out of control
 - Infusion of choice can help trauma survivors feel a sense of control over their environment, which may be lacking.

PBIS application

Effective Classroom Practices

- Task Difficulty
 - mastery requires practice and sometimes false starts, but a trauma survivor may have been punished or hurt for making mistakes in the past and may feel afraid to take necessary risks
 - Breaking down plans into smaller pieces so that a positive image of self can be developed when progress is seen.

PBIS application



Effective Classroom Practices

- Classroom Expectations
- Classroom Procedures & Routines
- Encouraging Expected Behavior
- Discouraging Inappropriate Behavior
- Active Supervision
- Opportunities to Respond
- Activity Sequencing & Choice
- Task Difficulty

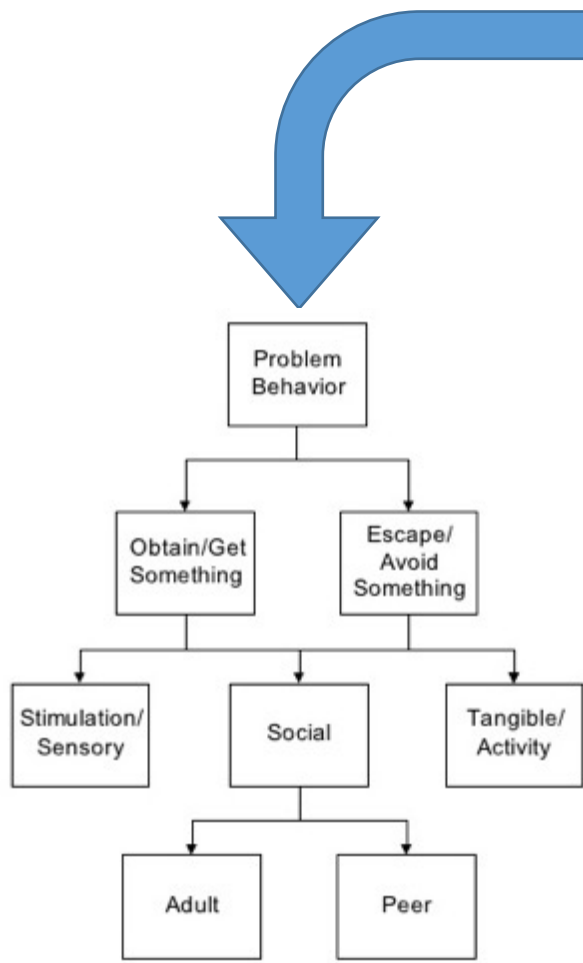
How consistently are you doing these practices?

How do you know?

Is there opportunities to increase your use of these?

What's your plan?

Function based thinking



Chad's Story



<https://vimeo.com/187759429>

This video keeps getting removed, search for 'chad trauma PSA' and you should stumble upon a working link.

What if kids are doing the best they can?

Resources

Adverse Childhood Experiences at the CDC

<https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/acestudy/>

Overview of ACEs (TEDTalk)

<http://www.educationdive.com/news/scotus-to-hear-arguments-about-learning-requirements-of-special-ed-law/433718/>

Childhood Trauma: Changing Minds

<https://changingmindsnow.org>

Missouri Department of Mental Health

<https://dmh.mo.gov/trauma/>

Bruce Perry's ChildTrauma Academy

<http://childtrauma.org>

Resources

The National Child Traumatic Stress Network

<http://www.nctsn.org>

The Search Institute
[institute.org](http://www.search-institute.org)

[http://www.search-](http://www.search-institute.org)

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
(SAMHSA) <http://www.samhsa.gov>

The Trauma and Learning Policy Initiative
<https://traumasensitiveschools.org/about-tlpi/successes/>

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction
<http://dpi.wi.gov/sspw/mental-health/trauma>

Resources

- Calmer Classrooms: A Guide to Working with Traumatized Children
http://www.ccyp.vic.gov.au/childsafetycommissioner/downloads/calmer_classrooms.pdf
- Helping Traumatized Children Learn: Supportive School Environments for Children Traumatized by Family Violence
<http://www.massadvocates.org/download-book.php>
- The Heart of Teaching & Learning: Compassion, Resiliency & Academic Success
<http://www.k12.wa.us/CompassionateSchools/HeartofLearning.aspx>

Resources

- *Fostering Resilient Learners: Strategies for Creating Trauma-Sensitive Classrooms*, ASCD (2016)
- *Supporting & Educating Traumatized Students: A Guide for School-Based Professionals*, Oxford University Press (2013)
- *Trauma-Sensitive Schools: Learning Communities Transforming Children's Lives*, Teachers College Press (2016)