



A national campaign from the
Office of Head Start

#HeadStartHeals Campaign

Examining the Effects of Toxic Stress and Trauma on the Mental Health of Young Children

**April 30, 2020
1:00- 2:30 pm ET**

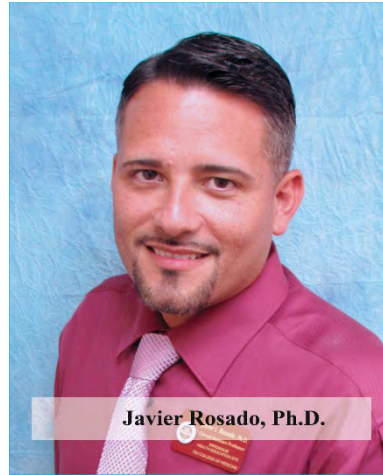
*Promoting empathy through trauma-informed and
healing focused practices*



#HeadStartHeals



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Office of Head Start
ACF/HHS



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Florida State University
College of Medicine
Immokalee Health Education Site
Center for Child Stress & Health

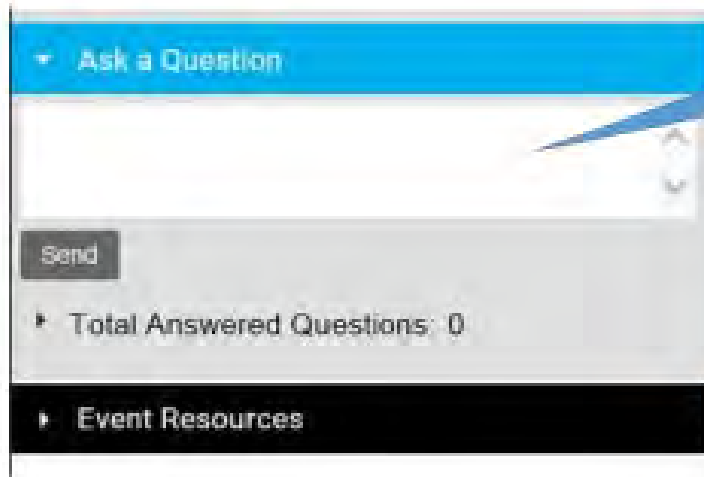


Sandra Carton
Regional Program Manager
Region XII
Office of Head Start
ACF/HHS

Welcome



Please use the left side bar to ask questions, submit comments, or download handouts



Ask your questions and submit your comments here

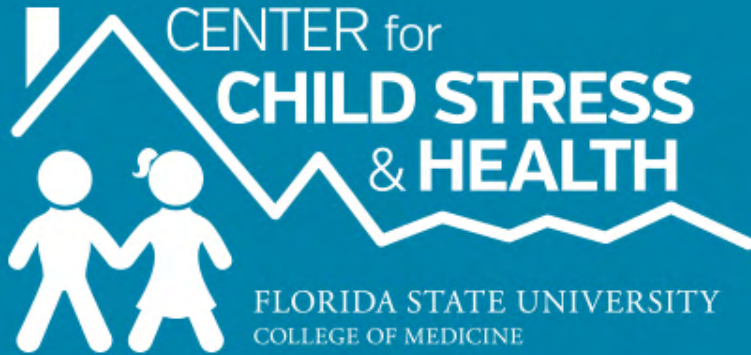
Download handouts from Event Resources

Welcome



Please type in the CHAT Box:

What is your role in Head Start?



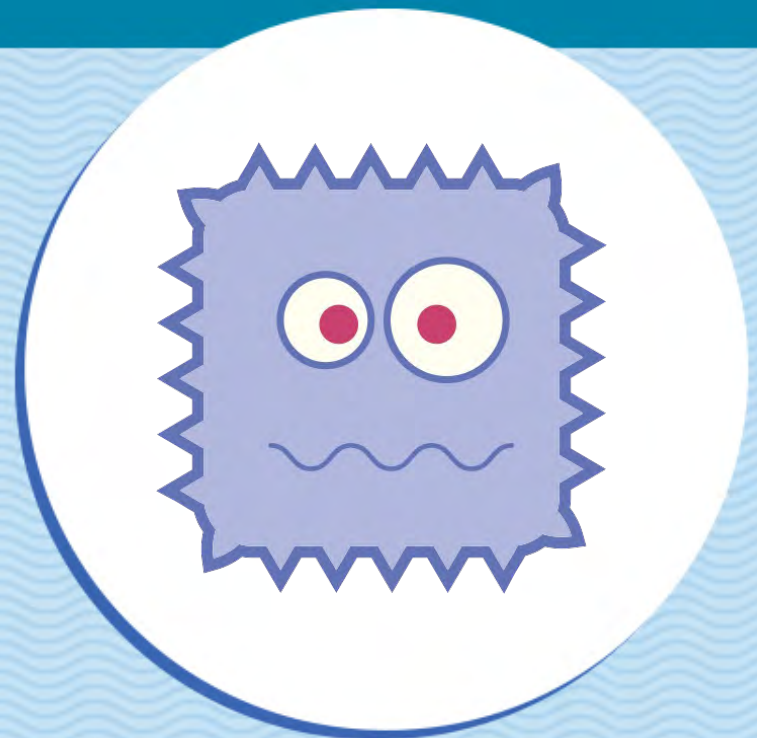
www.fsustress.org

Examining the Effects of Toxic Stress and Trauma on the Mental Health of Young Children

Presented by:

Javier I. Rosado, PhD

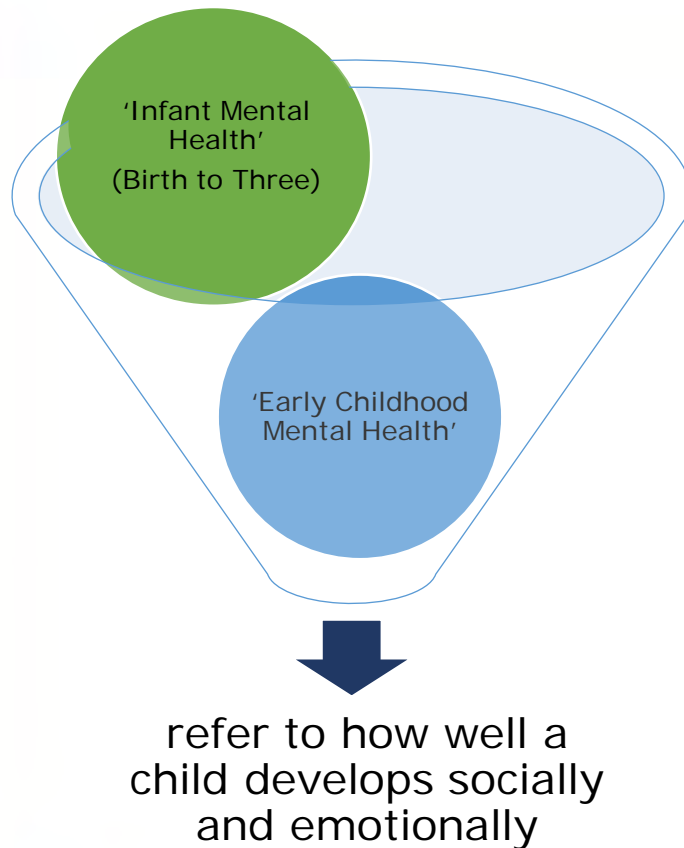
Psychologist & Clinical Associate Professor



Examining the Effects of Toxic Stress & Trauma on the Mental Health of Young Children

Learning Objectives

- Define toxic stress
- Identify ACEs that have a particular impact on stress levels
- Understand the developmental and health effects of toxic stress
- Recognize the effects of toxic stress and trauma on young children from agricultural and migrant families
- Learn simple strategies to help early childhood education systems become more trauma-informed

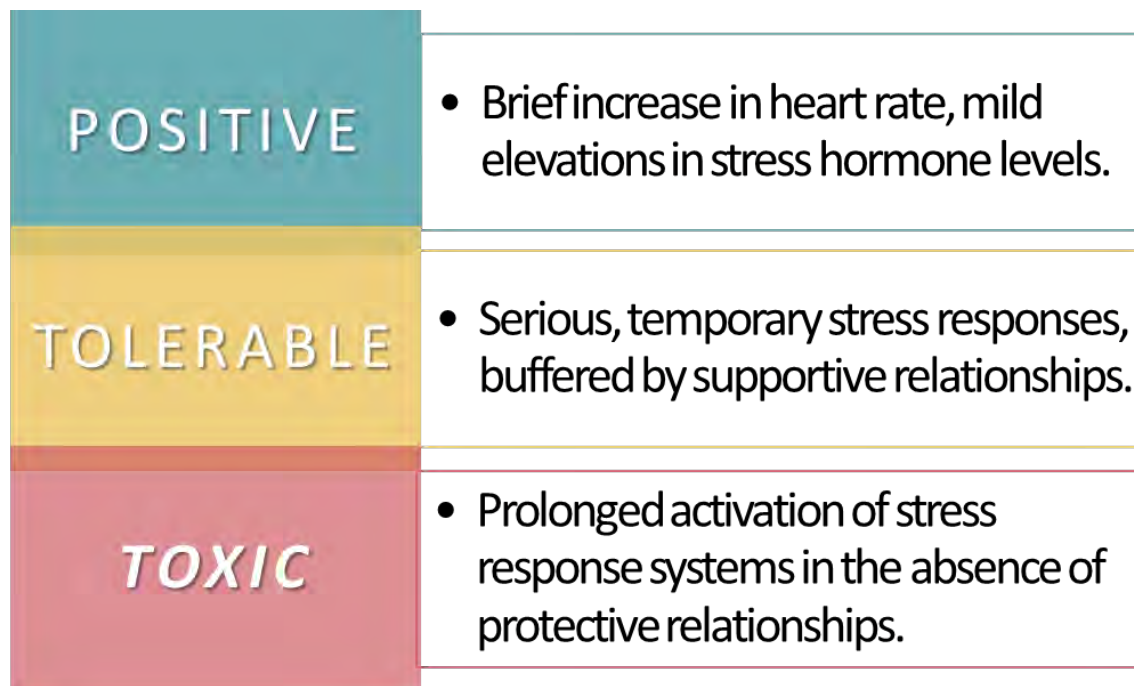


Infant Mental Health & Early Childhood Mental Health

- Both terms are used to refer to the developing capacity of the child to:
 - experience, manage and express emotions
 - form close and secure interpersonal relationships
 - explore, master and learn from the environment

Stress Severity

Stress: Levels of Severity

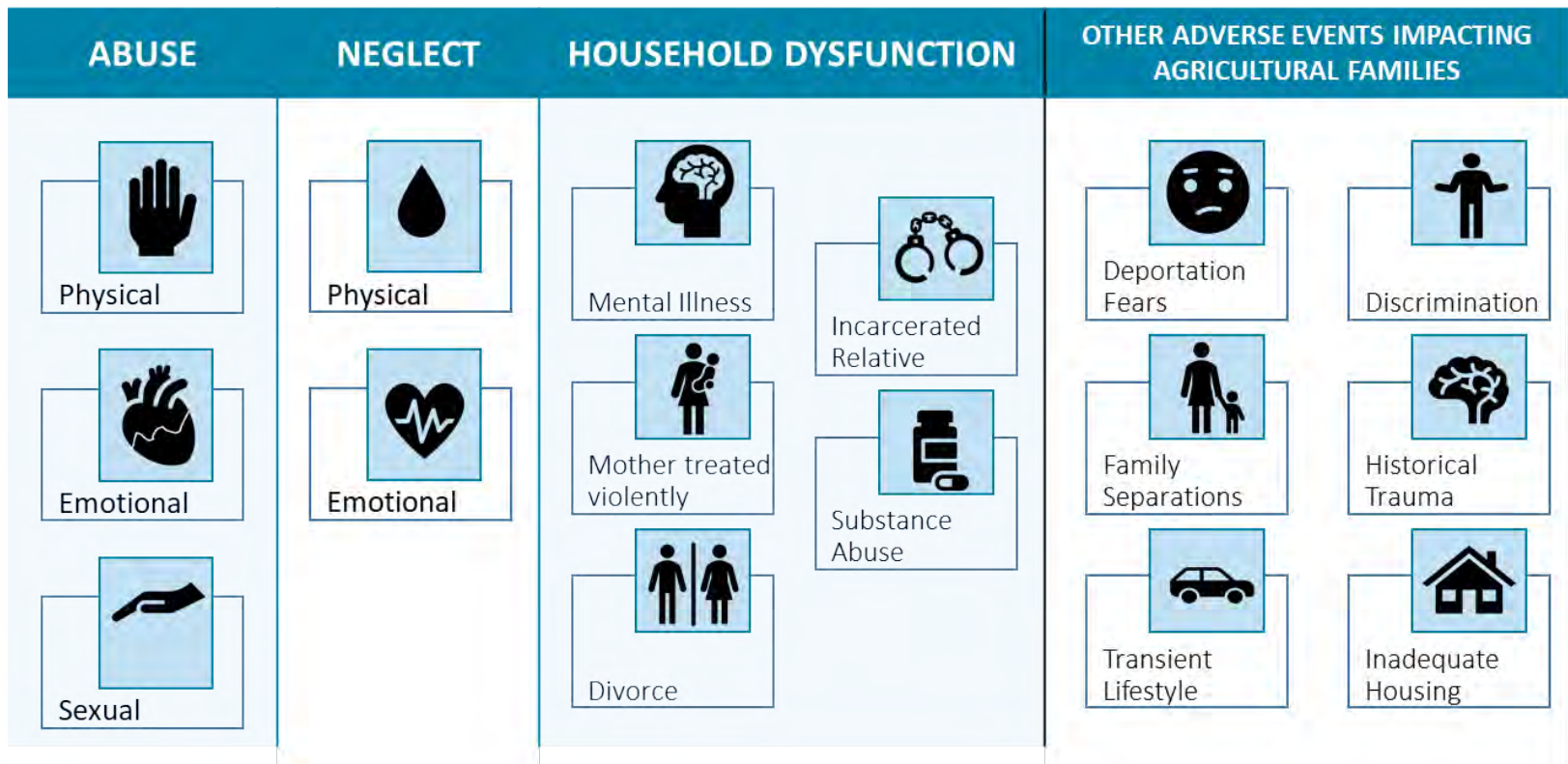




Activation of Stress Response System



Adverse Childhood Experiences



Resources

GOOD NEWS: Toxic stress is treatable!



Because negative experiences can be difficult to talk about, toxic stress often goes unrecognized. However, there are steps that parents can take to help their children cope with difficult life events. The first step is to talk about it! It may feel a little uncomfortable at first and talking about it can even cause you to feel mixed emotions such as guilt, embarrassment, or even irritation. However, it is important to bring up the topic. It is nothing to be ashamed of, remember, negative experiences can happen to anyone.

A PARENT IS THE NUMBER ONE SHIELD AGAINST THE EFFECTS OF CHILDHOOD TOXIC STRESS



Do not try to do it alone.

- Consider talking to your child's:
- doctor
 - school guidance counselor
 - psychologist
 - teacher
 - clergy member

You may also contact the Center for Child Stress and Health!

www.fsustress.org

www.fsustress.org

Center for Child Stress & Health

Florida State University College of Medicine
Inniskatee Health Education Site
1441 Heritage Boulevard
Tallahassee, Florida 32312
1-909-658-3123



TOXIC STRESS



FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF MEDICINE

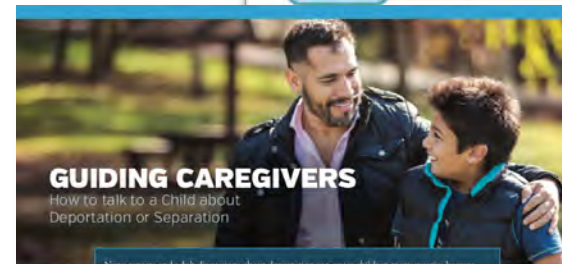
Sponsored by State of Florida, Department of Health

www.fsustress.org



HOW TO TALK TO A CHILD WORRIED ABOUT DEPORTATION

Children often worry when adults around them worry. News reports and while discussions about deportation can cause children many worries because they do not understand concepts about the law and policy and their own separation from their parents.



GUIDING CAREGIVERS

How to talk to a Child about Deportation or Separation

News reports and adult discussions about deportation can cause children many worries because they do not understand concepts about the law and policy. Some children may become fearful of separation from a parent and others may be coping with having been separated.



SHOULD CARETAKERS SPEAK TO CHILDREN ABOUT DEPORTATION AND SEPARATION?

Caretakers often wonder if it is better to keep silent and worry that conversations could cause fear or further traumatize a child. Although it can be an uncomfortable topic, it is important for affected families to speak with their children – whether that be a parent affected by deportation or a caretaker caring for a child separated from a parent.

Having an open conversation, at the child's developmental level, can help to address worry and to explain terms like deportation and immigrant. Children are hearing these terms from others, so it's typically better that they obtain accurate information directly from a caretaker.

HOW CAN CARETAKERS EXPLAIN DEPORTATION?

The use of analogies is often a helpful method for explaining difficult to understand concepts to children. The following are examples that caretakers may find helpful to use when they talk with a child about deportation.

www.FSUSTRESS.org

STRESSFUL TIMES ARE:

- **angry**
- **worried**
- **misbehavior** (displaying behaviors typical of pre-adolescents)
- **not focusing in school!**

DREN:

- **if news sources** such as television and radio. These are on a level difficult for children to understand.
- **with children** family plans in case a parent is detained who will pick up the child or when the child can go to live in charge of the child while parent is away
- **if an** make promises that you are too sure to keep.
- **the child** that you are making plans for their safety, care of yourself. Children do better when their parents share and calm.

BEFORE AN EMERGENCY:

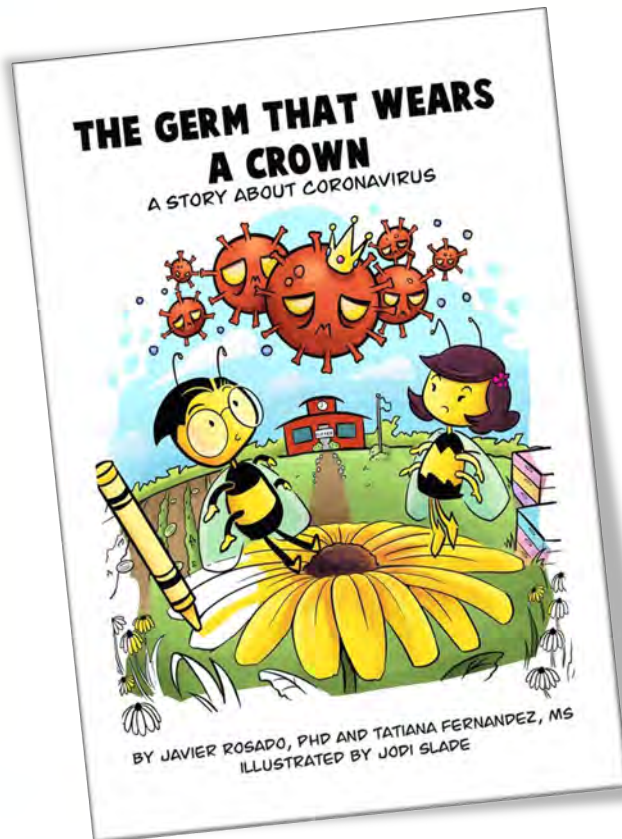
- **the documentation** of any public healths your child is on. Give a copy to a trusted adult.
- **the documentation** of your child's school records, copy in a sealed adult.

MORE HELP FOR YOUR OR YOURSELF:

Talk to your child's physician

Contact Florida State University
Center for Child Stress & Health:
(129) 658-3123 or www.fsustress.org

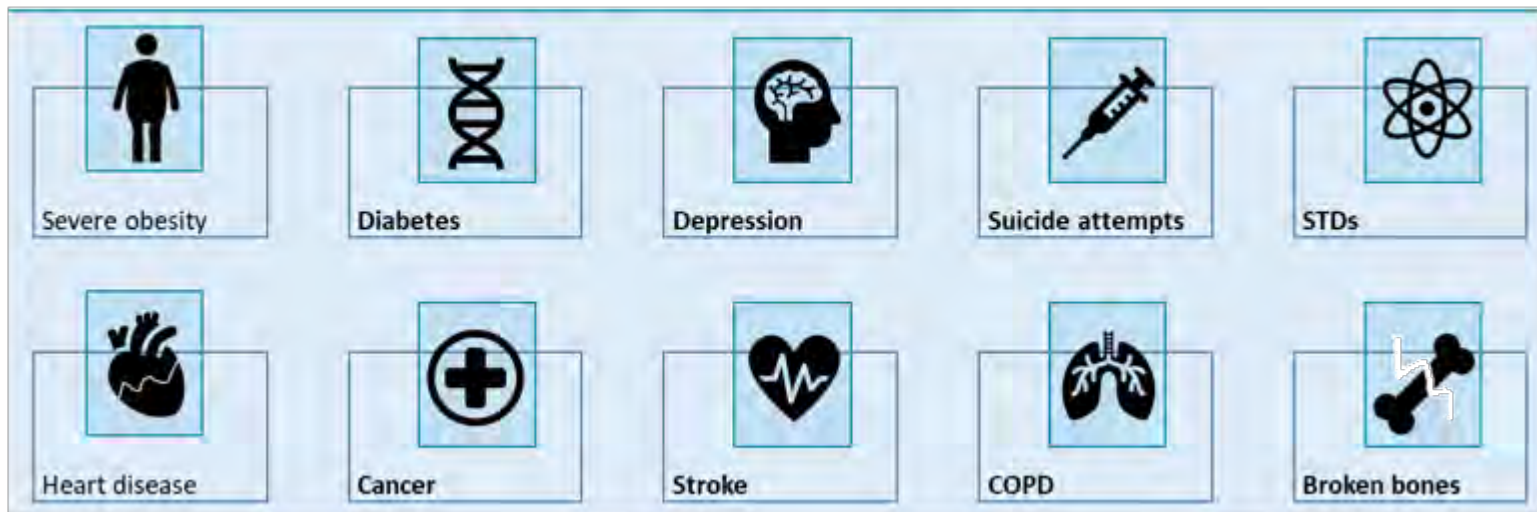
E-Books



<http://www.fsustress.org/ebook.html>

ACEs Increase Health Risks

PHYSICAL & MENTAL HEALTH



ACEs Impact Child Development

Significant Adversity Impairs Development in the First Three Years

Children with Developmental
Delays, percent



ACEs & Challenging Behaviors

Physical State

- **Fight:** hitting, kicking, yelling, lying
- **Flight:** running away, giving up
- **Freeze:** becoming numb, zoning out, disassociation

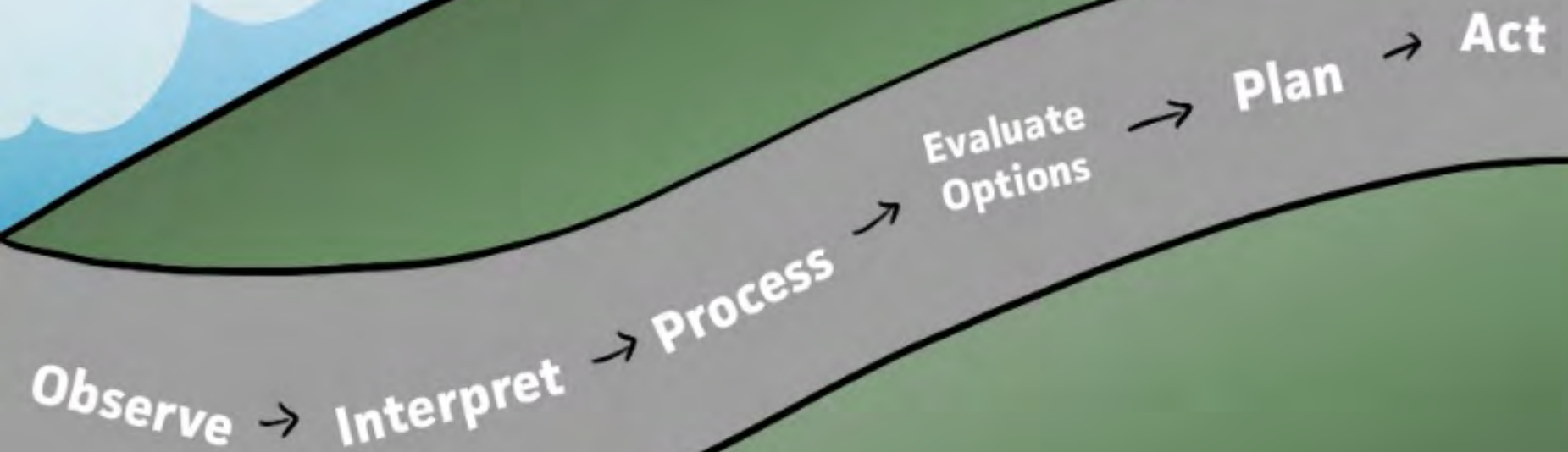
Emotional State

- Fear
- Anxiety/worry
- Stress
- Emotional regulation

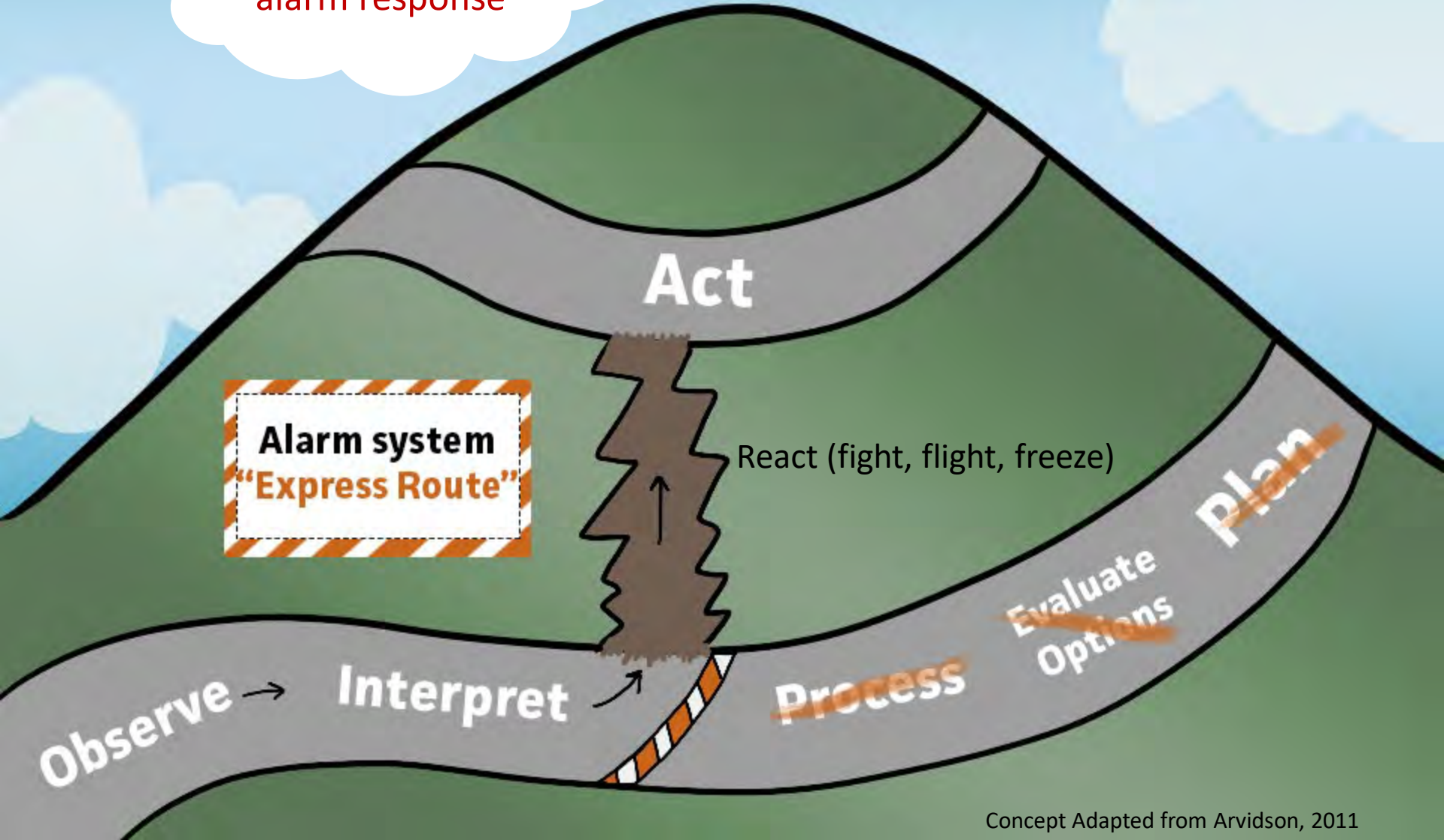
Thinking State

- Problem-solving
- Decision-making

How Brain
Processes Under
Typical
Conditions



How Brain functions under **alarm response**



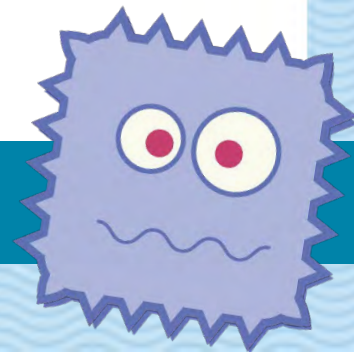
Understanding Terms

- **ACEs:** term used to represent a group of negative experiences children may face or witness while growing up.
- **Toxic Stress:** excessive or prolonged activation of stress response systems in the body and brain.
- **Trauma:** occurs when children are exposed to events or situations that overwhelm their ability to cope with what they have experienced

Trauma, Behavior & Emotions

- Exposure to traumatic experiences can impact young children, resulting in emotional & behavioral changes
- The experiences a child goes through will trigger either positive or negative emotions in the child

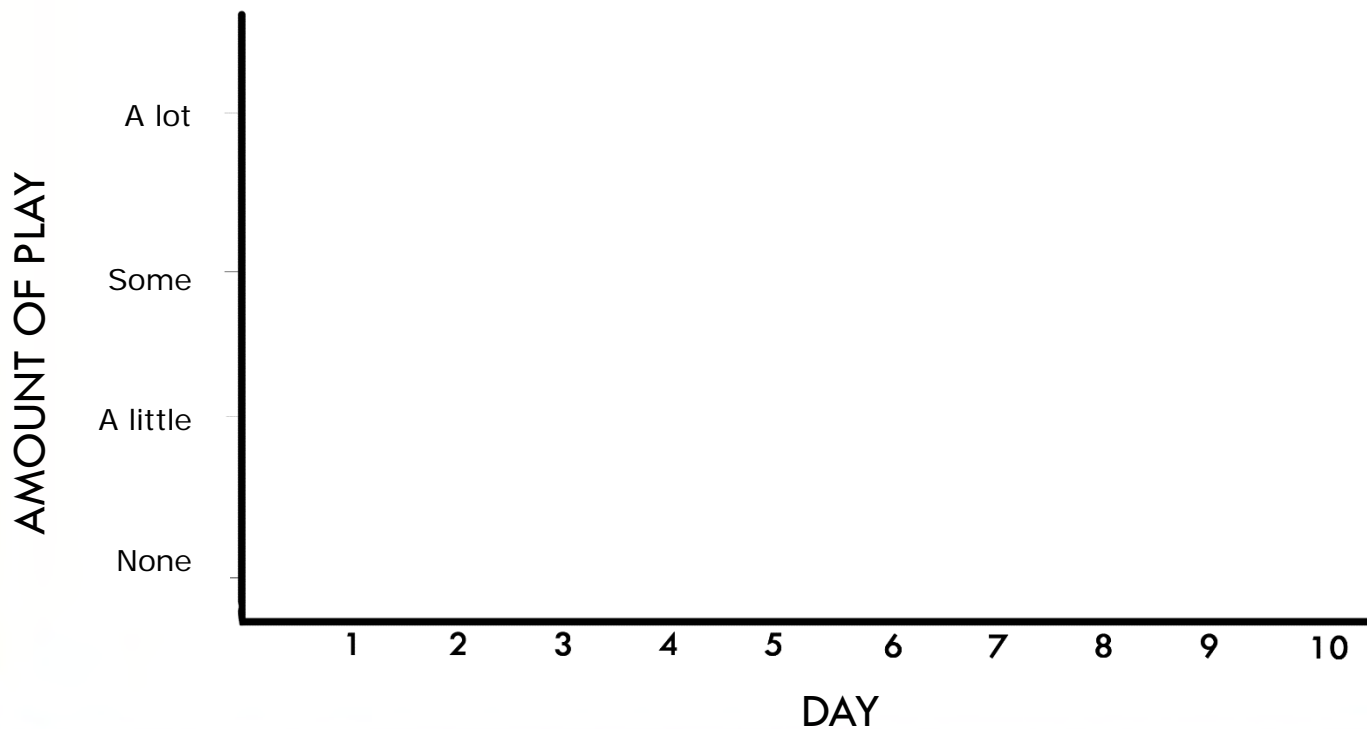
Positive emotions typically lead to positive behaviors
Negative emotions typically lead to negative behaviors



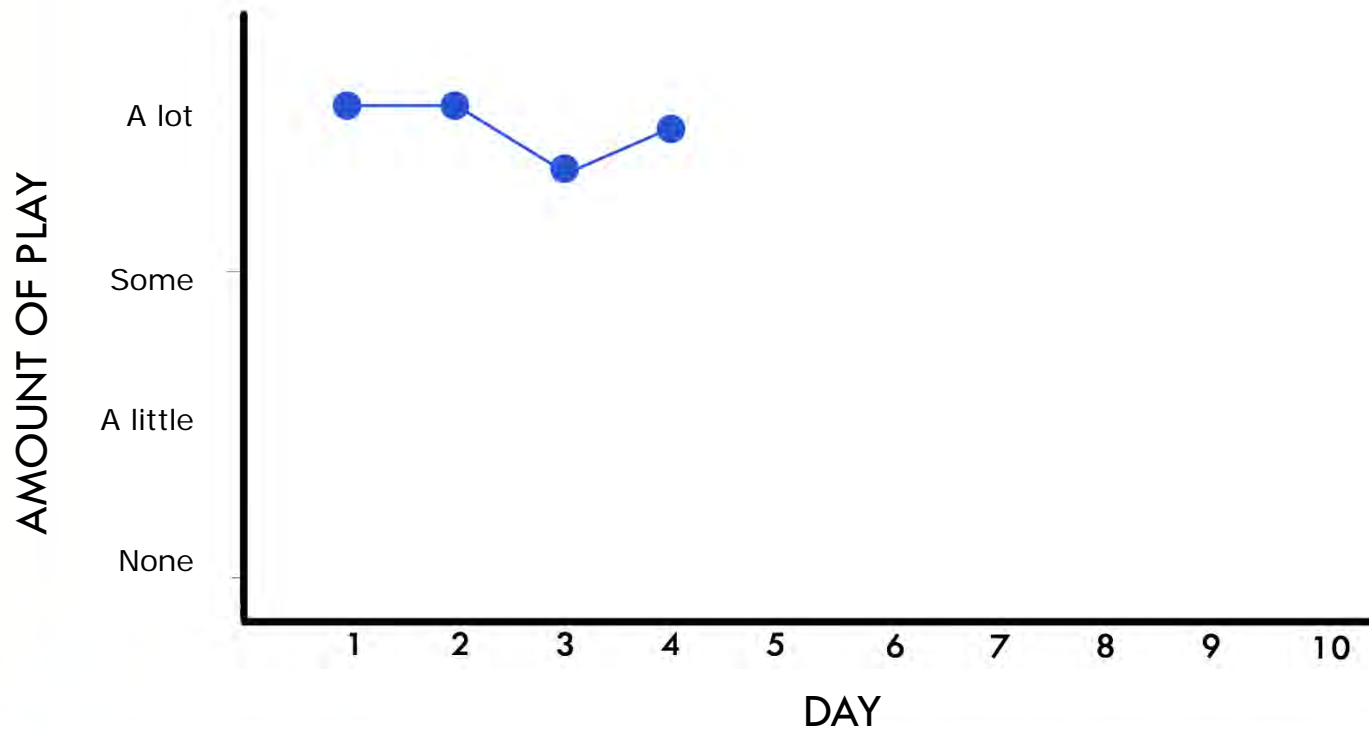
Trauma, Emotions & Behavior: An Experiment on Emotions



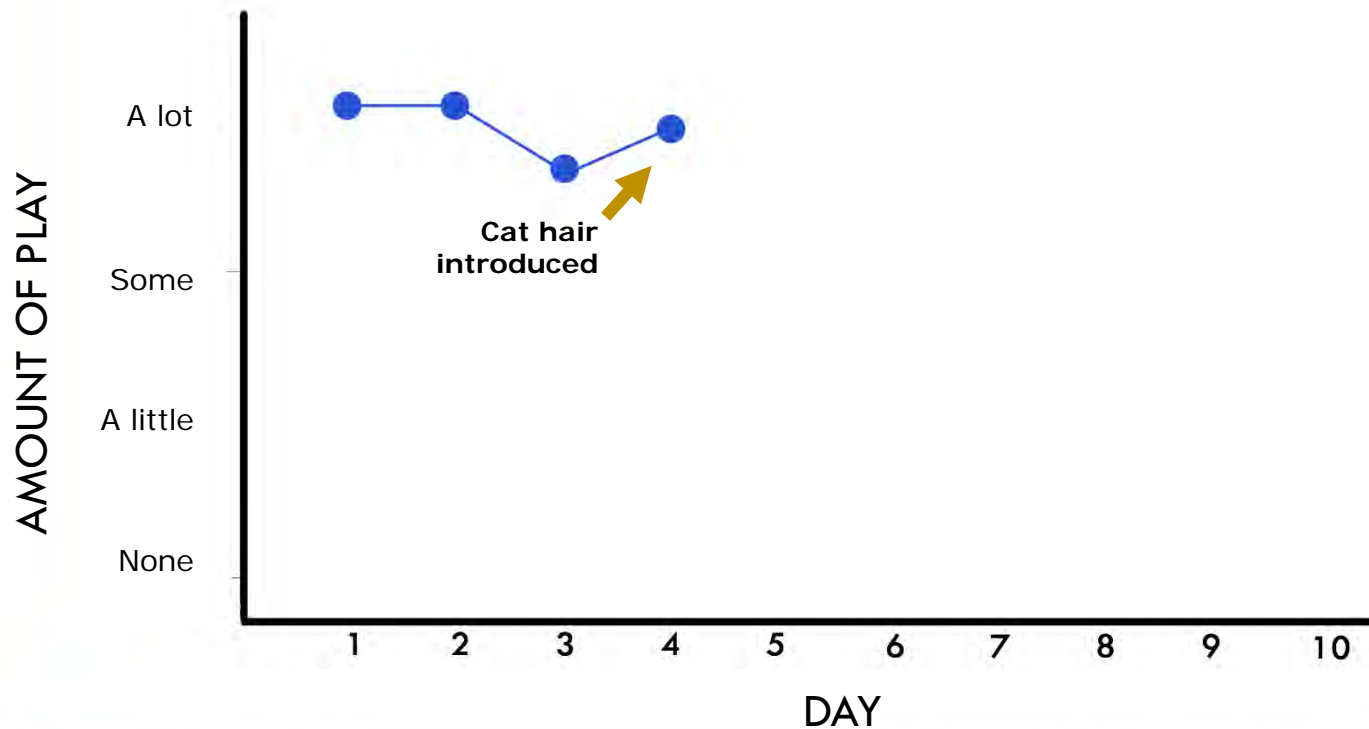
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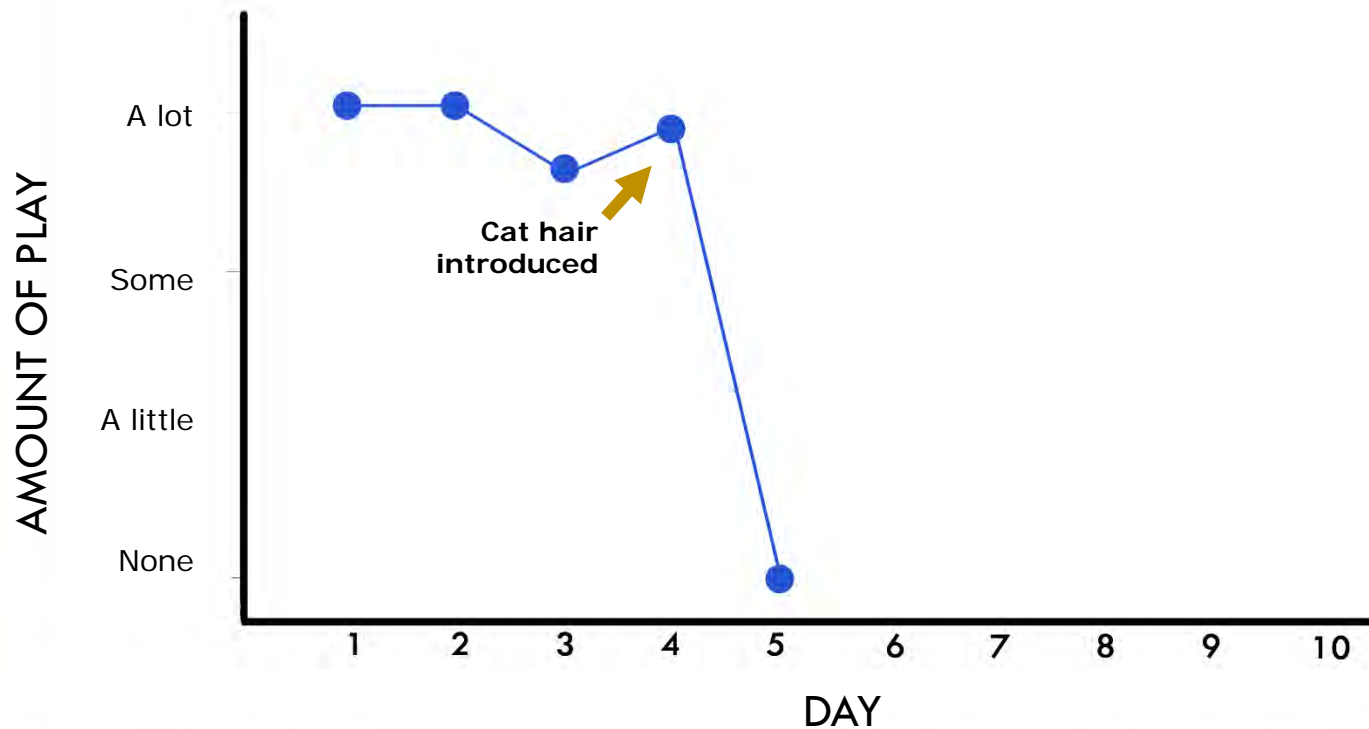
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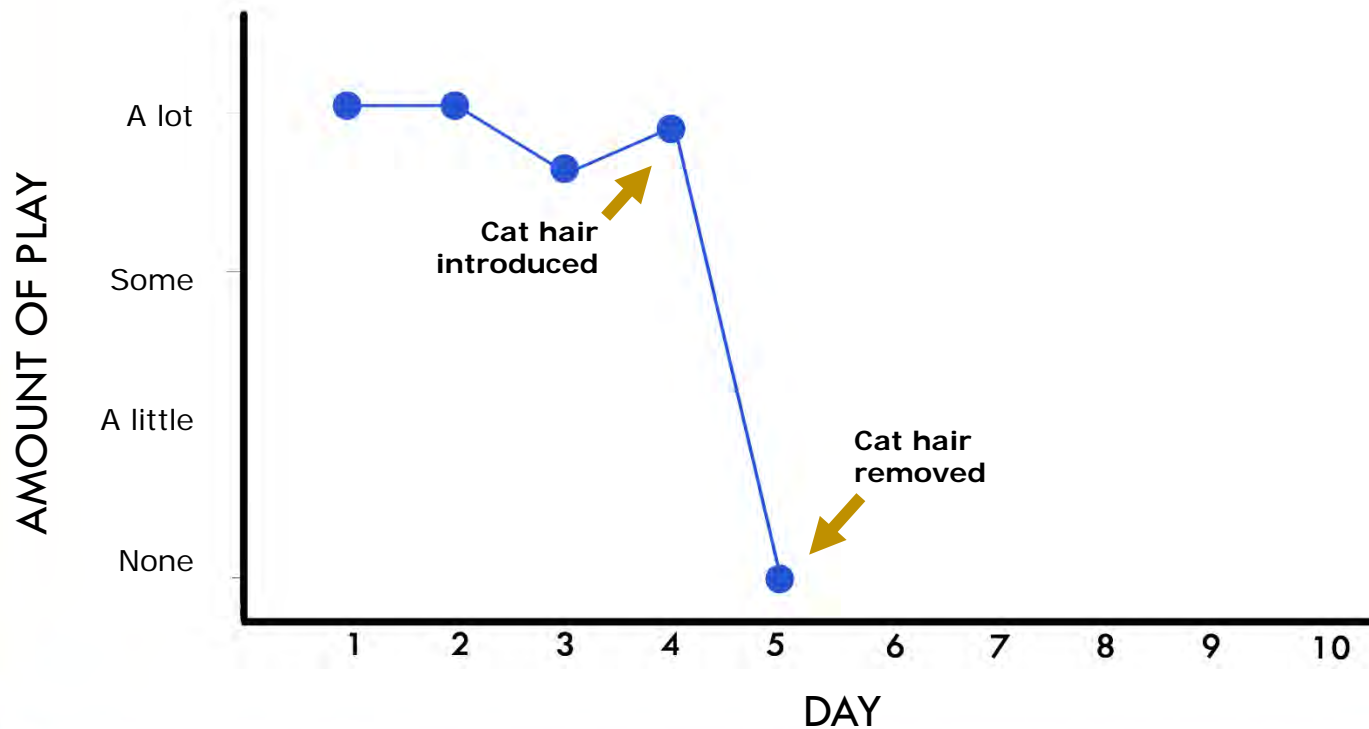
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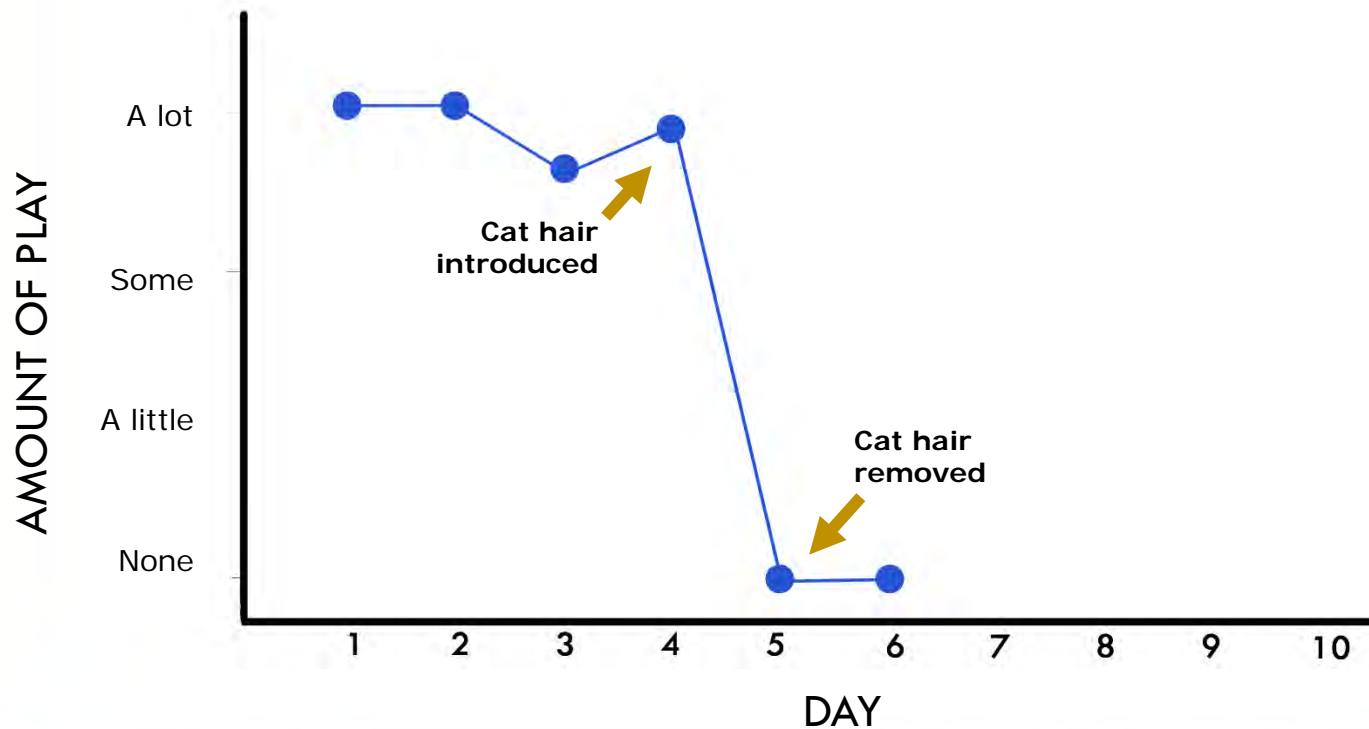
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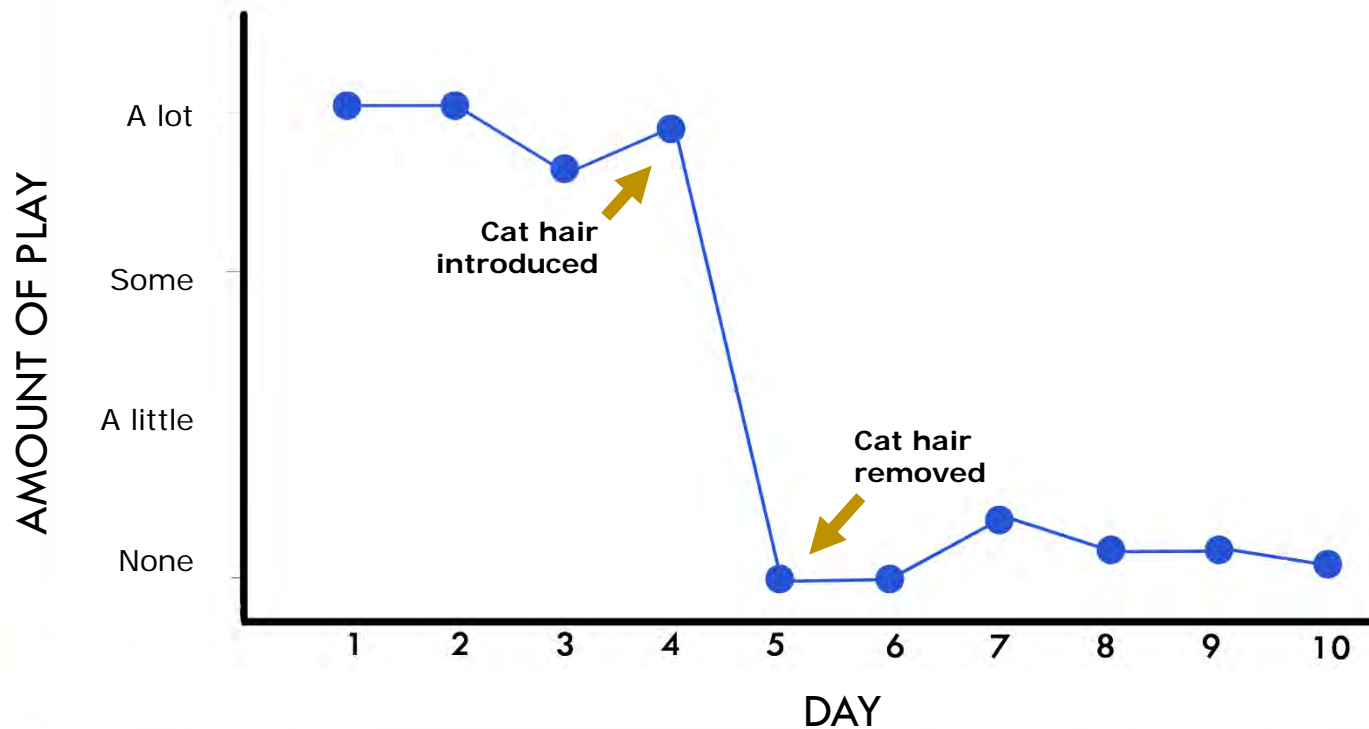
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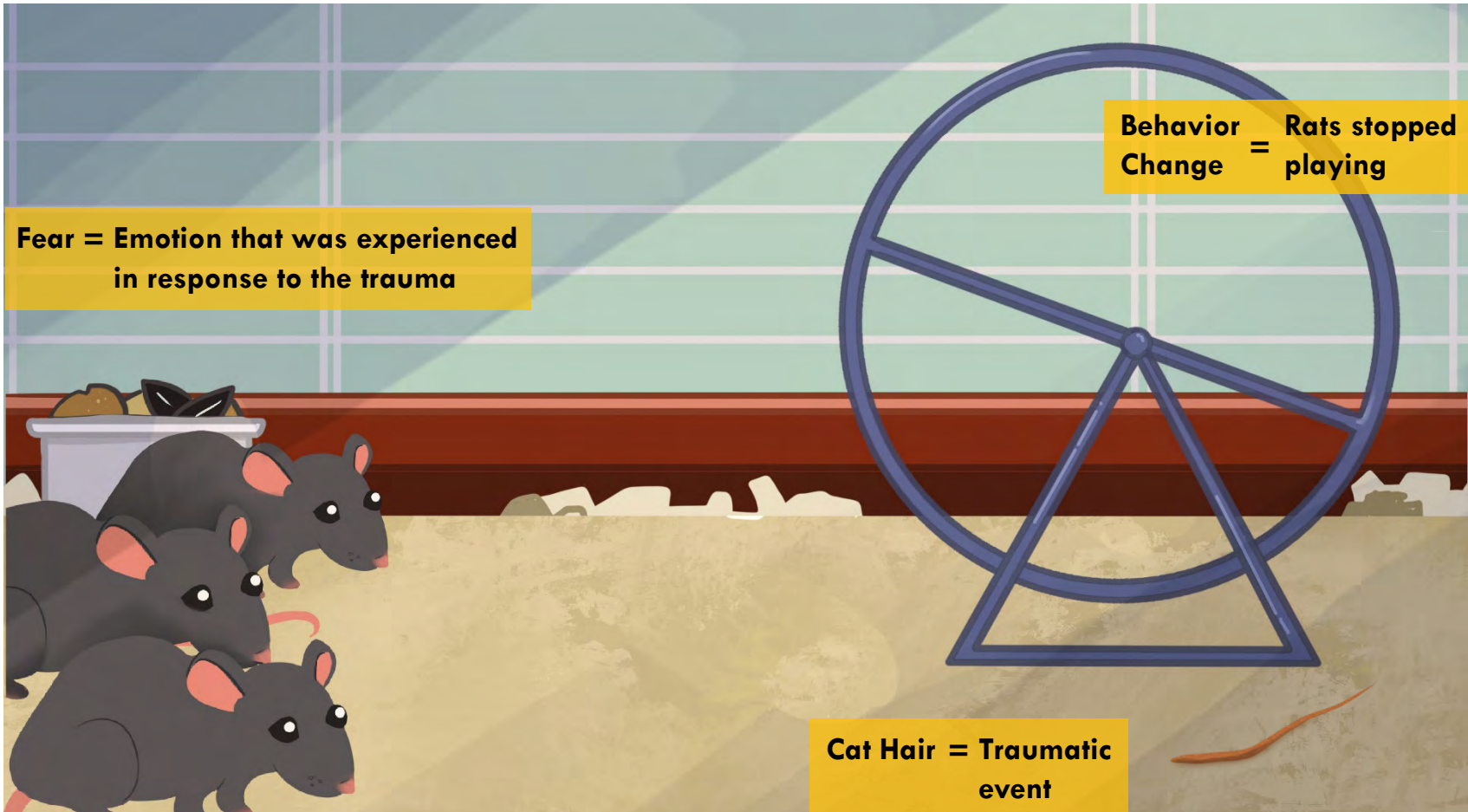
Trauma, Emotions & Behavior: An Experiment on Emotions



Trauma, Emotions & Behavior: An Experiment on Emotions



Trauma, Emotions & Behavior: An Experiment on Emotions



Key Lessons From Experiment

- When a young child is exposed to an adverse event, he/she is likely to experience fear
- When a young child experiences fear, his/her behavior is likely to change
- Once the fear system is triggered, it is hard to turn it off
- Even events that appear to be minimally stressful can have a lasting impact on a young child



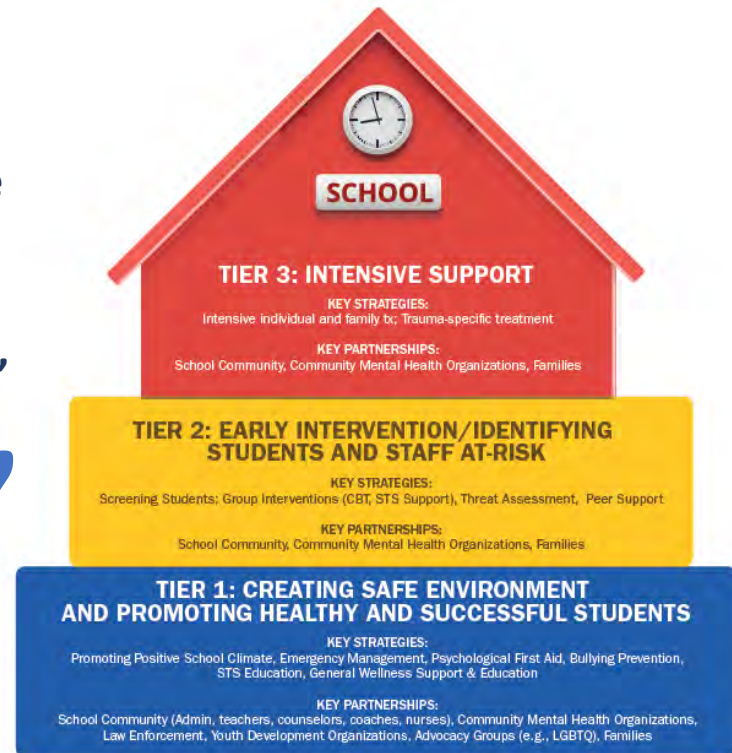
Trauma-Informed Strategies



What Does it Mean to be “Trauma-Informed?”

“ A system in which all parties involved **recognize and respond to the impact of traumatic stress** on those who have contact with the system ... Programs infuse and sustain **trauma awareness, knowledge, and skills** into their organizational cultures, practices, and policies... ”

-NCTSN



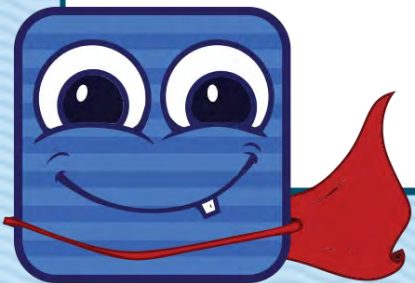
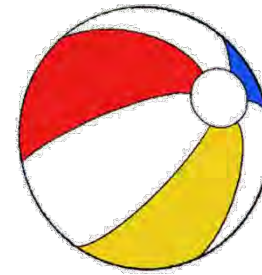
What Does a Trauma-Informed System Look Like?

Trauma-informed approaches aim to adhere to the “4 Rs”:

- **Realizing** the widespread impact of trauma and pathways to recovery
- **Recognizing** traumas signs and symptoms
- **Responding** by integrating knowledge about trauma into all facets of the system
- **Resisting** re-traumatization of trauma-impacted individuals

Resilience

Resilience is the ability to “bounce back” or recover from adversity



Competence

- The ability to handle situations effectively
- Acquiring a new skill

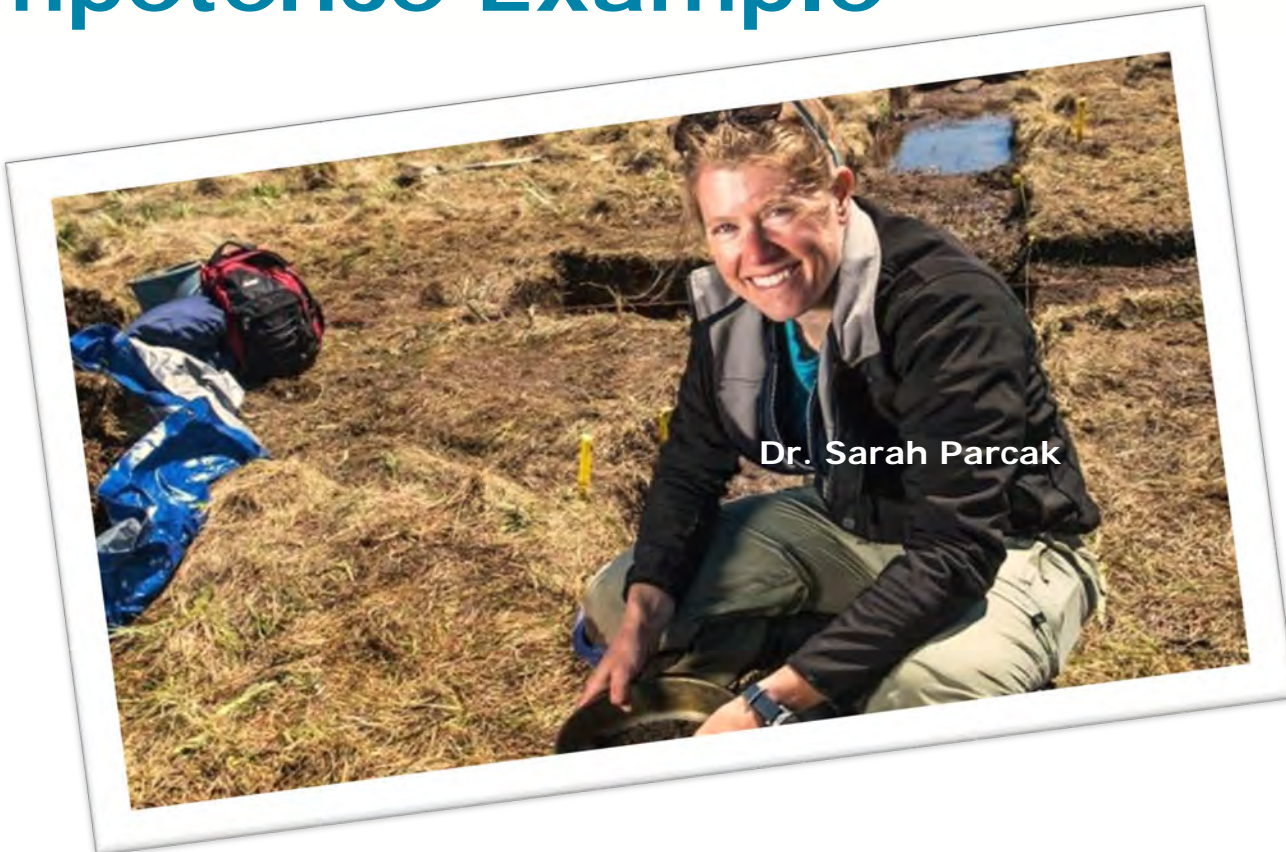


Islands of Competence



Children can't become competent without first developing a set of skills

Competence Example



Dr. Sarah Parcak

Fostering Competence



EVERYDAY STRATEGIES FOR BUILDING YOUNG CHILDREN'S RESILIENCE IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION SETTINGS

Early childhood education providers play an important role in the development of young children and are often a significant source of support during times of adversity. Below are several strategies that early care providers can use to help children develop resilience, organized into categories from the 7 C's Model.

COMPETENCE

Provide children with opportunities to learn new skills every day – from basic self-care (hand washing) to more complicated social skills (like problem solving). Below are three different approaches that can be used to teach skills to children:

1. INSTRUCTIONS: TEACH SKILLS BY TELLING

This is simply teaching a child how to do something by explaining how to do it. Just be sure to give good instructions!

- First, make sure you have the child's attention
- Get down to the child's eye level
- Use words that the child understands
- Repeat the instructions as often as needed
- As the child gives better at remembering what to do, begin to phase out your instructions

Use an image to help the child picture the instructions you are giving. The child can eventually look at the picture by him or herself when ready to work independently. Pictures are particularly helpful with children who have trouble understanding words.

2. MODELING: TEACHING KIDS BY SHOWING

Modeling is one of the best ways to teach a child a new skill. This involves showing a child how to do something instead of telling them how to do it. Consider the following:

Use modeling to teach a child skills that involve non-verbal communication, like a thumbs up means "good job" or "okay"

As you are modeling, point out the important parts of what you are doing. For example, "see how I am..." Give lots of opportunities for the child to practice after you have modeled the skill.



TYPES OF STRENGTHS IN YOUNG CHILDREN

Personal strengths include inner qualities that are developed at a very early age. Caregivers can help children strengthen these qualities so that they can go on to develop important skills and competencies in areas that interest the child. Recognizing these strengths is an important first step for caregivers to take. Below is a list of different strengths to look for in young children:

CHARACTER STRENGTHS:

- Helpful
- Thoughtful
- Kind
- Independent
- Cooperative
- Curious
- Trustful
- Handworking
- Brave

SOCIAL STRENGTHS:

- Enjoys group activities
- Shares & takes turns
- Good listener & follows rules
- Likes to make friends
- Asks for help when needed
- Can express emotions
- Good sense of humor
- Is good with animals/pets
- Is gentle with babies

CREATIVITY & ARTISTIC STRENGTHS:

- Creativity
- Likes drawing and doodling
- Can dance or sing
- Active imagination
- Tells stories

LITERACY STRENGTHS:

- Vivid imagination
- Interest in books
- Enjoys being read to
- Good memory
- Enjoys rhymes

LOGICAL-MATH STRENGTHS:

- Solves puzzles
- Can count
- Logically sorts objects
- Assembles or disassembles things

MOTOR SKILLS STRENGTHS:

- Physical strength and balance
- Running, kicking and jumping
- Riding bicycles
- Good hand-eye coordination (puzzles)

LANGUAGE/COMMUNICATION STRENGTHS:

- Uses a lot of words
- Uses words to express needs
- Likes learning words in songs
- Likes listening to stories
- Good listener

Confidence

- The solid belief in one's own abilities
- Children gain confidence by demonstrating their competence



Our job is to help children gain appropriate confidence by helping them recognize that they possess various abilities



Confidence-Building Strategy



HELP CHILDREN OVERCOME THE FEAR OF FAILURE:

Consider deliberately making mistakes in front of your group of students and follow those mistakes with statements like

“Oh well, I’ll have to try that again, that didn’t work”.

Use positive language and punctuate your interactions by using phrases like

“Oh gee, we might have to try that again ... Let’s build the tower again, it fell over ... You can do it ... keep trying”.

Character-Building Strategy



CHARACTER

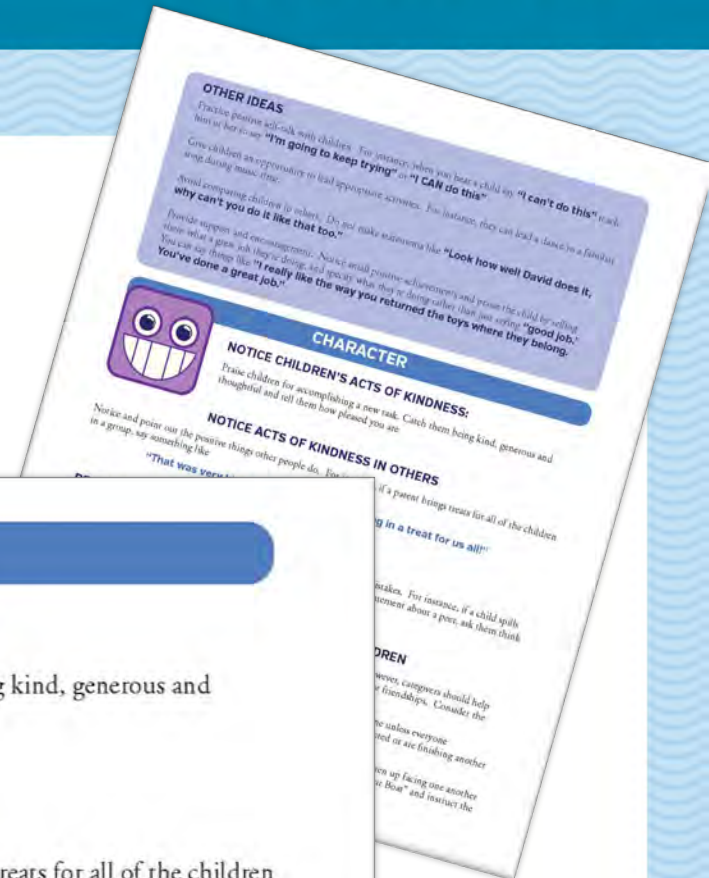
NOTICE CHILDREN'S ACTS OF KINDNESS:

Praise children for accomplishing a new task. Catch them being kind, generous and thoughtful and tell them how pleased you are

NOTICE ACTS OF KINDNESS IN OTHERS

Notice and point out the positive things other people do. For instance, if a parent brings treats for all of the children in a group, say something like

"That was very kind of David's mother to bring in a treat for us all!"



Contribution



- Has to do with a child contributing to others in a specific way
- We want children to realize that the world is a better place **because they are in it** and that they have competencies that they can use to help (contribute) to others

Contribution

CONTRIBUTION

ACKNOWLEDGE CHILDREN'S CONTRIBUTIONS:

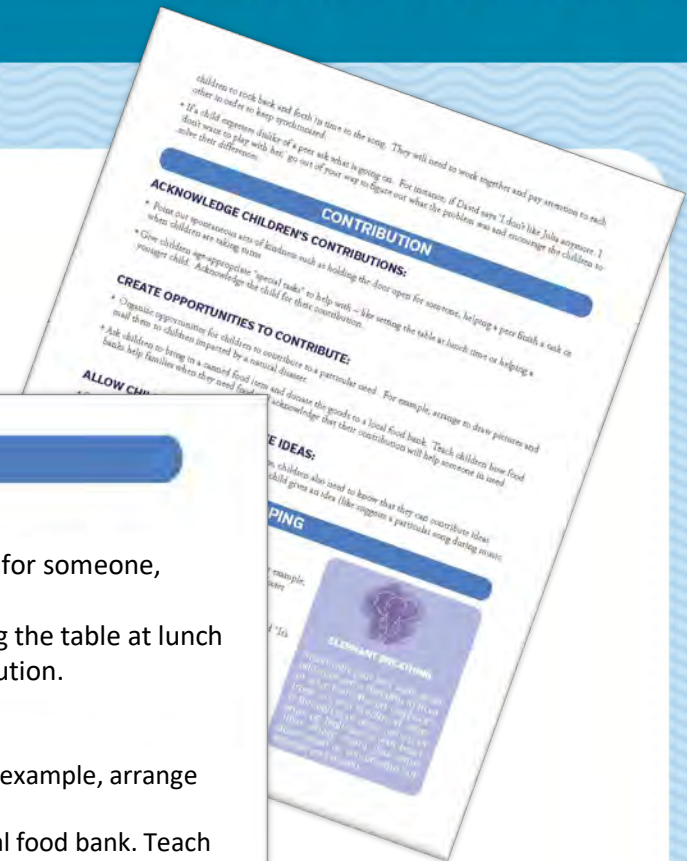
- Point out spontaneous acts of kindness such as holding the door open for someone, helping a peer finish a task or when children are taking turns
- Give children age-appropriate “special tasks” to help with – like setting the table at lunch time or helping a younger child. Acknowledge the child for their contribution.

CREATE OPPORTUNITIES TO CONTRIBUTE:

- Organize opportunities for children to contribute to a particular need. For example, arrange to draw pictures and mail them to children impacted by a natural disaster.
- Ask children to bring in a canned food item and donate the goods to a local food bank. Teach children how food banks help families when they need food and acknowledge that their contribution will help someone in need.

ALLOW CHILDREN TO CONTRIBUTE IDEAS:

- Contribution isn't only about good deeds or actions, children also need to know that they can contribute ideas that will be taken seriously and respected. When a child gives an idea (like suggests a particular song during music time), consider it and even solicit ideas.



Coping

- The skills a child has to deal (cope) with challenges



Like a coach on a sports team, adults need to teach children skills they can use to handle stress effectively

Teaching Coping Skills

COPING

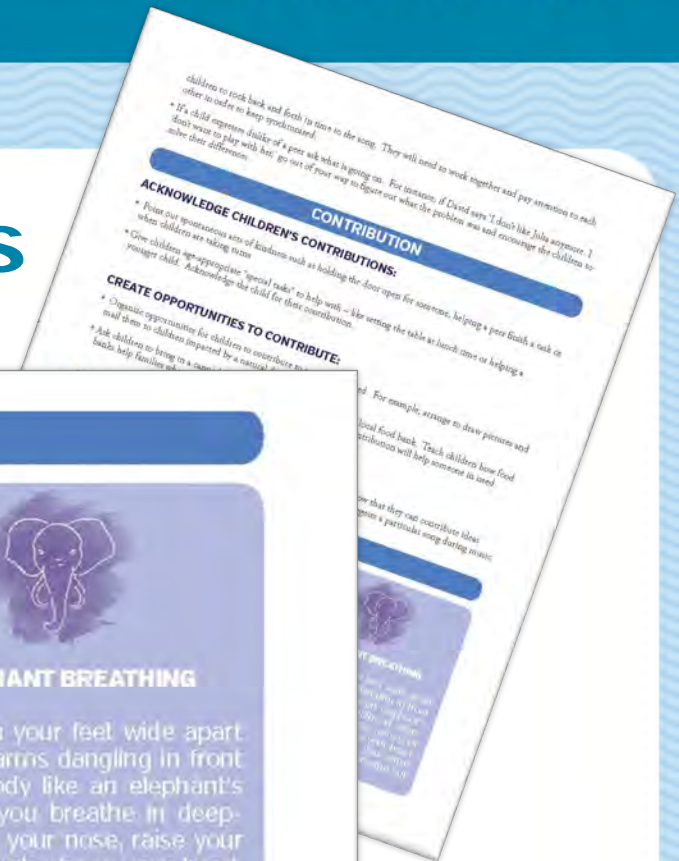
FOCUS ON MANAGING EMOTIONS

- Use sensory experiences to help children become calm. For example, the use of water trays, slime trays or finger paints may help foster feelings of reassurance and coping.
- When a child is distressed, acknowledge their feelings in the moment. Consider saying to the child, “I can see you’re sad”, and “It’s okay to cry.”
- Help young children put words to they feel. For instance, you may say to a child who is developing language “You’re smiling – you seem to feel happy!”
- Teach strategies to manage uncomfortable emotions – like deep breathing. Use strategies like elephant breathing to help children remember deep breathing.



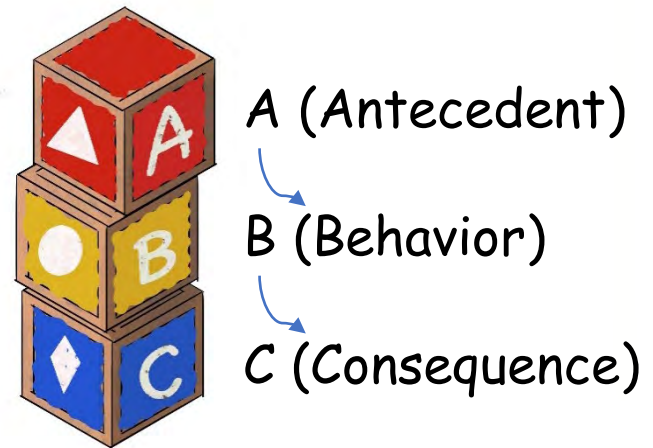
ELEPHANT BREATHING

Stand with your feet wide apart and your arms dangling in front of your body like an elephant's trunk. As you breathe in deeply through your nose, raise your arms up high above your head. Then slowly swing your arms down again as you breathe out through your mouth.



Control

- Has to do with a child having **inner control**, which means **they are** controlling their actions
- A child understanding the relationship between his/her behavior and consequences



Control

CONTROL

FOSTER INDEPENDENCE & RESPONSIBILITY

- Allow children to complete tasks on their own at developmentally appropriate times. For instance, hand washing or unpacking their bag.
- Have children retrieve their own hidden objects or replace toys in their proper location when they are finished.

PROVIDE STRUCTURE, ROUTINE & CHOICES

- Always keep a well-established routine so children know what is expected of them and what to expect; this helps children feel safe.
- Give children opportunities to make decisions. Children need structure, but when they are offered choices within that structure this can foster their sense of belonging and autonomy. You can give children choices like selecting a song from a selection of music or the option to choose if they'd like to use a red glue stick vs. a white one.
- Foster Belonging by having a designated space for each child. This can be a small container, basket or cubby where they can keep their belongings. Have a space to display any artwork or projects children complete.

CONTROL

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Connection

- A child needs to have meaningful relationships with other people
- Connection to other people sends the message that “we can get through this together”

Connection is NOT just about getting through hard times. Connection also does the following:

- let's children experience a higher level of security
- gives children joy
- provides children with a comfortable base that allows them to take chances (i.e., try new things)
- helps children come closer to their potential

Connection

CONNECTION

BUILD SUPPORTIVE RELATIONSHIPS:

- Look for opportunities to help children practice empathy. For instance, if you are reading a book about a character who is having a difficult time, ask the children how they would feel if they were experiencing the same things as the character.
- If you have several children of the same age, include 'Circle Time' in your daily schedule. You can pass a ball around the circle and the person with the ball takes a turn to speak or to share a special object or toy they brought from home.
- If child is out sick have peers prepare a 'get well soon' note or drawing and make arrangements for the peer to receive it

TEACH CHILDREN TO RESPECT DIFFERENCES:



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- If child is out sick have peers prepare a 'get well soon' note or drawing and make arrangements for the peer to receive it

TEACH CHILDREN TO RESPECT DIFFERENCES:

- Consider using children's books & videos.
- Read books that show examples of a cultural difference.

Resources

Intro to Toxic
Stress

Interactive
Activity

Resources

YouTube
Videos

Resources

FSU Center for Child Stress & Health Publications

Avoiding Toxic Stress Brochure

Provides an introduction to toxic stress, including information about its health consequences and suggestions for how to help.

- [Avoiding Toxic Stress Brochure \(English\)](#)
- [Avoiding Toxic Stress Brochure \(Spanish\)](#)
- [Avoiding Toxic Stress Brochure \(Creole\)](#)

Toxic Stress

- [Toxic Stress Brochure \(English\)](#)
- [Toxic Stress Brochure \(Spanish\)](#)
- [Toxic Stress Brochure \(Creole\)](#)

Depression

- [Depression Brochure \(English\)](#)
- [Depression Brochure \(Spanish\)](#)
- [Depression Brochure \(Creole\)](#)

Grief

- [Grief Brochure \(English\)](#)

Resources for Children/Youth

[KidsHealth Relax & Unwind Center](#)

Resources for Parents/Caregivers

- [A Parent is the #1 Shield \(English\)](#)
- [A Parent is the #1 Shield \(Spanish\)](#)
- [A Parent is the #1 Shield \(Creole\)](#)
- [Center on the Social & Emotional Foundations for Early Learning](#)
- [American Academy of Pediatrics – Healthy Children](#)
- [KidsHealth from Nemours](#)
- [Child Mind Institute](#)

Divorce

- [Divorce Brochure \(English\)](#)
- [Divorce Brochure \(Spanish\)](#)
- [Divorce Brochure \(Creole\)](#)

Deportation

- [Deportation Brochure \(English\)](#)
- [Deportation Brochure \(Spanish\)](#)
- [Deportation Brochure \(Creole\)](#)

Immigration and Traumatic Separation



**Toxic Stress Training for Early
Childhood Education Providers**

Practical Classroom Strategies for young Children with
Trauma & Toxic Stress

Training Opportunities:
fsustress@med.fsu.edu
(239) 658-3123

Module 1: The Effects of Toxic Stress & Trauma

**Module 2: Strategies for Building Resilience in
Early Childhood Education Settings**

**Module 3: The Impact of Trauma & Adversity
on Early Childhood Mental Health**

**Module 4: Managing Childcare Provider Stress
& Compassion Fatigue**

Questions/Comments?



MyPeers Communities



MyPeers.org offers:

- Open communities including: **Mental Health, Opioid Misuse and Substance Use Disorders; Staff Wellness**
- Knowledge base - Q&A, Forums, Polling, File sharing, Calendars, Events, Tasks, Wikis
- Communication tools – Group Chat, Instant Message, and internal email
- Robust search engine
- Social Network style feeds



Office of Head Start



U.S. Department of Health & Human Services
Administration for Children & Families



Office of Head Start #HeadStartHeals campaign



Office Hours coming up:

5/4, 1–2 p.m. ET –Building Resilience in the Face of Trauma and Adversity

5/14, 1–2 p.m. ET –Partnering with Families to Address Domestic Violence

5/21, 1–2 p.m. ET –Supporting Families Impacted by Substance Use

5/28, 3–4 p.m. ET –Family Engagement and Child Welfare

Webinars coming up:

5/5, 3–4:45 p.m. ET – Promoting Healing and Resilience with Staff and Families

5/12, 1-2:30 p.m. ET – Addressing Trauma in Classroom Settings

6/11, 3–4 p.m. ET – Preparing for Challenging Conversations with Families

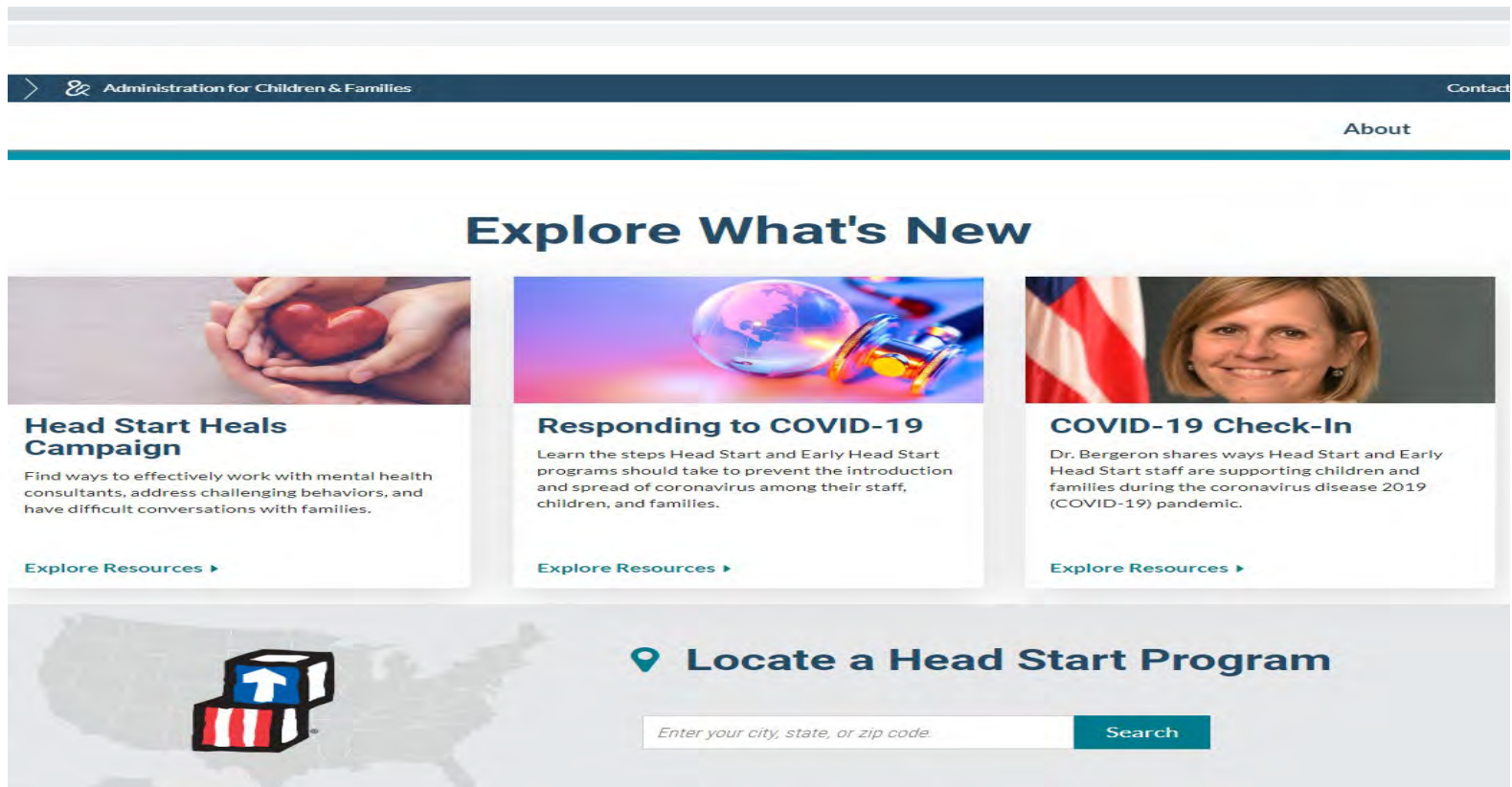


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Email: trauma@eclkc.info

Website: <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/>



The screenshot shows the website's navigation bar with the Administration for Children & Families logo and name, and a 'Contact' link. Below the navigation is an 'About' link. The main content area is titled 'Explore What's New' and features three featured articles:

- Head Start Heals Campaign**: Find ways to effectively work with mental health consultants, address challenging behaviors, and have difficult conversations with families. [Explore Resources >](#)
- Responding to COVID-19**: Learn the steps Head Start and Early Head Start programs should take to prevent the introduction and spread of coronavirus among their staff, children, and families. [Explore Resources >](#)
- COVID-19 Check-In**: Dr. Bergeron shares ways Head Start and Early Head Start staff are supporting children and families during the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. [Explore Resources >](#)

At the bottom, there is a 'Locate a Head Start Program' section with a map of the United States and the Head Start logo. It includes a search input field with the placeholder text 'Enter your city, state, or zip code.' and a 'Search' button.