

Raising Resilience:
 Infusing Resilience Into Our Work with Young Children

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Overview:

- Overview of ACES
- What is Resiliency
- Why should we build Resiliency
- PACES
- How to build Resiliency within our work with young children

ACEs Survey
 Adverse Childhood Experiences Survey

- 10 types of childhood trauma measured in the ACE study
 - 5 are personal: physical abuse, verbal abuse, sexual abuse, physical neglect, and emotional neglect
 - 5 are related to other family members: a parent who's an alcoholic, a mother who's a victim of domestic violence, family member in jail, family member diagnosed with mental illness, disappearance of a parent through divorce, death or abandonment
- ACEs Survey Attachment

ACES


- Adverse Childhood Experiences
 - Found that people who had experiences, difficult or adverse in childhood, had a greater risk of both physical and mental health problems during adulthood
 - The risk increases significantly for people with higher numbers of adverse experiences in their childhood
 - Adverse experiences include not only trauma and abuse, but also non-traumatic stressors like parental divorce and household dysfunction
 - Research has found that toxic stress on children's brains, damages the structure and function of a child's developing brain

Why Is This Important?

- When Children are overloaded with stress hormones, they are in flight, fight, or freeze mood
 - Impacts learning, have difficulty trusting adults or developing healthy relationships with peers
 - They turn to easily available biochemical solutions such as substances and risky behaviors
- Toxic stress can be passed down generations through hormones
 - If a child grows up with an overload of toxic stress, their stress-response genes are likely to be activated so they are easily triggered by stressful situations


Resilience

- Fortunately, our brains are the most malleable organ in the body!!
 - Research shows that the appropriate integration of resilience factors can help people improve their lives
- Resiliency:
 - The ability to cope with stress caused by such challenging situations
 - The capacity to recover quickly from difficulties
 - Impacts a child's ability to relate to others and their ability to survive and be successful even though their lives include many challenges



Basics of Building Resilience

- Building solid relationships with parents, caregivers, and professionals can help children cope with stress in their lives while building a sense of mastery
- Two important ways early childhood professionals can help parents and young children foster resilience include identifying strengths and building on resources
- Give practical ways to infuse resilience into caring and working for children



Understanding Resiliency

- Individual
 - Engage in age-appropriate activities such as attend school, participate in community activities and relate to others
- Family
 - Parents remain deeply committed to parenting
- School and Caregiving System
 - Vital in building strengths by providing care
- Larger Community
 - Safe neighbors, strong social ties, shared purpose can build resilience
 - Early care and education programs such as Early Head Start



Building Resilience Opportunities

Resilience can be recognized and fostered at four levels:

- Individual
 - Supporting the capacity to learn, relate to others, use imagination, see themselves as a part of a community
 - Developing child's awareness and regulation of their own feelings as well as skills and strategies for letting others know how they feel
 - Encouraging children's relationships with their peers, caregivers, and parents

Building Resilience Opportunities

- Families
 - Understanding cultural variations and build strength and resilience from that
 - Encouraging parents to be more effective by having regular routines for children to follow
 - Maintaining appropriate limits
 - Engaging in positive parent-child interactions such as reading together or talking about what happened during the day at school

Building Resilience Opportunities

- Caregiving
 - Encouraging consistent positive attachments with children and making parents feel welcomed and comfortable
 - Understanding adversity and resilience within those families they work with can provide a better resource and be more effective

Building Resilience Opportunities

- Community
 - Understand what exists and what is missing in the community to be a better parent outreach
 - Sharing knowledge and experience with families to find the right service or information from a variety of settings such as health clinics, schools, places of worship, and community centers
 - Child neglect can be avoided by government assistance to help families afford food and quality daycare

Why Is This Important?

- Research shows that good childhood memories support improved physical and emotional health
- Positive memories lower depression and illness risks
- Positive memories of parents are associated with better health in adulthood
- Studies show that an important way to prevent ACEs and toxic stress is to build "Protective Factors" in children
- Protective factors are like a shield to protect kids from ACEs and build resilience
- It only takes One Positive Attachment!

What Are Protective Factors?

- Loving supportive parents
- Parents who read and talk to their kids
- Healthy relationships with parents, family members and friends
- Learning good communication skills

PACES
Positive and Adverse Childhood Experiences Survey

- Designed as an alternative to the ACE Survey
- Includes questions about protective factors to help decrease the potential for re-traumatization, maintain balance between activating and calming questions, and help provide a richer understanding of early childhood experiences
- Developed to highlight the importance of understanding positive as well as adverse events in shaping a variety of outcomes
- Reduces the likelihood of re-traumatization and not of dysregulation while answering the questions
- PACES attachment

Infusing Resilience Into Our Work

Help Parents Build Resilience:

- Messages such as: "You and your child have strengths."
 - Asking parents what they like best about their child or what makes them happiest about their child
- Ask a parent "What do you need?"
 - Many parents require support in understanding their needs before they can ask for resources
 - Encourage parents to think about how their current experiences compare to how they would like things to be
- Building trust in your relationships with families is important to encourage reflection
- Encourage parents to consider how they are taking care of themselves

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Help Parents Build Resilience:

- Have as many healthy, positive experiences as possible for your child
- Always be there for your child when they need support and encouragement
- Spend time with your child; let them know they are loved and have a purpose in life
- Let them know who they can count on if bad things happen
- Shield your child from toxic stress by working to prevent negative experiences
- Children learn from their parents' behavior. If you handle times of stress by being positive and confident, your child will notice and learn from it

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On a daily basis, parents can build their child's resilience by:

- Teaching self-care
 - Making time for healthy eating, exercise, and rest supports parents' efforts to feel strong and teaches a child good habits to last throughout their lifetime
- Emphasizing the positive
 - Helping parents remember and celebrate important events within their family or within their culture
 - Singing songs with their children, drawing pictures with them, looking at photographs together, acknowledging important holidays

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- Building a strong parent-child bond
 - Developing a consistent loving bond by showing affection and responding to a child's needs can help them feel secure and support parenting effectiveness
- Reading Together
 - Numerous benefits such as language and literacy learning, creating routines, and fostering a love of learning and discovery through books
 - Books are also great tools that can open and support conversations about positive feelings and difficult events

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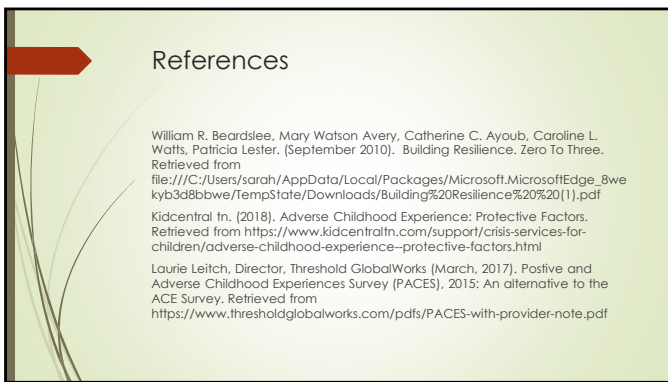
- Encouraging social skills
 - Teaching children how to make friends and parents reaching out to their own friends can teach children what it means to be friendly and get along with others
 - Make time and encourage children to play with peers and participate in positive group activities such as sports or clubs
- Maintain a daily routine
 - Knowing what to expect can be comforting
 - Keeping a routine and following daily simple rituals such as reading a story each night before bed can be reassuring

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- Nurturing positive self-esteem
 - Important to build on strengths
 - Parents can help child trust themselves and try new activities by complimenting successes and helping them to learn from hardships
- Practicing self-reflection
 - Taking time to reflect on life can help gain perspective and problem-solve
 - Could keep a journal or talking with others about positive and difficult events
 - Creative projects such as taking photos, creating artwork, making music and then sharing those art forms



Questions?



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