 **Moving Beyond ACEs:  
Trauma and Resiliency in  
a Post-Pandemic World**

PATIENT-CENTERED   RESPECT   INTEGRITY   EXCELLENCE   OWNERSHIP   INNOVATION

These slides were developed by the Department of Clinical Innovation at Maine Behavioral Healthcare and were designed to be delivered in a specific way. Please do not duplicate or share without written permission from the developers.


Act with kindness and compassion   Be an active listener   Be a role model   Set high standards   Take responsibility   Embrace change

**Conflict of Interest Disclosures**

There are no financial conflicts of interest related to this presentation.

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We acknowledge and honor the indigenous stewards of the land we are on. Maine is home to the sovereign peoples of the Wabanaki Tribal Nation. We exist on their unceded homelands.



## Nice to meet you!



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## Learning Objectives

- Participants will increase awareness and understanding of the multiple layers of adversity and trauma experienced
- Participants will be able to identify how adversity and trauma have impacted them and the children and families they work with
- Participants will be able to identify at least one resilience protective factor that can be implemented by next Wednesday



## Core Training Messages

### Professional Sustainability

Caring for ourselves, and each other, while caring for others.

### Resilience

All people are resilient and have the ability to heal following trauma.

### Coping & Strength

Problematic reactions to trauma can be coping resources that helped individuals survive.

### Support

Support and supervision are critical for those who help others.



## Warm Up Brainstorm



## Adverse Childhood Experiences vs. Trauma

ACE are experiences that may be traumatic to children and youth during the first 18 years of life and include ten categories under abuse, neglect and household challenges. Trauma is more broadly defined by subjective experiences.

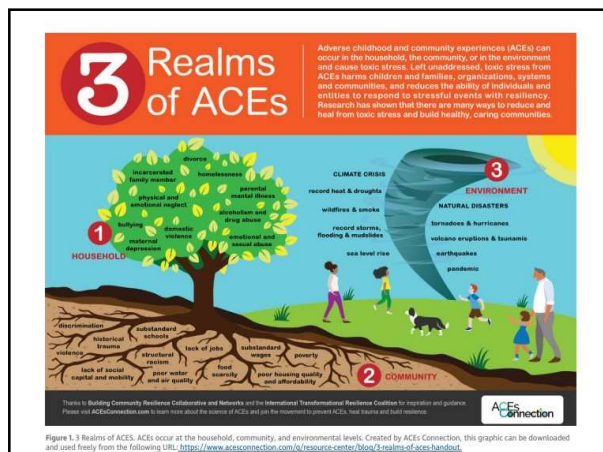
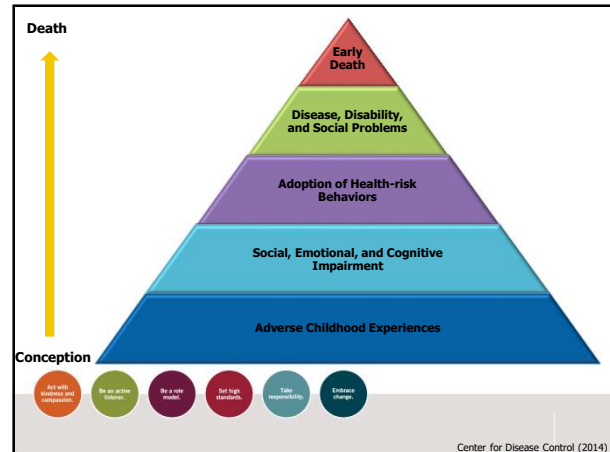
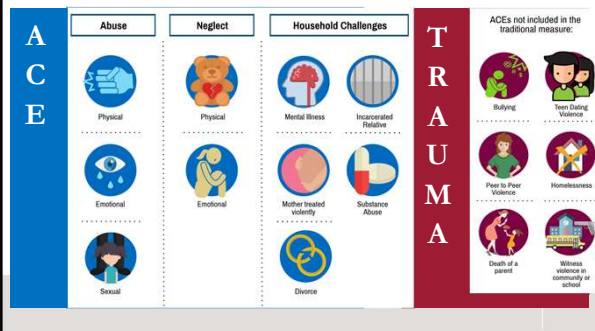
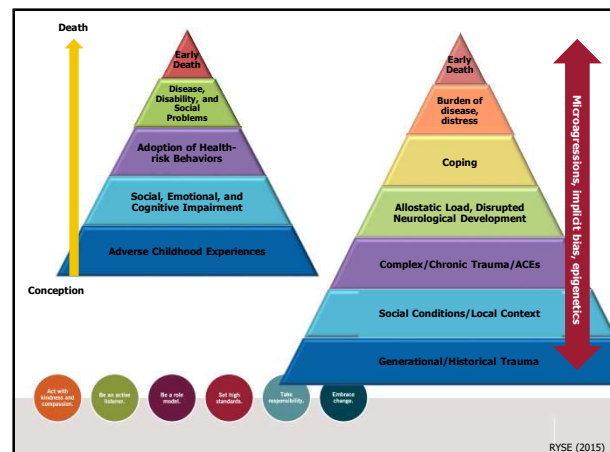
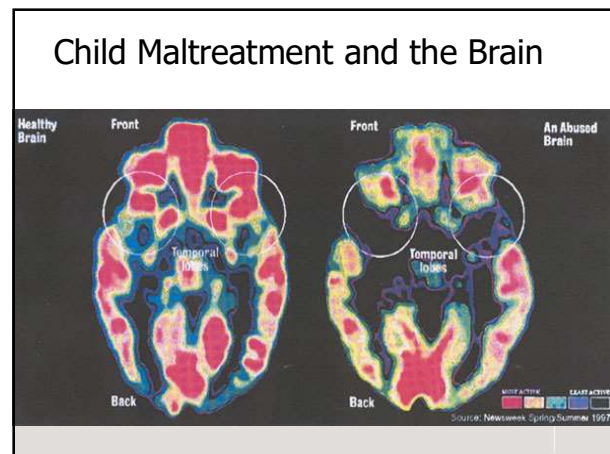
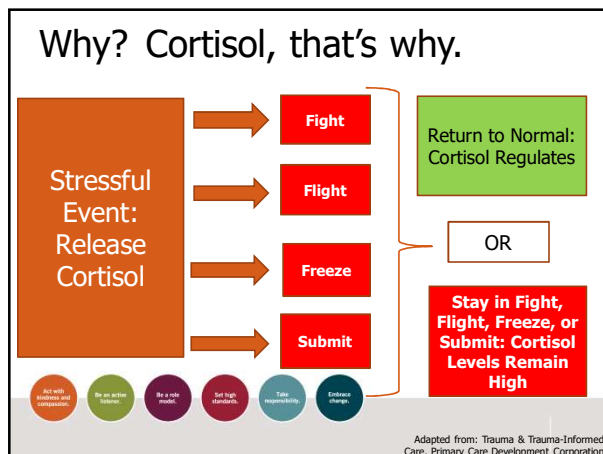
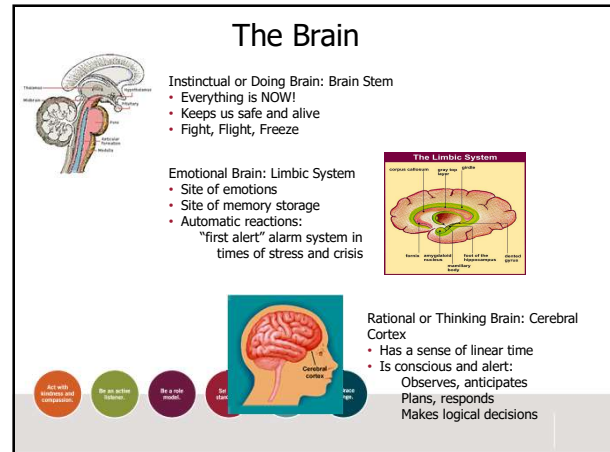


Figure 1.3 Realms of ACEs. ACEs occur at the household, community, and environmental levels. Created by ACEs Connection, this graphic can be downloaded and used freely from the following URL: <https://www.aceconnections.com/en/resources-center/3realms-of-aces-handout>.



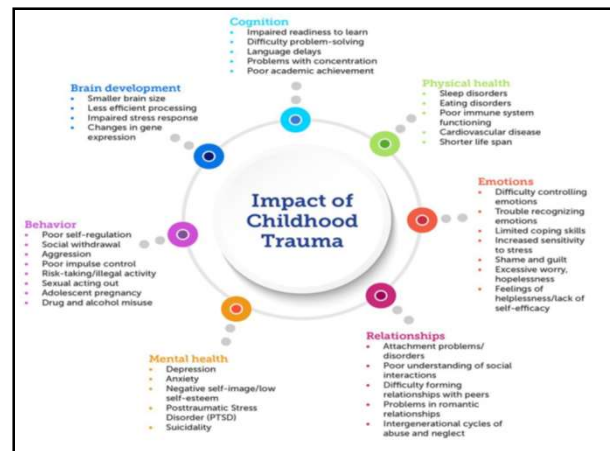


## Epigenetics and Trauma

### Epigenetics:

the study of how behaviors and environment can cause changes that affect the way genes work

Trauma can leave a chemical mark on a person's genes, which is then passed down to subsequent generations. The mark doesn't directly damage the gene; there's no mutation. Instead it alters the mechanism by which the gene is converted into functioning proteins, or expressed.



## Trauma Worldview



### Non-Trauma View

- I live in a predictable world
- I am safe
- I am worthwhile
- I have the ability to impact and change my life for the better
- I am hopeful about my future
- I trust myself to make decisions

### Trauma View

- The world is unpredictable
- I am not safe
- No one will help me
- I am not good/worthy enough for people to care about me
- It will never get better
- I can't even trust myself



Adapted from: Trauma & Trauma-Informed Care  
Primary Care Development Corporation

## Common Reactions in Youth

### FIGHT

- Self-blame
- Poor peer relationships
- Verbal/physical aggression
- Disobedience

### FLIGHT

- Distracted, inattentive
- "Runner"
- Isolation
- Disconnected

### FREEZE

- Persistent concern over safety
- Fear/Anxiety
- Depression
- Shame/low self-esteem

### SUBMIT

- Display exaggerated flattery or affection
- Protective behaviors
- Appeasing

### The Push-Pull of Trauma Informed Care



### Resilience



...is not only the capacity to thrive under stress, it is also the strength and ability of communities to provide those living within, with the things they need to adapt and thrive.

### Protective Factors

#### Individual

- Cognitive ability
- Self-Efficacy
- Internal locus of control
- Temperament
- Social Skills
- Epigenetics

#### Family

- Family cohesion
- Secure attachment
- Interaction
- Social support

#### Community

- Positive school experiences
- Community resources
- Supportive Peers/Mentors
- Formal support
- Advocacy and policy development

#### Culture

- Strong sense of cultural identity
- Spirituality
- Connection to cultural community
- Cultural talents and skills



Adapted from: The Road to Recovery Toolkit. NCTSN (2015)

### Protective Factors

Factors that can increase resilience include:

- Strong relationships
- Feeling connected
- Feeling nurtured and appreciated
- Feeling some control over one's own life
- Having a sense of belonging



Caring for Children Who've Experienced Trauma: Resource Parent Workshop, NCTSN (2010)



### Skill Development

- Help identify activators and patterns
- Brainstorm with youth what to do "in the moment"
- Give youth a role in solving problems
- Help youth understand stress responses – normalize
- Instill hope that with practice, a different response is possible

Act with  
compassion and  
empathy

Be an active  
listener

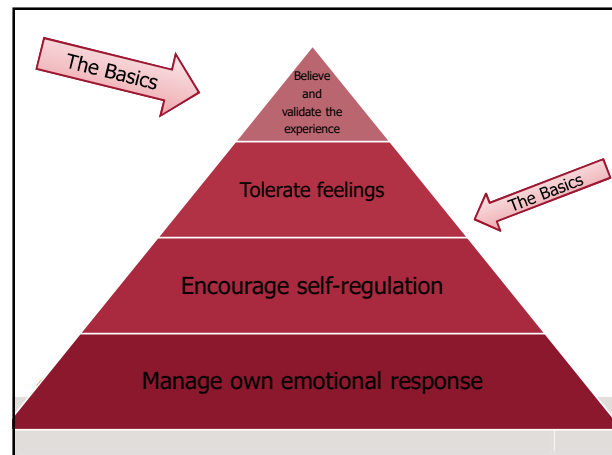
Be a role  
model

Set high  
standards

Take  
responsibility

Embrace  
change

Adapted from: *What If Everything You Knew About Disciplining Kids Was Wrong?* Lewis (2015)



### LOW and SLOW

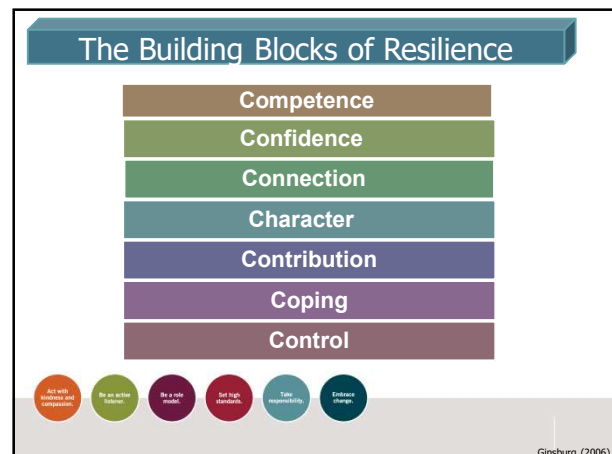
**LOW**

- Lower the volume and pitch of your voice
- Keep a matter of fact tone regardless of the situation
- Speak in short sentences with few questions
- Talking WITH the person, not at the person

**SLOW**

- Slow yourself down by taking slow, deep breaths
- Slow down your rate of speech and pause between sentences
- Slow down your body movements
- Slow down your agenda and take your time

Community Counseling Center (2008)  
TF-CBT Clinician Implementation Guide: 1<sup>st</sup> Ed.



### The Push-Pull of Trauma Informed Care



### Resilience



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### Resources

- Fostering Resilience  
[https://fosteringresilience.com/professionals/7cs\\_professionals.php](https://fosteringresilience.com/professionals/7cs_professionals.php)
- National Child Traumatic Stress Network  
[www.nctsn.org](http://www.nctsn.org)
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration:  
[www.samhsa.gov](http://www.samhsa.gov)

