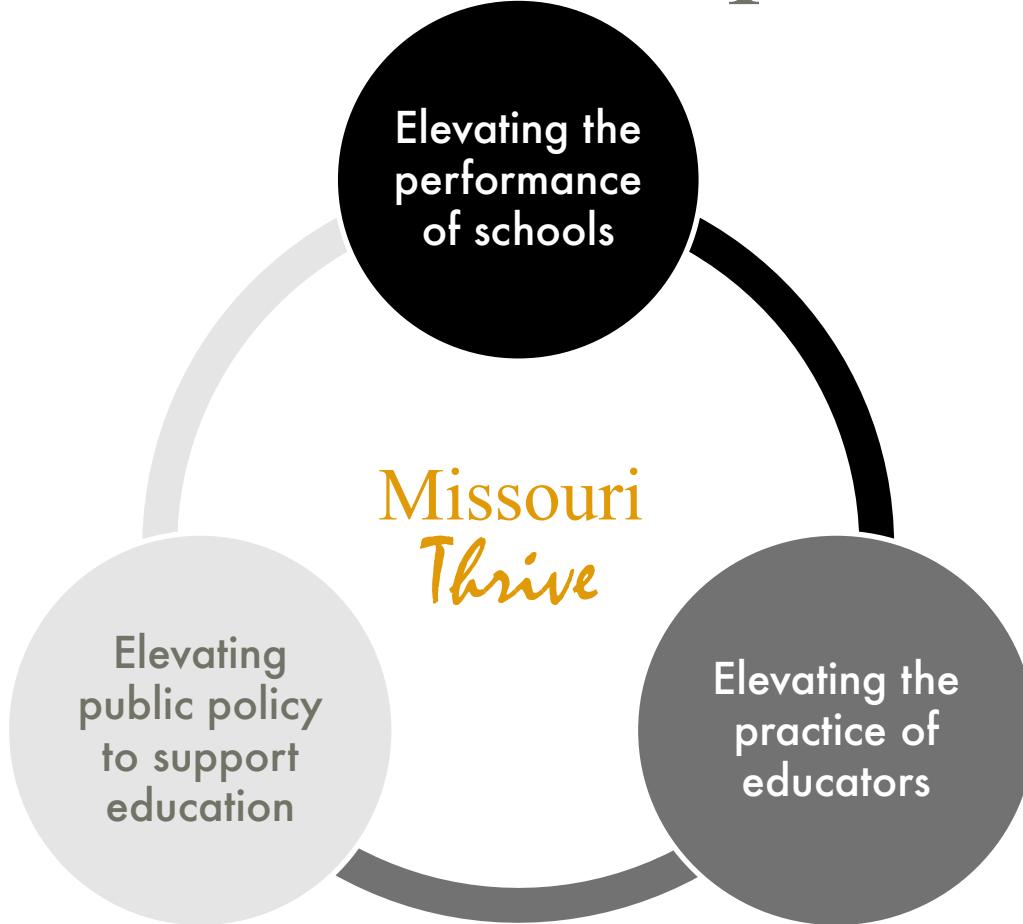


# A Network Hub for School *Mental Health* Improvement



# A Network Hub for School *Mental Health* Improvement

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@MissouriThrive  
@MUHookCenter  
@PBISRector  
@NCTSN  
#traumainformed



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# Sad not Bad: Seeing the World Through the Lens of Trauma

Mid-Missouri School Counselor Association  
February 7, 2017

# 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



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# Our Reality

- In 2014 there were 5,297 substantiated reports of child abuse and neglect in Missouri.<sup>1</sup>
- 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.<sup>2</sup>
- 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.<sup>2</sup>
- In 2011/12 almost 50% of children ages 0-17 experienced one or more adverse events (traumatic event).<sup>3</sup>



# 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.



# 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?

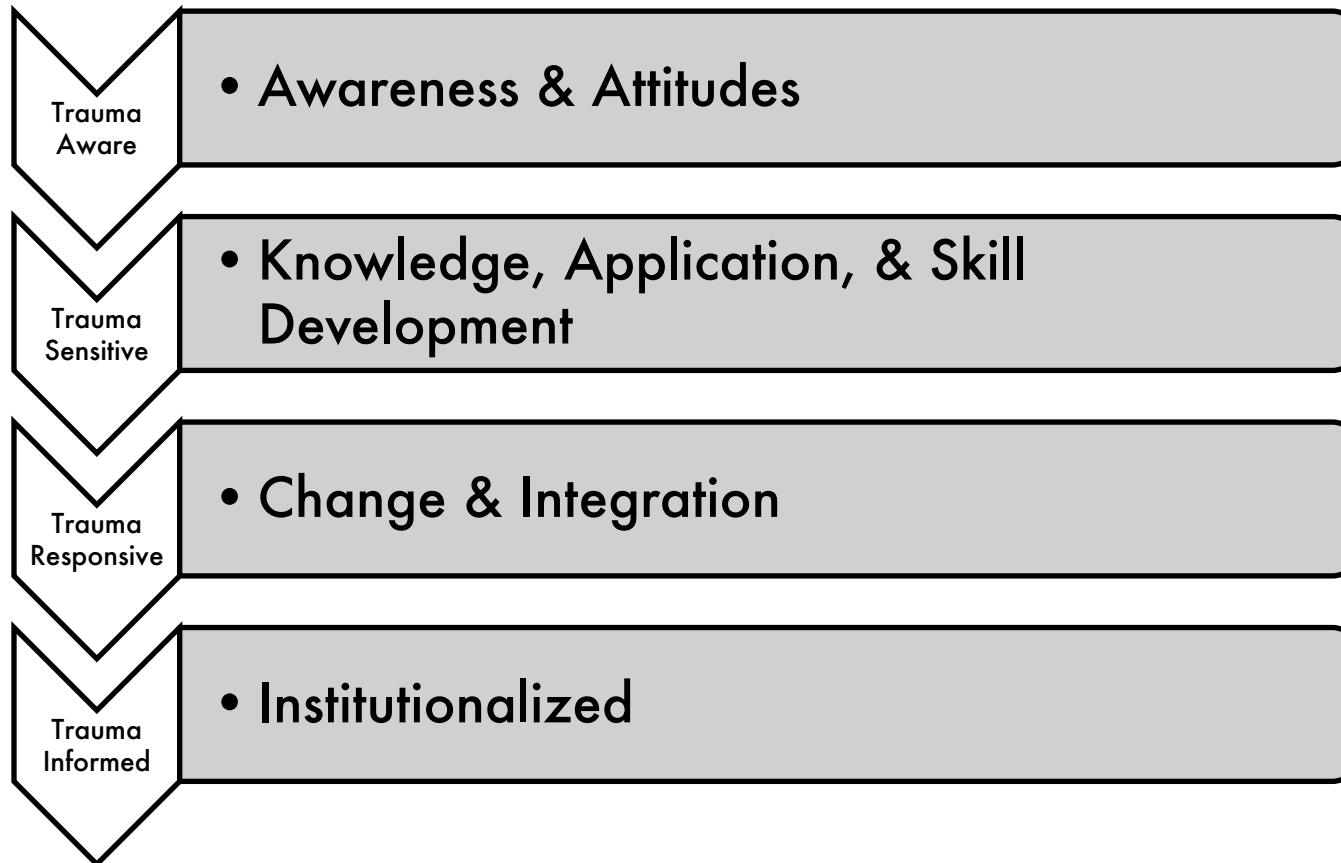
Changing the Question from:

What's wrong with you?  
to

What happened to you?



# The Missouri Model Trauma-Informed Framework





# Importance, Prevalence, and Definition **TRAUMA BASICS**

# 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



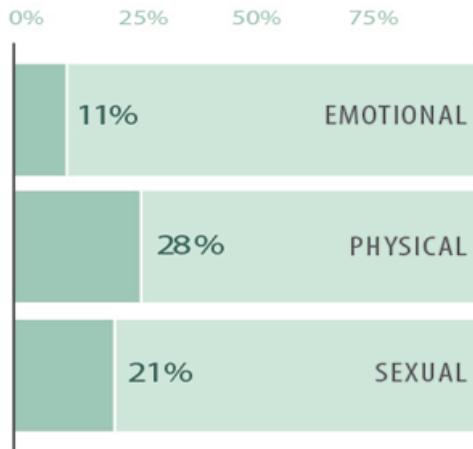
# What are the effects of trauma?

## Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study

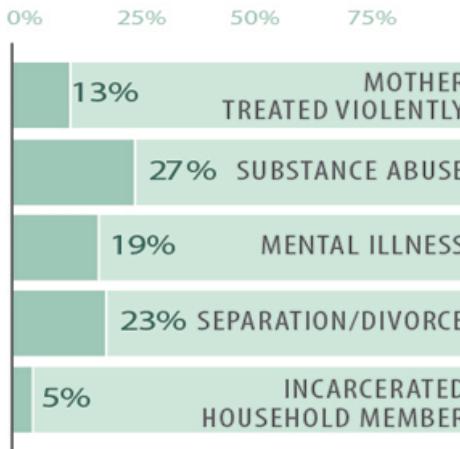
### → TYPES of ACES

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.

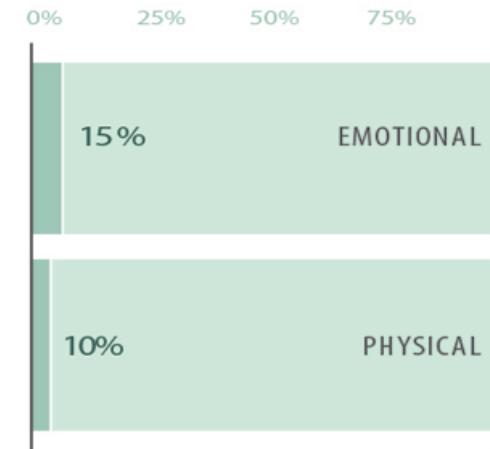
#### ABUSE



#### HOUSEHOLD CHALLENGES



#### NEGLECT



# What 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)

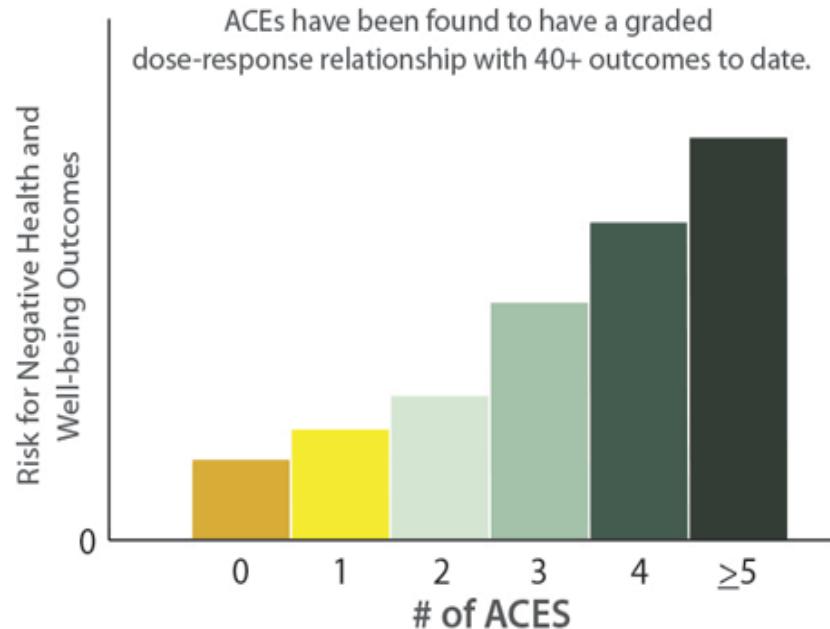


Behaviors (smoking, alcoholism, drug use)



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

ACEs have been found to have a graded dose-response relationship with 40+ outcomes to date.



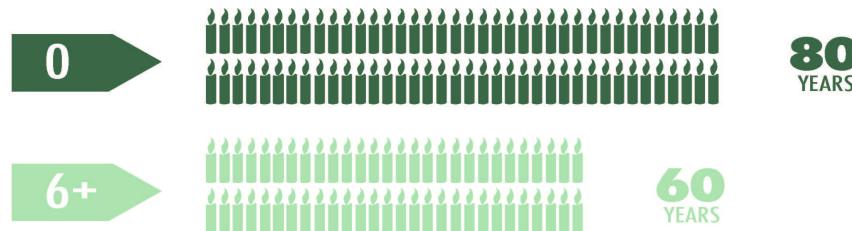
\*This pattern holds for the 40+ outcomes, but the exact risk values vary depending on the outcome.

# 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**.



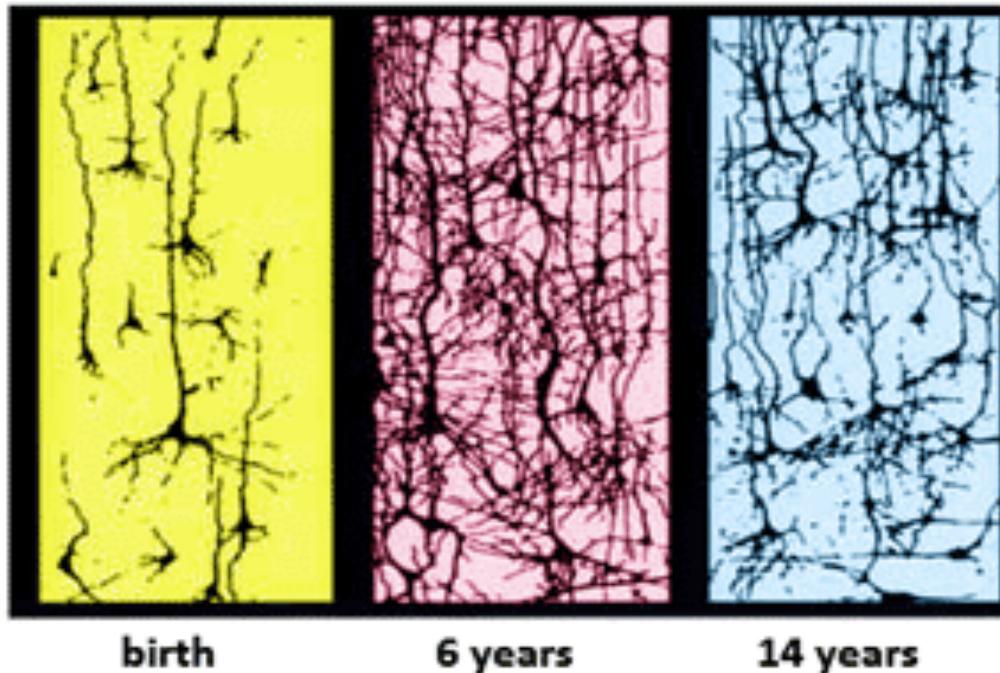


# THE IMPACT OF TRAUMA

# Brain architecture

Experience Shapes Brain Architecture by Over-  
Production Followed by Pruning

Center on the Developing Child HARVARD UNIVERSITY



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

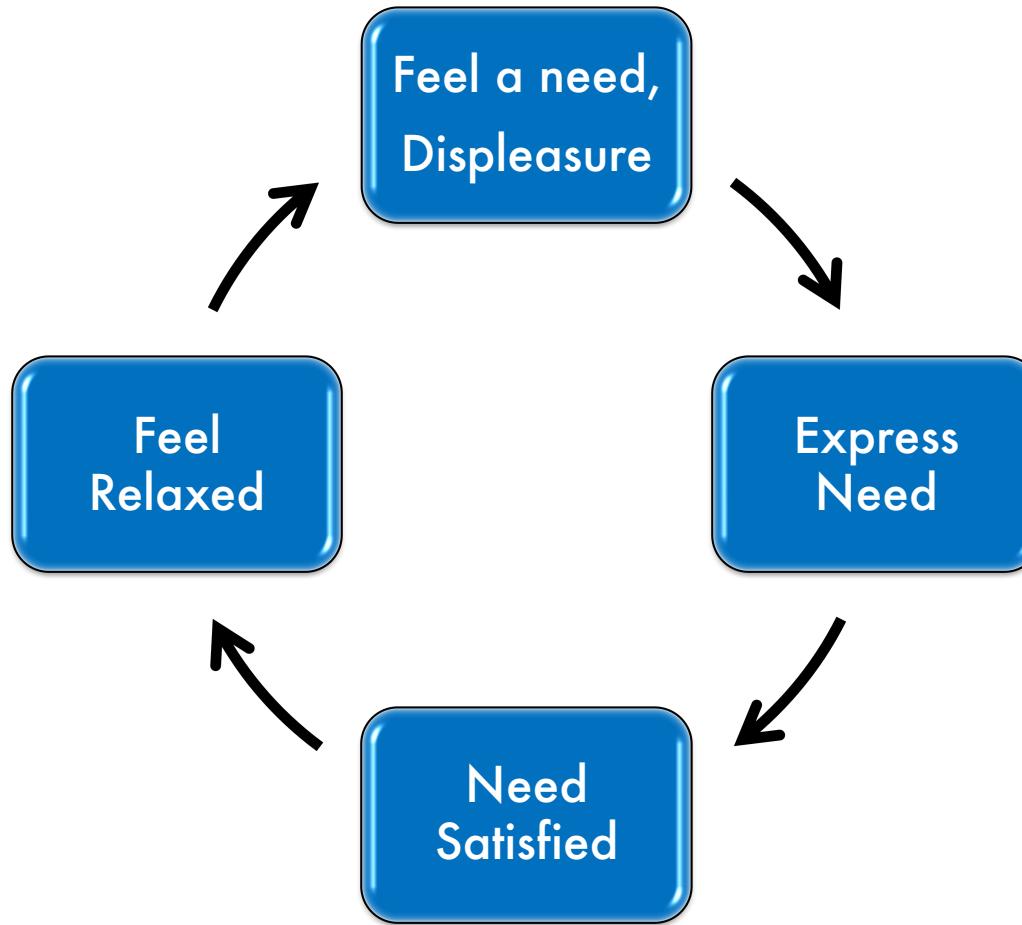
- Fixed amount of neurons
- Period of rapid proliferation
- Pruning
- Experiences shape connections



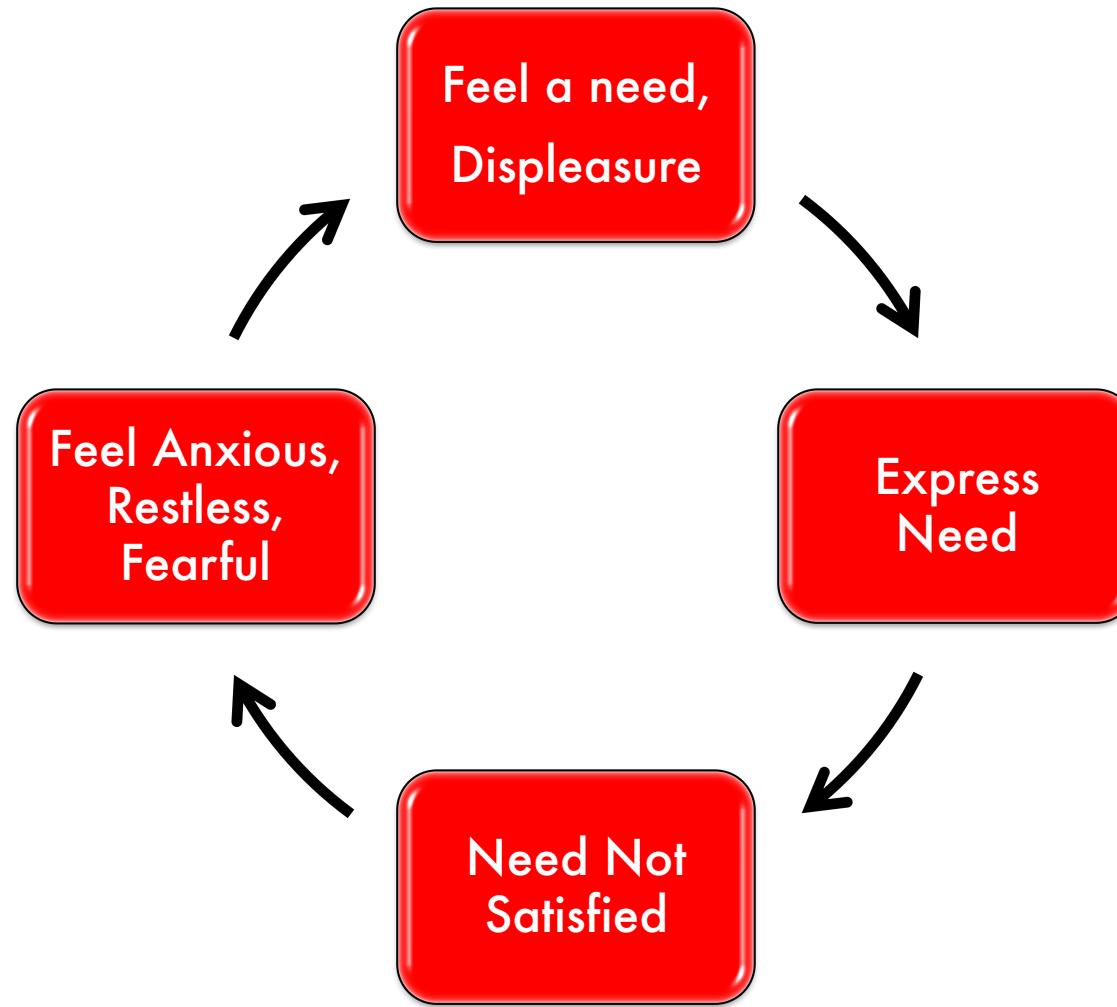
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# Developing neural connections

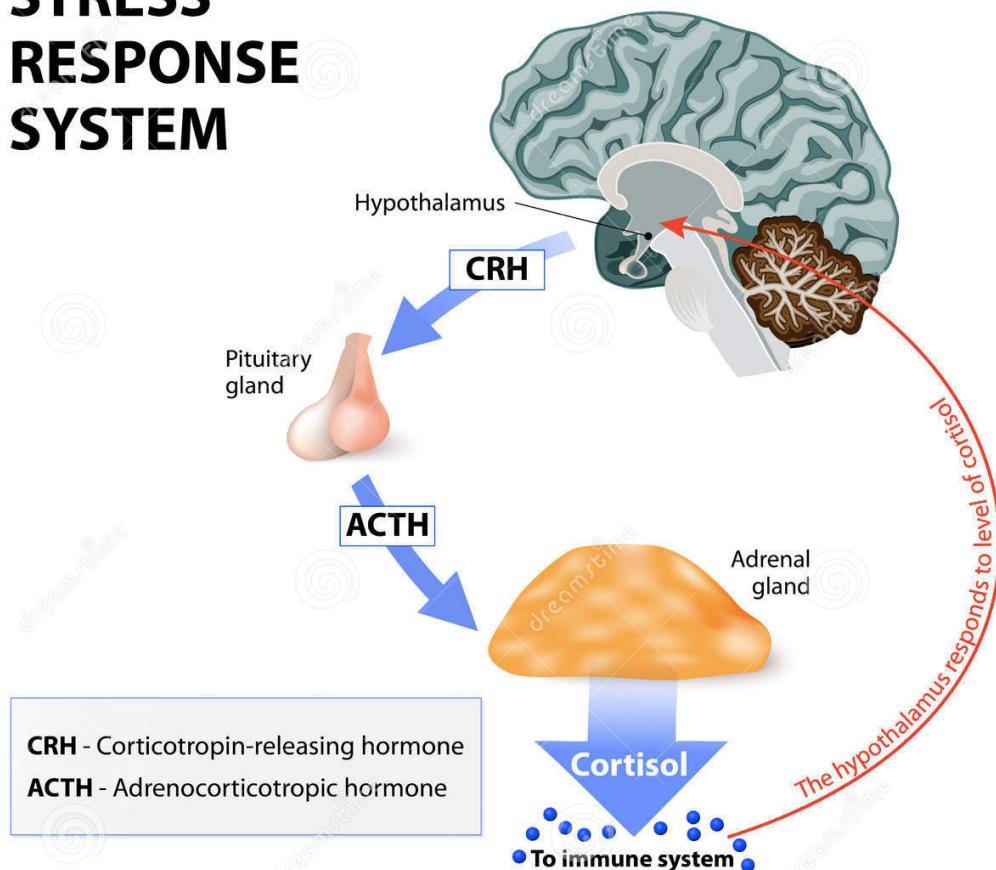


# Developing neural connections



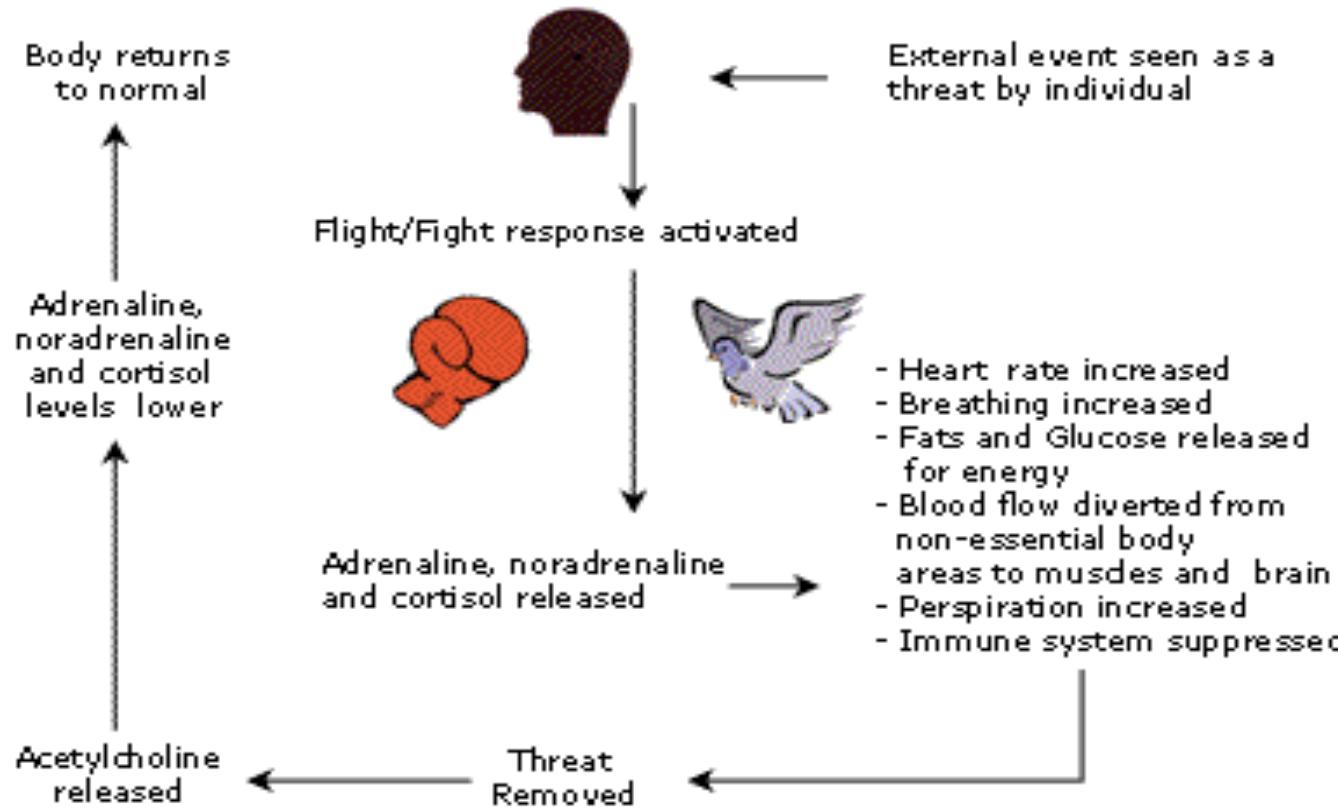
# Physiological response to stress

## STRESS RESPONSE SYSTEM



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

# Physiological response to stress



# Allostatic load

## Acute Stress Response

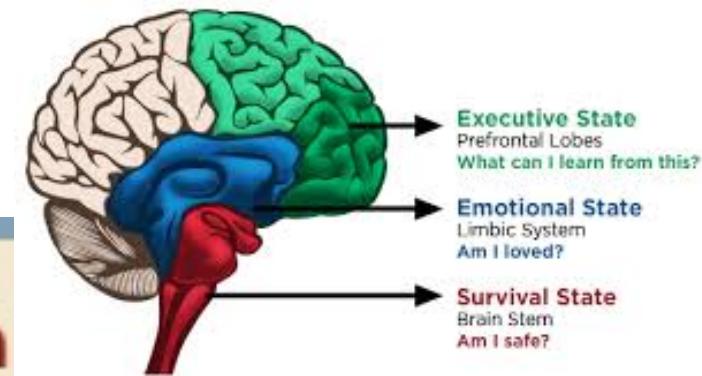
- increase blood glucose
- increased blood pressure
- modulation of immune response
- reduced motivation for rewarding stimuli
- vigilance and arousal
- consolidation of aversive memories

## 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)

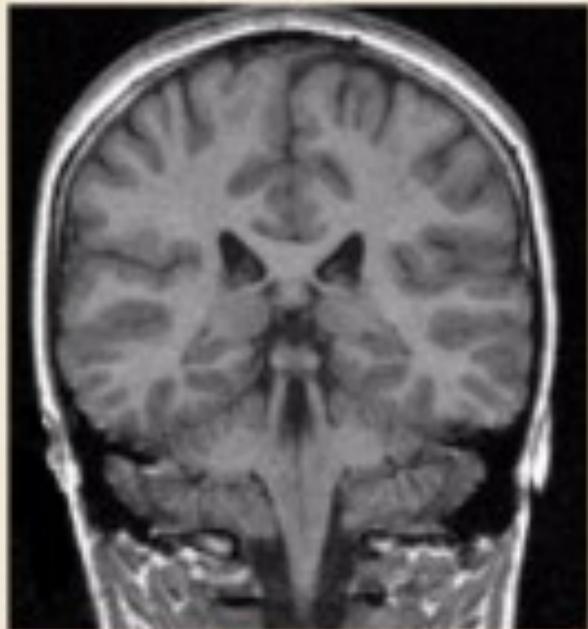


# Toxic Responses

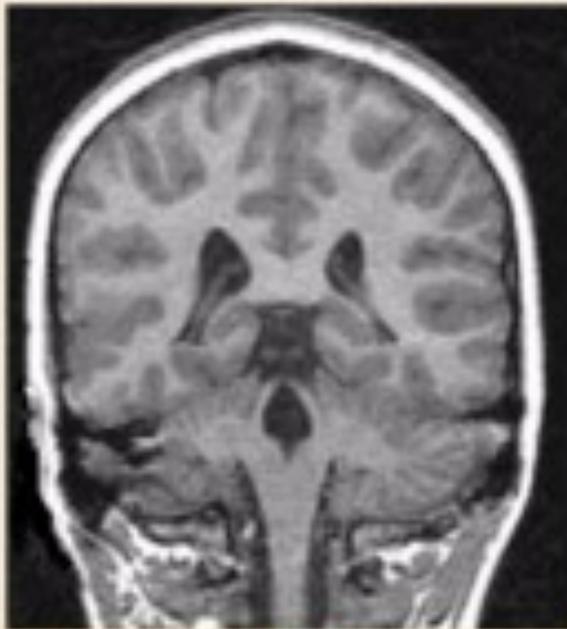


## Impact of Trauma on the Brain

Healthy Brain



Brain of Abused Child



DE BELLIS ET AL., 1992

56



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22

# Trauma manifestation Early Childhood

The trauma of not having a healthy relationship with a primary caregiver can result in difficulty in:

- Regulating emotions
- Trusting others
- Feeling free to explore environments
- Developing sense of self

- High risk due to rapid development
- Less able to anticipate danger
- Cannot always express feelings in words
- Children do not understand cause and effect, which can result in self blame



# Trauma manifestation Young Children

Trauma can result in:

- Delayed development of verbal skills
- Memory problems
- Regressive behaviors
- Aggression
- Excessive crying or screaming
- Problems with focus/learning
- Poor appetite, low weight, digestive problems

- irritability, sadness, and anxiety
- Nightmares/sleep difficulties
- Compulsion to re-enact or imitate traumatic event(s)
- Exaggerated/startled response
- Difficulty trusting others
- Lack of self-confidence
- Somatic complaints
- Bed wetting



# Trauma manifestation Adolescents

Trauma can result in:

- Anxiety, fear, and worry about safety of self and others
- Sudden changes in behavior
- Difficulty trusting others
- Repetitive thoughts and comments about death or dying (including suicidal thoughts, writing, art, or notebook covers about violent or morbid topics, internet searches)
- Heightened difficulty with authority, redirection, or criticism
- Re-experiencing the trauma through nightmares or disturbing memories
- Sleep difficulties
- Exaggerated/startled response
- Avoidance behaviors
- Emotional numbing



# Trauma manifestation Adults

Adults may experience the impact of compounded, unaddressed childhood trauma, but also experience new traumatic experiences throughout the life span.

Resulting symptoms may include:

- Depression
- Lack of trust, particularly of authority
- Impaired social/sexual relationships
- Hypervigilance
- Inertia
- Substance abuse/self-medication
- Mental illness
- Emotional dysregulation





# WHAT DO WE DO?

# Trauma Interventions (Prevention)

## THE SPECTRUM OF PREVENTION



# Trauma Interventions (Reaction)

## Clinical Responses (Connecting to resources)

- Many effective therapeutic interventions are available for individuals of all ages through various individual or group modalities
- Interventions are available to cater to one's individual strengths (visual, verbal, experiential, artistic, etc.)
- Trauma is not "cured" – therapeutic interventions are unable to erase the traumatic event(s); the goal is to focus on effective coping strategies

## Non-Clinical Responses (Our Environment)

- Work toward trauma-informed systems
  - See an individual's responses and behaviors as the result of changes in the brain and body
  - Affect policies and practices that are in the best interest of all students
  - Strive to see the world through the lens of trauma
- Developing **safe, stable, nurturing** relationships
  - Caring to ask
  - Caring to relate
  - Caring to connect



# Challenging Relationships

The first 3-4 months, I was thinking, “When are you going to leave?” The 5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> months I’m thinking, “You’re showing pity, you pity me, you don’t care about me.” By the 18th month I’m like, “This person loves me, because I have nothing to offer and they are showing they are not trying to use me.” So stick in their lives through thick and thin.

<https://vimeo.com/102974278>

James Andersen,  
2014 National Mentoring Summit

# What if kids are doing the best they can?

<https://changingmindsnow.org/stories>



# 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

<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](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/Heart  
ofLearning.aspx](http://www.k12.wa.us/CompassionateSchools/Heart_ofLearning.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)



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