



# **Children's Resilience Initiative**

*One Community's Response to ACEs through Resilience*

October 17, 2014

Stevenson, WA. Community Event

Please do not copy or distribute beyond participants

# A revolution is underway !



But not the:  
*“One if by  
night and two  
if by day”*  
version...

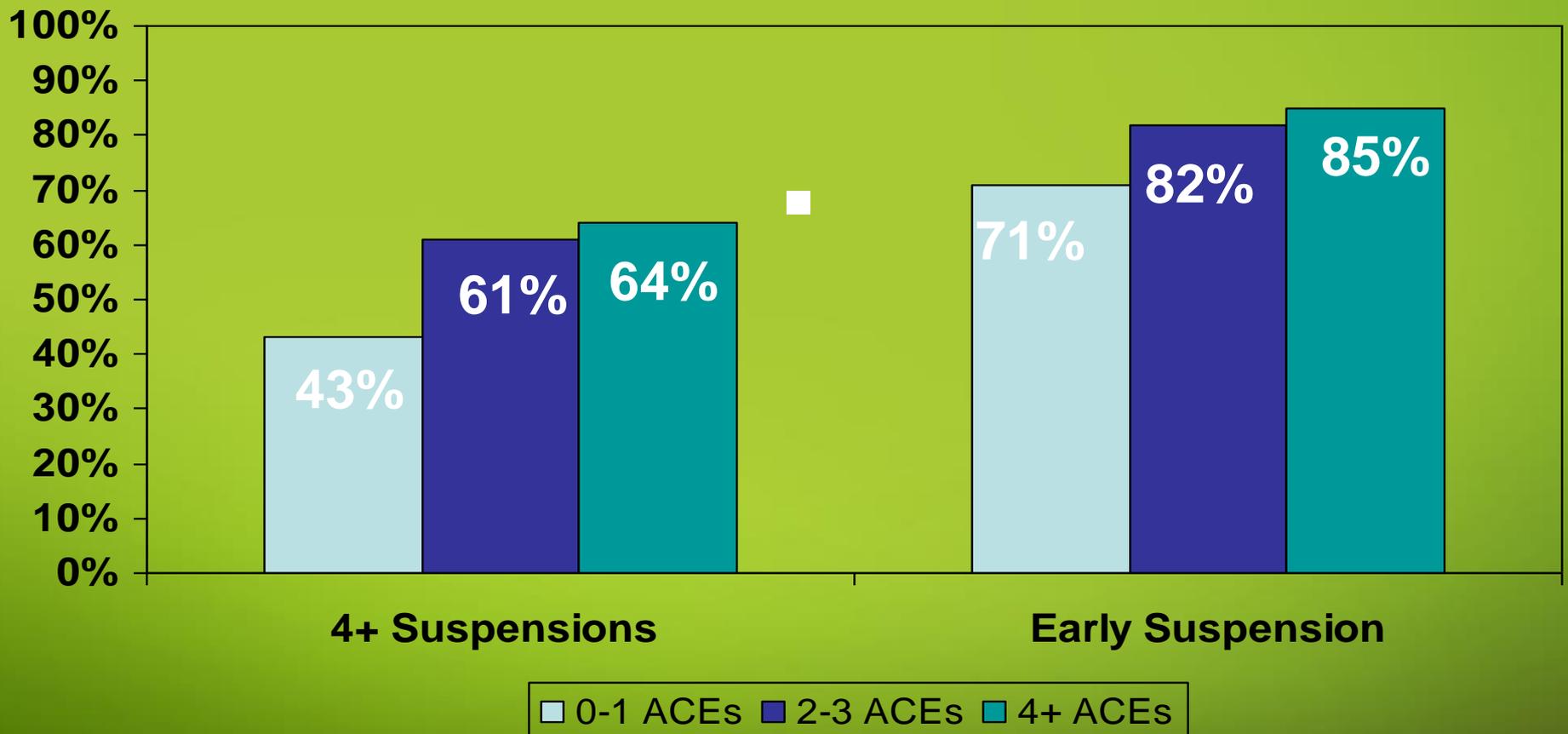


**Alarm bells ringing across the nation!!**



Preschool expulsions are  
13 times more common  
than K-12 expulsions

# Juvenile Offenders ACES & School Experience



# ACEs are the Pipeline to Prison



- 1 in 104 American adults is behind bars
- 1 in 33 American adults is under correctional control
- 1 in 4 of the world's inmates is in a US prison or jail
- 1 in 8 state employees works in corrections
- 1 in 14 state general fund dollars is spent on corrections

**HIGH COST, LOW RETURN: 1 in 2.3 inmates returns to prison within 3 years of release**

( - ACES TOO HIGH)

# Basis for revolution?



- Science & fact: brain becomes what it was exposed to
- Safety & self-regulation issues
- Thus, adult must model & build missing skills through relationship & resilience

# Why a new approach?



“When working with trauma impacted children, we must reach their hearts before we can reach their heads.”

Dr. Ken Ginsburg

# Be a rebel **WITH** a cause!



It is up to us to find the courage  
to change our mindsets.

It requires an entire paradigm shift.



# How does one join the revolution?



By building the capabilities of **adults** and strengthening **communities** that **together** form the **environment of relationships** for students to succeed

- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player\\_embedded&v=urU-a\\_FsS5Y](https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=urU-a_FsS5Y)



## Call out key point(s) you just heard?



1. Pile up, cumulative burden on children
2. Results in lack of skills for negotiating well-regulated environment
3. Extended period of plasticity- up to 30 yrs
4. Focus on development of adult skills first
5. Community help build & reinforce capacities for parents/children
6. Develop human capital
7. Plan for the future to have a future

# Key learning



- Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study
- Disrupted brain development
- Resilience building blocks
- Community response

Powerful information we all  
should know about!

# Children's Resilience Initiative



Formed-2009

Visioned-2007



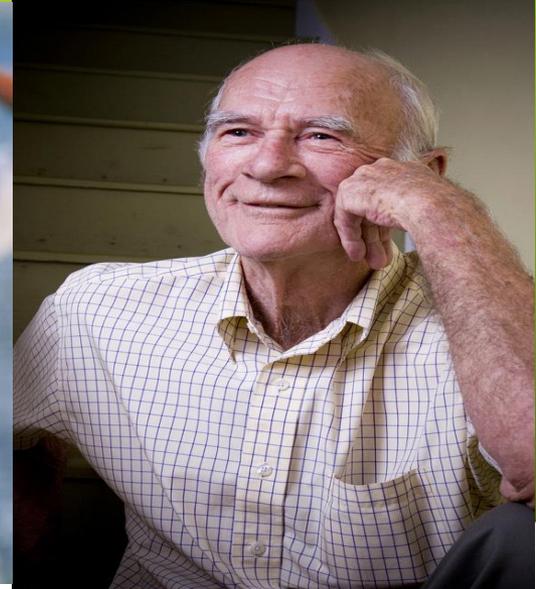
~25 community partners  
embed principles into practice

Reduce ACEs & build Resilience





**No one gets to  
choose the family  
into which  
they are born.**



# Adverse Childhood Experiences Study



*A hand no one  
should have to hold!*



**Dr. Vincent Felitti**

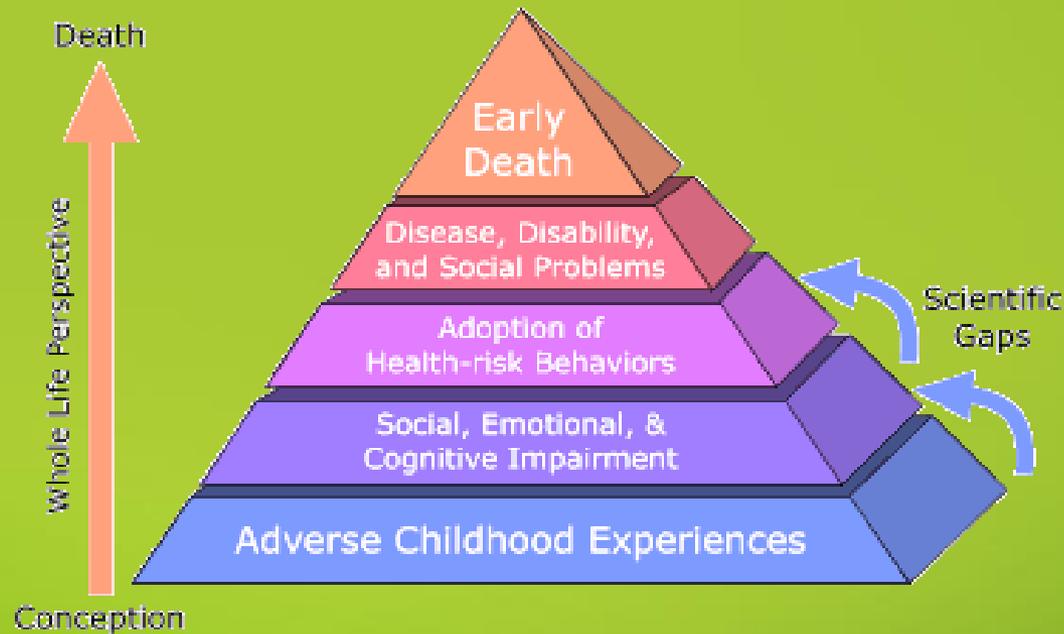
Kaiser Permanente



**Dr. Rob Anda**

CDC

# Integrating Brain & Epidemiological Research: Initial Hypothesis





# *What are the **A**dverse **C**hildhood **E**xperiences?*

Grouped by:

Child maltreatment/neglect  
and  
Dysfunctional family environment

# Maltreatment/neglect ACEs



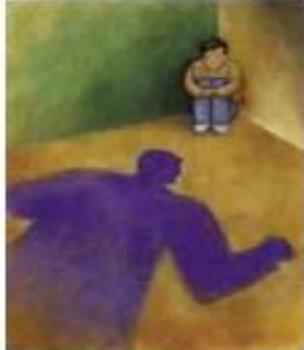
**A**  
♠ Adverse Childhood Experience  
**CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE**



♠  
A

This card features a black spade symbol in the top left corner. The text reads "Adverse Childhood Experience" in black and "CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE" in red. The central illustration shows a young girl with brown hair, looking down with a sad expression, her hand covering her eyes. In the bottom right corner, there is a black spade symbol and the letter "A".

**A**  
♠ Adverse Childhood Experience  
**CHILD PHYSICAL ABUSE**



♠  
A

This card features a black spade symbol in the top left corner. The text reads "Adverse Childhood Experience" in black and "CHILD PHYSICAL ABUSE" in red. The central illustration shows a small child sitting on a wooden floor, looking down. A large, dark purple shadow of an adult figure is cast over the child, suggesting a threatening presence. In the bottom right corner, there is a black spade symbol and the letter "A".

**A**  
♠ Adverse Childhood Experience  
**CHILD EMOTIONAL ABUSE**



♠  
A

This card features a black spade symbol in the top left corner. The text reads "Adverse Childhood Experience" in black and "CHILD EMOTIONAL ABUSE" in red. The central illustration shows a large, balding man with a red face and a yellow shirt, looking angry. He is standing over a small, sad-looking child in a blue shirt. In the bottom right corner, there is a black spade symbol and the letter "A".

**A**  
♠ Adverse Childhood Experience  
**PHYSICAL NEGLECT**



♠  
A

This card features a black spade symbol in the top left corner. The text reads "Adverse Childhood Experience" in black and "PHYSICAL NEGLECT" in red. The central illustration shows a plate of food, a fork, and a knife, symbolizing lack of proper nutrition. In the bottom right corner, there is a black spade symbol and the letter "A".

**A**  
♠ Adverse Childhood Experience  
**EMOTIONAL NEGLECT**



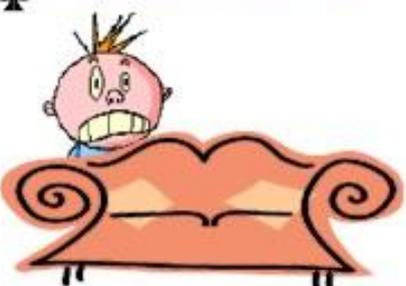
♠  
A

This card features a black spade symbol in the top left corner. The text reads "Adverse Childhood Experience" in black and "EMOTIONAL NEGLECT" in red. The central illustration shows a child sitting on the floor, looking down with a sad expression. A dog is sitting next to the child. In the bottom right corner, there is a black spade symbol and the letter "A".



# Family environment ACEs

**A** Adverse Childhood Experience  
**WITNESSING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AGAINST MOTHER**



**♠**

**A** Adverse Childhood Experience  
**MENTALLY ILL, DEPRESSED OR SUICIDAL FAMILY MEMBER**



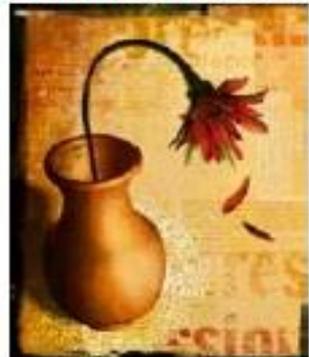
**♠**

**A** Adverse Childhood Experience  
**DRUG ADDICTED OR ALCOHOLIC FAMILY MEMBER**



**♠**

**A** Adverse Childhood Experience  
**LOSS OF A PARENT TO DEATH OR ABANDONMENT**



**♠**

**A** Adverse Childhood Experience  
**INCARCERATION OF A FAMILY MEMBER**

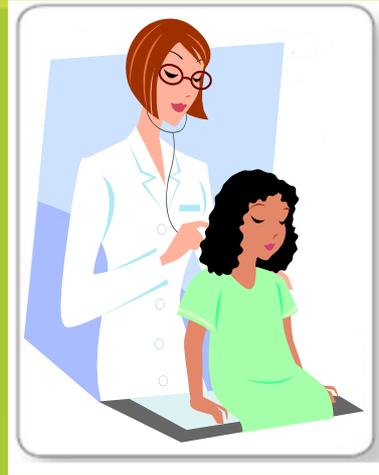


**♠**

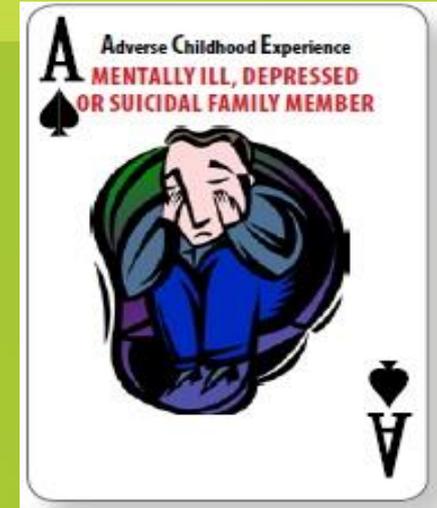
# Outcomes seen in ACE Study



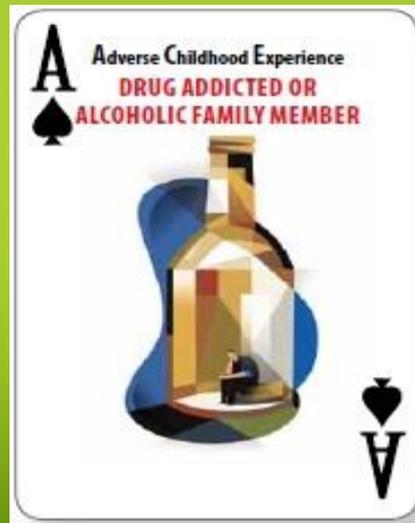
Disease



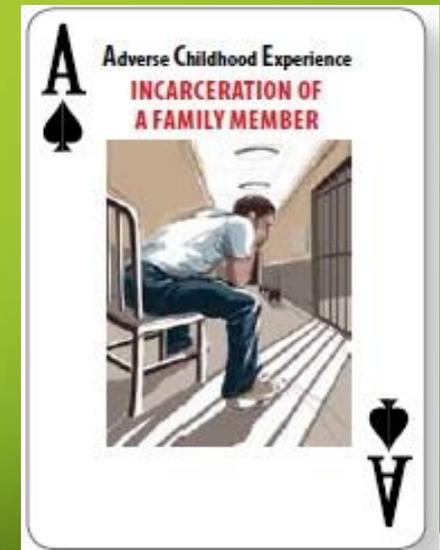
Poor  
Mental  
Health



Risk  
Behaviors



Other  
Challenges



# ACEs=major risk factors for later health outcomes



Nearly 2 of 3 reported one ACE



> 1 in 5 had  $\geq 3$  ACEs



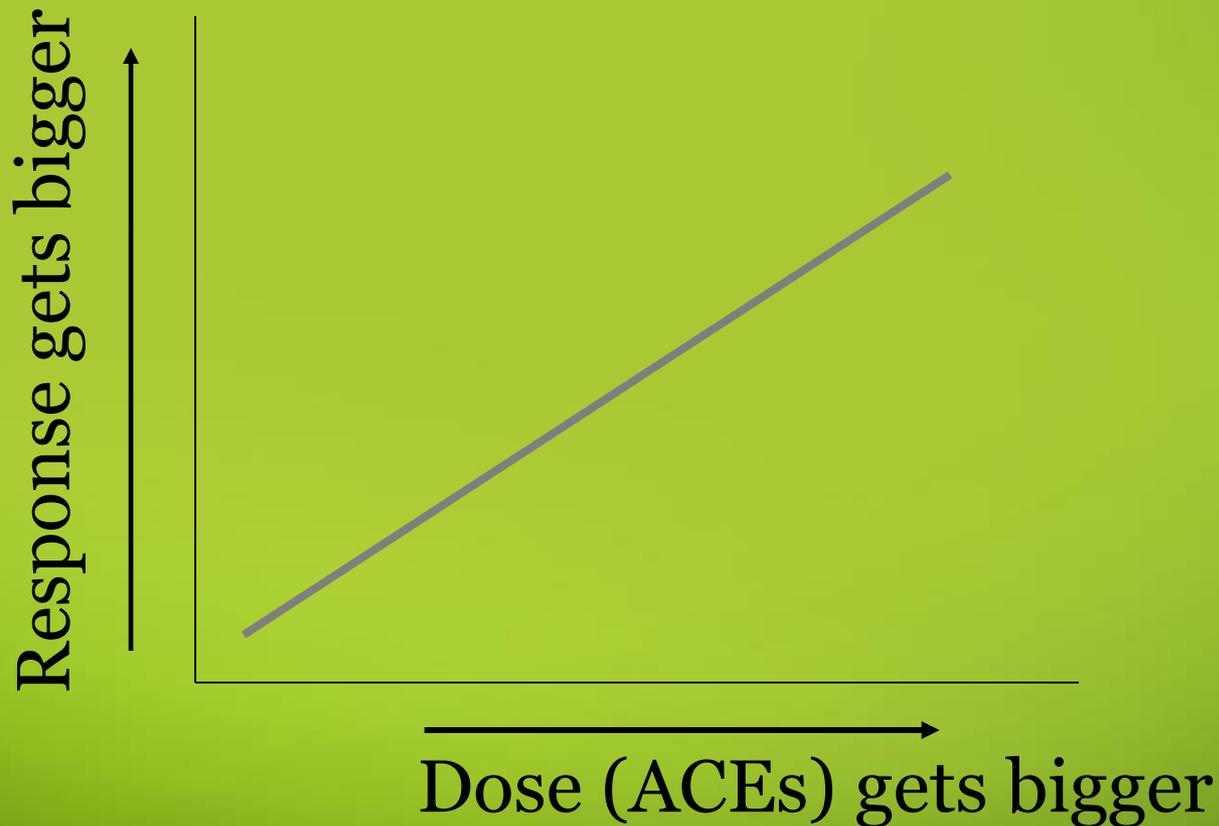
1 in 10 had  $\geq 5$  ACEs

- Physical abuse- 28%
- Substance abuse- 27%
- Parental sep/divorce- 23%
- Sexual abuse- 21%

**“What is predictable  
is preventable.”**

# Dose-Response Relationship

## More ACEs = More Disease



# ACE Score and Smoking



6 of 100 people with 0 ACEs smoke



11 of 100 people with 3 ACEs smoke



17 of 100 people with 7 ACEs smoke

# ACE Score and Suicide Attempts



1 of 100 people with 0 ACEs attempt suicide



10 of 100 people with 3 ACEs attempt suicide



20 of 100 people with 7 ACEs attempt suicide

# ACEs are Prevalent, Pervasive, and Cross All Sectors of a Population



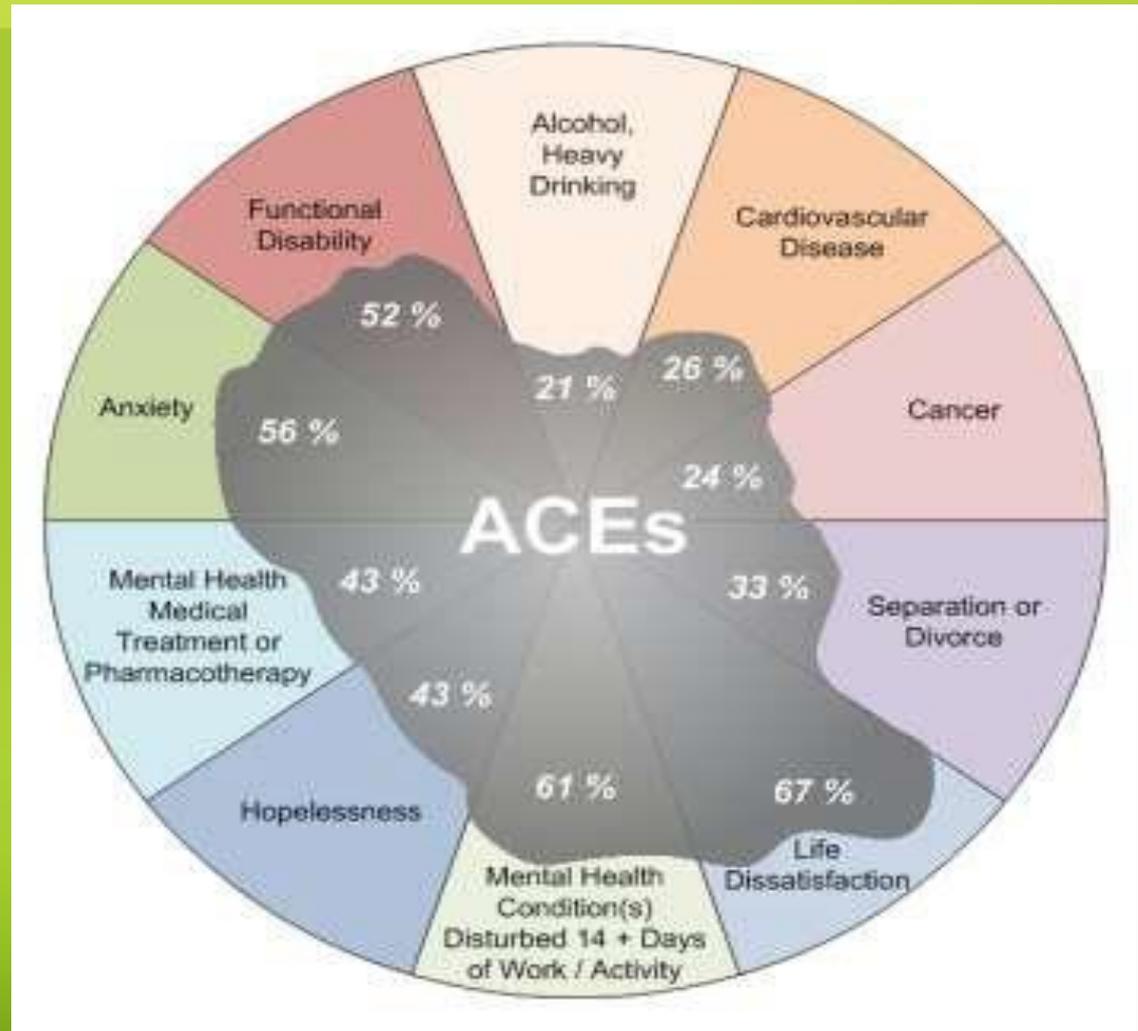
- 62%: at least 1 ACE
  - 25%: 3 or more ACE
  - 5%: more than 6
  - Cluster/co-occur
- 84% w/physical abuse have 2+
- 1 in 3 Emotional Abuse
  - 1 in 4 Sexual Abuse
  - > 1 in 5 Substance Abuse
  - > 1 in 5 Loss of Parent
  - 1 in 7 Mental Illness
  - 1 in 7 Physical Abuse
  - 1 in 8 DV

87%  
with 1 ACE  
have another



# Population Attributable Risk- WA State Data

Percentage of  
ACE impact  
to sectors  
of life and  
society

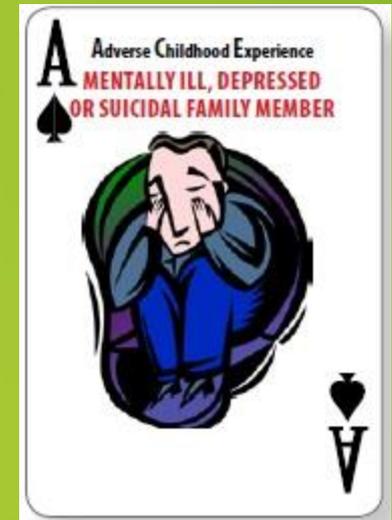
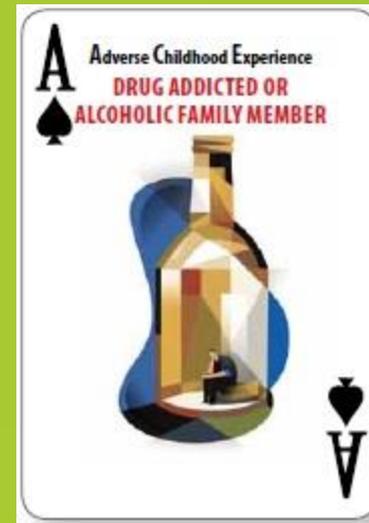
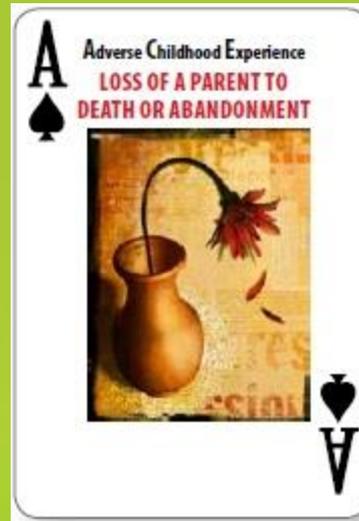
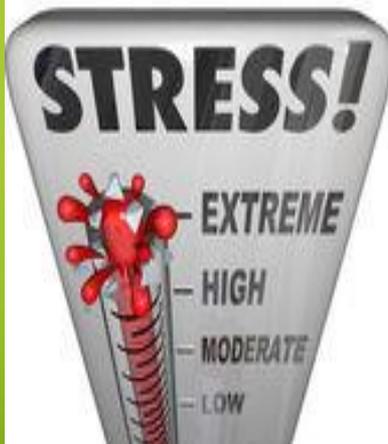


# National prevalence

Childtrends.org



Economic hardship



> 1 in 10 children 3 or more ACEs

# Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)



## **THE # 1** CHRONIC HEALTH EPIDEMIC in the United States

“The impact of ACEs can now only be ignored as a matter of conscious choice. With this information comes the responsibility to use it.”

Anda et al 2010



# Key findings



- The “witness” phenomenon & its impact
- Liberating - crisis line calls
- Diagnostics as history; look beyond symptom
- AMA and 3 national Academies
- Growing national movement to address impact
- Bottom line: protect children from early trauma and decrease ACE transmission
- With this information comes the responsibility to use it

# Responses



- Liberating- leave behind the shame and blame
- I thought it was my fault
- Now I know why I'm on my 4<sup>th</sup> marriage
- This saved my life
- I understand better now why my mother parented the way she did, but I will break the cycle
- I will be intentional in building resilience
- Hope and healing; I'm not alone
- Why haven't I heard about this before?



# **BRAIN RESEARCH: THE NEUROBIOLOGY OF MALTREATMENT**

See for example: “Neurobiological and Behavioral Consequences of Exposure to Childhood Traumatic Stress,” *Stress in Health and Disease*, BB Arnetz and R Ekman (eds). 2006. Martin Teicher, Jacqueline Samson, Akemi Tomoda, Majed Ashy, and Susan Anderson

Teicher, M. “Scars that Won’ t Heal: The Neurobiology of Child Abuse,” *Scientific American*, March, 2002, pp. 68-75.

# Good Stress, Bad Stress



- cortisol and adrenaline –  
designed for 20 min. bursts to address danger
- if 24/7, negative effects on brain structure and function
- results is an entirely different brain with different reactions and responses
- **brain adapts to daily experience as brain develops over the 25+ year process**
- **experience drives development**



# Brains Reflect the Environment Lived



**Toxic Stress**

**Assuming neutral start:**  
All brains will adapt to survive

## DEVELOPMENT for a tough life:

- Emotion processing regions smaller, less efficient
- Efficient production of stress-related chemicals
- Dysregulated happy hormones
- Fewer receptors for calming
- Less white matter

## INDIVIDUAL characteristics & traits

- Competitive
- Hot tempered
- Impulsive
- Hyper vigilant
- “Brawn over brains” or
- **Withdrawn**
- **Emotionally detached**
- **Numb**

## WHY IT WORKS

Under the worst conditions, both the individual & the species survive.

## DEVELOPMENT for a good life:

- Emotion processing regions robust and efficient
- Abundant happy hormones
- High density white matter, especially in mid-brain

## INDIVIDUAL characteristics & traits

- Laid back
- Relationship-oriented
- Reflective
- “Process over power”

## WHY IT WORKS

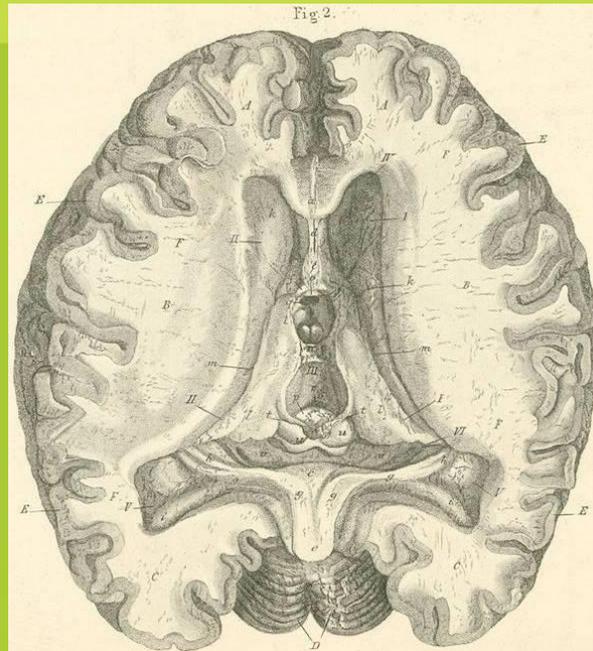
By striving for cooperative relationships, individual & species live peacefully

# Key Variables In Brain Outcomes



## Age of Maltreatment

Effects of maltreatment correspond to the region and/or function that developing at the time of maltreatment.



## Types of Abuse

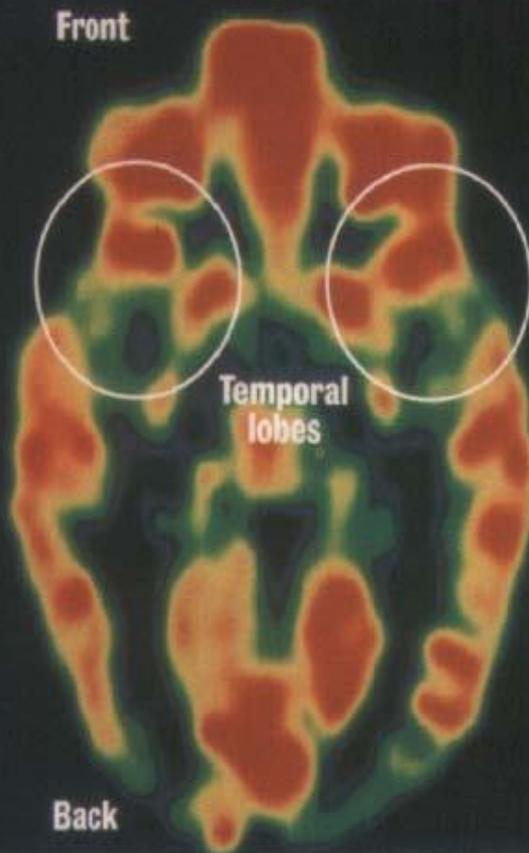
Different types of maltreatment activate different processes (chemicals, hormones, electrical activity, cell growth, & specialization of cells)

## Gender

i.e., the effects of sexual abuse are more profound in girls while the effects of neglect are more profound in boys.

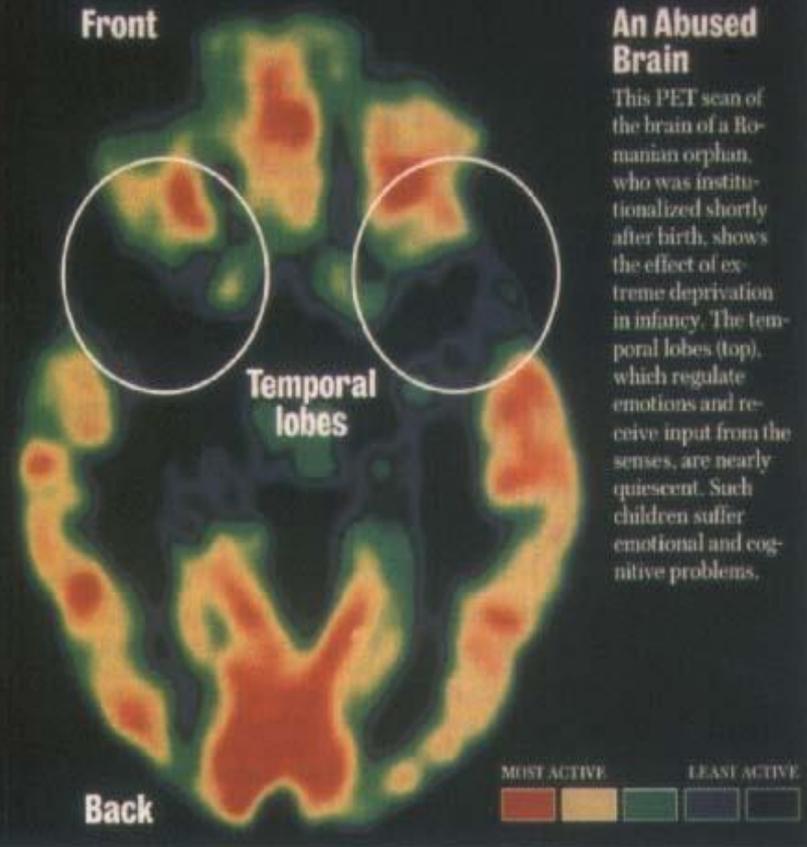
### Healthy Brain

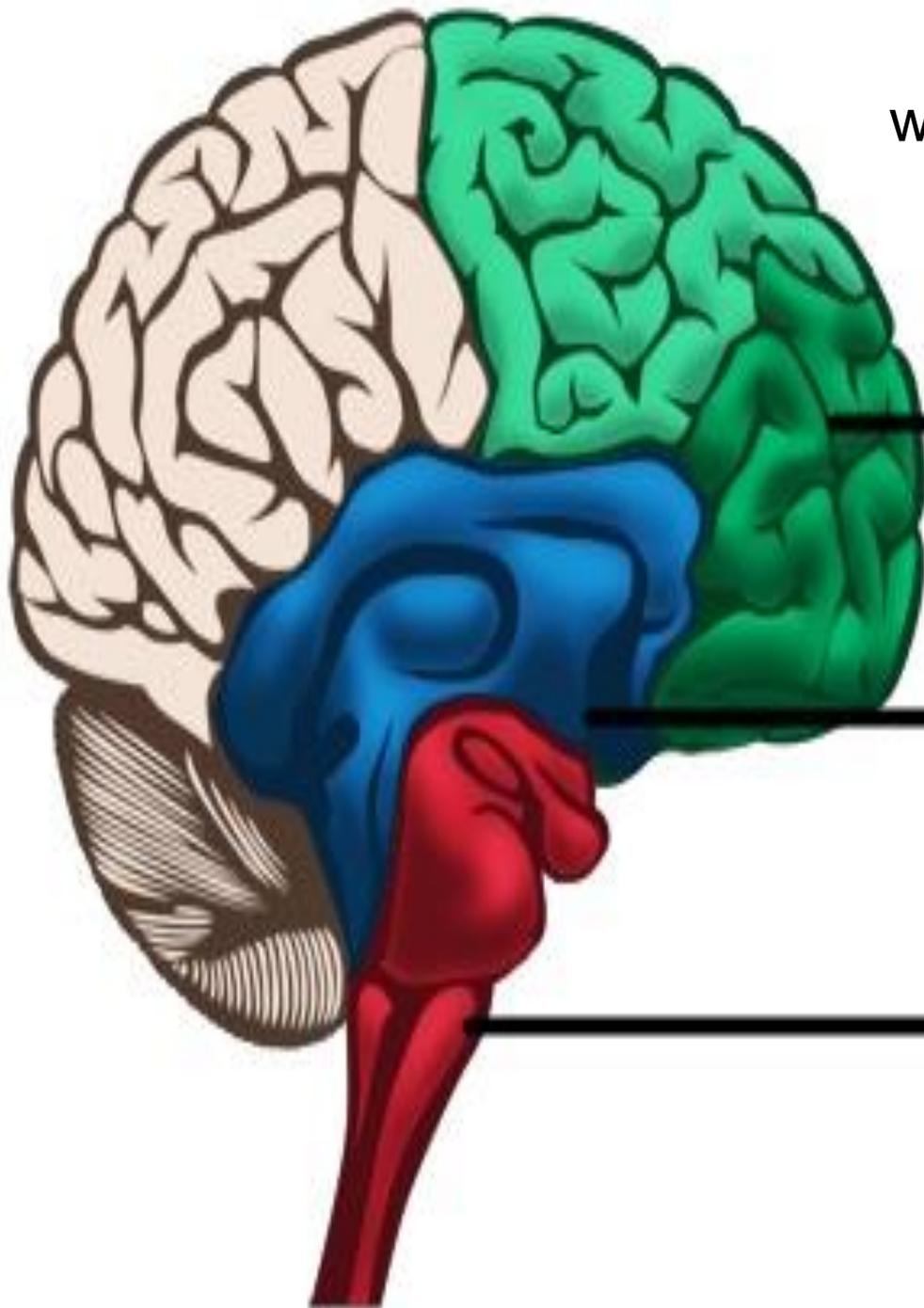
This PET scan of the brain of a normal child shows regions of high (red) and low (blue and black) activity. At birth, only primitive structures such as the brain stem (center) are fully functional; in regions like the temporal lobes (top), early childhood experiences wire the circuits.



### An Abused Brain

This PET scan of the brain of a Romanian orphan, who was institutionalized shortly after birth, shows the effect of extreme deprivation in infancy. The temporal lobes (top), which regulate emotions and receive input from the senses, are nearly quiescent. Such children suffer emotional and cognitive problems.





**Executive State**

Prefrontal Lobes

What can I learn from this?

**Emotional State**

Limbic System

Am I loved?

**Survival State**

Brain Stem

Am I safe?

# Car as an analogy of brain



Brain Stem

**Physical**

Need is safety

Limbic System

**Emotional**

Need is connection

Prefrontal Cortex

**Thinking**

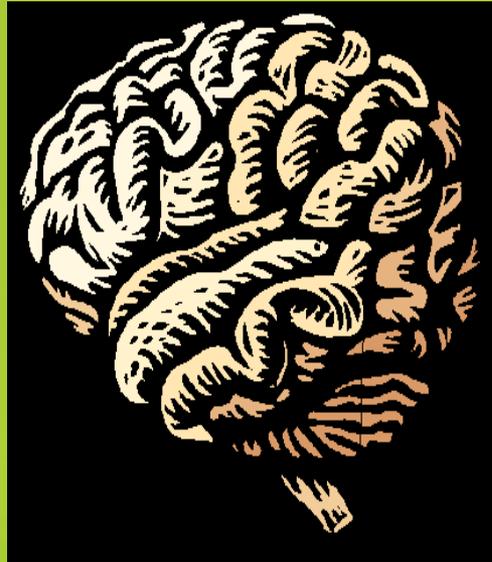
Need is to create meaning

# Survival Mode Response

Dr. John Medina- *Brain Rules*



## Toxic stress



It is out of the student's control-hardwired



The brain cannot physiologically take in new knowledge or problem-solve



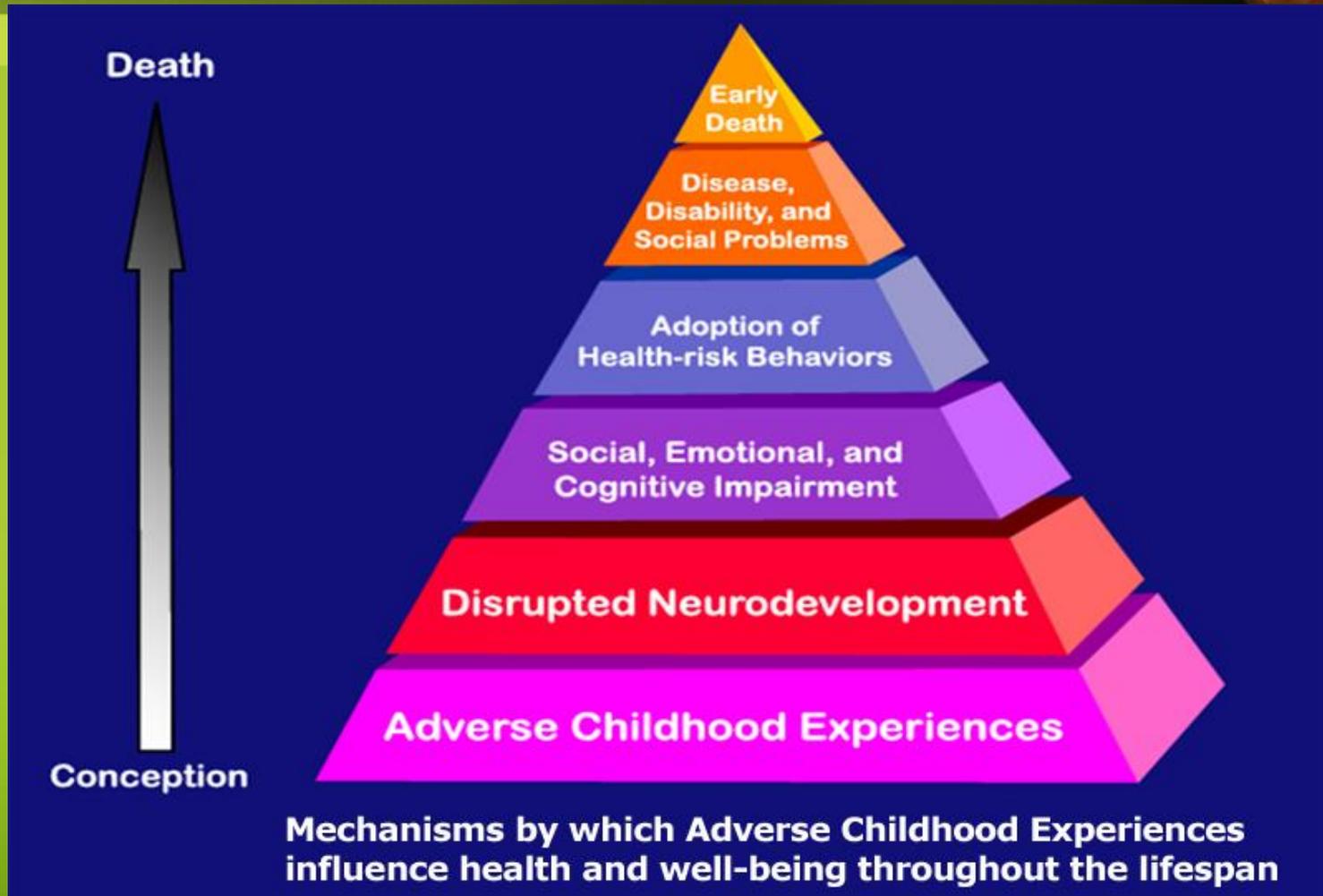
Brain is overwhelmed with "cortisol"



Fight-Flight-Freeze  
Lack of safety= threat



# ACE Study: A Paradigm Shift



# What we see in this research...



## **ACEs drive:**

- Health outcomes & healthcare costs
- Special education needs & rates of school failure
- Criminal justice costs
- Intergenerational patterns of high-cost social problems

***We can prevent and protect children  
from ACEs***

Use a “Trauma Lens” to better understand behavior



**A shift in perspective from:**

***“What is wrong with this person?”***

to

***“What has this person been through?”***





**This is NOT about letting people  
off the hook, or excusing actions  
because of trauma history**

**Data suggests accountability CAN  
actually increase!**

# Neuroscience gives us a new perspective



We have a deeper understanding of the brain

Therefore, we have a deeper understanding of our students

And we know that caring adults have a significant impact on students' lives

Heather T. Forbes, "Help for Billy"

A child's reality from his caregiver(s)  
is all that he knows...



**Trauma child's  
environment is broken  
up and many pieces are  
missing**



**Child from  
supportive  
environment is  
healthy and stable**



Heather T. Forbes, "Help for Billy"

# Trauma child's belief system built on negatives



**Unlovable**

Isolated

**Worthless**

Emotionally  
neglected

**Forgotten**

Abandoned

**Powerless**

Physically  
neglected

**Helpless**

Feelings of  
being  
trapped

**Hopeless**

Can't see  
beyond  
current  
circumstances

“When children are given environments of support, love, and attention, and when their needs are met... the impact of traumatic experiences is minimized, and in many cases - avoided.”

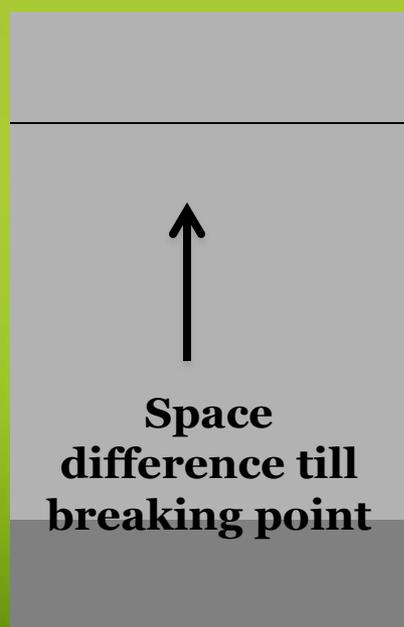
# Window of “Stress Tolerance” ....



## Baseline levels of stress...

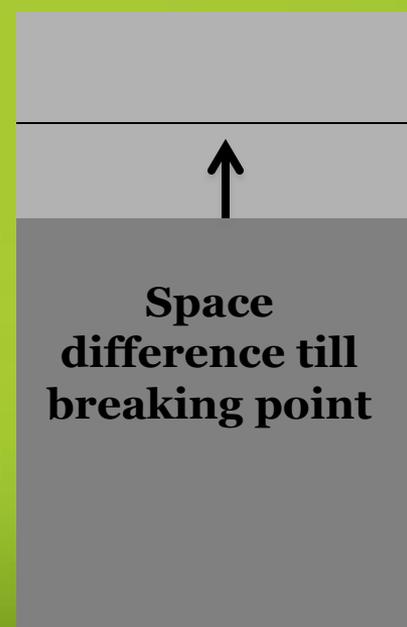
Healthy child’s baseline of stress

Breaking point



Trauma impacted child’s baseline of stress

Breaking point



# Areas of difficulty with trauma history



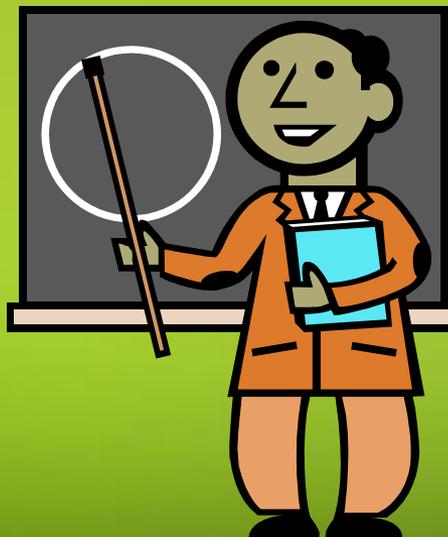
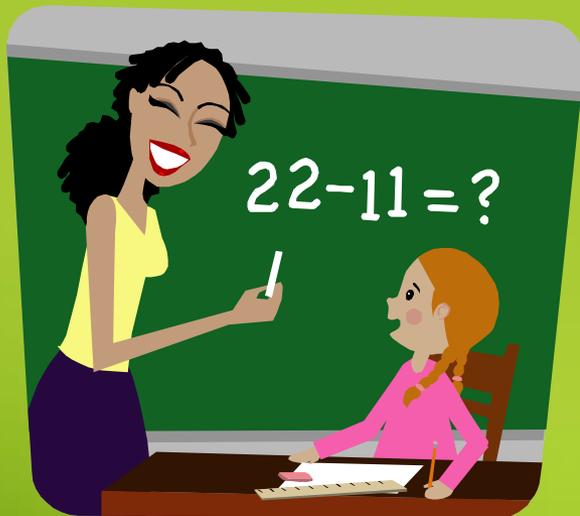
- ↓ Perception of safety
- ↓ Ability to regulate emotion
- ↓ Ability to regulate behavior
- ↓ Ability to master academic content
- ↓ Development of personal agency and social competence

# Trauma is not a cognitive experience



**Act (not think)** when triggered

# Safe and supportive to us...



# But not to the triggered child...



# Frequent misinterpretation of behavior



- ▣ Looks like defiance or opposition
- ▣ Is body's way to adapt to danger and prepare to protect self (fight, flight, freeze) or shut down and prepare for damage
- ▣ Trauma = loss of control and sense of utter powerlessness

...leads to punishment rather than  
skill building

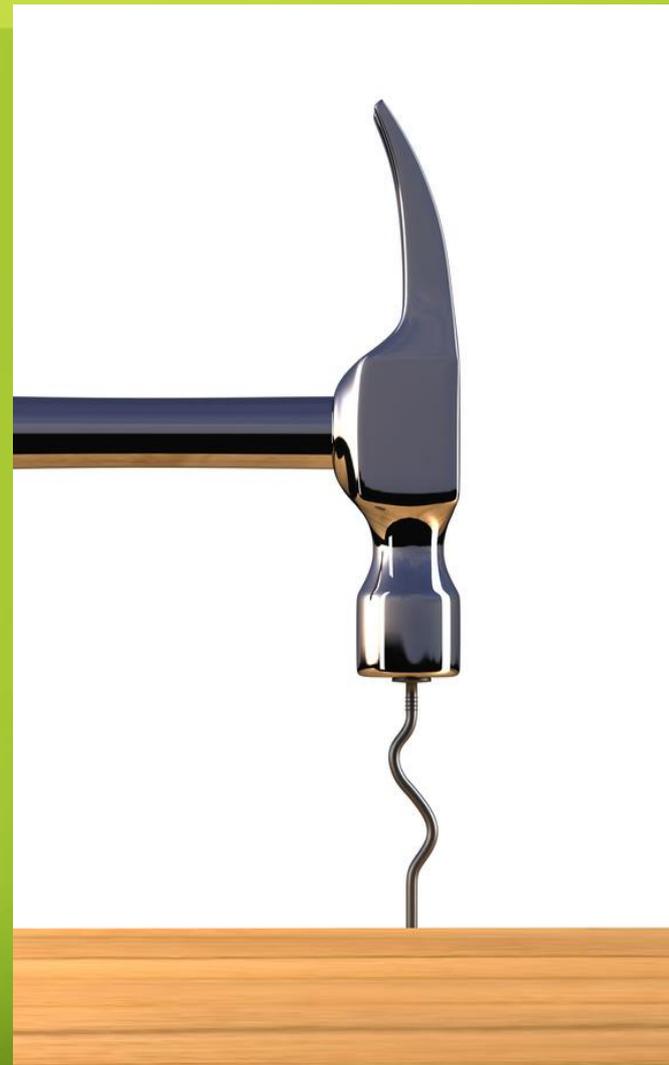
# Paradigm Shift...



**“If the only tool you have is a hammer, you tend to see every problem as a nail.”**

**Abraham Maslow**

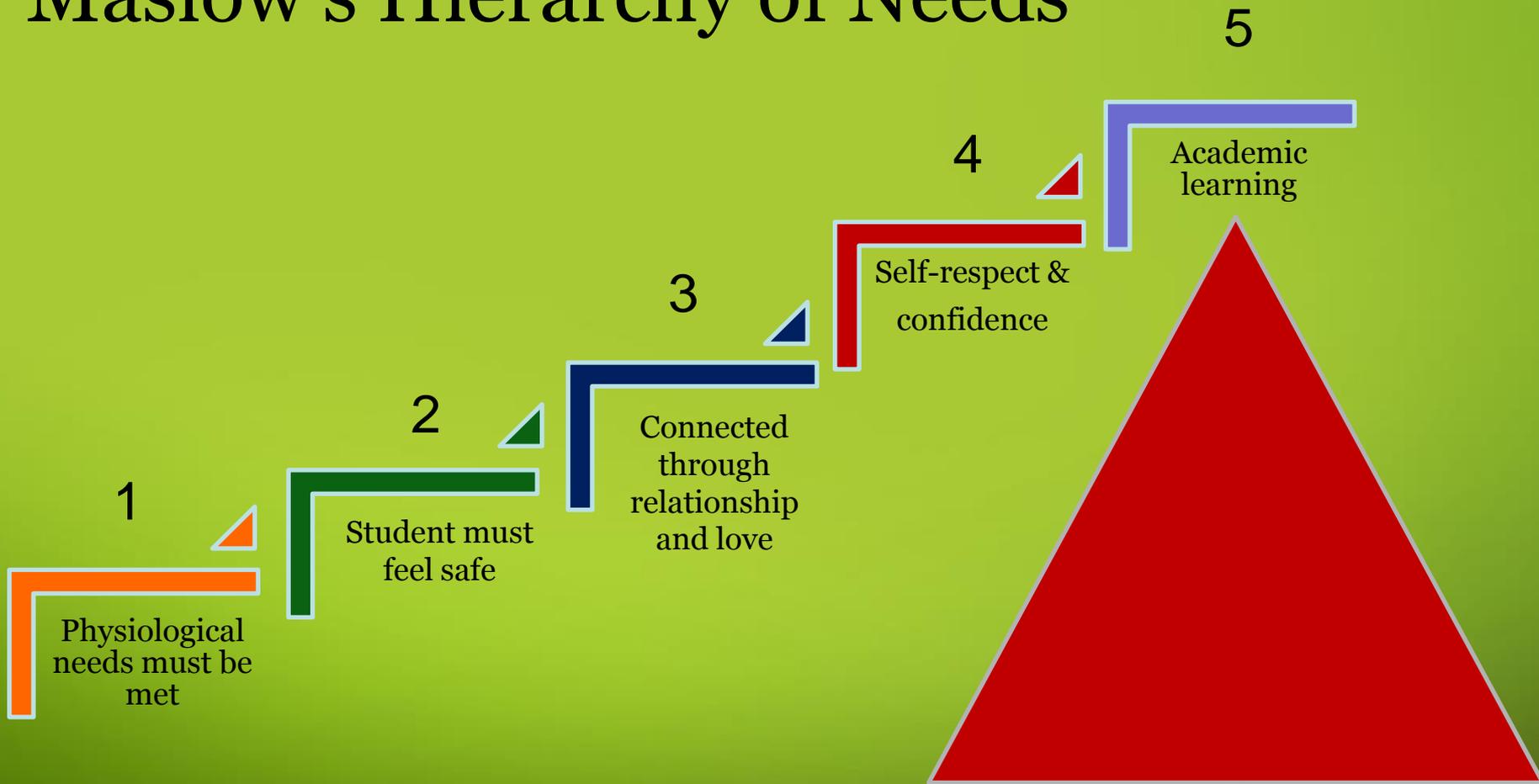
Heather T. Forbes, “Help for Billy”



We have to start from the bottom to get to the top of the pyramid...



## Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs



# Our Goal



## ReAIGEsce



The **powerful force** that can drive forward action for our community

# Opportunities for Resilience



*Moving forward with  
this **powerful**  
information*

Current research is  
discovering that  
nurturance is actually  
**reparative** and  
**regenerative!!**

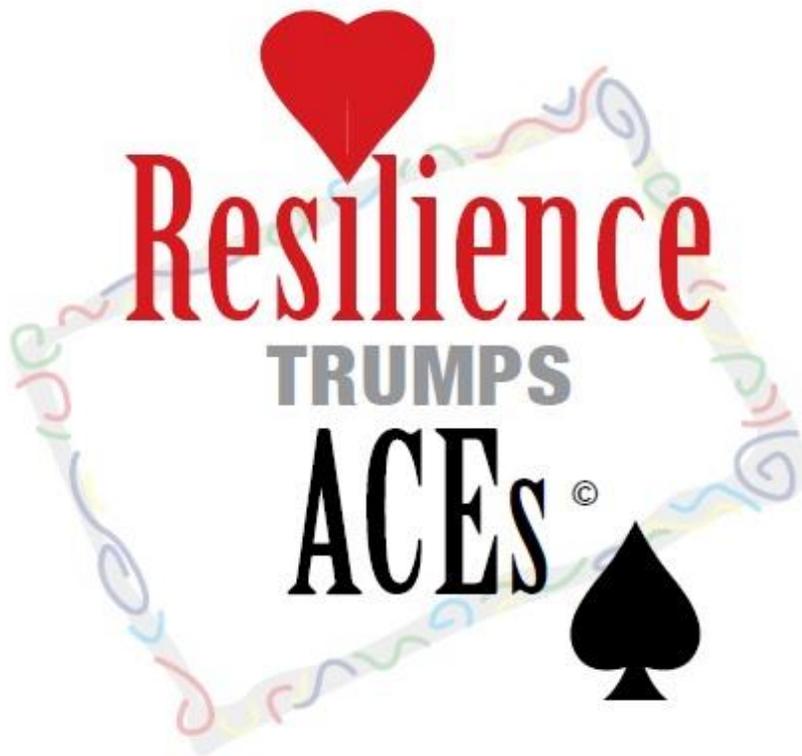
# Why do some rise above the ACE load and others don't?



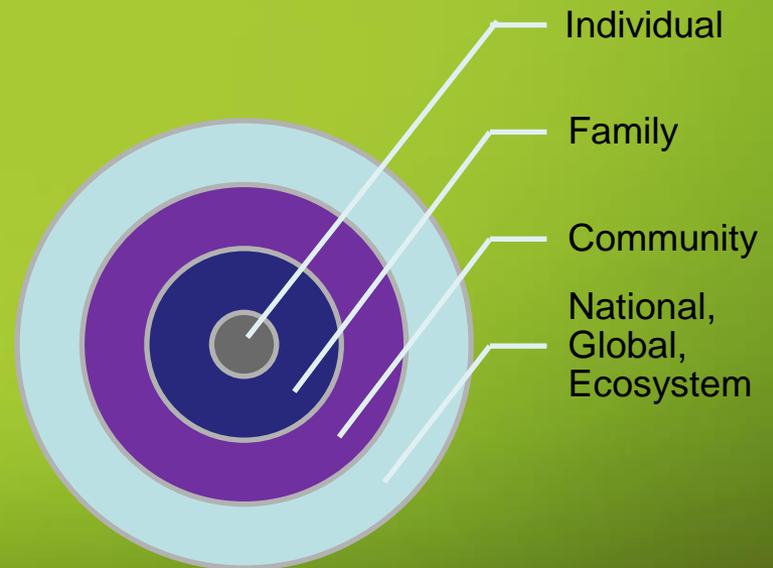
- Attachment to caring adult(s)
- **Opportunities**
- Choices
- **Privilege/ resources**
- Ethnicity/culture
- **Relationships**
- Timing



# What is Resilience?



Resilience - the ability to bounce back from challenges - is the most important tool you can give a child.



# Resilience: *ability to recover from or adjust to change*



**R** Resilience Building Blocks  
**DEVELOP SELF-ESTEEM**

An illustration of a woman with long brown hair, wearing a red top and tan pants, sitting on a green hill and talking to a small child with a black hat and a patterned shirt. The background is a warm yellow-orange color.

**B**

**R** Resilience Building Blocks  
**EXPRESSING FEELINGS**

An illustration of a woman in a green dress hugging a child from behind. The child is wearing a red shirt and a black hat. The background is a warm yellow color.

**B**

**R** Resilience Building Blocks  
**EXPERIENCING SUCCESS**

An illustration of a young boy with brown hair, wearing a blue shirt and dark pants, playing a violin. Musical notes are floating around him. The background is a warm orange color.

**B**

**R** Resilience Building Blocks  
**PROBLEM SOLVING & DECISION MAKING**

An illustration of a boy in a purple shirt and green pants pushing a red cart filled with papers. A dog is sitting on the cart. In the background, there is a sign that says "RECYCLE CENTER" with an arrow pointing left. The background is a warm yellow color.

**B**

**R** Resilience Building Blocks  
**MASTERING A SKILL**

An illustration of a girl in a red dress and a patterned top playing a flute. She is wearing black leggings with white stripes. The background is a warm yellow color.

**B**

# *Relationship...*

...shapes neural system of stress response



Template that molds future responses...



# RESILIENCE

- **Able to *recognize* resilience in self/others**
  - **Become aware of *how to promote it***
- **Vocabulary *reinforces feelings and beliefs***

# MODELS OF RESILIENCE



**Grotberg**

**Boss**

**Blaustein Masten**

**Brooks & Goldstein**

**I HAVE**  
(external supports)

Attachment & belonging

**Attachment**

Connection

Positive relationship w/caring adult

**I AM**  
(personal strengths)

Community, culture & spirituality

**Regulation**

Affirmation

Self-esteem through emotional awareness & control

**I CAN**  
(social & interpersonal skills)

Capability

**Competence**

Chores, choices, mastery of skills

Effectiveness in one's own world

# Skill Building



<b>Think</b>	<b>Not</b>
Lack of Skill	Intentional Misbehavior
Building Missing Skills	Shaming for Lack of Skills
Nurture	Criticize
Teach	Blame
Discipline	Punishment

# Trauma-informed vs. Traditional



## Think

## Not

“I need to know how hard this is for you.”

“It’s not that difficult.”

“I’m here. You’re not in trouble.”

“Go to the principal’s office.”

“I don’t want you alone in this. Let me help you.”

“You need to learn to deal with life.”

“It’s okay to feel.”

“Stop crying.”

“That really set you back, didn’t it?”

“Stop being such a baby.”

# Community Partners

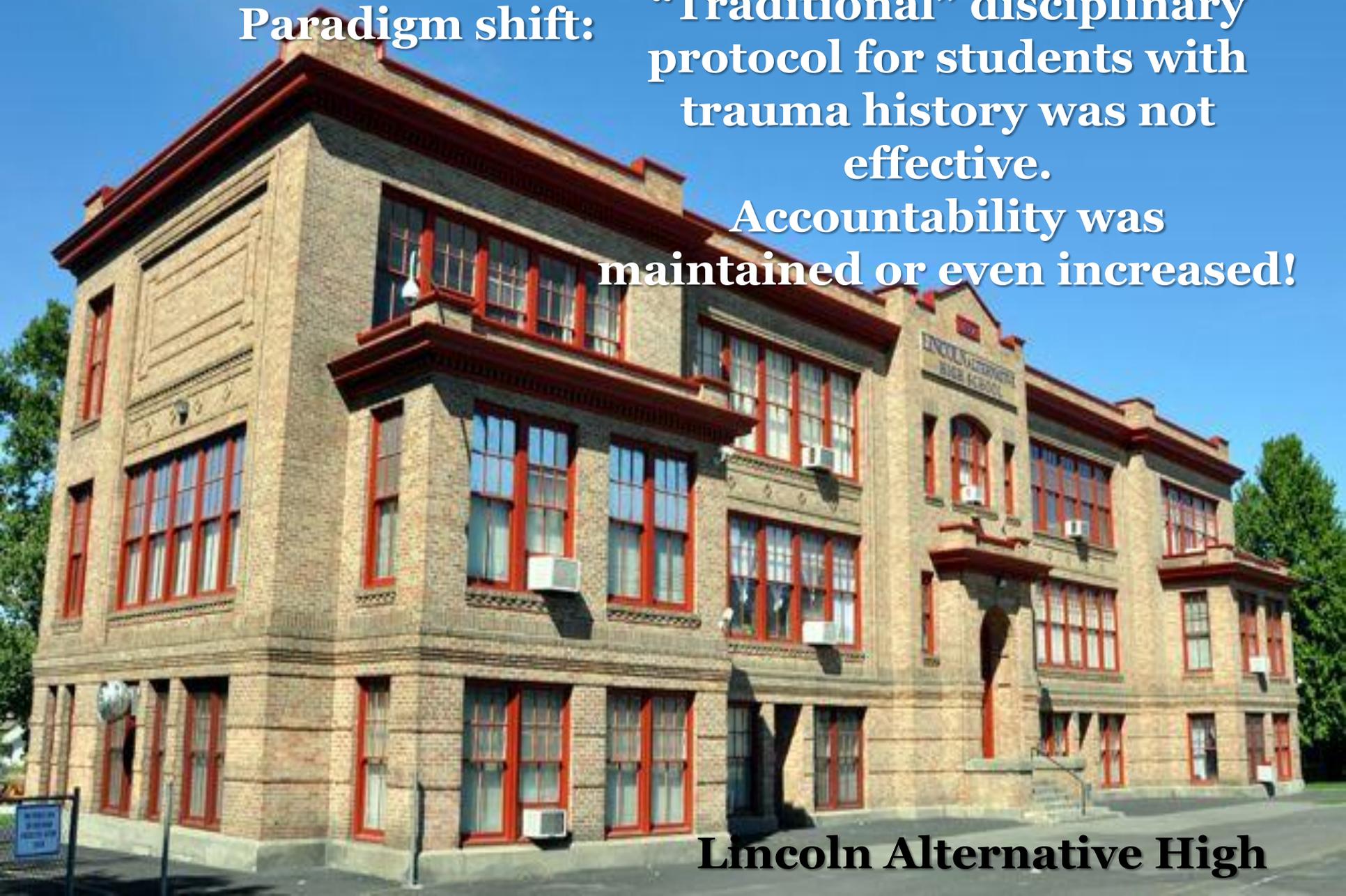


- Law Enforcement
- School Districts
- **Public Health**
- Medical Community
- DSHS
- **Mental Health**
- Social Service Providers
- Neighborhoods
- **Businesses**
- Municipalities
- Public Library
- **Alternative Programs**
- Employment
- Parents
- **Court Ordered Clients**



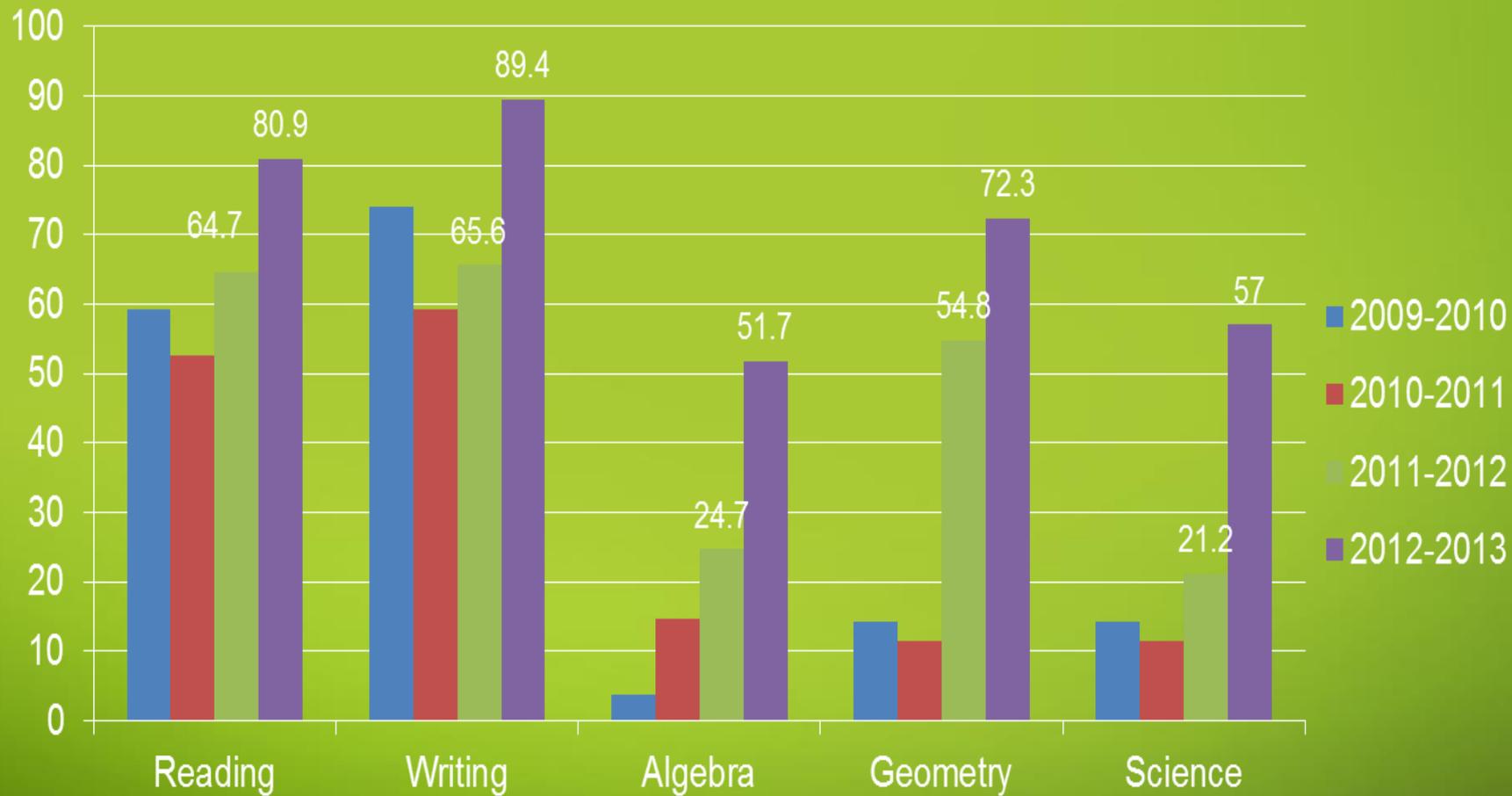
**Paradigm shift:** “Traditional” disciplinary protocol for students with trauma history was not effective.

**Accountability was maintained or even increased!**



**Lincoln Alternative High**

# State assessments



# Resilience trumps ACEs!



Correlate resilience (problem solving, optimism, supportive relationships): academics: ACE level

Increases:

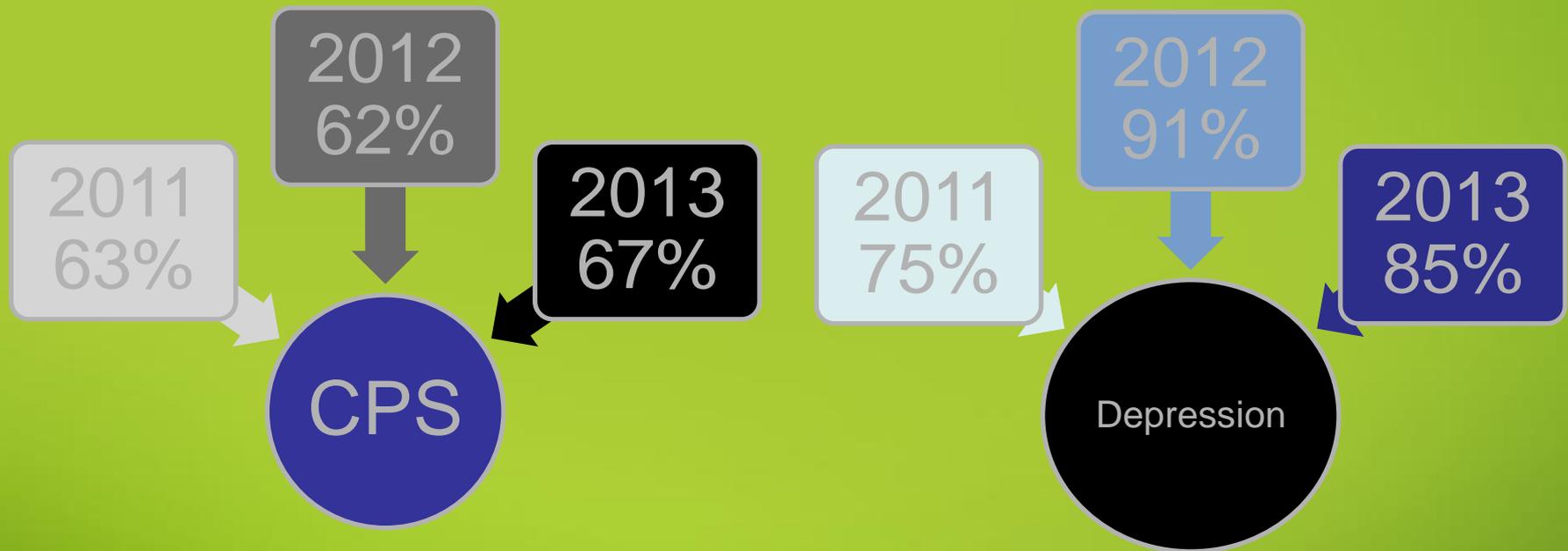
- Student resilience overall
- With higher ACE students whose resilience was lowest before entering Lincoln
- Fewer absences, greater improvements on standardized tests
- Moderated the effects of ACEs on current school performance at Lincoln



# 90 Parents in Parent Aide Program Children's Home Society



## Parents who report 4 or more ACEs



**Direct Correlation to CPS involvement and depression**

# Policy example



- All volunteers trained in ACEs
- Manual includes ACE info
- Active in promoting resilience

# Play well together and learn new things together!



October is Children's Resilience Month!

**Resilience**

Start:  
Land Title Plaza  
1st & E. Main

**Treasure Hunt**

Sponsored by **The Children's Resilience Initiative** - [www.resiliencetrumpsaces.org](http://www.resiliencetrumpsaces.org)





## Trauma Smart!



**Clock hours available!**

We invite you to attend a training by Avis Smith, LCSW, director of St. Luke's Crittenton Prevention Services and Children's Resilience Initiative. They will be sharing their work around trauma and how it affects children's emotions. Ms. Smith has been a key leader in the pilot program "Head Start Trauma Smart". Learn more about how each of us can impact trauma education and awareness for young children in our valley, as we continue to expand our community's response to ACE's, brain development and resilience strategies. This session is open to anyone involved in child development or in working with families with young children.

### where:

Walla Walla Airport Community Room  
45 Terminal Loop Road

### when:

October 9<sup>th</sup>, 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

### Sponsors:

WWCC Early Learning Coalition  
WWPS Head Start/ECEAP  
Children's Resilience



CITY HALL - 15 N. 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue  
Walla Walla, WA 99362-1859  
509.327.4522  
FAX 509.324.7900

## PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, there is compelling evidence of a correlation between the experience of childhood trauma and resulting behavioral and health problems, when the trauma is unrecognized and unaddressed; and

WHEREAS, the cumulative effects of such trauma over a lifespan, if ignored, are detrimental to individuals and communities; and

WHEREAS, the Children's Resilience Initiative of Walla Walla has a vision of a community where all young people thrive and all parents raise their children with consistency and nurturance to develop lasting resilience, and a mission to mobilize the community through dialogue to radically reduce the number of Adverse Childhood Experiences while building resilience and a more effective delivery system.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Jerry Cummins, Mayor of Walla Walla, do hereby proclaim October 2014 to be:

### Children's Resilience Month in Walla Walla

and urge all residents to become informed about childhood trauma and how to create resilience in individuals who have suffered such trauma, to integrate these principles into their everyday work and practice, and to otherwise support the work of the Children's Resilience Initiative.



*Jerry Cummins*  
Jerry Cummins, Mayor





**Resilience Rocks Treasure Hunt**



# Trauma Stewardship

Laura van Dernoot Lipsky



Feeling helpless & hopeless

Can never do enough

Hypervigilance

Loss of creativity Embracing complexity

Anger & cynicism

Deliberate avoidance

Addictions

Sense of persecution

Grandiosity

Numb

Minimizing

Dissociative moments

Fear

Exhaustion & ailments

Guilt

# Daily practice of centering



Professional

**Self-care**

Personal

Know the warning signs

Get support



“What we cannot argue anymore is that there’s nothing we can do...”

“We can change our approach.”

Paul Tough, *How Children Succeed*



At first, people refuse to believe a strange  
new thing can be done.

Then, they begin to hope it can be done.  
Then, when it is done, all the world wonders  
why it was not done sooner.

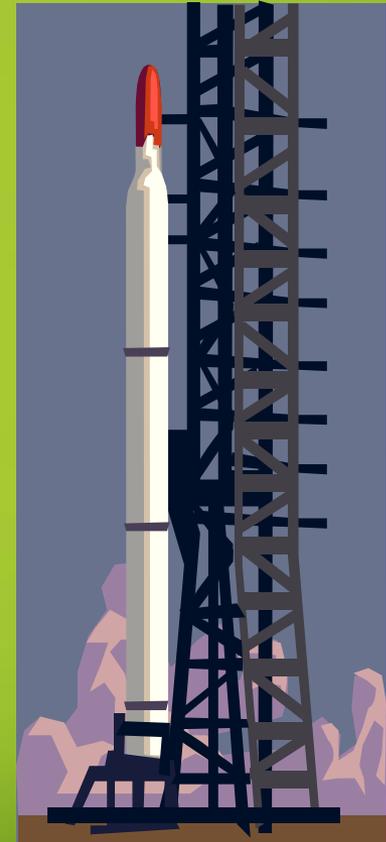
Frances Hodgson Burnett



# Sparking your shift and response



- Talk
  - Share
- Listen
  - Act
- Respond
  - Schedule



# Reflection



How do we know whether we  
are becoming a

Trauma-Sensitive Community?

What indicators for yourself and your  
community will you establish?

# Children's Resilience Initiative



*Empowering community understanding of the forces that shape us and our children*

**Website: [www.resiliencetrumpsaces.org](http://www.resiliencetrumpsaces.org)**

