Building Capacity: Moving Beyond ACEs with HOPE in Times of Crisis
Welcome
Welcome

Stephanie Luczak, LMSW  
Program Coordinator

Erin Cornell, MPH  
Associate Director

Today’s Agenda

• Welcome from the HMG National Center
• Introduction
• Moving Beyond ACEs with HOPE
  Robert Sege, MD, PhD
  Cailin O’Connor, MS
• Q & A and Discussion
Help Me Grow & COVID-19

Now, more than ever, families with young children need access to the supports and services that help them thrive. The HMG National Center is committed to ensuring that all children are able to grow and develop to reach their full potential, even in the face of a global pandemic. In the coming weeks, the HMG National Center will be exploring various ways to support the National Affiliate Network through resource sharing, peer-to-peer learning, and ongoing communication.
The Importance of a Strengths-Based Approach
Help Me Grow and the Protective Factors Framework

- Learning collaborative designed to leverage Protective Factors and Program Self-Assessment Tool to support sites in reflecting on strengths-based approach to working with families in the centralized access point (Orange County, San Francisco, Vermont, South Carolina)

- Building Protective Factors Framework into research and evaluation efforts (Connecticut)

- Promoting Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development through community events such as Books, Balls, and Blocks (Utah)

- Mitigating Toxic Stress through Pediatric Primary Care: Bringing Protective Factors into child health provider outreach efforts
Today’s Speakers

Cailin O’Connor, MS
Center for the Study of Social Policy

Robert Sege, MD, PhD
Tufts Medical Center
Moving Beyond ACEs with HOPE in Times of Crisis
Moving Beyond ACEs with HOPE in Times of Crisis

Cailin O’Connor, Center for the Study of Social Policy
Robert Sege, Tufts Medical Center
April 13, 2020
What Happens in Early Childhood Can Matter for a Lifetime

Early experiences influence the developing brain

During sensitive early periods of development, the brain’s circuitry is most open to the influence of experiences and relationships – for better or for worse.
Moving Beyond ACEs with HOPE in Times of Crisis

1. ACEs and Toxic Stress
2. Strengthening Families Approach
3. Positive Childhood Experiences and HOPE
4. HOPE in the time of Coronavirus
Moving Beyond ACEs with HOPE in Times of Crisis

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Adverse Childhood Experiences and Other Risk Factors for Toxic Stress

Additional community and societal factors that contribute to toxic stress:

- Poverty
- Institutional racism
- Historical Trauma
- War and migration
- Neighborhood effects
How Common are ACEs?

ACE Score Prevalence for Participants Completing the ACE Module from the 2011-2014 BRFSS

### ACEs cause chronic disease: Population attributable fractions by ACEs score

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>1 ACE</th>
<th>2-3 ACE</th>
<th>4 or more</th>
<th>Overall</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CHD</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>12.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asthma</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>24.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depression</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>23.0</td>
<td>44.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heavy Drinker</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>23.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education &lt; HS</td>
<td></td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td></td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adverse childhood experiences

Toxic stress

Physical outcomes
ACEs are only part of the picture

- Many people with 4+ ACEs are OK
- Other experiences affect the brain
- Do positive experiences affect outcomes?
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Meanwhile, in Family Support...

Risk factors are not predictive factors because of protective factors

Dr. Carl Bell, University of Illinois
The Pathway to Improved Outcomes for Children and Families

Strengthening Families™ Protective Factors Framework Logic Model

**Core Functions**
- State, system, agency, program, and community leaders work across systems to:
  - Build parent partnerships
  - Deepen knowledge and understanding
  - Shift practice, policy, and systems
  - Ensure accountability

**Program Practice**
- Programs that serve children and families:
  - Shift organization culture to value and build upon families’ strengths
  - Make policy changes to support changes in worker practice
  - Implement everyday actions that support families in building protective factors

**Worker Practice**
- Individual workers:
  - Have knowledge of protective factors and skills to help families build them
  - Change their approach to relationships with parents
  - Implement everyday actions that support families in building protective factors

**Protective Factors**
- Families are supported to build:
  - Parental resilience
  - Social connections
  - Knowledge of parenting and child development
  - Concrete support in times of need
  - Social and emotional competence of children

**Results**
- Strengthened families
- Optimal child development
- Reduced likelihood of child abuse and neglect

Center for the Study of Social Policy's Strengthening Families®
A Protective Factors Framework

Graphics by Norma Reynolds for the National...
Family Protective Factors

- Parental resilience
- Social connections
- Knowledge of parenting and child development
- Concrete support in times of need
- Social and emotional competence of children
When children are young, the family environment is very important. That's why Strengthening Families emphasizes parents' protective factors as a pathway to children's well-being.

**STRENGTHENING FAMILIES PROTECTIVE FACTORS**
- Parental Resilience
- Social Connections
- Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development
- Concrete Support in Times of Need
- Social and Emotional Competence of Children

**YOUTH THRIVE PROTECTIVE & PROMOTIVE FACTORS**
- Youth Resilience
- Social Connections
- Knowledge of Adolescent Development
- Concrete Support in Times of Need
- Cognitive and Social-Emotional Competence of Children

As children grow, their own sense of self and experiences in family, peer, school and community contexts are very important. Youth Thrive emphasizes protective and promotive factors as a pathway to well-being during adolescence and in the transition to adulthood.
How to connect these threads?

✓ We believed that protective factors play a role in making negative outcomes less likely:
  ✓ By preventing some ACEs in the first place
  ✓ By preventing the toxic stress response when adversity occurs
  ✓ By promoting healing and resilience for parents and children

✓ But we didn’t have ACE-style data to prove it... until now
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Researchers studied PCEs just like ACEs

**ACEs**
- 1998 study of employed people in the Pacific Northwest
- Patients answered questions about their childhood
- Correlated with mental and physical health

**PCEs**
- 2015 population study in Wisconsin
- Part of the BRFSS
- Asked about ACEs
- Asked about Positive Childhood experiences (PCEs)
- Correlated with mental health
Positive Childhood Experiences (PCEs) questions asked: How often respondents...

1. Felt able to talk to their family about feelings
2. Felt their family stood by them during difficult times
3. Enjoyed participating in community traditions
4. Felt a sense of belonging in high school
5. Felt supported by friends
6. Had at least two non-parent adults who took genuine interest in them
7. Felt safe and protected by an adult in their home
6-7 vs. 0-2 PCES: Adults reporting 6-7 PCEs have 72% lower odds of having depression or poor mental health compared to those reporting 0-2 PCEs.

48% v. 12.6%, OR 0.28; 95% CI 0.21-0.39. 3.8x higher rate for 0-2 vs. 6-7 PCEs.

**Positive Childhood Experiences (PCEs) Protect Adult Mental Health**

6-7 vs 3-5 PCES: Adults with 6-7 PCEs have **50% lower odds of** adult depression or poor mental health compared to those with 3-5 PCEs.

25% v. 12.6%, OR 0.50; 95% CI 0.36-0.69. 1.98x higher rate for 3-5 vs. 6-7 PCEs.

Positive Childhood Experiences Mitigate ACEs Effects

PCEs Protect Physical Health

FIGURE 5. FACTORS THAT MODERATE THE EFFECTS OF MORE THAN 3 ACEs ON ADULT HEALTH

Adults with >3 ACEs AND selected positive childhood experiences had lower rates of poor/fair health. (\(^*=p<0.05\))

- **Family stood by me\(^\d\)**
  - Family did not stand by me
    - 17.4%
    - 27.2%

- **Felt supported by friends\(^\d\)**
  - Did not feel supported by friends
    - 18.4%
    - 30.1%

- **Sense of belonging at high school**
  - Did not feel a sense of belonging at high school
    - 19.6%
    - 25.2%

- **Enjoyed community traditions**
  - Did not enjoy community traditions
    - 17.7%
    - 25.1%

Summary: PCEs

- Prevent ACEs
- Reduce toxic stress
- Promote Healing
HOPE: Health Outcomes from Positive Experiences

https://positiveexperience.org

Sege and Browne. Responding to ACEs with HOPE: Health Outcomes from Positive Experiences. Academic Pediatrics 2017; 17:S79-S85
What does this mean for your work?

- How do we support positive experiences, build protective factors, and promote resilience?
- How do we prevent ACEs and mitigate the effects of adversity?
- How do we talk to parents about all of this?
- How do we reduce stress/adversity and increase supports to thrive for ALL of the families in our communities?
Improving direct service with HOPE

Initial encounter

Interaction

Programming

https://positiveexperience.org/
Toxic stress model built on observed changes in brain architecture from adversity

Growing evidence of broader brain plasticity

- Stroke recovery
- Brain changes observed with positive experiences
- Post-traumatic brain growth
- Role of oligodendrocytes in recovery
Meditation

• Intense meditation training v attention control (relaxation).

• Meditation participants:
  • Cognitive and Affective Mindfulness Scale (CAMS) and
  • Resilience Quotient Test (RQT)*
  • Increased resting state functional connectivity measured by fMRI

Learning to Read

• Earlier studies showed neural activation when learning to read

• Pre-post evaluation of illiterate adults who learned to read

• The acquisition of literacy is associated with a reinforcement of left temporo-parietal connections**

• Learning to Read Changes the Cortical Networks for Vision and Language ***


Balance ACEs with HOPE and Protective Factors

- Screen for problems (ACEs)
- Identify protective factors / strengths (PCEs)
- Create opportunities for engagement and celebration
- Offer opportunities to strengthen protective factors
- Offer therapies

During screenings, identify protective factors and strengths. Use the information to create opportunities for engagement and celebration, as well as to offer therapies to strengthen protective factors.
HOPE provides a language that:

- Honors the reason we do the work we do and centrality of health equity
- Supports a paradigm shift towards a strength-based approach
- Infuses positive experiences in the prevention, mitigation, healing from ACEs
- Offers building blocks for flexible adaptation and adoption
Different Perspectives on Positive Influences

- Individual — HOPE
- Family — The Strengthening Families Approach
- Community — Education, childcare, home visiting
- Norms and Policies — Essentials for Childhood, paid family leave
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A HOPE-informed Guide to Coronavirus
Creating Positive Experiences

- Children are people with disrupted lives
- Maintain Relationship with family and friends
- Developmentally safe environments
- Engagement with community
- Opportunities for growth
Childhood Experiences last a lifetime

Creating Positive Experiences

- Children are people with disrupted lives
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https://positiveexperience.org/blog

1. Intro
2. Engagement
3. Environment
4. Virtual world
5. 10 ways to avoid ACEs
6. Foundational Relationship (Willis)
7. Inequities and Supporting Children (Laraque-Arena)
Childhood Experiences last a lifetime

Preventing Adverse Experiences

- Parental Resilience
- Concrete Supports
- Maintain Social Connection
- Knowledge of Parenting
- Social-Emotional Competence
Childhood Experiences last a lifetime

CSSP:

COVID-19: Our Response Must Protect the Health and Well-Being of All Children, Youth, and Families

Preventing Adverse Experiences

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- *Parental Resilience*
- *Concrete Supports*
- Maintain *Social Connection*
- *Knowledge* of Parenting
- *Social-Emotional Competence*
Questions?

Comments?