



NATIONAL CENTER ON
Early Childhood Health and Wellness

Trauma, Resilience, and Trauma-Informed Care

28th NIHSDA Management Training Conference

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June 12, 2018

Learning Objectives

Participants will be able to:

PART I

1. Define trauma, including historical and intergenerational trauma.
2. Describe the potential impact of adverse experiences (e.g., toxic stress) on young children.
3. Identify signs and symptoms of trauma in infants, toddlers, and preschoolers.
4. Identify steps to support children and families who have experienced trauma.



Learning Objectives

Participants will be able to:

PART 2:

1. Define resilience
2. Identify approaches to build protective factors for young children and their families

Part I: Understanding Trauma in Early Childhood



What is Trauma?



Trauma occurs...

...when frightening events or situations overwhelm a child's ability to cope or deal with what has happened.



Group Discussion:



What kinds of potentially traumatic experiences do children and families face in your programs?

Historical and Intergenerational Trauma



What does Trauma look like for Indigenous people?

- Historical and intergenerational trauma is cumulative and collective. The impact of this type of trauma manifests itself emotionally and psychologically.
- The trauma is held personally and transmitted over generations. Thus, even family members who have not directly experienced the trauma can feel the effects of the event generations later.
- The multigenerational aspects of trauma continue to be treated as secondary and, consequently, the behavior of many children of survivors of massive trauma is misunderstood and not treated appropriately.

BraveHeart, M. Y. (1995). The return to the sacred path: Healing from historical unresolved grief among the Lakota and Dakota. Unpublished dissertation, Smith College, Northampton, MA.



What is Historical and Intergenerational Trauma

- Historical and intergenerational trauma occurs when trauma is not resolved, is subsequently internalized, and is passed from one generation to the next.
- Increased sensitivity or hyperarousal to stressful events, in particular to events that act as reminders of their colonized status, may predispose American Indian and Alaska Native people to trauma responses and corresponding symptoms.



Toxic Stress

POSITIVE

Brief increases in heart rate, mild elevations in stress hormone levels.

Experiencing strong, frequent, and/or prolonged adversity.

TOLERABLE

Serious, temporary stress response, Buffered by supportive relationships.

Can disrupt the development of brain architecture and other organ systems.

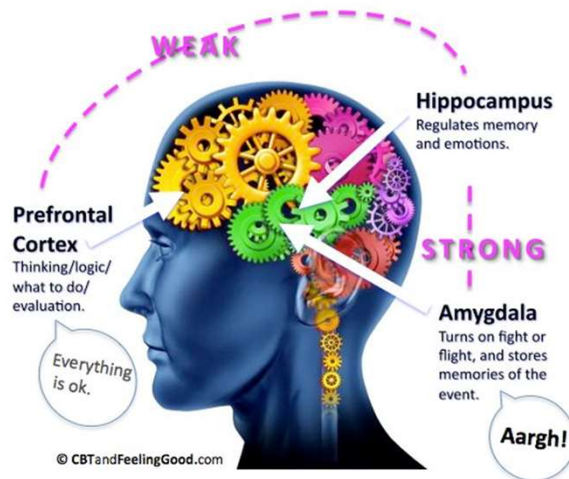
TOXIC

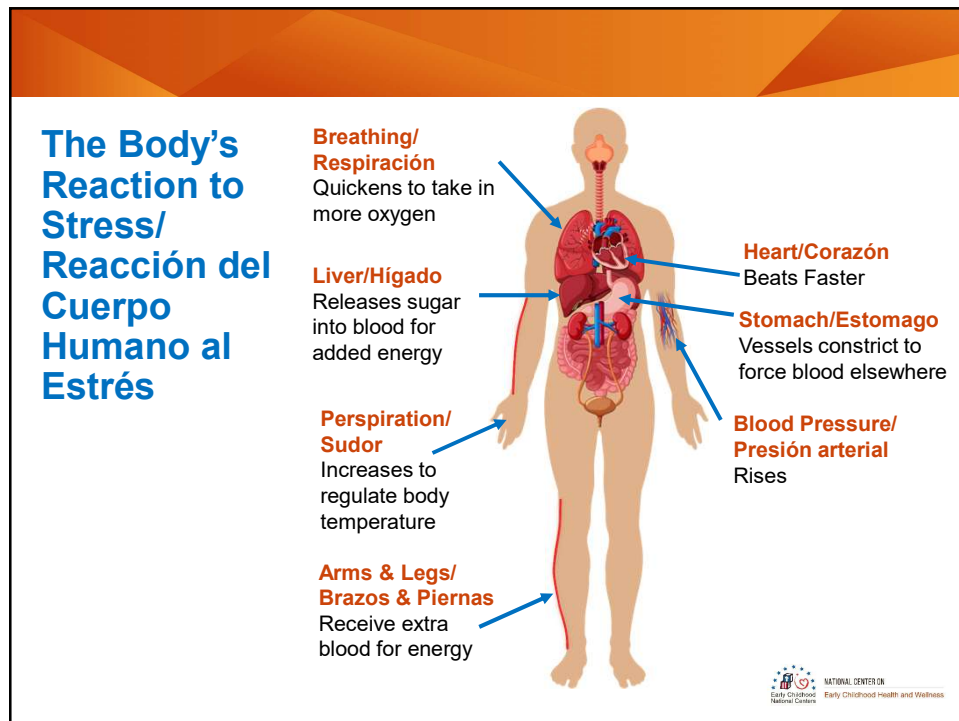
Prolonged activation of stress systems in the absence of protective relationships.

Can increase the risk for stress-related disease and cognitive impairment well into adulthood.



What Happens When We Experience Stress?





Physiological Adaptation to Stress

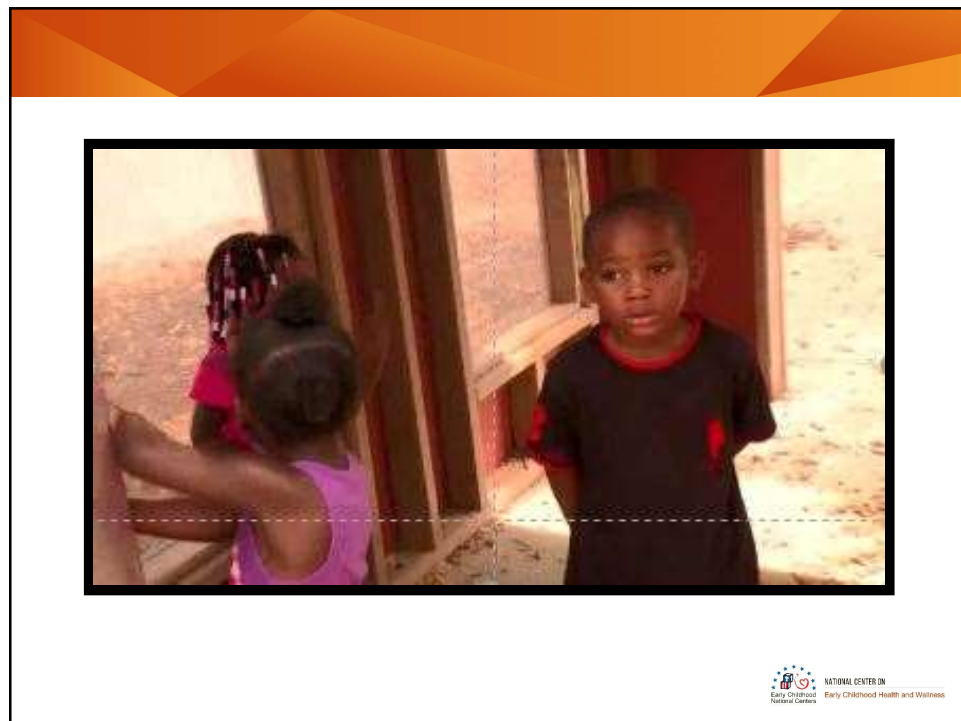
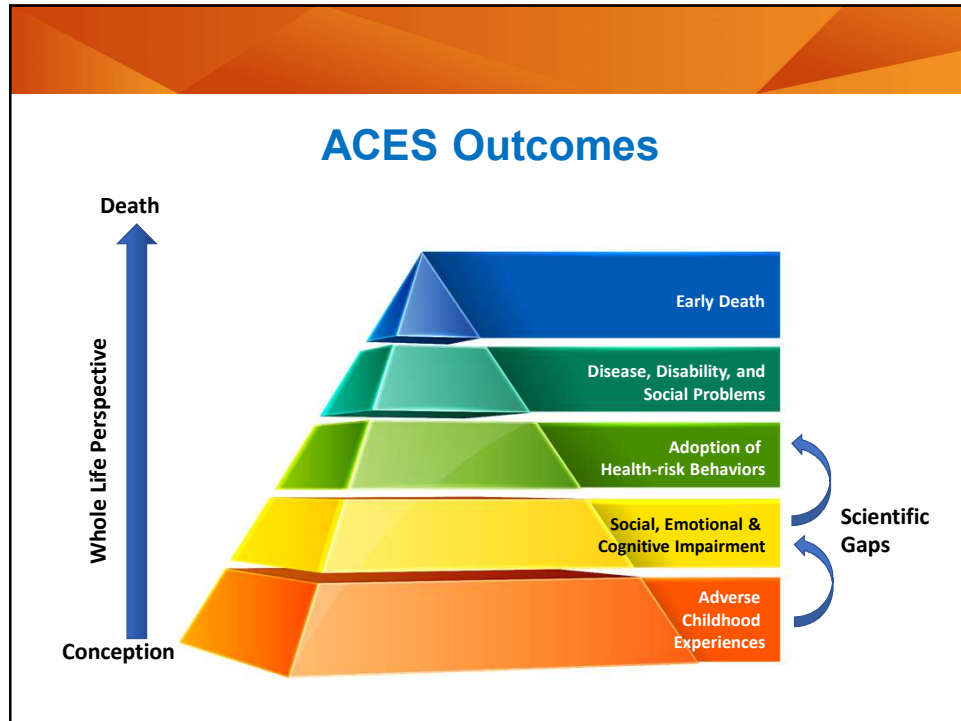
- Increase immediate availability of energy
- Increase oxygen intake
- Inhibit growth, digestion, reproductive function, pain perception
- Increase blood flow to important flight/flight areas
- Enhancement of memory/performance
- Boost immune function
- Release of mood stabilizers & endorphins



The Impact of Adverse Experiences: Years Later

*Lessons from the Adverse Childhood
Experiences (ACES)*





Knowing the Signs & Symptoms



Signs and Symptoms of Trauma in Infants and Toddlers

- Eating & Sleeping disturbance
- Clingy/separation anxiety
- Irritable/difficult to soothe
- Repetitive/post-traumatic play
- Developmental regression
- Language delay
- General fearfulness/new fears,
- Easily startled
- Reacting to reminders/trauma triggers
- Difficulty engaging in social interactions through gestures, smiling, cooing
- Persistent self-soothing behaviors, for example, head banging
- Aggression (toddlers)

Signs and Symptoms of Trauma in Preschoolers

- Avoidant, anxious, clingy
- General fearfulness/new fears
- Helplessness, passive
- Restless, impulsive, hyperactive
- Physical symptoms (headache, etc.)
- Inattention, difficulty problem solving
- Irritability
- Aggressive and/ or sexualized behavior
- Sadness
- Repetitive/ post-traumatic play
- Talking about the traumatic event and reacting to trauma triggers
- Developmental regression
- Poor peer relationships and social problems (controlling/over permissive)

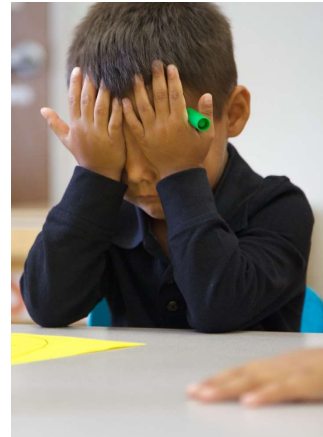


How Can You Help Children Who Have Experienced Trauma?



Impacts of Trauma on Learning

- Persistent fear states in children can interfere with their ability to learn from educational, social, and emotional experiences
- Exposure to trauma can affect their perception of time, cognitive style, emotional tone, problem-solving skills, and ability to respond to and understand rules, regulations, and laws



Perry, B. D. (2001). The neurodevelopmental impact of violence in childhood. *Textbook of child and adolescent forensic psychiatry*, 221-238.



Summary

- Adverse experiences can impact very young children
- Obtaining mental health services for children and families who have experienced potentially traumatic experiences can help reduce the negative impact of these experiences



Summary cont'd



- Understanding signs of trauma helps make sure children who need help receive it
- Help for children who experience trauma includes help for the caregivers and families who care for them

Part II: Supporting Resilience in Early Childhood



Learning Objectives

PART 2:

Participants will be able to:

1. Define resilience
2. Identify approaches to build protective factors for young children and their families

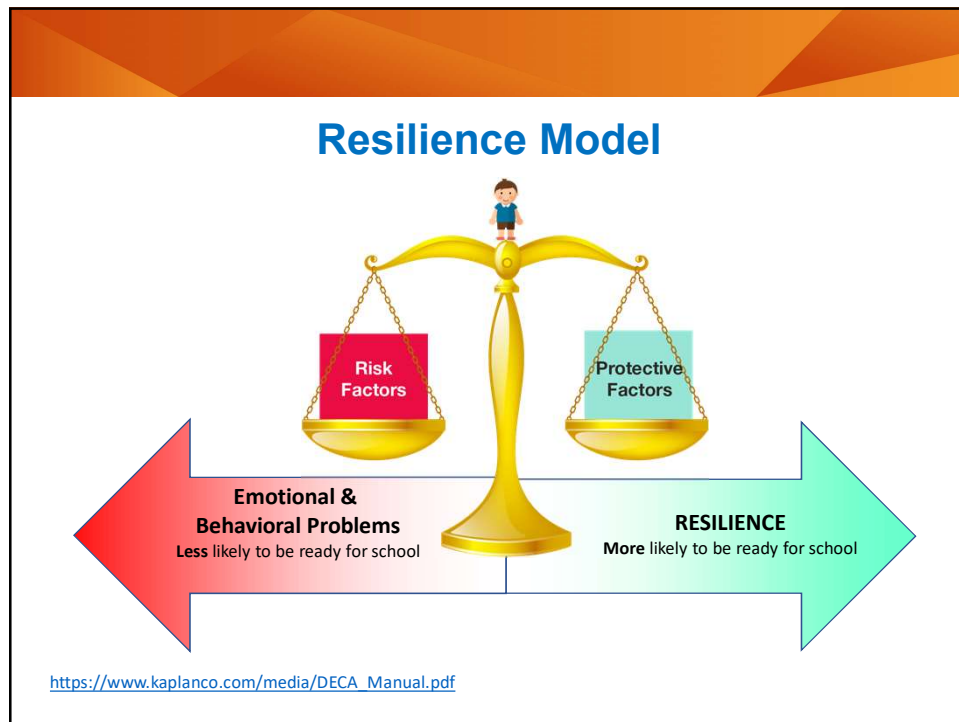


Resilience Defined



- Recovering from or adjusting to misfortune or change
- The ability to bounce back
- Overcoming the odds





Perfectly Resilient Infant or Toddler



Watch the Still Face Clip

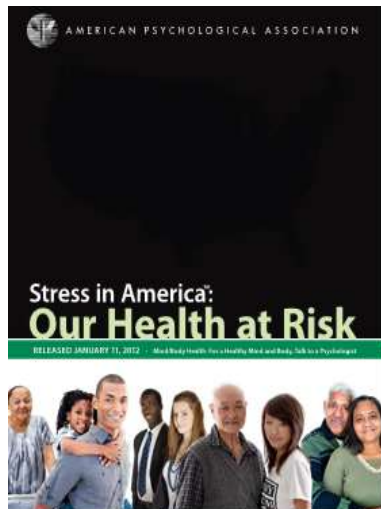


[Search for 'Still Face Experiment: Dr. Edward Tronick' on YouTube.](#)



Americans Living with Stress

One-third of Americans are living with extreme stress and nearly half of Americans (48%) believe that their stress has increased over the past five years.



Report from the American Psychological Association, 2012

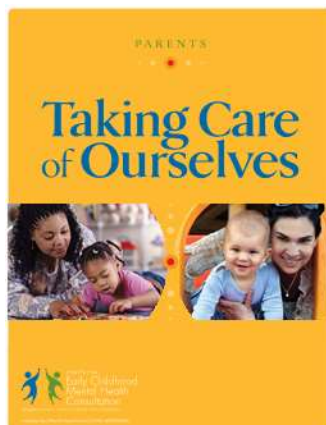


Adults Under Chronic Stress

- Are often more irritable
- Are more likely to be inconsistent
- Have less energy
- Lose a feeling of joy of life



Take Care of Yourself: Tips



Take a Breath

Belly breathing or "Deep Breathing Exercise" is a proven way to reduce stress. Try this technique standing or seated in a chair.

1. Place your arms and hands at your side, relaxed
2. Close your eyes
3. Focus on your belly, the lower part of the stomach. Imagine a small balloon inside
4. Breathe in slowly and deeply through your nose, imagine the balloon inflating. Slowly, hold a few seconds
5. Slowly exhale through your mouth, imagine the balloon gently deflating. Blow out of your mouth as if you were blowing out a candle
6. Repeat at least 3 times

TIP: Place a hand over your belly to feel it go up and down, and make sure you're not breathing with your chest

You can do this in your classroom, at home, on the bus, in the car, or anywhere!

Why Pay Attention to Staff Wellness?

- Providing care to young children is an intense and demanding job.
- Parents and staff are under pressure to meet the demands of running a household/classroom, personal concerns, and responding to children in their care.
- Stress is natural and can be inevitable, but stress can take a toll on health and effectiveness as a parent or staff member.
- Stress doesn't just effect individuals; it also impacts the children that staff care for.



Why Pay Attention to Staff Wellness?

Research shows that:

- Staff who are stressed find it more difficult to offer praise, nurturance, and the structure that young children need.
- Staff who are stressed are more likely to use harsh discipline.
- When staff are under significant stress, children in their care tend to have more challenging behavior.



Trauma, Brain and Relationships: Helping Children Heal



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How Do You Build Protective Factors in Young Children?

Large Group Conversation

- With children?
- With families?



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Provide Consistent, Responsive Caregiving

- Identify a primary caregiver to increase the level of support and encouragement
- Hold, cuddle and rock children
- Respond gently & quickly to cues (smiles, cries, etc.)
- Talk to children about their emotions
- Stay close by as children interact with one another
- Observe each child's skills



Provide Predictable Routines & A Safe Environment

- Maintain a predictable schedule
- Provide choices
- Provide a safe place for the child to talk or just relax
- Be sensitive to cues the child gives related to the environment- create a soft, nurturing space



Core Strengths for Children

Developed by Bruce Perry



- Attachment
- Self Regulation
- Affiliation
- Awareness
- Tolerance
- Respect

<http://www.childtrauma.org/>



Supporting Families with Immediate Needs

Know your community supports for:

- Housing, Food, & Clothing
- Job Training
- Transportation
- Health Care and Insurance
- Child Care subsidy



Trauma-Informed Care (TIC)

- Realizes the widespread impact of trauma and understands potential paths for recovery.
- Recognizes the signs and symptoms of trauma in children, families, and staff.
- Responds by fully integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, and practices to resist retraumatization.

(SAMHSA, 2014, *Trauma- Informed Approach and Trauma- Specific Interventions*,
<https://www.samhsa.gov/ntic/trauma-interventions>)



Views on Challenging Behavior in TIC

The underlying cause of problem behavior/symptoms

TIC – Unfavorable Attitude	TIC – Favorable Attitude
People were raised the way they are, so there is not much I can do about it now.	People were raised the way they are, so they didn't know how to do what I am asking them to.
People are always manipulative so you need to always question what they say.	People have had to learn how to trick or mislead others to get their needs met.

Baker, & Brown, 2018, *Measuring Trauma Informed Care Using the Attitudes Related to Trauma Informed Care Scale*, http://traumaticstressinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/ARTIC-Webinars-2016_Final.pdf



Views on Staff Well-being in TIC

Staff reactions to the work

TIC – Unfavorable Attitude	TIC – Favorable Attitude
It's best not to tell others if I have strong feelings about the work because they will think I am not cut out for this job.	It's best if I talk with others about my strong feelings about the work so I don't have to hold it alone.
How I am doing personally is unrelated to whether I can help children and families.	I have to take care of myself personally in order to take care of children and families

Baker, & Brown, 2018, Measuring Trauma Informed Care Using the Attitudes Related to Trauma Informed Care Scale, http://traumatiainstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/ARTIC-Webinars-2016_Final.pdf



Current Literature on TIC Outcome Research

- **Family outcomes**
 - Improved mental health outcomes (Morrissey, J. P., Jackson, E. W., Ellis, A. R., Amaro, H., Brown, V. B., & Najavits, L. M. (2005). Twelve-month outcomes of trauma-informed interventions for women with co-occurring disorders. *Psychiatric Services*, 56(10), 1213-1222.)
 - Reductions in suspensions, expulsions, and written referrals for students (Stevens, J. E. (2012). Lincoln high school in Walla Walla, WA tries new approach to school discipline—suspensions drop 85%. ACEs too high. Retrieved from <http://ACEstoohigh.com/2012/04/23/lincoln-high-school-in-walla-walia-wa-tries-new-approachto-school-discipline-expulsions-drop-85.>)



Current Literature on TIC Outcome Research

- **Staff outcomes**
 - Build knowledge, change attitudes, and develop practices favorable to TIC (Brown, S. M., Baker, C. N., & Wilcox, P. (2012). Risking connection trauma training: A pathway toward trauma-informed care in child congregate care settings. *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy*, 4(5), 507.)
- **System outcomes**
 - Increase in trauma-informed care at the organizational level. (Bassuk, E. L., Unick, G. J., Paquette, K., & Richard, M. K. (2017). Developing an instrument to measure organizational trauma-informed care in human services: The TICOMETER. *Psychology of violence*, 7(1),150.)



Current Literature on TIC Outcome Research

- **Cost savings**
 - Reductions in staff turnover, staff use of sick time, work-related compensation claim costs, and liability insurance costs. (LeBel, J. (2011). The business case for preventing and reducing restraint and seclusion use. Retrieved from <http://store.samhsa.gov/shin/content/SMA11-4632/SMA11-4632.pdf>.



Approaches to Challenging Behavior

Pyramid Model

- Promotes social emotional development and school readiness of young children.
- Effectively addresses challenging behavior through intentionally teaching social-emotional skills.
- Leadership team supports the infrastructure to ensure that adoption of the Pyramid Model can occur within the classroom and all levels of services provided to children and their families.

Trauma Informed

- Addresses the consequences of trauma and facilitates healing.
- Realizes the widespread impact of trauma and potential paths for healing.
- Recognizes the signs/symptoms of trauma.
- Fully integrates knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, practices, and settings.



Approaches to Challenging Behavior

Old Way Approaches to Addressing Challenging Behavior	Pyramid Model	Trauma Informed Pyramid Model
Focus on behavior reduction	Focus on understanding function/meaning of behavior and teaching new skills	Focus on understanding the function/meaning of the behavior, teaching new skills and healing
Quick fix	Focus on long term academic and social emotional outcomes	Focus on long term academic, social emotional outcomes and on mental health outcomes
General intervention for all behavior problems	Intervention matched to the purpose of behavior	Intervention matched to the purpose of behavior and adults recognize that today's challenging behavior may be rooted in skills that have previously kept them emotionally and/or physically safe in unhealthy and unsafe situations.



Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (PBIS) and Trauma Informed Care

Old Way	PBIS	Trauma Informed PBIS
Focus on behavior reduction	Focus on teaching new skills	Focus on teaching new skills and healing
Old Way	PBIS	Trauma Informed PBIS
Quick fix	Focus on long-term academic, social, and health outcomes	Focus on teaching new skills and healing

PBIS and Trauma Informed Care

Old Way	PBIS	Trauma Informed PBIS
General intervention for all behavior problems.	Intervention matched to purpose of the behavior.	Intervention matched to purpose of the behavior and adults recognize that today's challenging behavior may be rooted in skills that have previously kept them emotionally and/or physically safe in unhealthy and unsafe situations.

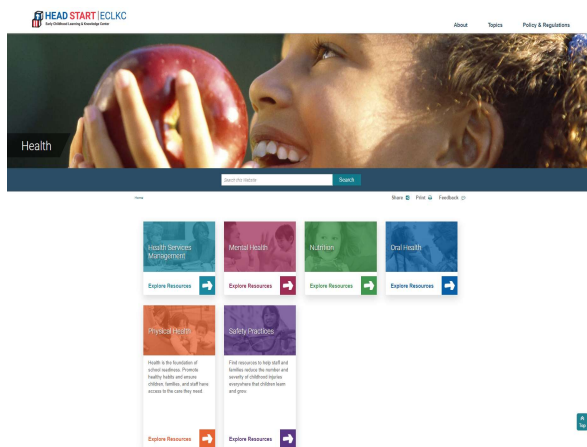
Action Plan - How Will You Support Resilience?

List Two Things You Will Do



NCH Resources

<http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/health/center>



- Newsletters
- Online courses
- Webinars
- Fact sheets
- T/TA tools

Next Steps...

Action Planning



Evaluation



Wrap-Up

- What questions do you still have?
- What will you do differently?
- What will you remember?

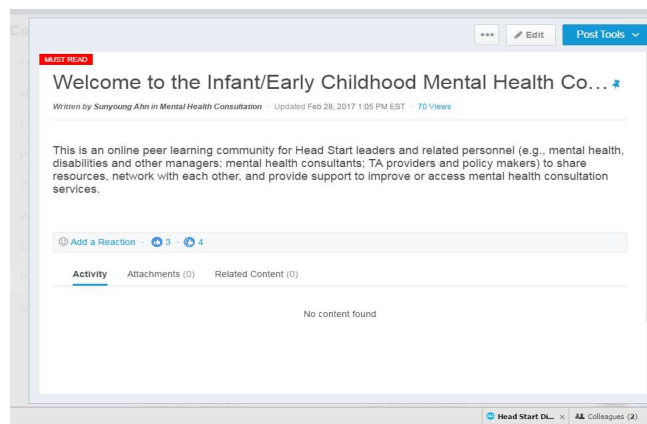
To Continue the Discussion, Join MyPeers



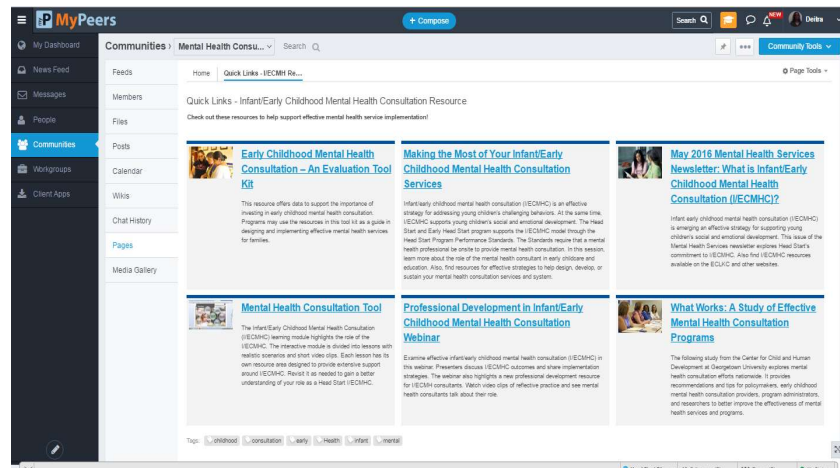
Email health@ecetta.info and say "I'd like to join MyPeers"



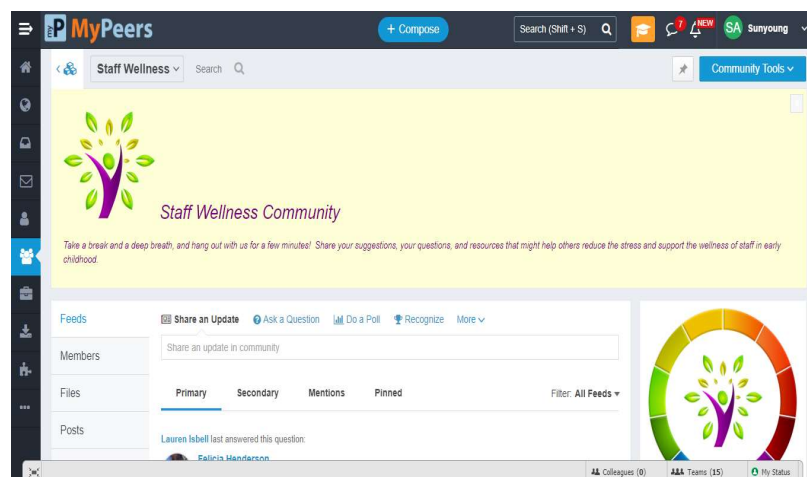
MyPeers Mental Health Consultation Community



MyPeers Mental Health Consultation Community



MyPeers Staff Wellness Community



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