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.


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.

**TOLERABLE**
Serious, temporary stress response, buffered by supportive relationships.

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

Experiencing strong, frequent, and/or prolonged adversity.

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

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

**What Happens When We Experience Stress?**

- **Weak**
  - Prefrontal Cortex
    - Thinking/logic/what to do/evaluation.
  - Hippocampus
    - Regulates memory and emotions.

- **Strong**
  - Amygdala
    - Turns on fight or flight, and stores memories of the event.

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Stress Responses

The Body's Reaction to Stress/
Reacción del Cuerpo Humano al Estrés

- Breathing/Respiración
  - Quicken to take in more oxygen

- Liver/Hígado
  - Releases sugar into blood for added energy

- Perspiration/Sudor
  - Increases to regulate body temperature

- Stomach/Estomago
  - Vessels constrict to force blood elsewhere

- Blood Pressure/Presión arterial
  - Rises

- Arms & Legs/Brazos & Piernas
  - Receive extra blood for energy

- Heart/Corazón
  - Beats faster
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)
ACES Outcomes

Whole Life Perspective

- Early Death
- Disease, Disability, and Social Problems
- Adoption of Health-risk Behaviors
- Social, Emotional & Cognitive Impairment
- Adverse Childhood Experiences

Scientific Gaps
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?

[Image of children]
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.


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
Resilience Model

Emotional & Behavioral Problems
Less likely to be ready for school

RESILIENCE
More likely to be ready for school

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**

www.ecmhc.org
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

How Do You Build Protective Factors in Young Children?

Large Group Conversation
• With children?
• With families?
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.


Views on Challenging Behavior in TIC

*The underlying cause of problem behavior/symptoms*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TIC – Unfavorable Attitude</th>
<th>TIC – Favorable Attitude</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>People were raised the way they are, so there is not much I can do about it now.</td>
<td>People were raised the way they are, so they didn’t know how to do what I am asking them to.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People are always manipulative so you need to always question what they say.</td>
<td>People have had to learn how to trick or mislead others to get their needs met.</td>
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Views on Staff Well-being in TIC

**Staff reactions to the work**

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<td>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.</td>
<td>It's best if I talk with others about my strong feelings about the work so I don't have to hold it alone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How I am doing personally is unrelated to whether I can help children and families.</td>
<td>I have to take care of myself personally in order to take care of children and families.</td>
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Current Literature on TIC Outcome Research

- **Family outcomes**
Current Literature on TIC Outcome Research

- **Staff outcomes**

- **System outcomes**

- **Cost savings**
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.

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<th>Old Way Approaches to Addressing Challenging Behavior</th>
<th>Pyramid Model</th>
<th>Trauma Informed Pyramid Model</th>
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<tr>
<td>Focus on behavior reduction</td>
<td>Focus on understanding function/meaning of behavior and teaching new skills</td>
<td>Focus on understanding the function/meaning of the behavior, teaching new skills and healing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quick fix</td>
<td>Focus on long term academic and social emotional outcomes</td>
<td>Focus on long term academic, social emotional outcomes and on mental health outcomes</td>
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<td>General intervention for all behavior problems</td>
<td>Intervention matched to the purpose of behavior</td>
<td>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.</td>
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### Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (PBIS) and Trauma Informed Care

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### PBIS and Trauma Informed Care

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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”
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National Center on Early Childhood Health and Wellness

Toll-Free: 888-227-5125

Email: health@ecetta.info

Website: https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/health