

Talking to Trauma:

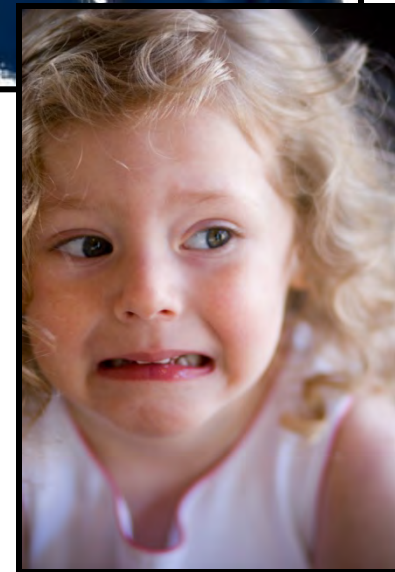
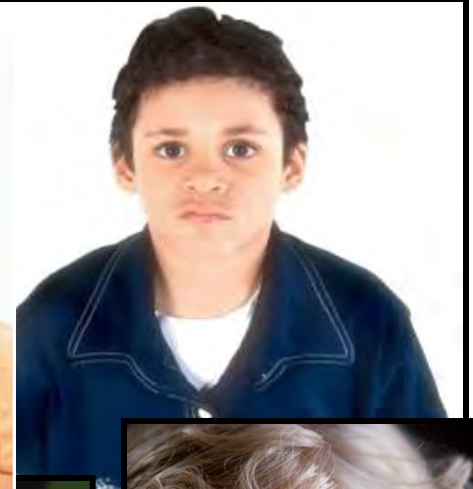
Relationship Skills that reach the Traumatized Brain

CASA
Anehiem, CA

April 8, 2013

Frank J. Kros, MSW, JD

President, The Upside Down Organization
Executive Vice President, The Children's Guild



What's The Upside Down Organization?



- A unique learning organization to “Help Adults Help Kids.”
- Nonprofit. Benefits go to kids at The Children’s Guild.
- Applied Research. We are operating schools, group homes, foster care, mental health and autism programs!
- Word of Mouth Marketing. Our participants “spread the word.” If you benefit today, please tell someone about us!

www.upsidedownorganization.org

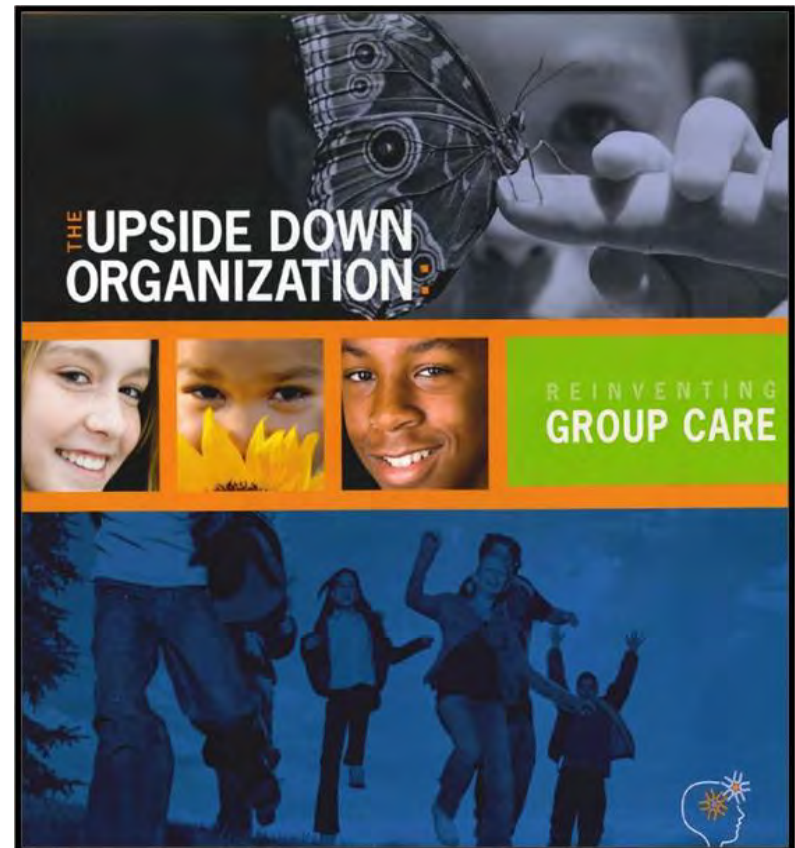
The Upside Down Organization



- 25 Learning Experiences on topics such as **ADHD**, **Poverty**, **Executive Function**, **Adolescent Brain**, **Behavior Motivation** and **More!**
- Presented in 43 states and **4 foreign countries.**
- **Award-Winning!**

Reinventing Group Care

- The only strengths-based, brain-based guide to group care on the market.
- “Soup-to-Nuts” guide, everything from behavior to breakfast music (but no point systems!)



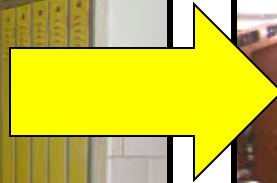
An Enriched Environment...

- High Contrast
- Integration
- Coherence
- Challenge
- Novelty
- Complexity
- Active
(not passive)



Jensen, E.; *Enriching the Brain* (2006)

Enriched Environments Change Brains for the Better!





Conventional Group Home Dining Room

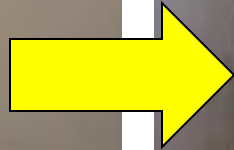
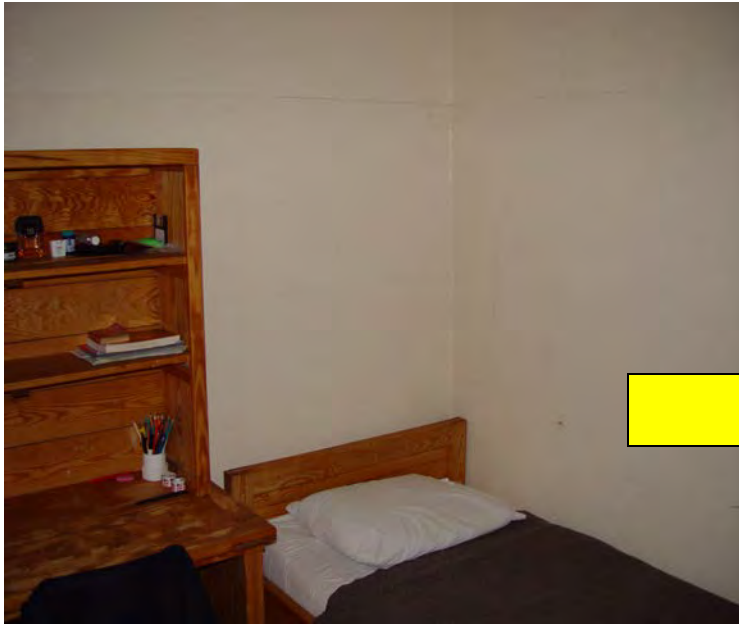


Conventional Group Home Living Room



TranZed Group Home Living Room

Conventional Group Home Bedroom



TranZed Group Home Bedroom

Talking to Trauma:

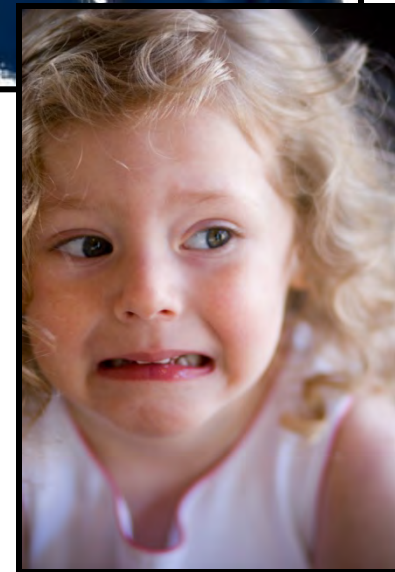
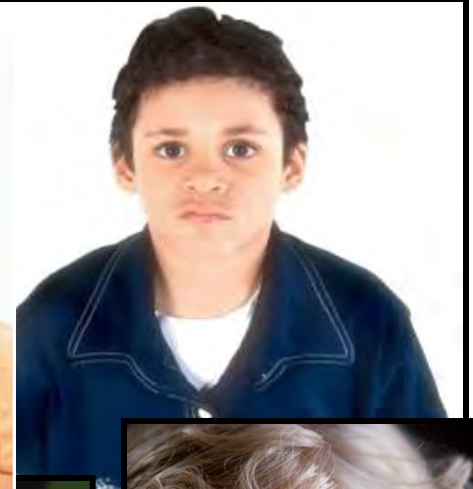
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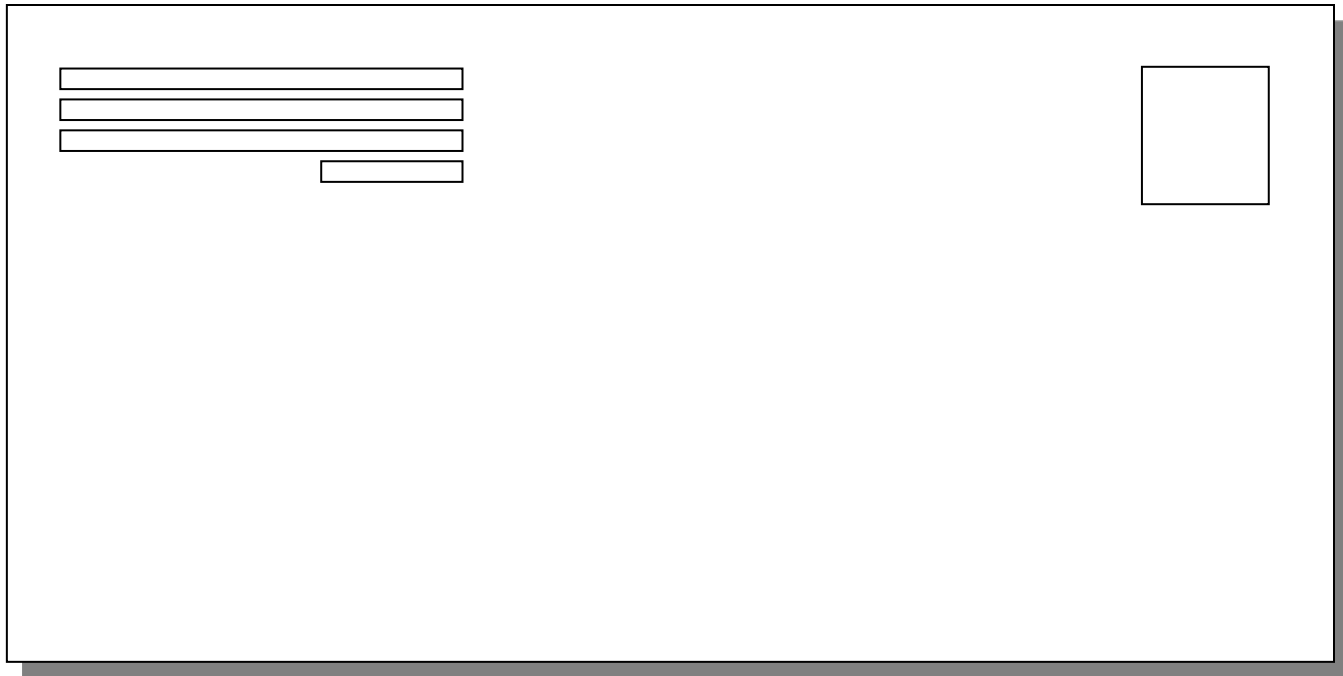
Workshop Evaluation Link

<http://svy.mk/YdGL2t>

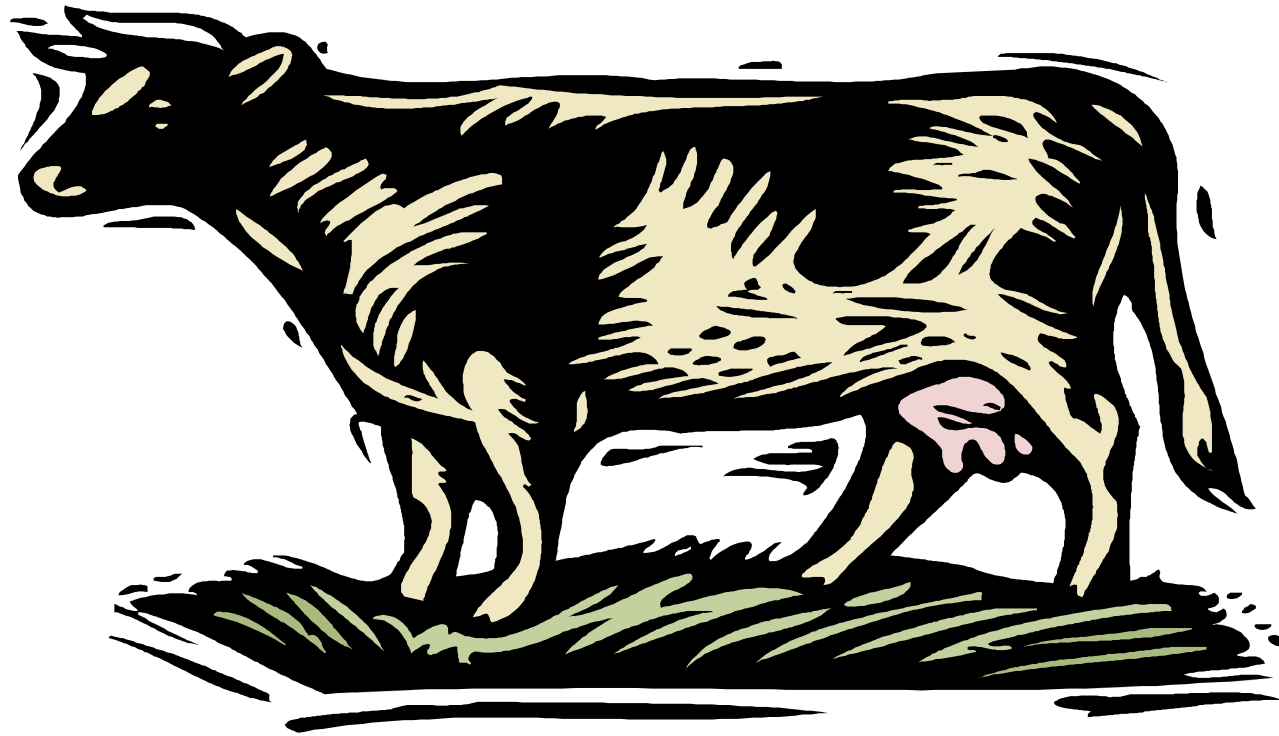
How is *your* brain this morning?



What Color?



What Do Cows Drink?



An Important Brain Rule...

Associations in the brain are real, physical brain structures.

It is much more difficult for our brains to unlearn something than to learn something new. Adults can build positive associations with learning by using the right language.



Adverse Childhood Experiences: Do They Matter?



ACES Study Findings

- As the number of ACES increases, risk for the following increases (strong statistical correlation):
 1. Alcohol Abuse
 2. Depression
- Drug Use
- Partner Violence
- Suicide Attempts
- Adolescent Pregnancy
- Arrest
- Incarceration

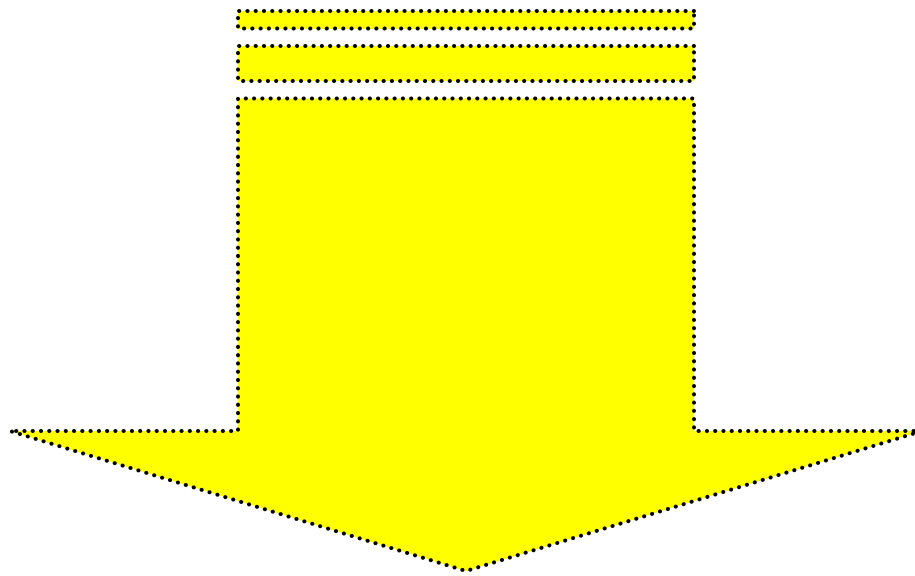
ACES Study, Centers for Disease Control (2008)

Trauma in Childhood Has Been Directly Tied to:

- *Conduct Disorder*
- *Oppositional Disorder*
- *Attachment Disorder*
- *Adolescent Violence*
- *Delinquency*



R. Greenwald: *Trauma and Juvenile Delinquency: Theory, Research and Interventions* (Haworth Press 2002)



1. What Causes Trauma?

Trauma: What Is It?

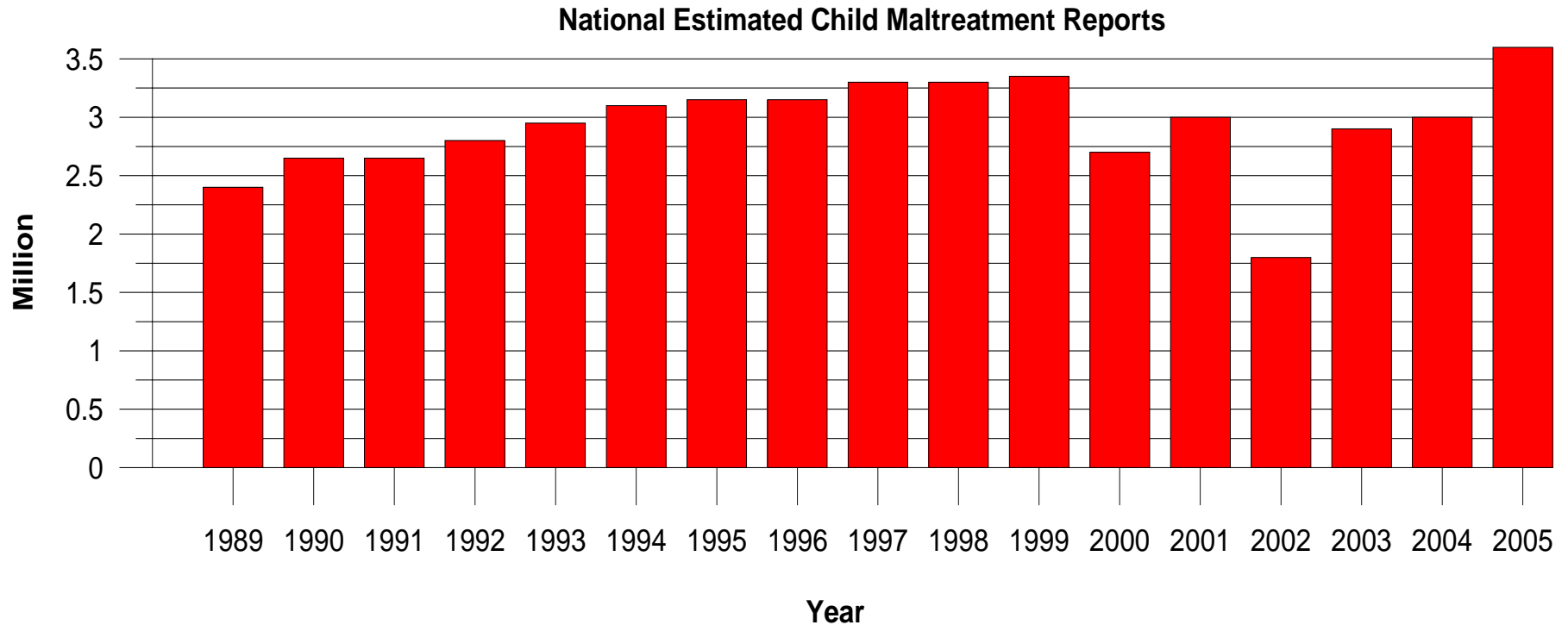
A frequent source of trauma for children in the United States can be referred to as “*child maltreatment.*” While exact definitions may differ, professionals generally recognize 4 types of child maltreatment:

1. Neglect
2. Physical Abuse
3. Sexual Abuse
4. Emotional Abuse



Incidence of Child Maltreatment

NCANDS, 2007



Life Experience Trauma: What Is It?

Events that do not involve child maltreatment can be just as traumatic or *more traumatic*.

These “life experience” events include:

1. **Death of a parent, sibling or caretaker**
2. **Separation from parent, sibling or caretaker**
3. **Relocation**
4. **Disaster**



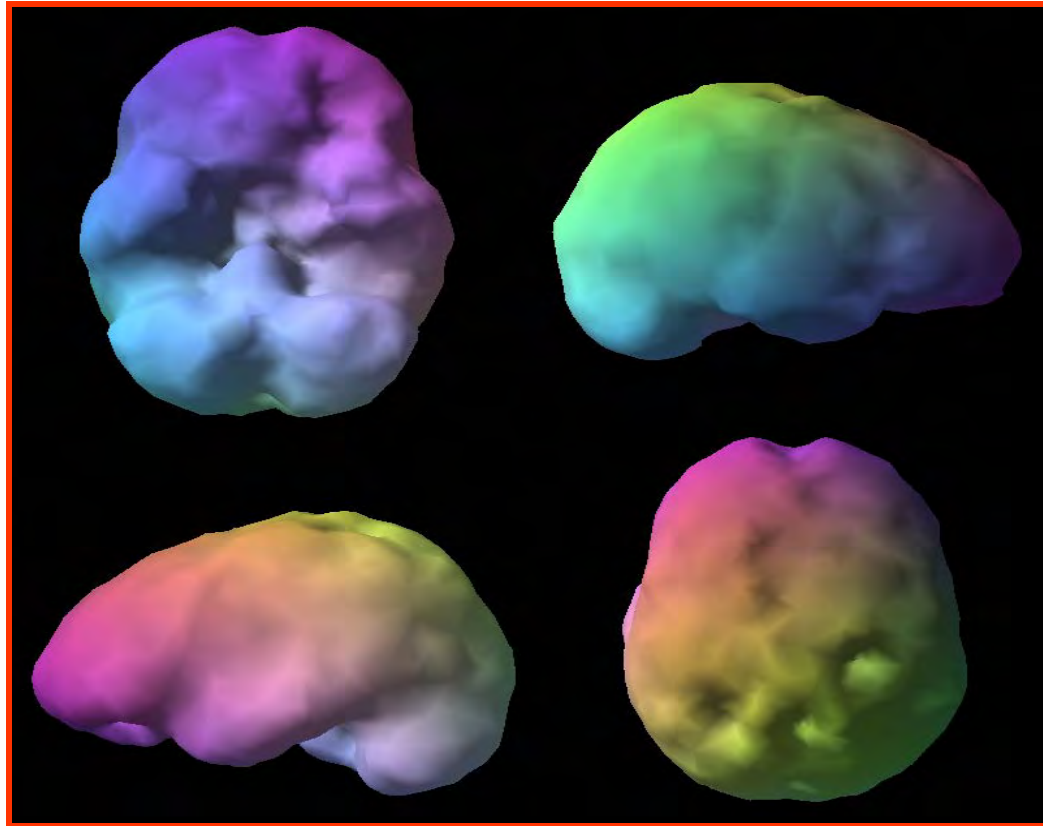
Take Home Message #1



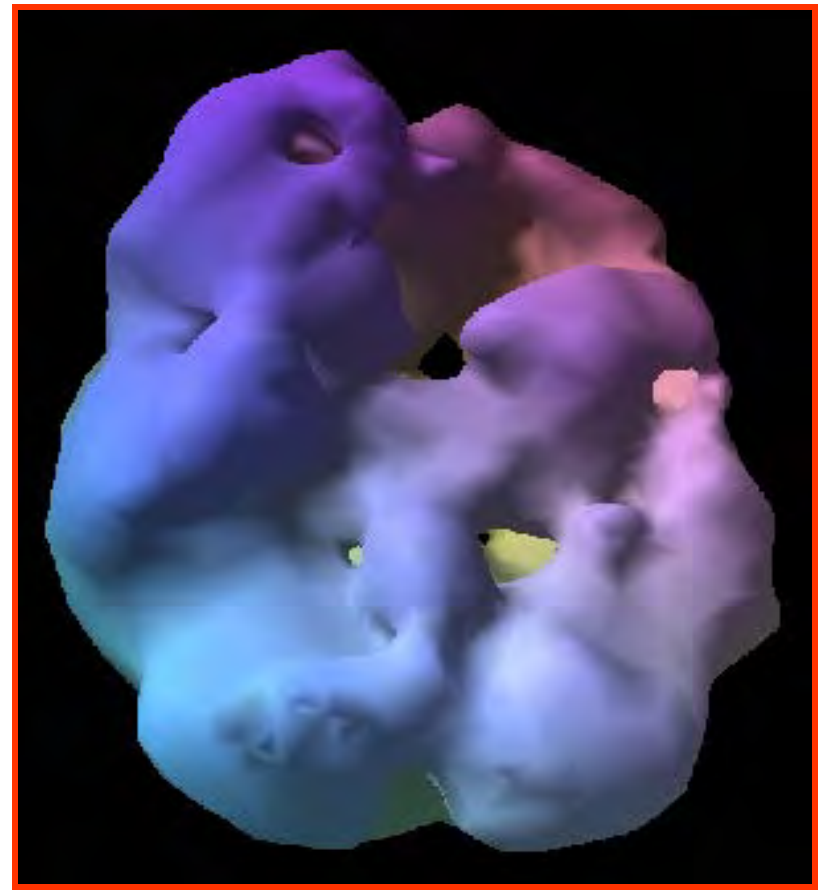
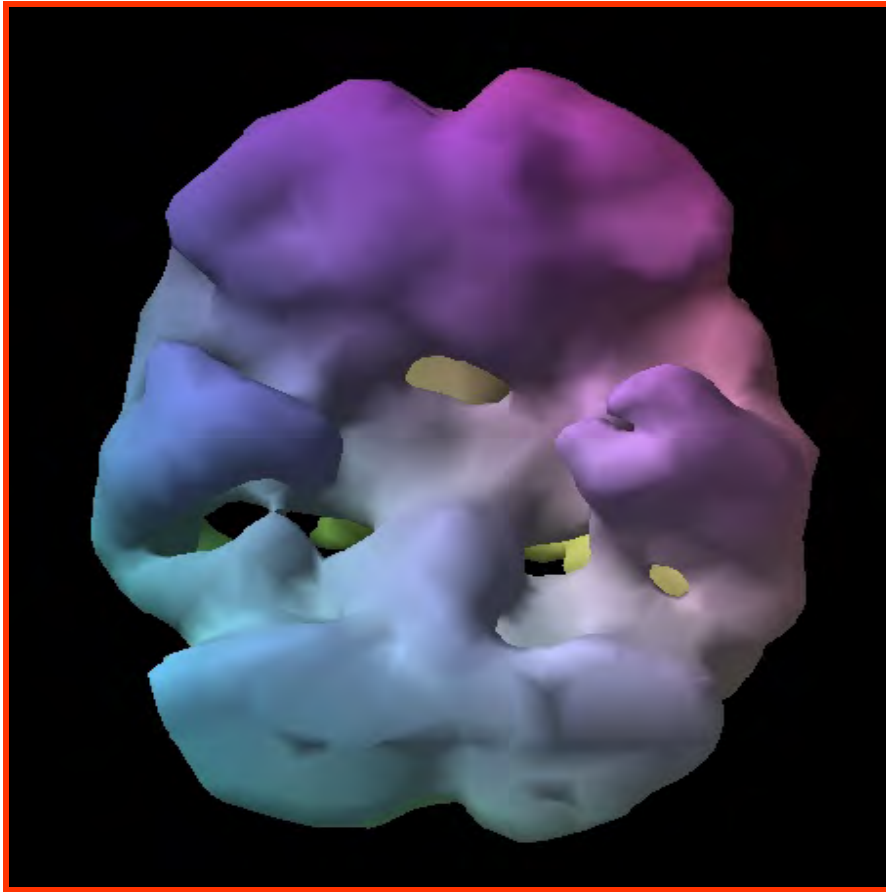
- Child Abuse and “Life Event” experiences can have the same traumatic impact on the developing (and vulnerable) child brain.

When it comes to responding to trauma, the brain does not discriminate.

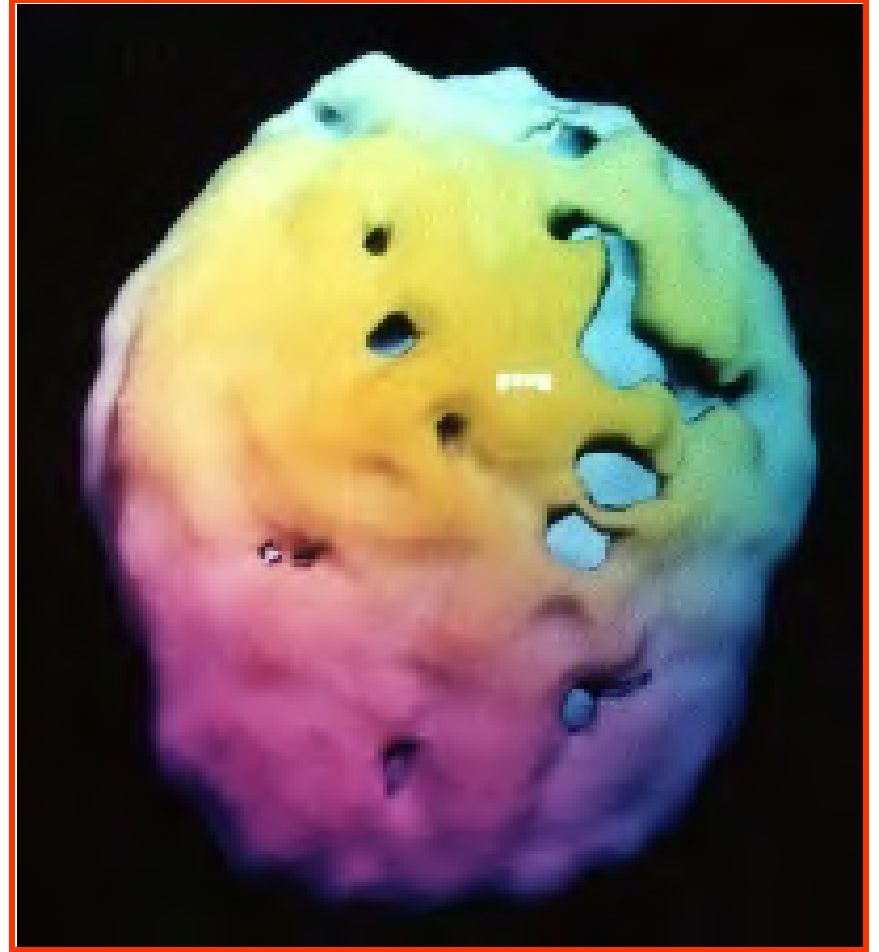
Healthy Brains: SPECT Scans



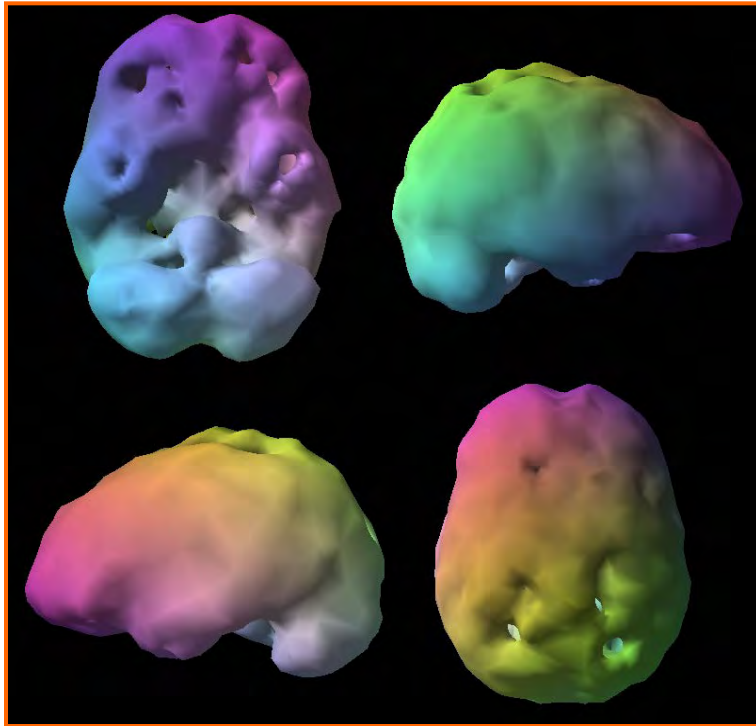
Physical Trauma



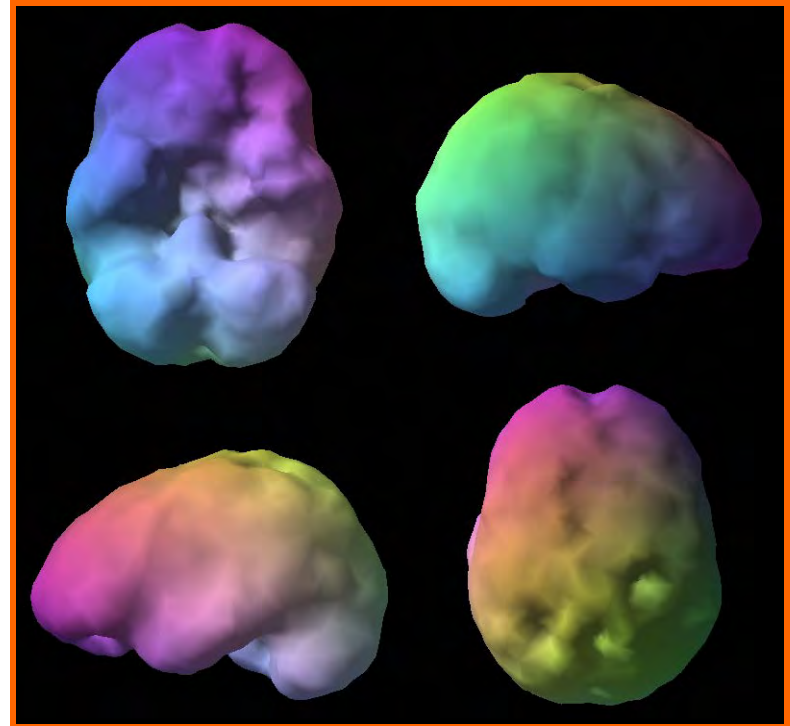
Physical Trauma



Poor Nutrition



Junk Diet



Healthy Diet

Shaken Baby Syndrome



Cerebral Edema - 7-Month Old



Life Experience Trauma

Some events in the life of a child may be non-abusive but still traumatic.

- *Death* of a parent, sibling or caretaker.
- *Separation* from a parent, sibling or caretaker.
- *Relocation.*
- *Disaster.*
- *Other (iatrogenic stress).*

What is Iatrogenic Stress?

- Stress caused by a child's placement in a program that results in separation from people he/she is attached to; relocation to unfamiliar surroundings; and exposure to new routines, people and systems.



Child Trauma: Key Questions

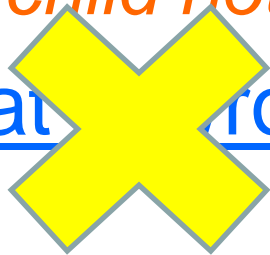
1. What has happened to you?

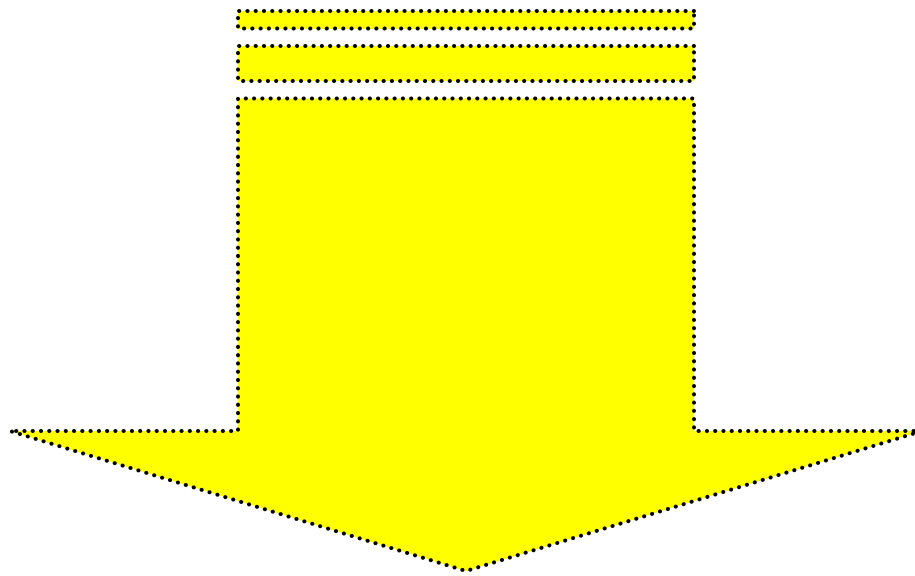
Every child/youth in the juvenile system should be screened for trauma history.

2. What has NOT happened to you?

Our understanding of what children need to develop healthy brains is well known. What is this child not getting?

3. What is wrong with you?

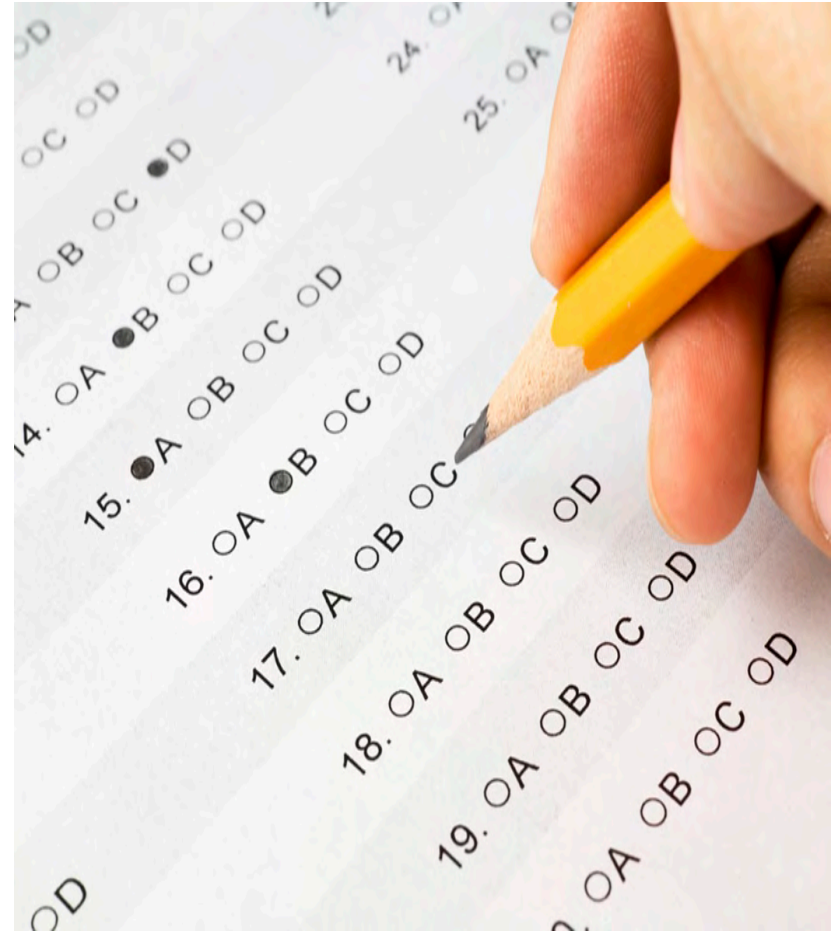




2. How Does The Brain Respond?

But First...

- Let's All take a short-term memory test.
- Watch screen.
- Remember as many words as possible in 30 seconds.
- Female vs. Male Brains!



Remember...

All Learning =
Making a Memory

- Slumber
- Siesta
- Doze
- Nap
- Deep
- Nightlight
- Snooze
- Wake
- Rest
- Night
- Sound
- Tired
- Snore
- Dream
- Yawn
- Bed



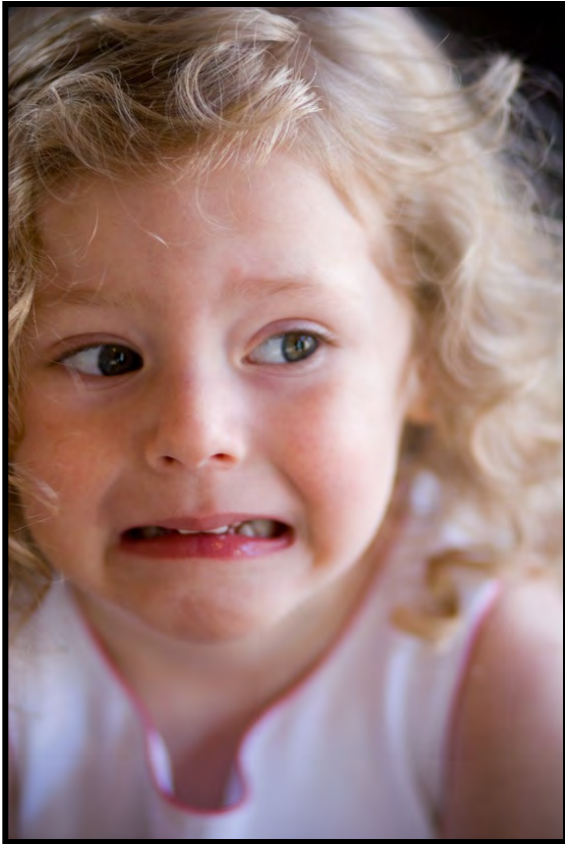
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- Snore
- Dream
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- Bed

“SLEEP” IS NOT ON THE LIST!

**Most
Everyone
Has
Had
a Memory
Lapse**

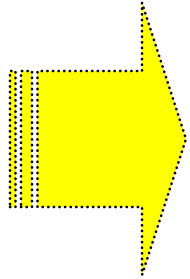


How Does The Brain Respond?



- *Trauma in childhood may lead to psychiatric problems that can emerge in childhood, adolescence or adulthood.*
- These psychiatric vulnerabilities result from the brain's response to the traumatic stress. Traumatic stress is commonly referred to as “distress.”

How Does the Brain Respond?

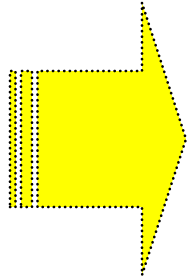


How does traumatic stress influence the developing brain?

In two big ways:

- 1. The stress response system has an exaggerated and prolonged response to other stressors.**
- 2. The child's brain organs change size.**

How Does the Brain Respond?



How does traumatic stress influence the developing brain?

- 1. The stress response system has an exaggerated and prolonged response to other stressors.**

3 Stages of the Stress Response

(Amygdala Driven)

Amygdala compels you to:

1. *Solve the problem causing stress.*
2. *Escape from the problem.*
3. *Cope with the problem.*
4. *Defend yourself the best you can.*
5. *At any cost, survive.*

Alert!

Stress Response

Distress!

Cortisol

Cortisol
Adrenaline

DANGER

The Paradox of Cortisol

Too Little

- Weak memory formation (encoding)

Too Much

- Strong encoding for emotion
- Weak encoding for detail
- Poor recall
- In extreme, cell death

Just Right

- Moderate cortisol improves the formation of detailed memory for facts and events
- Low cortisol promotes efficient and effective recall



Distress Impact on Neurons

Dendrites taken from rat PFC show effects of distress.

How much (time) exposure to distress would you predict it would take for neurons to wither as shown?

- a.) 2 hrs./day for 2 months
- b.) 30 min./day for 7 wks
- c.) 1 hr./day for 10 weeks
- d.) 10 min./day for 5 days

(Brown et al. 2005)



Distress Affects Neurons

There is strong evidence of withering and retraction of dendritic branching within ...

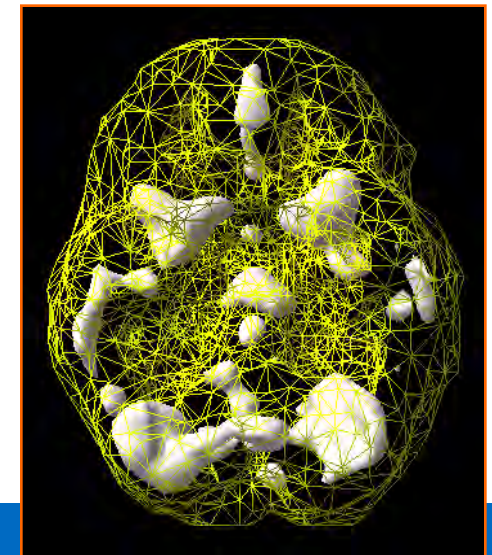
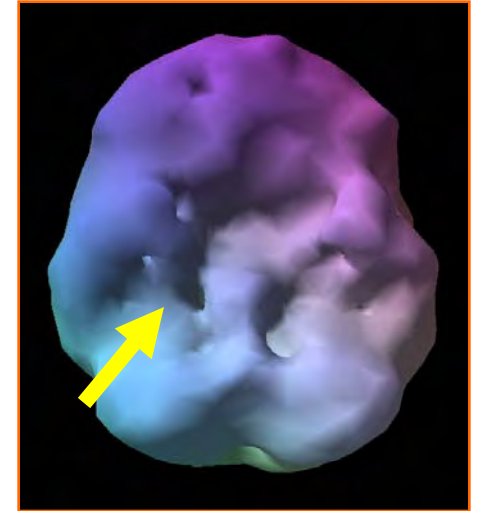
- a.)
- b.)
- c.)
- d.) 10 min./day for 5 days!

(Brown et al. 2005)



Results of Chronic Stress

- Distress kills cells in the hippocampus
- Distress hurts memory and learning
- Distress compromises immune function
- Distress activates the limbic brain (more emotional)



How Does the Brain Respond?

What might this look like in Monday's world?

- 1. Anxiety, nervousness, hypervigilance.*
- 2. Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.*
- 3. Attachment Disorder.*

Brain Map- Anxiety and PTSD

- A Different Type of Memory
- Remembers the Extremes of Emotion
- Traumatic Extreme is Triggered by Present Context
- Stress System is Activated
- The Amygdala Never Forgets!

Healthy Attachment



Attachment Troubles



Distress Impact: Your Guess?

Study had 3 groups of mice:

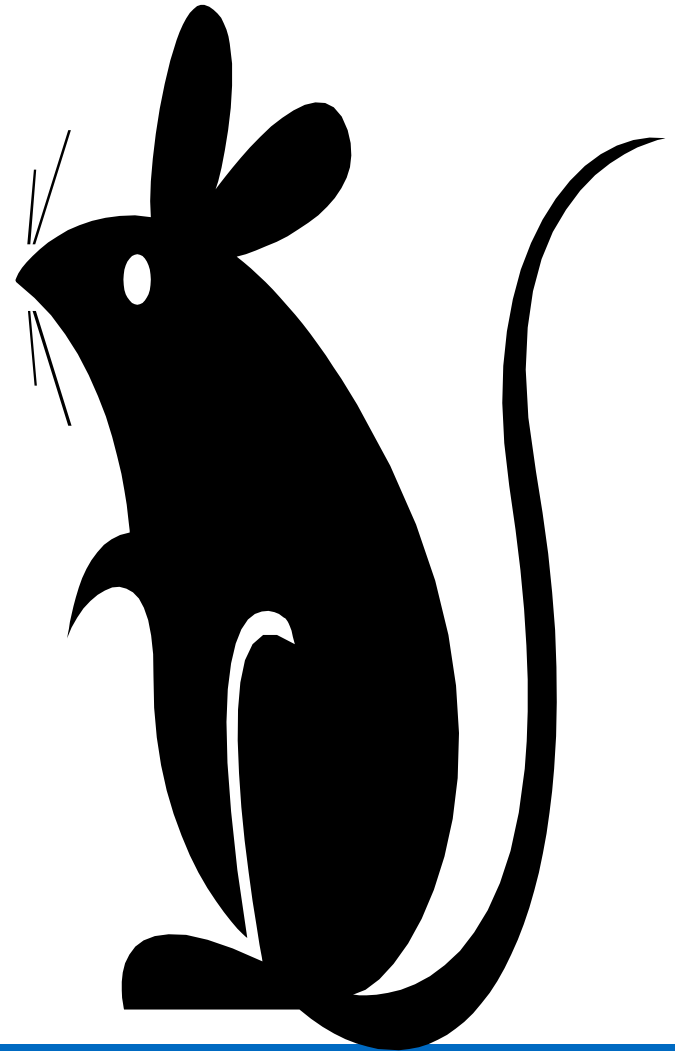
- 1) Remained in home cage
- 2) 12 hrs. daily of restraint stress
- 3) social reorganization

All infected with respiratory virus

Match the 3 groups above with their 30-day mortality rates:

a.) 8% b.) 15% c.) 70%

(Padgett and Sheridan, 1999)



Social Instability Effects

- Remained in home cage
8%
- 12h daily of restraint stress
15%
- Social reorganization
70%

Social stress is a killer!

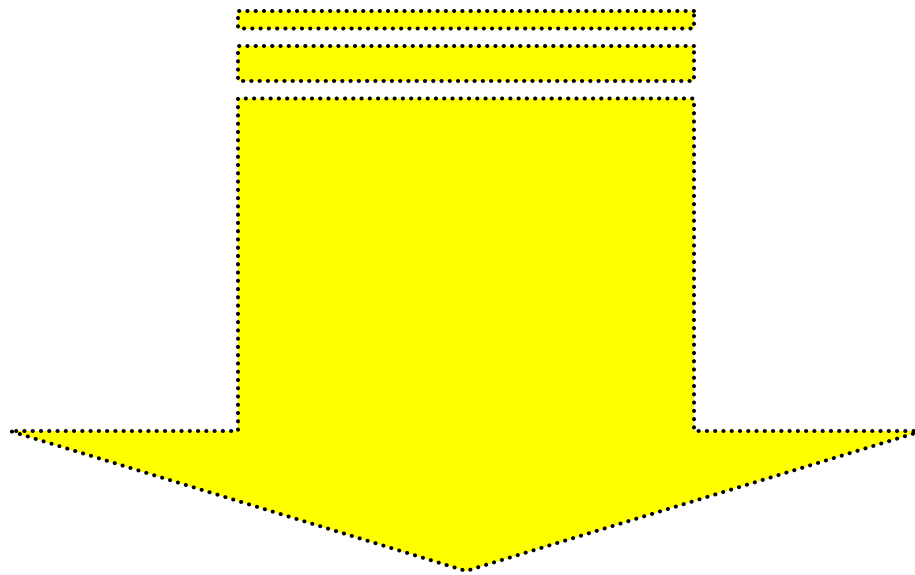
(Padgett and Sheridan, 1999)



Take Home Message #3



Chronic distress (excess cortisol) is the key issue to address in child trauma. Until cortisol is reduced to near normal ranges, damage to brain development is likely to continue. Trauma is common- if not universal- among youth in the social service/ juvenile justice systems.



4. What Can We Do?

“Talking to Trauma”

(1) Safety Comes First

- *Stop the Distress*
 - *Medical Care*
- *Psychological Care*

(2) Don't Personalize Behavior

- *Moderate Your Emotional Responses*
 - *Show Up. Every Time.*
- *“Map” Your Own Behavior*

Child's Filter	Before CASA	During CASA	After CASA
<i>Adults</i>			
<i>Learning</i>			
<i>Future</i>			

Child's Filter	Before CASA	During CASA	After CASA
Adults	Untrustworthy. Can't rely on them. They leave me. Inconsistent. Hurt/Help.		Adults come in all types. It is my choice which ones I want to have a relationship with.
Learning	Not good at it. School is not fun. I can't learn like the other kids.		I can learn but it takes work. Learning can be fun.
Future	Huh? I don't have one. I'm just trying to survive.		I have one! I think about it. I am planning for it.

(3) Build Hope!



How Do You Measure Hope?



Strategy #3: The Technical Side of Hope



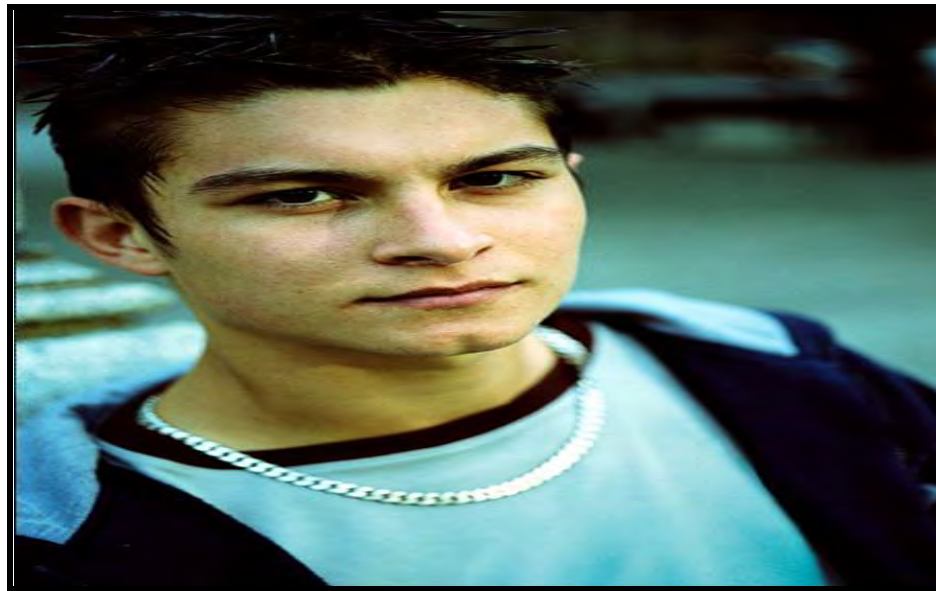
- 1) Affirmation
- 2) Prediction of positive outcomes
- 3) Vision of personalized, compelling possibilities by a believable authority figure *(parent, teacher, key other)*

Enhanced brain chemistry supports mood, attention, cognition, memory and even neurogenesis. *(Jensen, 2006)*

Strategy #3: The Technical Side of Hope

1) Affirmation. Unconditional positive regard unrelated to behavior or compliance.

“Frank, great to see you today. I’m happy to have you in class.”



Strategy #3: The Technical Side of Hope

- 2) Prediction of positive outcomes. *“You keep working hard and your love of storytelling will get you paid for telling stories. I heard about a volunteer opportunity at the Heritage Museum that would give you some practice...”*



Strategy #3: The Technical Side of Hope



- 3) Vision of personalized, compelling possibilities by a believable authority figure. *“Good storytellers like you are in great demand. I could see you working for a newspaper or a television station. You’ll have to keep-up your hard work, but I believe you’ll tell stories for a career.”*

Think of a Kid....

- 1) Affirmation**
- 2) Prediction of positive outcomes**
- 3) Vision of personalized, compelling possibilities by a believable authority figure (i.e., You!)**

(4) Track Behavior Patterns and Offer Alternatives



Reward: What's Reinforcing Behavior?

Context	Behavior	Result

Reward: What's Reinforcing Behavior?

Context	Behavior	Result
End of day. Lots of stress. Busy. Kids asleep. Going to bed soon.	Smoke 2 cigarettes. On deck. (What new behavior will achieve the same result in the same context?)	Nicotine buzz. Time with my wife. Relax. Unwind. (The result is the reward for that reinforces the behavior)

Reward: What's Reinforcing Behavior?

Context	Behavior	Result
End of day. Lots of stress. Busy. Kids asleep. Going to bed soon.	Walk the neighborhood quickly and play "Sherlock Holmes" (What new behavior will achieve the same result in the same context?)	Nicotine buzz. (Dopamine substitute) Time with my wife. Relax. Unwind. (The result is the reward for that reinforces the behavior)



(5) Teach Empathy and Build Communication Skills

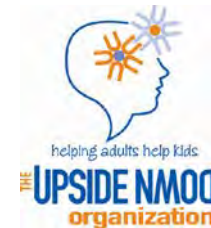


Structured Conversation

Teach Empathy and Build Communication Skills

You Feel _____

Because _____



This Empathy card is courtesy of:
The Upside Down Organization • 410-870-2481
www.upsidedownorganization.org

(6) Build Self-Regulation Skills

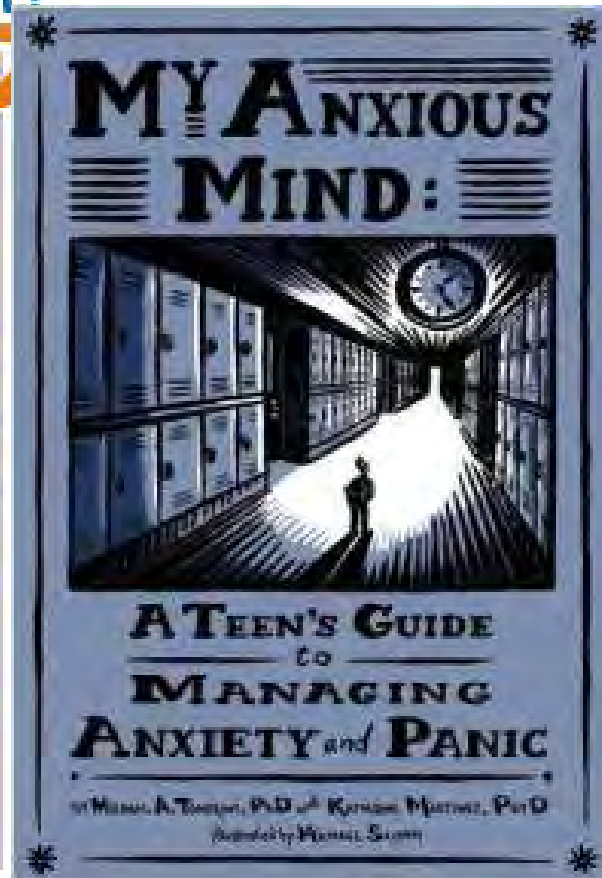
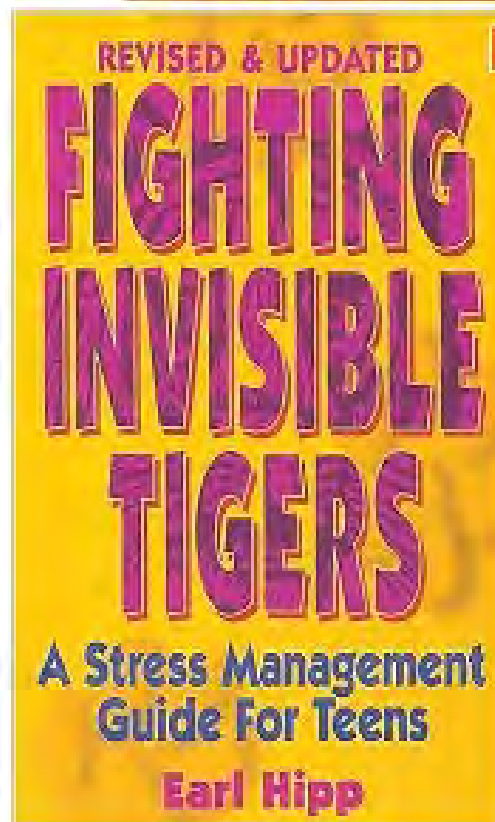
- Body Awareness
- Emotional Awareness
- Behavior Selection
- Frustration Tolerance

(6) Build Self-Regulation Skills

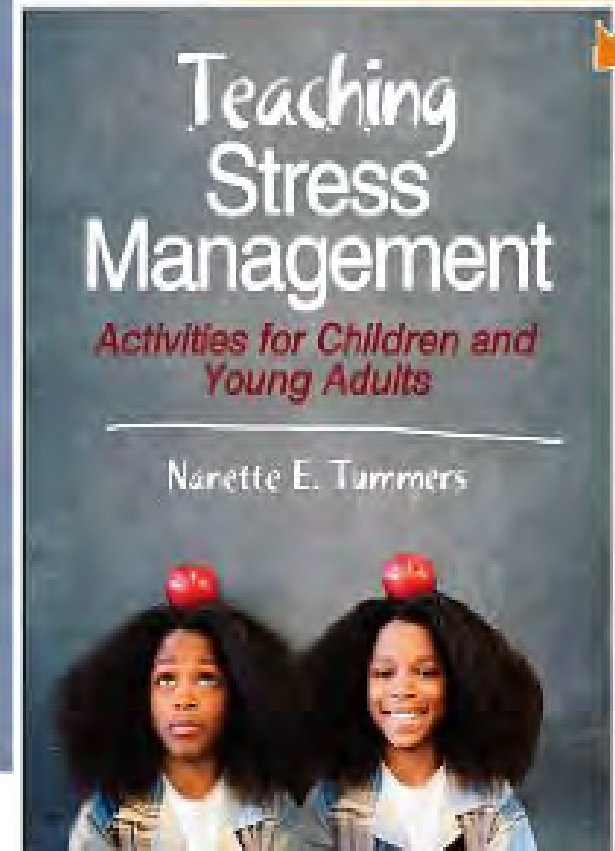
- Developmentally Appropriate
 - ANT Therapy
 - Self Talk
 - Physical Activity

Three Excellent Resources

Click to **LOOK INSIDE!**



Click to **LOOK INSIDE!**



Successful Coping Strategies*

Hampel, M. and Roos, T., *Interpersonal Coping and Multimodal Treatment in Boys with ADHD*, Emotional and Behavioral Disorders in Youth (Volume 7, No. 3, Summer 2007)

<u>Coping Dimension</u>	<u>Student Paraphrase</u>
Minimization	<i>Don't take it that seriously!</i>
Distraction	<i>I'm thinking of something else!</i>
Situational Control	<i>First, I make a plan!</i>
Reaction Control	<i>First of all, I have to handle myself!</i>
Relaxation	<i>First, I'm going to relax!</i>

<u>Coping Dimension</u>	<u>Student Paraphrase</u>
Positive Self-Instruction	<i>I'm encouraging myself!</i>
Need of Social Support	<i>I'm asking for help!</i>
Denial	<i>I'm not stressed out!</i>
Recreation	<i>Everything will work better after a break!</i>

(7) Provide Concrete Feedback



Feedback

- **Appreciation** = Showing gratitude for an act or expression.
- **Recognition** = Acknowledging extraordinary effort or performance
- **Praise** = Feedback intended to get the child to repeat the behavior being praised!

An Upside Down Idea

- Avoid abstract terms without a concrete example (“Responsibility,” “Respect,” “Appropriate”).
- Be specific.
- Focus on action.
- If using abstract terms, always pair with a specific, concrete behavior.

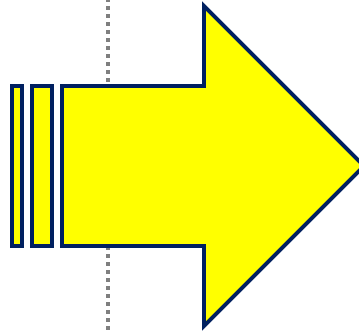
An Upside Down Idea

You are leading a classroom discussion and have called on Katy for a contribution. Katy begins speaking. Two other students start having a side conversation and giggling.



An Upside Down Idea

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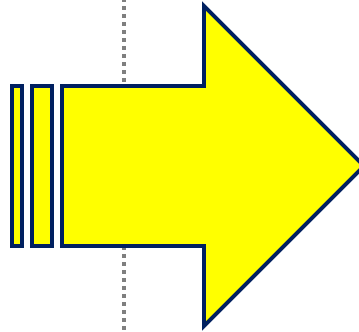


- ***“ShShhh! Be respectful!”***



An Upside Down Idea

You are leading a classroom discussion and have called on Katy for a contribution. Katy begins speaking. Two other students start having a side conversation and giggling.



“When someone is speaking during class discussion, it is time to listen. That means eyes on the speaker, hands in lap, and mouth closed. That shows the speaker respect.”

A High-Impact, 3-Part Model

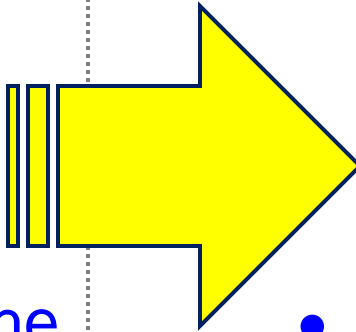
Step 1: State the context (“when someone is speaking...”) and the general behavior desired in that context (“...it is time to listen.”)

Step 2: Precisely and concretely state the behavior desired (“that means eyes on the speaker, hands in lap and mouth closed.”)

Step 3: Connect the context and desired behavior to the abstract term (“That shows the speaker respect.”)

Be Specific!

You get a call to come to school. Your son, Frank, was removed from class because he disagreed with a teacher's instruction and began yelling at the teacher. Be specific with Frank about his behavior.



- “When you disagree with a teacher....”
Do this _____
Say this _____
- “That shows respect for the teacher while advocating for yourself.”

Take Home Message



**Language
Changes
Lives!**

Resources

- Attachment, Self Regulation and Competency: A Framework for Intervention with Highly Traumatized Youth by Kristine M. Kinniburgh and Margaret E. Blaustein, The Trauma Center (Brookline, MA, 2004)
- National Child Traumatic Stress Network (www.NCTSN.org)
- Center for Developing Child (www.DevelopingChild.net)
- De Panfillis, D. & Dubowitz, H. (2005) Family Connections: A Program for Preventing Child Neglect. Child Maltreatment, 10,108-123.
- Child Help (www.childhelp.org)

Resources

- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administrations on Children, Youth and Families (2008). Child Maltreatment 2008. Washington, D.C. U.S. Government Printing Office.
- Saxe, G.N., et al., Collaborative Treatment of Traumatized Children and Teens: The Trauma Systems Therapy Approach (2006).
- Doak, M.J., Child Abuse and Domestic Violence (2007 Edition) Thomson Gale (Detroit 2007).