

Slide 1

**TRAUMA & INFANT MENTAL HEALTH**  
**BUILDING RESILIENCE IN CHILDREN AND FAMILIES**

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• MASTER ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES TRAINER  
• PROTECTIVE FACTORS TRAINER

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Slide 2

**DEVELOPING RELATIONSHIPS**



- An infant's internal working model is organized around the accessibility and responsiveness of his or her caregiver.
- An infant needs to develop a relationship with at least one primary caregiver for social and emotional development to occur normally.
- Infants become attached to individuals who are sensitive and responsive in social interactions with them, and who remain as consistent caregivers.
- Caregivers' responses lead to the development of patterns of attachment; these, in turn, lead to internal working models which will guide the individual's perceptions, emotions, thoughts and expectations in later relationships.

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Slide 3

**EARLY RELATIONSHIPS**



Relationships are developed through the emotional bond between the child and caregiver. It is through this relationship that we learn to:

- Regulate emotions/self-soothe
- Develop trust in others
- Freely explore our environment
- Understand ourselves and others
- Understand that we can impact the world around us
- Begin to establish a worldview

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Slide 4

### RISK FACTORS IMPACTING OPTIMAL MENTAL HEALTH

- Parental Mental Illness and/or Substance Use
- Postpartum Depression
- **Trauma**
- Physical Illness
- Environment
- Global Developmental Delay
- Poverty
- Domestic Violence
- Genetics
- Neglect

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### WHAT IS TRAUMA?

Disrupts the nervous system

Refers to extreme stress (e.g. threat to life, bodily integrity or sanity) that overwhelms a person's ability to cope

Is subjective

Often results in feeling vulnerable, helpless and afraid

Often interferes with relationships and fundamental beliefs about oneself, others and one's place in the world

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### ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES

ABUSE	NEGLECT	HOUSEHOLD DYSFUNCTION	
 Physical	 Physical	 Mental Illness	 Incarcerated Relative
 Emotional	 Emotional	 Mother treated violently	 Substance Abuse
 Sexual		 Divorce	

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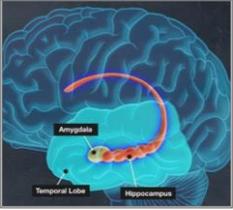
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### AMYGDALA & HIPPOCAMPUS

Part of the limbic system  
Vital for relationships  
Responsible for regulating panic, fear, and a whole range of emotional responses



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### CEREBELLAR VERMIS

- Connects 2 halves of the cerebellum
- Helps us move through our environment and enables us to perceive peripheral details in the world around us
- Regulates the release of "feel-good" brain chemistry
- Consequence of maltreatment is:
  - Attention problems (ADHD)
  - Mental illness (schizophrenia, borderline personality disorder and depression)

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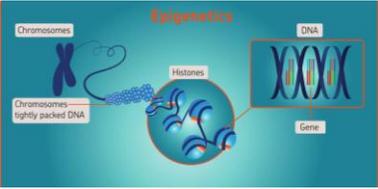
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### ACES INFLUENCE GENE EXPRESSION



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### RISK FACTORS FOR PRETERM LABOR AND DELIVERY

- Sexually transmitted infections
- High blood pressure
- Underweight or obesity
- Diabetes/gestational diabetes
- Younger than 18, older than 35
- Experiencing sexual or emotional abuse
- Lack of health care during pregnancy
- Alcohol consumption
- Using illegal drugs
- Experiencing domestic violence
- Stress
- Lack of social support

National Institute of Child Health and Human Development  
[https://www.nichd.nih.gov/health/topics/preterm/conditioninfo/who\\_risk](https://www.nichd.nih.gov/health/topics/preterm/conditioninfo/who_risk)

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### WISCONSIN PRAMS DATA

- 10% of Wisconsin women who recently gave birth have less than a high school diploma
- 25% of Wisconsin women are impacted by unstable employment
- 16% of Wisconsin women are estimated to experience economic instability in the 12 months prior to giving birth
- 3% of women experience intimate partner violence before or during their pregnancy

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### ACES IN WISCONSIN FINDINGS

- ACEs are common
- ACEs are interrelated
- ACEs are associated with:
  - Mental Health Outcomes
  - Health Risk Behaviors
  - Physical Health Outcomes
  - Socioeconomic Status
  - Medicaid/Badger Care Enrollment
  - Quality of Life

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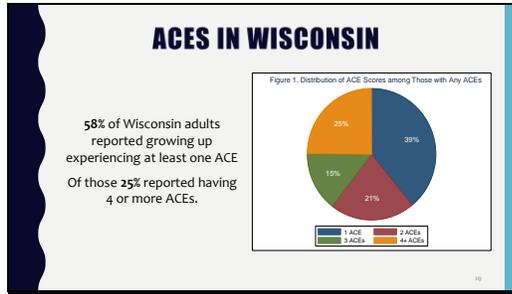
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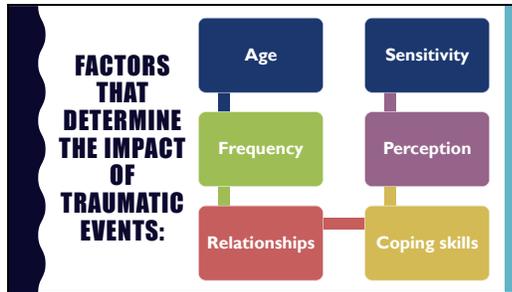
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<b>GUIDING VALUES IN TRAUMA INFORMED CARE</b> <small>NATIONAL CHILD TRAUMATIC STRESS NETWORK</small>	Share	Share Power
	Earn	Earn Trust
	Respect	Respect Human Rights
	Promote	Promote Safety
	Embrace	Embrace Diversity
	Communicate	Communicate with Compassion
	Pursue	Pursue the Person's Strengths, Choice and Autonomy
	Understand	Understand Prevalence and Impact of Trauma

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- PARENT SURVIVORS OF TRAUMA ARE:**
1. Unable to draw from their own childhood experiences due to dissociation and memory loss
  2. Living with fear and anxiety every day
  3. Struggling to unlearn what they were taught during childhood
  4. Unable to express their emotions due to fear
  5. Unable to connect with others and their children because connection is painful
  6. Taught to hide their passions and confidence
  7. Deal with triggers daily

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- WHAT CAN YOU DO?**
- Incorporate knowledge about trauma- prevalence, impact and recovery-in all aspects of service delivery
  - Placing Priority on:
    - Meaningful engagement
    - Physical and emotional safety
    - Choice
    - Collaboration and sharing power
    - Empowerment and skill building
    - Healing relationships
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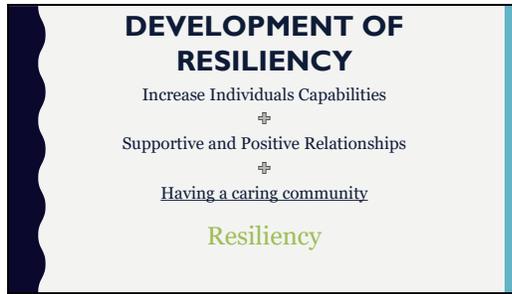
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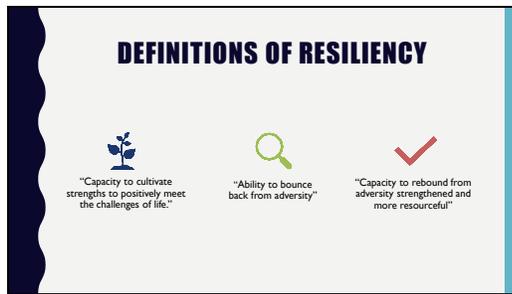
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### NURTURING A CHILD'S BRAIN

- Positive, caring relationships
- Secure attachment to a loving caregiver
- Consistent and responsive caregiving
- Stimulation and supportive environment
- Identifying Developmental Assets
- Parental resilience
- Stress in small doses
- Cultural considerations



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### PROTECTIVE FACTORS

- 1. Parental Resilience:** Numerous researchers have concluded that how parents respond to stressors is much more important than the stressor itself in determining the outcomes for themselves and their children.
- 2. Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development:** Early childhood is the period in which the foundation for intellectual, social, emotional and moral development is established.
- 3. Social and Emotional Competence of Children:** A child's ability to interact positively with others, to self-regulate, and to effectively communicate his or her emotions has a great impact on the parent-child relationship.
- 4. Social Connectedness:** For both mothers and fathers—high levels of emotional, informational, instrumental or spiritual support is associated with positive parental mood, positive perceptions of and responsiveness to one's children; parental satisfaction, well-being and sense of competence; and lower levels of anger, anxiety and depression.
- 5. Concrete Supports:** Assisting parents to identify, find and receive concrete support in times of need helps to ensure they and their family receive the basic necessities everyone deserves in order to grow.

Center for the Study of Social Policy

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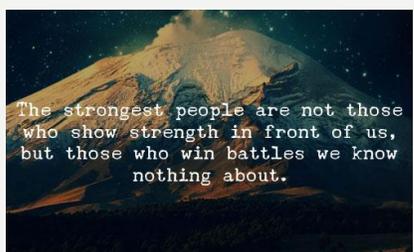
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Slide 30



The strongest people are not those who show strength in front of us, but those who win battles we know nothing about.

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**QUESTIONS?**

Thank you!

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