

HELPING YOUNG
PEOPLE COPE
WITH STRESS AND
ANXIETY DURING
UNCERTAIN TIMES

Children's Institute
SPOTLIGHT SERIES



CHILDREN'S INSTITUTE | www.childrensinstitute.net |



©2020 CHILDREN'S INSTITUTE INC., 274 N. GOODMAN STREET, SUITE D103, ROCHESTER, NY 14607 | ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

WELCOME



Featured speaker:

Earl Greene, MA, CAMS-I/Fellow
Early Childhood Mental Health Consultant

Moderator:



Caitlin Orbanek
Project Coordinator, Whole Child Connection

Panelists:



Lynn Lubecki, Ed.D.
Research Associate



Linda Murray
Project Coordinator



Charles J. Infurna, Ed.D.
Research Associate

UNDERSTANDING ACES, TRAUMA, TOXIC STRESS, AND BUILDING RESILIENCE



Earl Greene, MA, CAMS-I/Fellow
Early Childhood Mental Health Consultant

CDC-KAISER PERMANENTE

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) Study

- Largest on-going investigations of childhood abuse and neglect and later-life health and well-being
- Looked at 17,000 children to examine the prevalence of ACE exposure
- Demonstrated a clear link between the occurrence of traumatic events in childhood and negative health and behavioral outcomes throughout the lifespan
- Additional studies are on-going today



TRAUMA: A DEFINITION

- Individual trauma results from an event, series of events, or set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or life threatening and that has lasting adverse effects on the individual's functioning and mental, physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES,
SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES
ADMINISTRATION (SAMHSA) AND OFFICE OF POLICY,
PLANNING, AND INNOVATION



WHAT IS TOXIC STRESS?

- Toxic stress can occur when we experience strong, frequent, and/or prolonged adversity
- Childhood is a critical time for the development of stress response systems and the brain circuitry mediating emotions



TOXIC STRESS IMPACTS THE BRAIN

- Loss of neurons
- Changes in the size of some brain structures
- Changes to connections between neurons
- Changes in the activity in some regions of the brain



BUILDING RESILIENCE



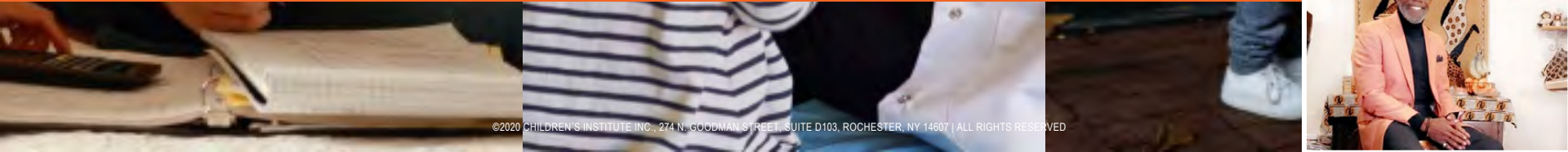
WHAT IS RESILIENCE?

1. The ability to thrive, adapt, and cope despite tough and stressful times
2. A natural counter-weight to adverse childhood experiences (ACEs)
3. Not an innate characteristic, but rather is a skill that can be taught, learned, and practiced
4. The more resilient, the more likely we are to deal with negative situations in a healthy way that won't have prolonged and unfavorable outcomes
5. Everyone has the ability to become resilient when surrounded by the right environments and people





PROMOTING SAFE, STABLE, NURTURING RELATIONSHIPS AND ENVIRONMENTS



RESILIENCE AND HEALING

- Research suggests that the single most common factor for children who develop resilience is at least one stable and committed relationship with a supportive adult



THE NEUROSCIENCE OF RESILIENCE

- Opening “Windows of Plasticity” that allow the brain to change itself
- Gene expression in the brain continually changes with experience, even in adulthood
- Behavior interventions change the brain
- Mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR)



THE NEUROSCIENCE OF HARM AND HEALING



The brain is a plastic and malleable organ that responds to interventions designed to redirect its function towards healthier physiology and behavior





YOUNG CHILDREN AT HOME



Lynn Lubecki, Ed.D.
Research Associate

YOUNG CHILDREN AT HOME

- Self-care is essential, not selfish
 - We need to keep ourselves physically, emotionally, and mentally well so we can be there for our babies
- Pay attention to how you are feeling
 - Notice your feelings (anxiety, worry, overwhelmed, grief are normal)
- Imagine your child's behavior as a communication
 - Little people tell us when something is wrong through behavior
- Make time for self-care
 - Walking, video chats, long baths



TIPS FOR HELPING YOUNG CHILDREN

1. Be available
2. Let them know they are safe
3. Teach your child things they can do to feel safe
4. Keep daily routines as normal as you can
5. Create a “Plan B”
6. Build family time into the routine
7. Be aware of changes in your child’s behavior





Tips for Helping Your Child During the Pandemic



https://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/docs/Pandemic_family_infographic.pdf

https://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/docs/washing-hands_story.pdf

https://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/docs/Pandemic_helping-your-child_tipsheet.pdf

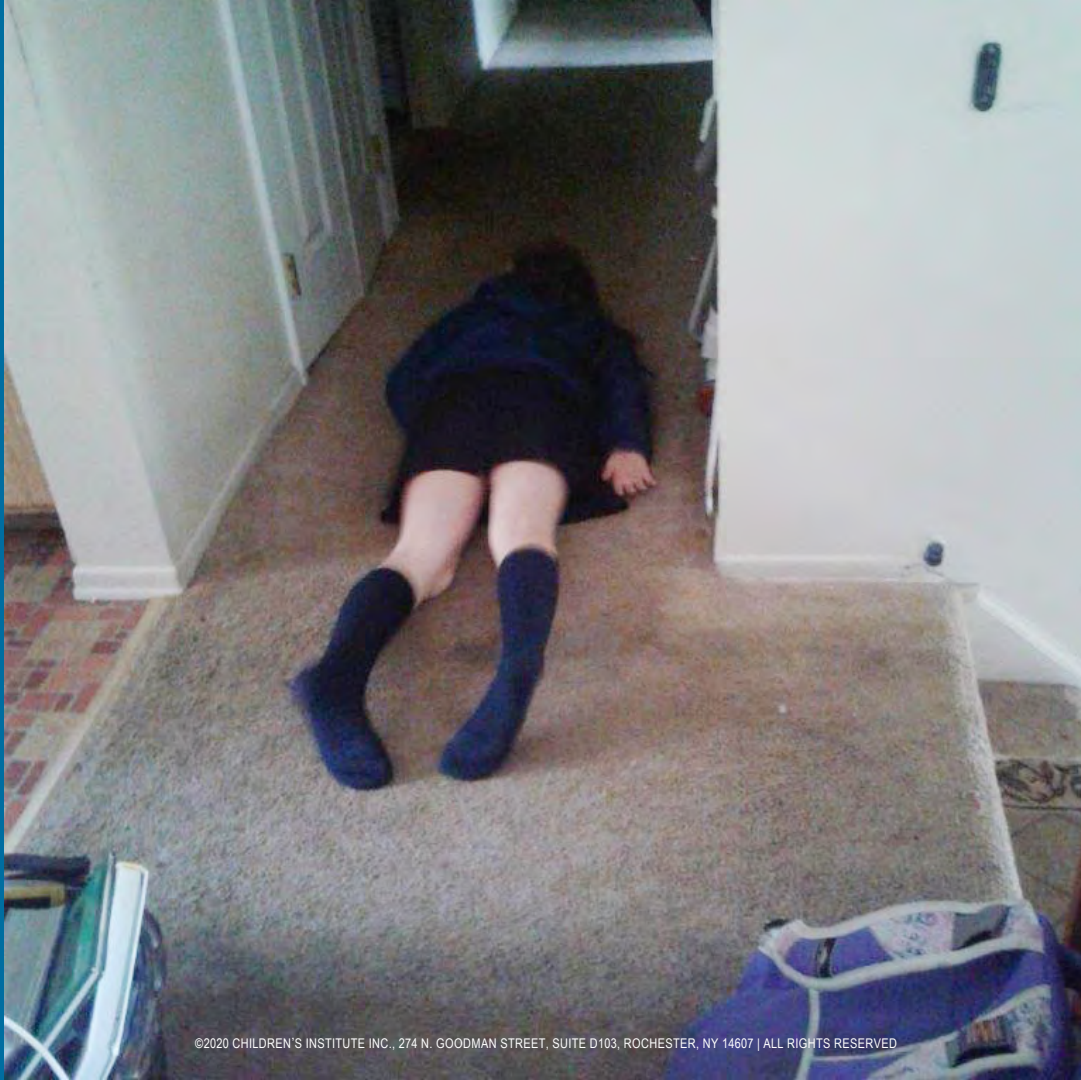




ADAPTING COMMUNICATION WITH CHILDREN



Linda Murray
Project Coordinator












©2020 CHILDREN'S INSTITUTE INC., 274 N. GOODMAN STREET, SUITE D103, ROCHESTER, NY 14607 | ALL RIGHTS RESERVED



COMMUNICATION: A BASIC STRATEGY

- Be open
- Create opportunities
- Adapt to the individual child



	J	E	S
Learn -homework -read -practice -explore	✓	Sadly yes ;)	I agree too much
Be Creative	✓		
Help ex: house room outside others	✓		
Outside or be active			
Food FAITH FUN	✓		
Social - in touch with friends	✓		





CREATING HABITS OF SUCCESS



Charles J. Infurna, Ed.D.
Research Associate

MAKING THE TRANSITION FROM HIGH SCHOOL TO POST HIGH SCHOOL LIFE

I. Create habits for success

- Brings awareness of what we do on a daily basis
- Accountability measures



A DAY IN THE LIFE

I. Create a list of daily habits

- Wake up
- Turn off alarm
- Check my phone
- Go to bathroom
- Take a shower
- Brush my teeth
- Put on deodorant
- Get dressed
- Etc.

2. Then ask yourself, is this a good habit, bad habit, or neutral habit

(+) = Good habit

(-) = Bad habit

(=) = Neutral habit

How to decide – does this behavior help me become the person I want to be, or does it cast a vote against who I want to be?



IMPLEMENTATION INTENTION

I. An **Implementation Intention** is a plan you make beforehand about where and when to act on a habit. That is how you **INTEND** to **IMPLEMENT** a particular habit.

➤ Example

I will [Behavior] at [Time] in [Location]

I will **Study** at **3pm** in the **Library**



HABIT STACKING FORMULA

I. We take the Implementation Intention and now stack another habit on top of it

➤ Example

After [Current Habit], I will [New Habit]

After ***I study in the library for one hour***, I will ***go to the gym***



RESULTS

- Small changes made throughout our day can lead to large changes in our behavior over time
- Be aware of the cues brought about by our good habits within our environment
- Surround yourself with people who have the habits you want to have yourself



FURTHER QUESTIONS:
connection@childrensinstitute.net

Children's Institute
SPOTLIGHT SERIES



CHILDREN'S INSTITUTE | www.childrensinstitute.net



©2020 CHILDREN'S INSTITUTE INC., 274 N. GOODMAN STREET, SUITE D103, ROCHESTER, NY 14607 | ALL RIGHTS RESERVED