



Trauma Informed Teaching through the Arts



The Brain Wants To...



What is Trauma?

An experience that causes physical, emotional, psychological distress or harm

Simple Trauma

- One time victim of crime
- House fire
- Earthquake
- Car accident
- Physical injury

Complex Trauma

- Ongoing physical abuse
- Emotional neglect
- Sexual abuse
- Domestic violence
- Family substance abuse
- Placement disruptions – homelessness, changing foster care

Adverse Childhood Experiences

Growing up (prior to age 18) in a household with:

ABUSE

- Recurrent physical abuse
- Recurrent emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse

NEGLECT

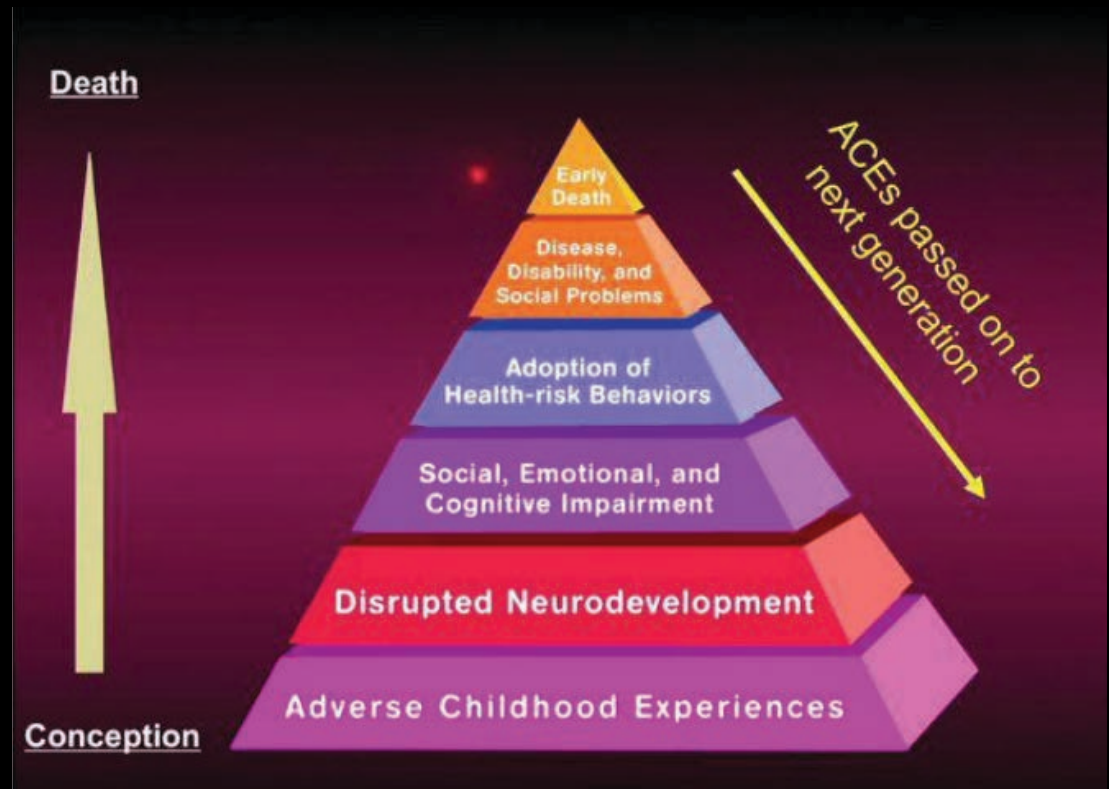
- Emotional neglect
- Physical neglect
- Exposure to violent experiences



Adverse Childhood Experiences Study

WHO

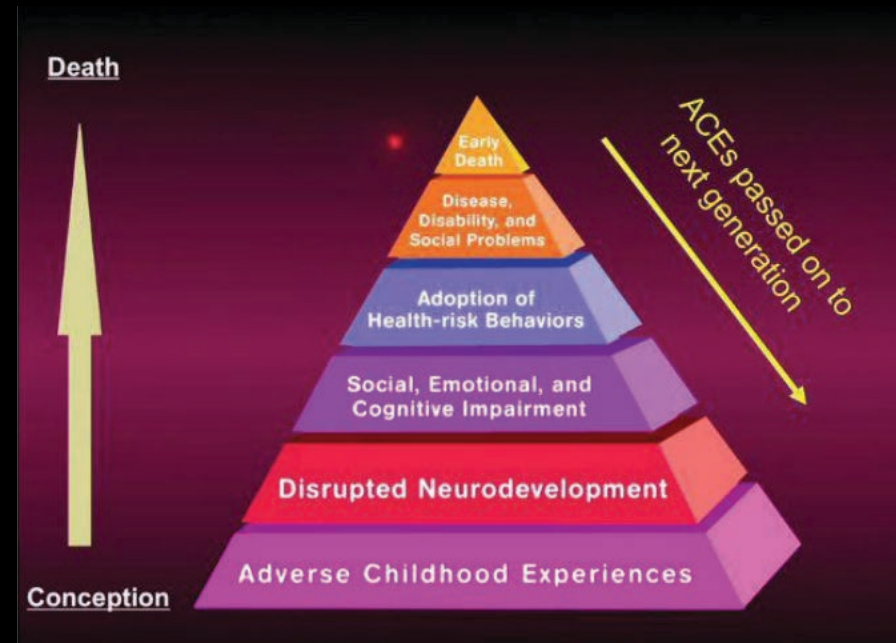
- 17,000 Kaiser Healthcare members
- 50/50 Male/Female
- 75% White
- 75% College graduates
- Employed with good healthcare



ACEs

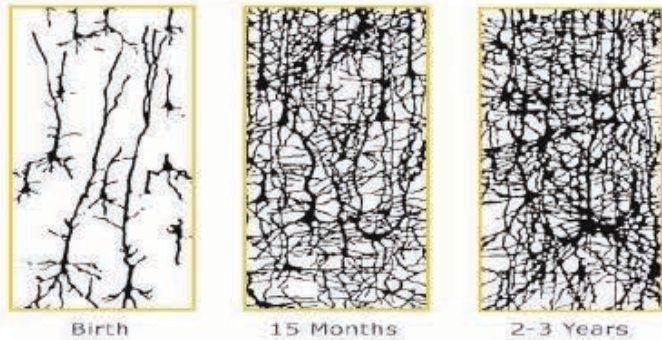
FINDINGS

- ACEs are common, more than 64% reported abuse in childhood
 - 28% reported physical abuse
 - 21% sexual abuse
- ACEs occur together
 - 40% reported 2 or more ACEs
 - 12.5% reported 4 or more ACEs
- A high ACEs score has a strong correlation to many health, social and behavioral problems throughout lifespan



IMPLICATIONS for EDUCATION

- At least 25% of all students have experienced one ACE
- It is estimated that over 85% of low income students and those experiencing racism or displacement suffer from multiple ACEs



Healthy & Whole Development

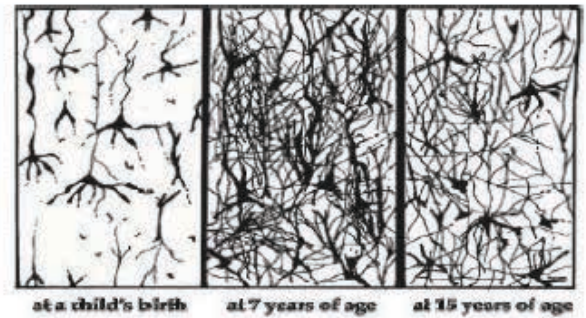
Hope

Despair

Epigenetic Impacts

Physical Health

Neurological Deficiencies



ACE's

Disruptions in Healthy and Whole Development



Trust

Anxiety

ACE's

Depression

Mistrust

Toxic Stress



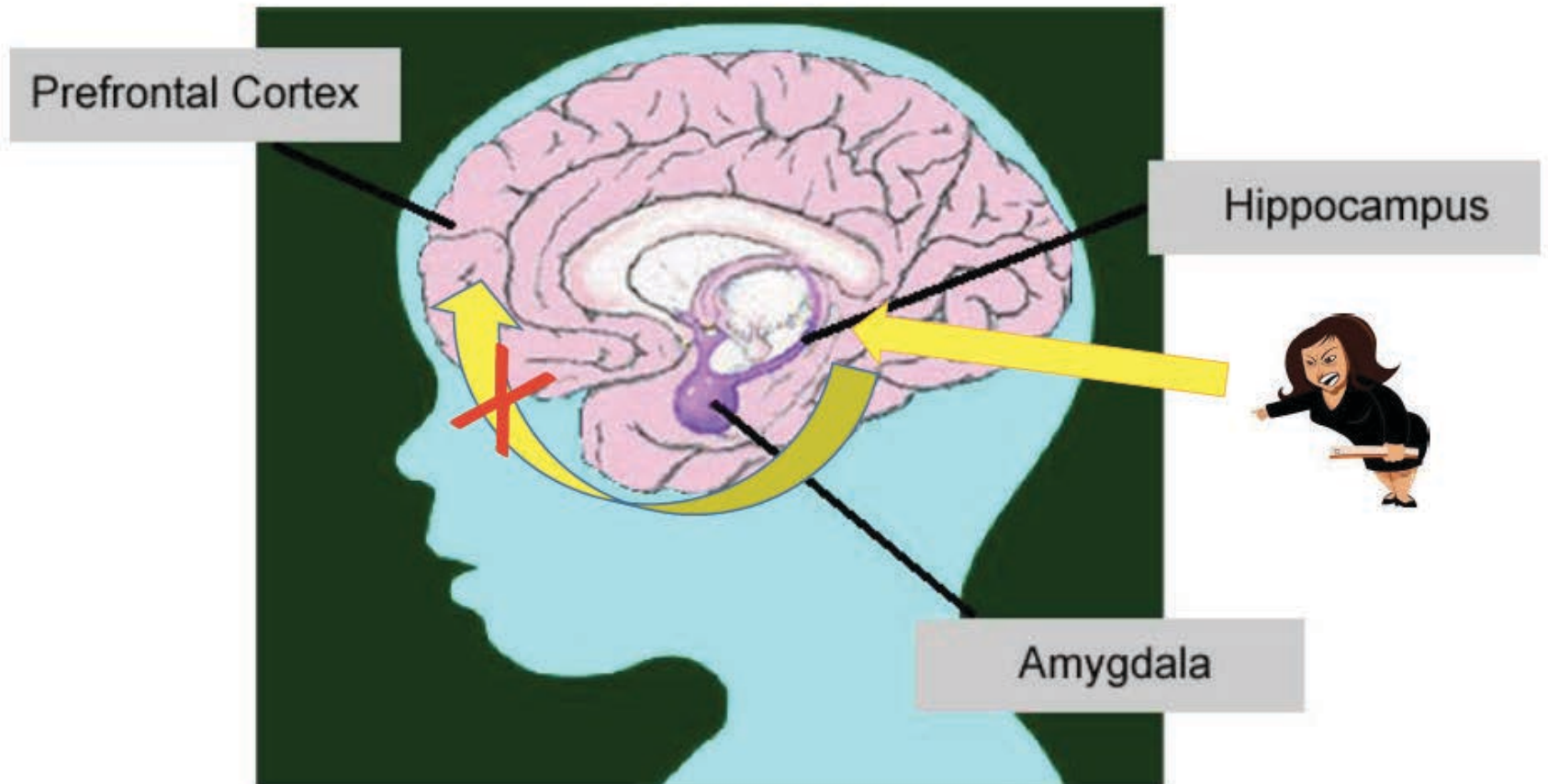
STRESS is the body's normal response to challenging events or environment. Positive stress is part of growing up.

- Stress increases cortisol and adrenaline in the body
- Stress hormones return to normal levels quickly (20 mins)

TOXIC STRESS happens when a child experiences too much stress over a long period of time.

- Child's brain and body maintain a high level of stress hormones all the time
- Child is quickly and easily triggered into "fight or flight" responses

Physiological Response



Being Trauma Informed Means...

Asking, “What happened to you?” instead of
“What’s wrong with you?”

- Prioritize relationships
- Listen and validate
- Create opportunities to be successful
- Clear routines and expectations
- Creative downtime



Building Resilience through the Arts

Resilience: Positive adaptation within the context of adversity or challenge.



In what ways have you developed resilience in and through the arts?



Research Based Practices for Reducing Toxic Stress through Arts



DANCE

- Movement increases endorphins
- Repetition of movements (gross and fine motor) soothe anxiety

MUSIC

- Breathing deeply increases oxygen to the brain, induces a relaxed state of mind
- Some classical music slows the heart rate to that of the body at rest

THEATER

- Empathy displaces fear from the brain (moves response from limbic brain to frontal cortex)

Research Based Practices for Reducing Toxic Stress through Arts



VISUAL ARTS

- Repetitive movements (fine motor) induce a state of calm
- Drawing mandalas (radial symmetry) center the mind
- Observational drawing focuses attention in the present moment, slows heart rate
- Doodling or automatic drawing releases tension

ALL ARTS

- Creative activities engage the whole self, connect emotional and cognitive centers, inspire personal meaning making, and facilitate flow

21st Century STEAM

- Creative Thinking
- Critical Thinking
- Collaborating
- Communicating
- Perseverance
- Growth Mindset

