



WELCOME TO A FRESH START!

Back to school 2021-2022

It's been a
rough 19
months.
Take a
moment to
reflect:

My number 1 priority is.....


I want to do less....

I want to do more....


This week I want to feel....

To feel this way I will.....

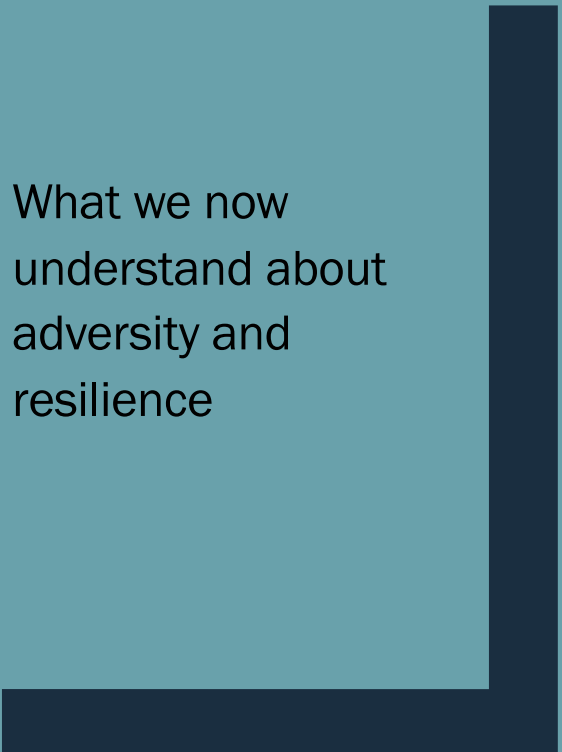
If I get stuck I'll remember.....



BENEVOLENT CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES



What we now
understand about
adversity and
resilience





THIS IS
SOME
GOOD
NEWS!
FINALLY!

What we will learn today

- Review of Adverse Childhood Experiences or ACE's and impact of early adversity
- Consider ACE's in the context of the global pandemic
- Define Benevolent Childhood Experiences, BCE's and Positive Childhood Experiences, PCE's
- How BCE's can counter the impact of ACE's
- Introducing BCE's to your school building- use of a 10-item scale called Benevolent Childhood Experiences (BCEs) that was developed by Angela Narayan et al. 2017 or the Positive Childhood Experience, PCE, a 7-item scale developed in 2016
- How to intentionally build BCE's with your students



Courageous Conversations Norms

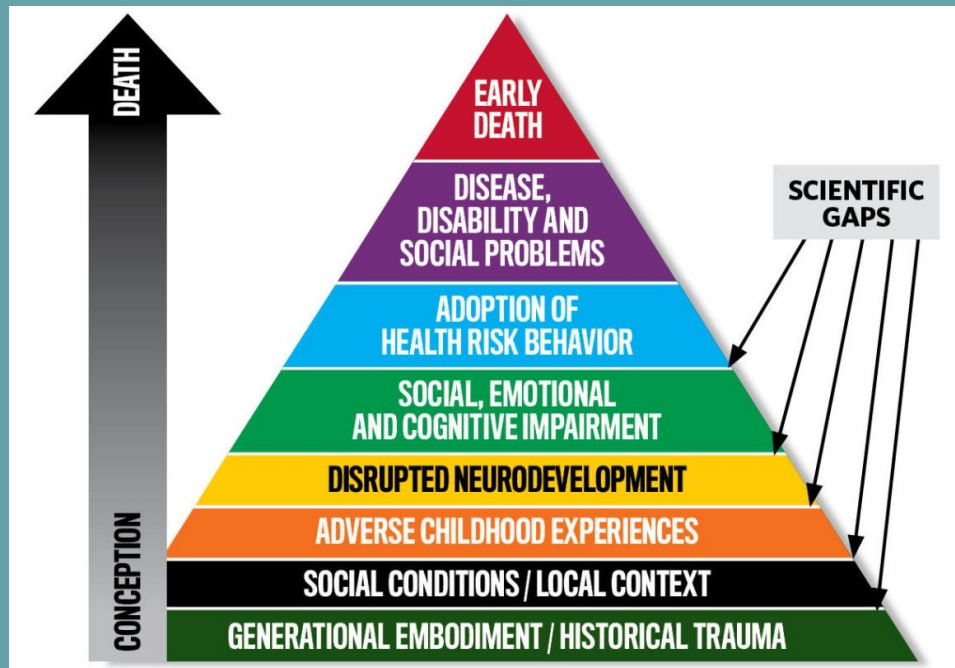
Adverse
Childhood
Experiences
or ACE's can
shape our
worldview
and our
responses

Adverse Childhood Experiences, ACE's are a list of 10 events that could create risk for physical and emotional health problems in life.

An adverse childhood experience (ACE) describes a traumatic experience in a person's life occurring before the age of 18 that the person remembers as an adult.

Review of ACE's and Trauma

- Vincent Felitti and Robert Anda, 1995-1997 study.
- 9 areas of childhood trauma
- Physical abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Emotional Abuse
- Neglect- Emotional and Physical
- Mother treated violently
- Household substance Use
- Parental divorce or Separation
- Incarcerated Family Member
- An emotional response to an intense event that threatens or causes harm. It can be mental or emotional, real or perceived, a single event or the result of exposure to multiple events over time.
- -Child Welfare Information Gateway 2015

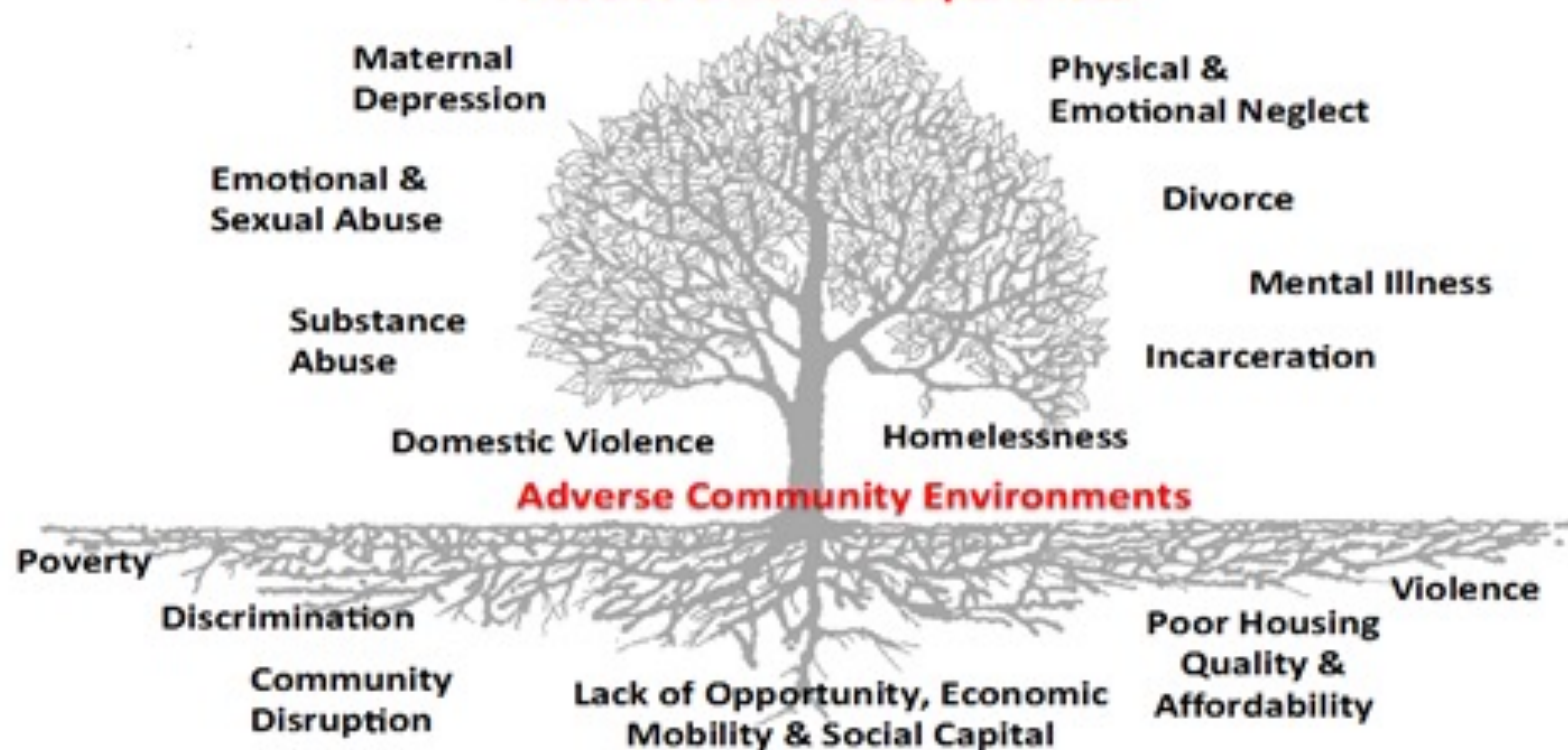


ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES

ACE's are woven into our life and shape our worldview

The Pair of ACEs

Adverse Childhood Experiences



Ellis, W., Dietz, W. (2017) A New Framework for Addressing Adverse Childhood and Community Experiences: The Building Community Resilience (BCR) Model. *Academic Pediatrics*. 17 (2017) pp. S86-S93. DOI information: 10.1016/j.acap.2016.12.011

ACE'S ARE
COMMON,
POWERFUL
AND INTER-
RELATED





DISCUSSION QUESTION: CAN
ACE'S RELIABLY PREDICT RISK
FOR PHYSICAL AND MENTAL
HEALTH DIFFICULTIES?
FROM YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF
ACE'S WHAT DO YOU THINK?
AND WHAT CAN WE DO?

Consider
how trauma
or stress
related to
the
pandemic
might show
up:

Isolation

Immobility

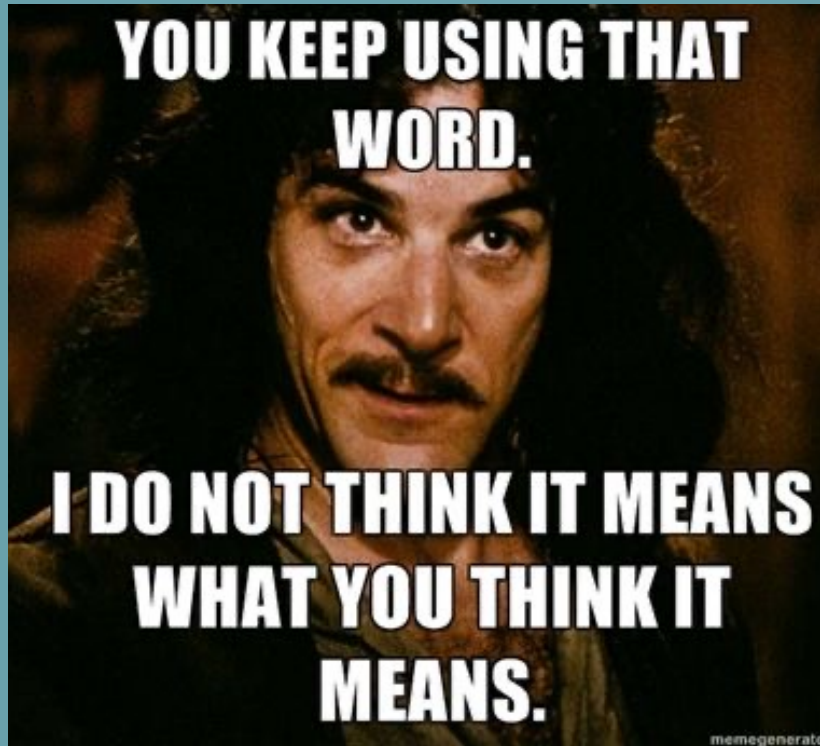
Unpredictable schedules

Grief and loss

Safety



DON'T BE AFRAID TO
START ALL OVER AGAIN!
YOU MAY LIKE YOUR NEW
STORY BETTER.
LET'S ADD TO THAT
STORY BENEVOLENT
CHILDHOOD
EXPERIENCES-BCE'S!



WE OFTEN HEAR
A LOT OF
DIFFERENT
TERMS: ACE'S
BCE'S? PCE'S?
RESILIENCE?
GRIT?



TIME TO FIND COMMON LANGUAGE

REFER TO ACE'S FOR
CHILDHOOD ADVERSITY
AND TRAUMA.

REFER TO BCE'S AND
PCE'S FOR DISCUSSING
POSITIVE AND
BENEVOLENT
EXPERIENCES THAT
BUILD RESILIENCE

The other side of ACE's

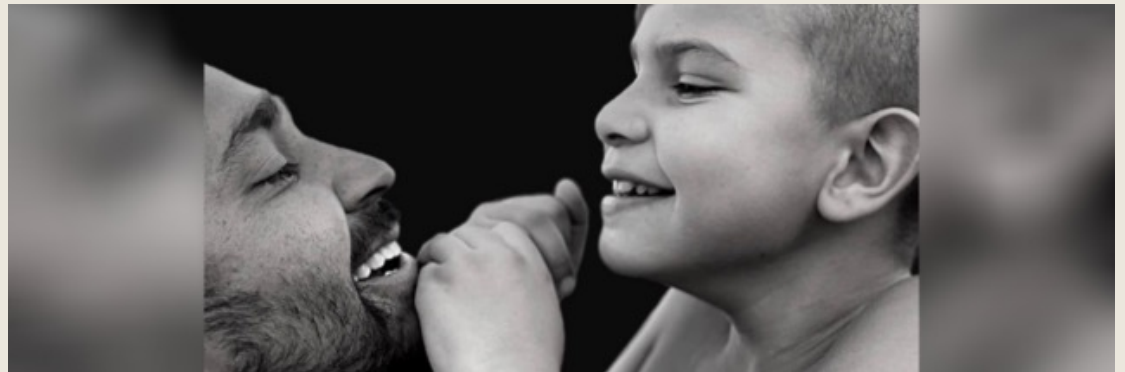
- Consider BCE's and/or PCEs and ACEs as two sides of the same coin.
- We can take a two-pronged approach of striving to decrease adverse [childhood](#) experiences for today's children under age 18 and to increase their positive experiences.

You might have heard of Positive Childhood Experiences and Benevolent Childhood Experiences when discussing resilience

- Similar in content and orientation.
- PCE's – a study (Bethell et al., 2019) published in *JAMA Pediatrics* . The takeaway of this study by colleagues at Johns Hopkins is that adults who self-reported having more [positive childhood experiences](#)(PCE) before the age of 18 tended to have a lower likelihood of clinical [depression](#) or poor adult mental health along with a higher probability of healthier interpersonal relationships in adulthood.
- BCE's- a study that was developed by Angela Narayan et al. 2017-2018

Benevolent and Positive Childhood Experiences

These are 10 identified experiences- BCE's a person has before the age of 18 that can counter and buffer against the impact of ACE's. There are also 7 identified Positive Childhood Experiences- PCE's- that are similar and were previously identified for building resilience.





PHEW! ISN'T IT A
GREAT FEELING TO
KNOW THAT WE CAN
IDENTIFY WHAT
HELPS!

This process
can begin
when we
have
pregnant
moms

Person-oriented analyses also showed that higher levels of BCEs offset the effects of ACEs on prenatal stress and psychopathology (mental health).

The BCEs scale lists promising promotive factors associated with lower trauma-related symptoms (mental health) and stress exposure during pregnancy.

BCE's illuminate how favorable childhood experiences may counteract long-term effects of childhood adversity.

Why focus on a pregnant mom?

- Early adversity has a strong impact on an infant and mother-
- If we can promote resilience and stress reduction now we are really changing the future for that baby and family!

Lets look at the questions together!

- We used a 10-item scale called Benevolent Childhood Experiences (BCEs) that was developed by Angela Narayan et al. for a [2018 pilot study](#)."

To get a BCE score, the survey-taker is asked how many of these ten items he or she experienced before the age of 18.

Would you respond "yes" or "no" to the prompt, "Growing up, I had.....

- At least one [caregiver](#) with whom you felt safe
- At least one good friend
- Beliefs that gave you comfort
- Enjoyment at school
- At least one teacher that cared
- Good neighbors
- An adult (not a parent/caregiver or person from #1) who could provide you with support or advice
- Opportunities to have a good time
- Ability to like yourself or feel comfortable with yourself
- Predictable home routine, such as regular meals and a regular bedtime

The seven items on this Positive Childhood Experiences, PCE test include answering "yes" or "no" to a prompt, "Before the age of 18, I..."

- Was able to talk with the family about my feelings
- Felt that my family stood by me during difficult times
- Enjoyed participating in community traditions
- Felt a sense of belonging in high school
- Felt supported by friends
- Had at least two non-parent adults who took a genuine interest in me
- Felt safe and protected by an adult in my home

Take a moment and look at those questions

- Why ask these questions?
- What are we hoping to identify?
- Hat is something new we could learn?

Something we can do in the face of overwhelming risk factors

As much as we don't want kids to experience ACEs, the absence of positive things (i.e., the absence of counter-ACEs) may be more harmful than the presence of the negative (ACEs).

So whether one is a public health professional, clinician, other professional working with families/children, or a parent or adult who associates with children in some way, we need to focus more on ensuring that children have counter-ACEs.

Everybody goes through hard things in life, and those counter-ACEs help us to weather the ups and downs of life.

Never underestimate your power

Everybody can make a difference and can contribute to the wellbeing of children – even if you're not a parent. Certainly parents are in the best place to help children receive the positive things.

Parents and families need support. Neighbors, teachers, aunts/uncles, grandparents, community and church/religious leaders who work with children, volunteers, and other adults can intentionally try to build positive relationships with children

When they do, it can be really meaningful and have a lifelong impact on physical, emotional, social, and cognitive health.

Even when a child has experienced ACEs, providing them with the positive can neutralize the negative impact.

Combine 10 BCE's+7
PCE's to counter the 10
ACE's- Now we've got
hope and a plan!

- There is some overlap between the 10 BCEs and 7 PCEs, taken together, these 17 counter-ACEs make a comprehensive checklist that "covers all the bases."
- They have the potential to neutralize some of the harmful ripple effects of early-life adversity and ACEs for future generations



Connecting BCE's with the pandemic

Taking time to reflect on positive childhood experiences could be particularly helpful for boosting your mood and feeling better during these stressful times.

And increasing these positive experiences for children in your own life may be a great way to improve mental health for the next generation!

Think of some typical behaviors you might see in your classroom

- Please think about ways being a benevolent person to this child could reduce or prevent challenging behaviors
- Children need a “felt sense of safety” everyday



Ideas for intentional promotion in your schools

Use one of the screeners-
as students enter
kindergarten, 3rd grade, 6th
grade, 9th grade.

Promote protected time for
SEL which includes
teaching identifying,
labeling and recognizing
feelings. Mind Up, Second
Step are great for this.

Student mapping- connect
each student with a staff
member who can get to
know them.

Talk about BCE's and
PCE's make them become
real and familiar to
students and staff.

BCE's and PCE's provide
Hope!



WE CAN
MITIGATE THE
IMPACT OF
ACE'S WITH
EVERY CHILD



THE LONGING TO BE
ACCEPTED AND
AFFIRMED IN THEIR
TRUTH IS THE SAME FOR
EVERYONE. AND BEYOND
SCIENCE, IT BOILS DOWN
TO THIS.
“HOW WERE YOU
LOVED?”

Wisdom From Dr. Bruce Perry:

- What do you expect if you neglect a kid and you beat them and you humiliate them and you sexually abuse them, and now they're having trouble with relationships?
- What do you expect? Why pathologize something that is a completely predictable outcome from a horrific background?
- And so I think it's so important that rather than judging somebody in these pejorative ways, giving them labels that are inaccurate and don't lead to good care, that we take the time to get to know each individual child and understand why they're acting the way they are.

Unlocking Us



OPRAH WINFREY & DR. BRUCE D. PERRY

RECOMMENDED!

ACES: a felt sense of danger.

BCE's: a felt sense of safety

- Your ability to be curious and explore the world is directly related to your ability to feel safe and settled, and so kids that don't feel safe don't want to see new things.
- They want to go back to things that are safe and familiar. People who feel safe get bored with the safe and familiar and go out and explore the world.
- So if you come from an environment where there's been a lot of predictability, there's been a lot of moderate challenges, there's been a lot of good things, you have a more open cortex that literally will allow you to take advantage of this sort of neurobiological quality of human beings to be curious about things.
- But if you are under threat or have a sense of threat, you will shut down- people under threat aren't very curious.

So it's all about relationships. Relationships are the agent of change.

- Who's been close to you, how you've been connected, how that is protective in the presence of adversity, that's the place to pay attention.
- When society finally figures out how to do both, -identify and understand the trauma and identify and understand the protective factors-look at both, you're going to get a better understanding of the person in front of you.

Be as familiar with BCE's as you are with ACE's and trauma.

- Using the screening tool consider the concrete ways you can offer support.
- Create a felt sense of safety
- It takes time and trust
- It is the most important work you will do- and it is bi directional you will give and receive!

