


*Trauma-Informed Care:
Building
Trauma-Informed Schools*
Felicia Fago, PhD

Objectives


- Updated definition of trauma
- Unmet needs of traumatized students
- Traumatized brain and learning
- Creating trauma-informed learning environments



Shift in Thinking: "The Four R's"

Evidence of a trauma informed approach:


- Realizes** • widespread impact of trauma and understands potential paths for recovery
- Recognizes** • signs and symptoms of trauma in clients, families, staff, and others involved with the system
- Responds** • by fully integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, and practices
- Resists** • re-traumatizing



According to the CDC (2015), 25% of children experience some form of abuse or neglect during their lifetime.


According to the National Survey of Children's Exposure to Violence, 22% of respondents indicated that they witnessed family or community violence.

Census data released in 2016 indicates 54% of Cleveland children and 25% of Oberlin children live in poverty.



"Trauma is an experience or pattern of experiences which activates the stress response system in the brain in such an extreme or prolonged fashion as to alter its organization and functioning."



- Dr. Bruce Perry



Trauma Theory


"A traumatic experience impacts the entire person -the way we think, the way we learn, the way we remember things, the way we feel about ourselves, the way we feel about other people, and the way we make sense of the world."

- Dr. Sandra Bloom



Potential Traumatic Events



Abuse	Loss	Chronic Stressors
Emotional	Death	Poverty
Sexual	Abandonment	Racism
Physical	Neglect	Invasive medical procedure
Domestic violence	Separation	Community trauma
Witnessing violence	Natural disaster	Historical trauma
Bullying	Accidents	Family member with substance use disorder
Cyberbullying	Terrorism	
Institutional	War	




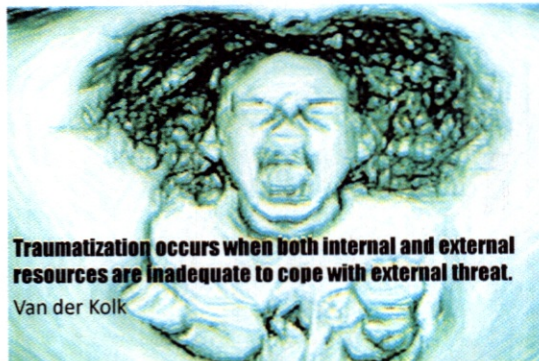
Trauma and Children

Children are uniquely susceptible to traumatic life events

Children are also uniquely susceptible to the deleterious effects of traumatic life events





- Garbarino and Kostelny (1997) - "trauma arises when the child cannot give meaning to dangerous experiences."
- In coping with traumatic events, children in particular, are forced into patterns of behaviors, thoughts, and feelings that are themselves abnormal
- Often times this makes talk therapy with children difficult
- The younger the age when trauma occurs, the more likely the consequences
- The individual may have no memory of the trauma—memory is stored in emotional center of brain incapable of language


Traumatization occurs when both internal and external resources are inadequate to cope with external threat.

Van der Kolk




Indicators of Trauma


- Chronic Hyperarousal
- Cognitive Problems
- Aggressive Impulses
- Lack of Emotional Management
- Toxic Helplessness
- Dissociation/Fragmentation
- Alexithymia – No Words
- Re-Experiencing

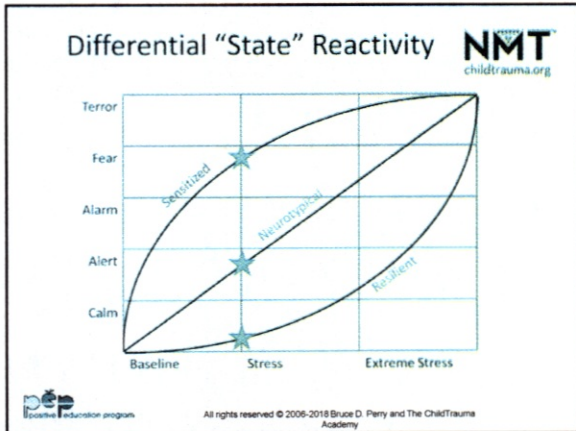


Impact on Behavior



Hyperarousal
Hypervigilance
Attention problems
Trust issues
Social skill deficits
Restricted range of affect





Pair and Share

- Turn to the person next to you.
- In 1 minute, share one strategy you use to stay regulated and cope with stressful moments.

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Adverse Childhood Experiences

While you were growing up, during your first 18 years of life:

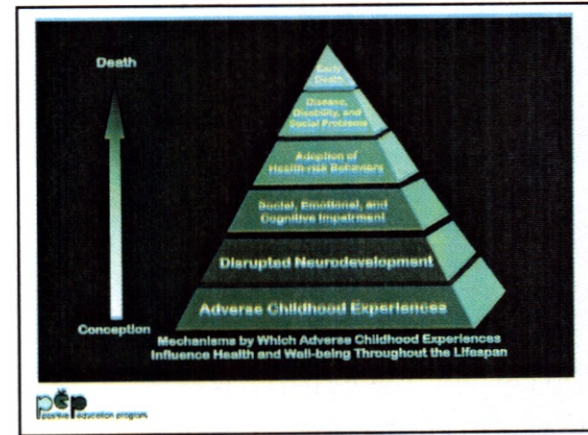
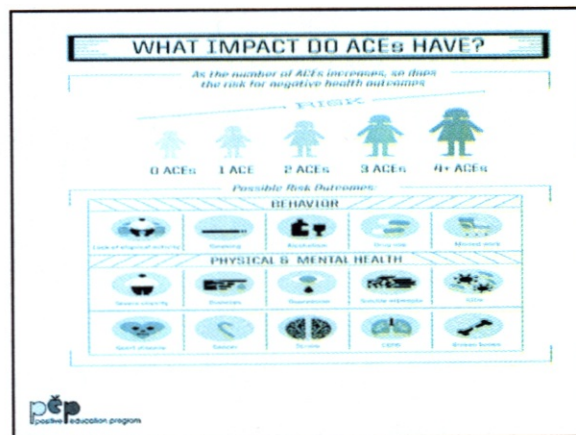
1. Did a parent or other adult in the household often swear at you, insult you, put you down, or humiliate you or act in a way that made you afraid that you might be physically hurt?
2. Did a parent or other adult in the household often push, grab, slap, or throw something at you, or hit you so hard that you had marks or were injured?
3. Did an adult or person at least 5 years older than you ever touch or fondle you or have you touch their body in a sexual way, or try to or actually have oral, anal, or vaginal sex with you?
4. Did you often feel that no one in your family loved you or thought you were important or special, or your family didn't look out for each other, feel close to each other, or support each other?

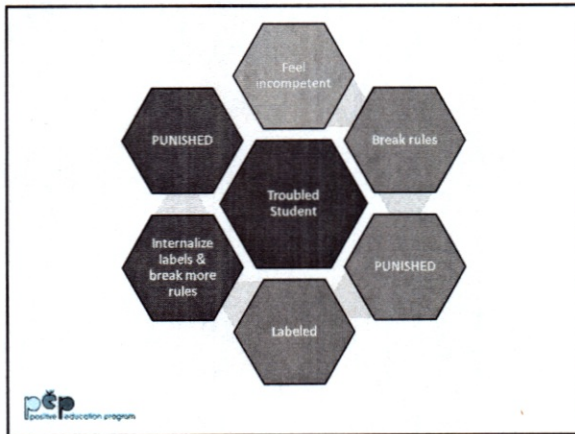
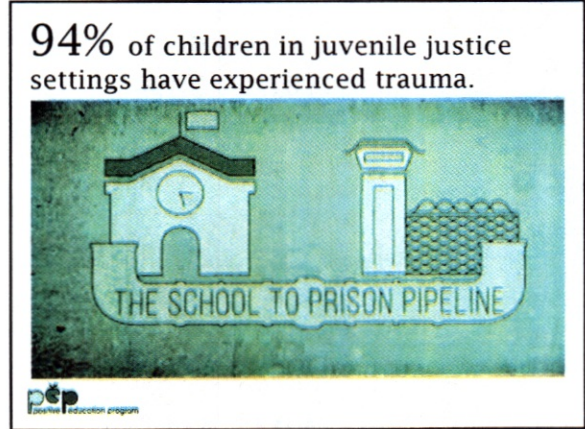
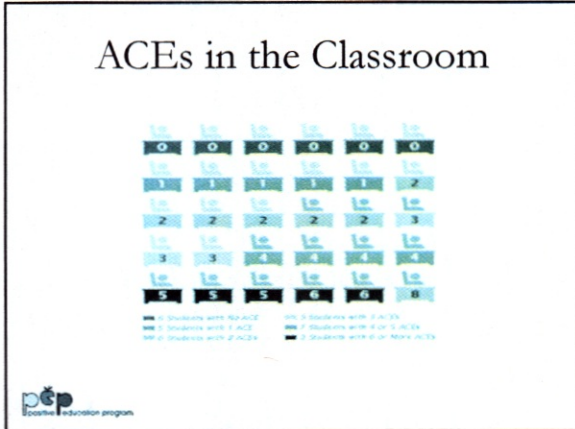
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Adverse Childhood Experiences

5. Did you often feel that you didn't have enough to eat, had to wear dirty clothes, and had no one to protect you, or your parents were too drunk or high to take care of you or take you to the doctor if you needed it?
6. Were your parents ever separated or divorced?
7. Was your mother or stepmother often pushed, grabbed, slapped, or had something thrown at her, or sometimes or often kicked, bitten, hit with a fist, or hit with something hard or ever repeatedly hit at least a few minutes or threatened with a gun or knife?
8. Did you live with anyone who was a problem drinker or alcoholic or who used street drugs?
9. Was a household member depressed or mentally ill or did a household member attempt suicide?
10. Did a household member go to prison?

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Impact on learning

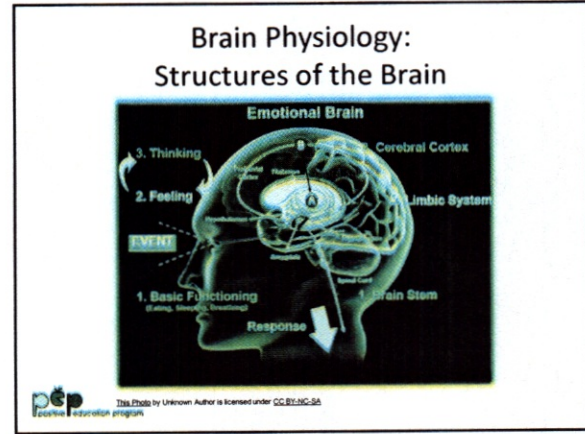
- Adapting to unpredictable environments
- Sustaining effort and attention
- Memory and recall
- Expressing emotions with words
- Differentiating internal and external stimuli

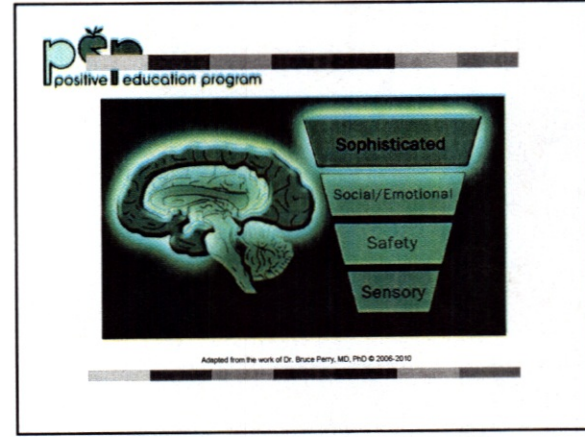
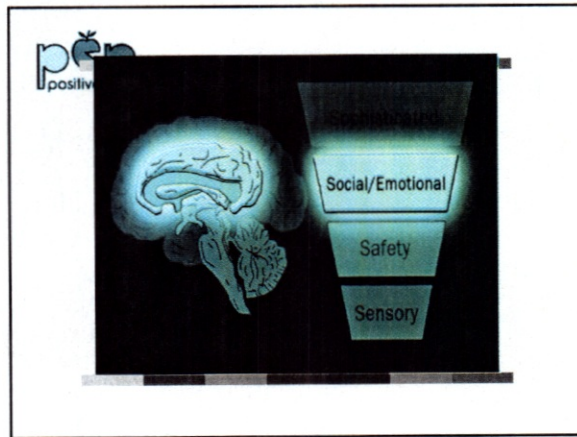
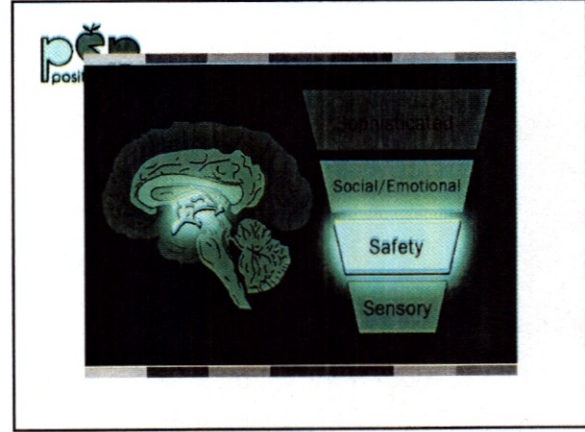
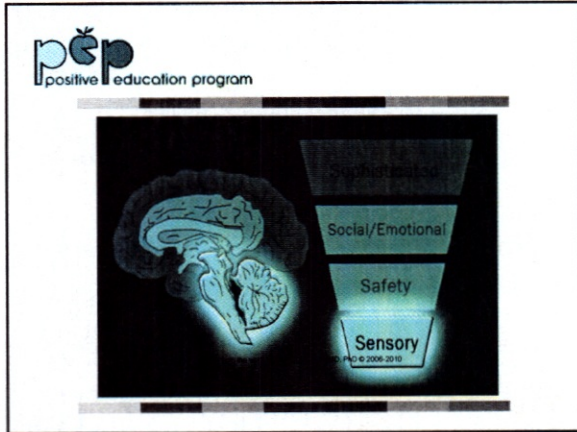
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3 Year Old Children

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- Dr. Bruce Perry

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Bruce Perry's Three "R"s

Regulate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Somatosensory Activities • Patterned, rhythmic movement • The rhythm of relationship: Interpersonal connection
Relate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presence • Active listening • Genuine interest and compassion
Reason	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cognitive Behavioral Therapy • Psycho-education • Skills training

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Building neural pathways



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NME


6 Core Elements


	Relational (safe)
	Relevant (developmentally)
	Repetitive (patterned)
	Rewarding (pleasurable)
	Rhythmic (neural patterns)
	Respectful (child, family, culture)

Adapted from Bruce D. Perry

Is the experience Relational?

Creating a relationally rich and safe environment is the most powerful core element.







Meaningful relationships - staff, students, parents - promote a sense of safety and belonging.

Is the experience Relevant?


Meaningful and attuned to the needs of the student




Provide content at a level and amount that can be managed successfully



Know the **Stage**

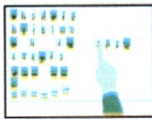





Watch the **State**

Is the experience Repetitive?


The brain changes through patterned repetitive processes.



The brain develops in a use dependent way.






Is the experience Rewarding?



Healthy relationships are highly rewarding.

Healthy relationships + Rewarding Activities = Optimal Learning



Pleasurable activities strengthen the area of the brain accessed.

Activities that support self-regulation should be DOSED throughout the day.




Self-regulation.

Regulating activities that are *essential* for traumatized students are *enriching* for typical students.

Is the experience Rhythmic?

Rhythmic activities are processed by the brain as regulating, providing a sense of safety and comfort.

Pair and Share

- Share a current case with the person next to you.
- Through a trauma-informed lens, describe the student's needs and identify brain smart interventions

