STRENGTHENING FAMILY RESCILIENCY IN A V.U.C.A. WORLD: A COLLABORATIVE APPROACH ACROSS THE CONTINUUM OF CARE

California Breastfeeding Coalition
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PANEL PRESENTERS

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Native Land
By the end of the webinar, attendees will be able to:

1. Identify the common reactions to & impact of critical incidents or traumatic events.
2. Understand the key concepts and practices of the Community Resiliency Model and how to promote and enhance resiliency.
3. Describe examples of collaborative approaches to address the well-being needs of mothers and families in times of crisis.
4. Demonstrate application of resiliency skills.
Volatile: The environment demands you react quickly to ongoing changes that are unpredictable and out of your control.

Uncertain: The environment requires you to take action without certainty.

Complex: The environment is dynamic, with many interdependencies.

Ambiguous: The environment is unfamiliar, outside of your expertise.
ACEs Connection accelerates the global movement to prevent and heal adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), and supports communities to work collaboratively to solve our most intractable problems. Left unaddressed, toxic stress from ACEs harms children and families, organizations, systems and communities, and reduces the ability of individuals and entities to respond to stressful events with resiliency. The ACEs in these three realms intertwine throughout people’s lives, and affect the viability of organizations, systems and communities.

1. **HOUSEHOLD**
   - incarcerated family member
   - divorce
   - homelessness
   - physical and emotional neglect
   - parental mental illness
   - alcoholism and drug abuse
   - emotional and sexual abuse
   - maternal depression
   - domestic violence
   - bullying

2. **COMMUNITY**
   - historical trauma
   - substandard schools
   - structural racism
   - violence
   - substandard wages
   - poverty
   - lack of social capital and mobility
   - poor water and air quality
   - lack of jobs
   - poor housing quality and affordability

3. **ENVIRONMENT**
   - climate crisis
     - record heat & droughts
     - wildfires & smoke
     - record storms, flooding & mudslides
     - sea level rise
   - natural disasters
     - tornadoes & hurricanes
     - volcano eruptions & tsunamis
     - earthquakes

ACEs in these three realms intertwine throughout people’s lives, and affect the viability of organizations, systems and communities.
**Perspective Shift**

**Conventional**
- People are bad.
- People need to be punished.
- People just don’t care.
- We need to stop making excuses for people.
- What is wrong with you?

**Trauma-Informed**
- People are suffering.
- People need an effective intervention.
- Many people care but lack understanding and skills.
- We need to learn how trauma impacts a child’s and adult’s development.
- What happened to you?

**Resiliency-Informed**
- People are resilient.
- People need our compassion as they learn new skills.
- Any person can learn self-regulation skills based on science.
- We need to learn how skills of well-being can reduce suffering.
- What is right with you? What are your strengths?
“Resiliency is an individual’s and community’s ability to identify and use individual and collective strengths in living fully with compassion in the present moment, and to thrive while managing the activities of daily living.”

~Miller-Karas (2020)
Things happen in life and our thoughts, feelings and reactions move around in the **RESILIENT (OK) ZONE**
Critical Incidents, Traumatic/Stressful Events or Stressful/Traumatic Reminders

Stuck in High Zone
- Edgy
- Irritable
- Mania
- Anxiety & Panic
- Angry outbursts
- Pain
- Overfunctioning

Stuck in Low Zone
- Depression/Sadness
- Isolated
- Exhaustion/Fatigue
- Numbness
- Underfunctioning

Resilient Zone

Graphic adapted from an original graphic of Peter Levine/Heller, original slide design by Genie Everett/Adapted by Elaine Miller-Karas
This is Your Brain on Toxic Stress

**Amygdala:**
Overactive / Oversensitive
Continual State of “Fight or Flight” Reactivity
Emotional
- Rage/Fear
- Avoidance
- Depression
- Grief
- Guilt
- Shame
- Apathy
- Anxiety

Spiritual
- Hopelessness
- Loss of Faith
- Increase in Faith
- Deconstruction of Self
- Moral Distress
- Guilt
- Doubt

Common Reactions
- Isolation
- Tantrums
- Self-Injury
- Violent behaviors
- Addictions
- Eating Disorders
- Abusive Behaviors

Behavior
- Isolation
- Tantrums
- Self-Injury
- Violent behaviors
- Addictions
- Eating Disorders
- Abusive Behaviors

Physical
- Numb/Fatigue
- Physical Pain
- Rapid heart rate
- Breathing problems
- Tight Muscles
- Sleep Problems
- Stomach Upset
- Hypervigilance
- Trembling

Relationships
- Angry at others
- Isolation
- Missing work
- Overly Dependent
- Irritability
COMMON REACTIONS
POST CRITICAL INCIDENT RESILIENCY

Resilience
Strength and Courage
Renewed Relationships
Gratitude & Generosity
Advocacy
Appreciation of loved ones
Forgiveness
Hope & Faith
Wisdom
Compassion for self and others
New Meanings
Innovation
Teamwork / Collaboration
Sympathetic Prepares for Action

The SNS controls organs during times of stress

Breathing rate
Heart rate
Pupils Dilate
Blood Pressure
Sweating
Stress Hormones

Parasympathetic Prepares for Rest

The PNS controls the body during rest

Breathing rate
Heart rate
Pupils Constrict
Blood Pressure
Sweating
Stress Hormones

Digestion
Saliva

Digestion
Saliva

CRM uses observation and knowledge of patterns of the nervous system to help people learn to distinguish between sensations of distress and well being.
Learning the wellness skills helps people realize:

Many reactions to stress and trauma cannot be “talked away” but they can be “sensed away.”

People learn their symptoms are about **biology** not mental weakness

This concept can result in a sense of RELIEF and greater feeling of well being.
CRM SKILL: RESET NOW!
or HELP NOW!

- Drink a glass of water
- Count backwards from 20
- Go for a walk
- Listen to the sounds
- Name six colors you see
- Push against a wall
- Notice your surroundings
- Notice the temperature
- Touch the furniture
- Touch something in nature
Pregnancy during the COVID-19 Pandemic

Sommer Hail, MA, APCC
Perinatal Mental Health Counselor,
Community Health Center
What are current pandemic related challenges for perinatal patients?

- Increased mental health risks for children and families
- Increased domestic violence, child neglect/abuse, substance abuse, financial stress
- Reduced access to support services:
  - mom groups
  - lactation consultations
  - mother, grandmother, sister, friends
  - Religious services and supports
  - Coworkers, colleagues, classmates
• Multidisciplinary approach concerning supporting perinatal patients.

• “Resilience, the personal attributes that help (children) manage everything from little disappointments to big life traumas, should be nurtured and implemented by public health programs. If properly supported by healthcare professionals, families, and other social connections, including school environment, children and adults can appropriately overcome a condition of distress and prospectively stabilize emotionally and physiologically” (Wen Yan Jiao 2020)
Interventions for maladjustment to social isolation: improve parenting strategies and family resiliency skills

Resource with mother and family for alternative ways to get needed support.

- Online parenting programs
- Family Resource centers
- Community Health Workers
- Online religious services
- Community support groups
- Couples counseling
Interventions for maladjustment to social isolation: improve parenting strategies and family resiliency skills

- Virtual appointments with mental health professionals, lactation consultants, primary physician
- Assist contacting 211 to get callbacks from needed supports, Domestic violence intakes, substance abuse treatment intakes etc.
- Show them how to access resources.
- Teaching resiliency model in session to reinforce application, provide app and use with them. Practice grounding techniques with patient
Interventions

• Newborn care and breastfeeding can be a rocky adjustment in the best of times, uncertainty increases stress and adjustment reactions

• Listen to issues, no advise. Use kind, non judgmental language.

• Strength based approach to increase autonomy and confidence in parenting/breastfeeding

• Know the facts about signs of perinatal mental health complications.

• Help normalize intense feelings, by being present and educating about common thoughts and stressors most mothers go through. Connecting to professionals as needed
Intimate partner violence/child abuse during COVID-19

- 1 in 4 women and 1 in 10 men have experienced intimate partner violence, sexual violence, physical violence and or stalking by and intimate partner during their lifetime (SAMHSA)

- Latest SAMSHA report examining substance use and addiction showed individuals being laid off, especially the service industry, restaurant, hospitality had highest substance use in past month and the highest rate of substance use disorders in past year. (Arsenault 2020)
A Mother’s Resiliency Story in a VUCA World
STRENGTHENING THE FAMILY’S RESILIENCY

- Connected to local resource to assist with rent and utilities due to money mismanagement due to partner buying alcohol and missing work.
- Connected to Community Health Worker to assist with process of inpatient detox. Get mother needed medical appointments (psychiatrist, OB GYN). Connect to food banks, assist with CAL FRESH benefit change, assist with resources for legal assistance for Family law/ appointment for protective order through domestic violence advocate
- Appointment with Registered Dietician to help maximize food, get strategies for shopping for healthy inexpensive meals for family.
- Implemented psychoeducation concerning brain function and addiction to increase appropriate expectations concerning partners addiction and treatment options
- Problem solved self care activities, practice deep breathing exercises during session for grounding. Sleep hygiene, problem solved sleep challenges with toddlers/infant
- Continual parenting supports to monitor and facilitate well being of children.
Strengthening Families
Increasing positive outcomes for children and families

Strengthening Families is a research-informed approach to increase family strengths, enhance child development, and reduce the likelihood of child abuse and neglect. It is based on engaging families, programs, and communities in building five key Protective Factors.

• Parental resilience
• Social connections
• Knowledge of parenting and child development
• Concrete support in times of need
• Social and emotional competence of children

https://cssp.org/our-work/project/strengthening-families/
When we learn to discern the differences between sensations of distress and well being

We begin to have CHOICE of what to pay attention to on the inside
Dr. Demedre L. Barnes, PhD., MSW

Clinical Social Worker
Women’s & Children Units
Empathy

Let me hold the door for you. I may have never walked a mile in your shoes, but I can see that your soles are worn and your strength is torn under the weight of a story I have never lived before. So let me hold the door for you. After all you've walked through, it's the least I can do.

-- Morgan Harper Nichols
NEW MOMMY MOMENT
Challenges

- Feelings of inadequacy
- Lack of support
- Lack of resources
- Lack of consistency

Foundational Five

- Establish a connection
- Listen
- Focus on strengths
- Evidence based practice
- Resources and follow up
Establish a connection

Express interest in your patient as a whole person

Recognize and acknowledge your patient’s circumstances

Immediate
Broader sense

Be personal as appropriate

Remember, trust is at the core of every interaction.

https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/222374
Listen

• Ask open-ended questions

• Be non-judgmental

• Validate concerns

Focus on Strengths

What we pay attention to grows.

Pay attention to the flowers in your garden.

Elaine Miller Karas
Evidence Based Practice and Shared Decision Making

- Patient goals
- Current research
- Clinician experience
- Collaborate on a plan

Credit: Marcie Hopkins, U of U Health

https://accelerate.uofuhealth.utah.edu/explore/what-is-evidence-based-practice
Remember the starfish story? A storm had washed up thousands of starfish. A girl picks one up and tosses it into the ocean. Then another. And another. People watch, amused. A man says, “Little girl, what are you doing? You can’t save them all. It’s impossible to make a difference.” Returning another back to the water, she says, “It made a difference to that one.”

Let’s each make a difference with the talent we’ve been given.
A COMMUNITY RESILIENCY MODEL GUIDE is a person who shares the wellness skills of the Community Resiliency Model with others

• Does not interpret or assume meaning.
• Asks open-ended questions.
• Gives the person time for sensations to develop.
• Is non-judgmental.
• Observes and stays one step behind and does not direct.
VUCA

Volatility → Vision
Uncertainty → Understanding
Complexity → Clarity
Ambiguity → Agility
HOW ORGANIZATIONS CAN SUPPORT FAMILIES IN A VUCA WORLD

CLARITY
Create clarity and focus. Accept what you do not do and make clear decisions based on the information.

VISION
Keep the big picture in mind all the time. Know what your vision is and work towards it.

UNDERSTANDING
Create security for people so that they can get on with their job. Break down tasks.

AGILITY
Involve people, communicate as openly as you can and get feedback from others.
RESOURCING & TRACKING

Paying attention to sensations of well-being while thinking about a personal resource.

1. Think about something or someone that gives you hope, peace or helps you get through tough times. For a few seconds thinking about all the reasons why this gives you hope, peace or helps you hope, peace or helps you through tough times.
2. As you think about this resource, be aware of changes inside that are pleasant or neutral.
“Do the best you can until you know better. Then when you know better, do better.”

-Maya Angelou
RESOURCES

ACES Connection Resources:  https://www.acesconnection.com/

Trauma Resource Institute:  https://www.traumaresourceinstitute.com/
  ❖ TRM Training Level 1 and 2
  ❖ CRM Teacher Training
  ❖ Free Webinars: Cultivating Our Best Selves in Response to COVID-19;
  ❖ iChill App
  ❖ Book (Building Resilience to Trauma) and workbooks

Center for the Study of Social Policy: Strengthening Families
https://cssp.org/our-work/project/strengthening-families/