

Practical Hope:
Turning Trauma-Informed
Knowledge into
Everyday Action



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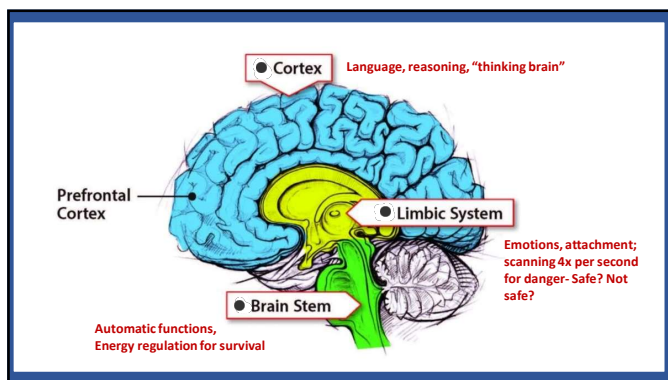
Kristy Allen

Collaborative Family Engagement Lead
TBRI Practitioner; Certified Mental Health Advocate

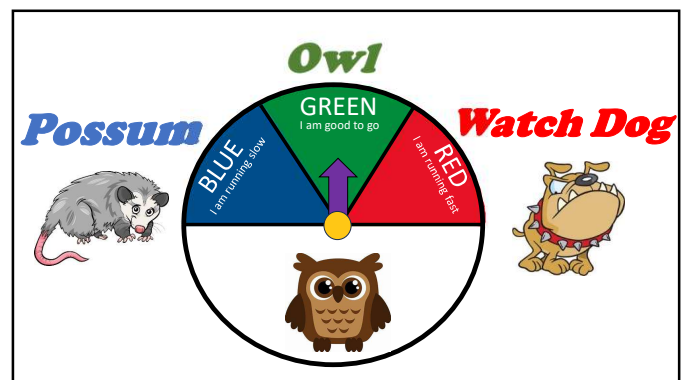
Kristy.allen@ctcasa.org

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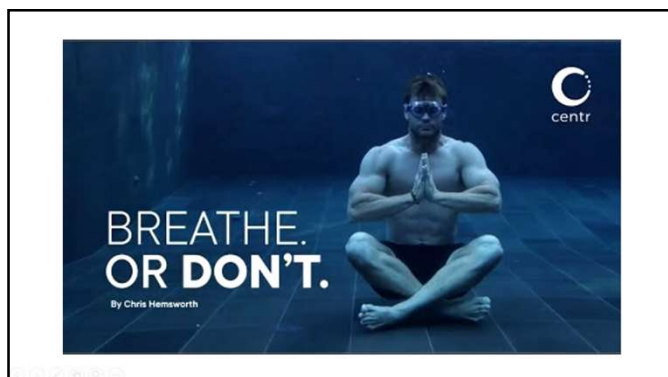
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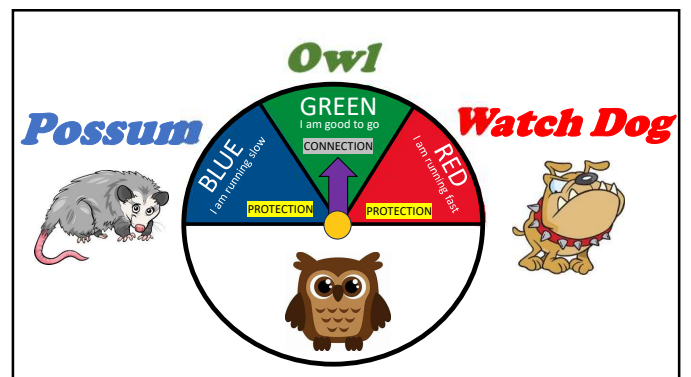
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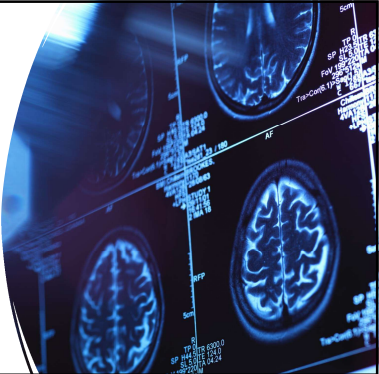
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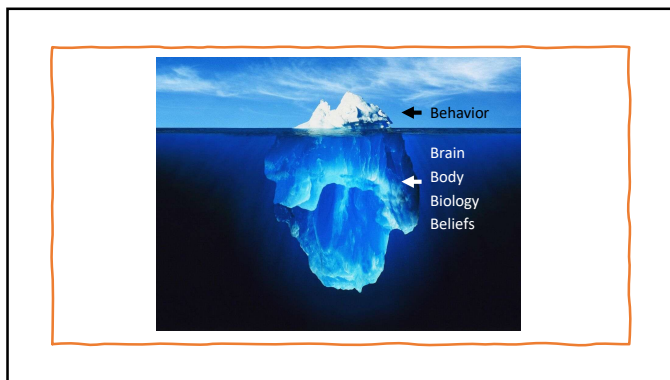
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Complex Developmental Trauma

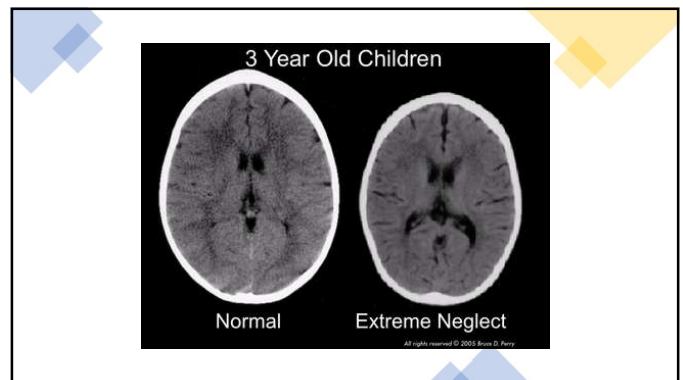
- Is a Condition of Chronic FEAR
- Impacts Cognitive Functioning
- Impacts Emotional Functioning



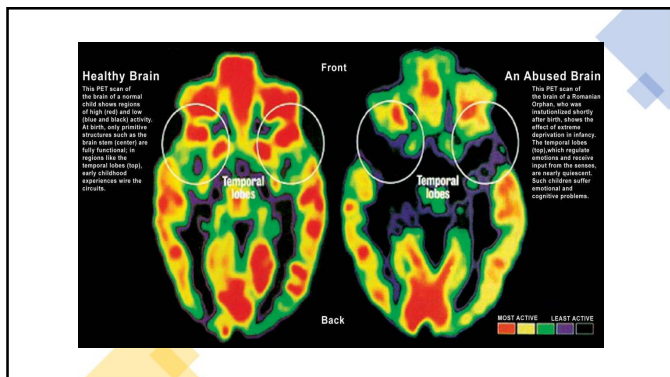
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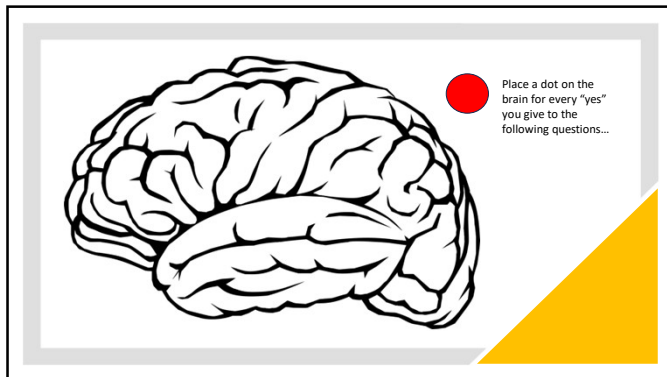
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Understanding Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

Adverse Childhood Experiences

Adverse childhood experiences, called ACEs.

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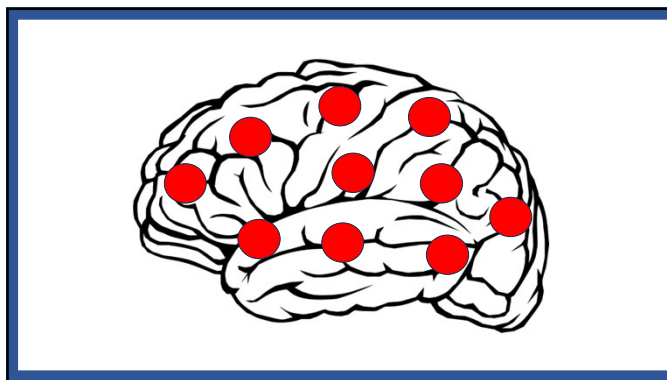
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Instructions: Below is a list of 10 categories of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). From the list below, please place a checkmark next to each ACE category that you experienced prior to your 18th birthday. Then, please add up the number of categories of ACEs you experienced and put the total number at the bottom.

1. Did you feel that you didn't have enough to eat, had to wear dirty clothes, or had no one to protect or take care of you?	
2. Did you lose a parent through divorce, abandonment, death, or other reason?	
3. Did you live with anyone who was depressed, mentally ill, or attempted suicide?	
4. Did you live with anyone who had a problem with drinking or using drugs, including prescription drugs?	
5. Did your parents or adults in your home ever hit, punch, beat, or threaten to harm each other?	
6. Did you live with anyone who went to jail or prison?	
7. Did a parent or adult in your home ever swear at you, insult you, or put you down?	
8. Did a parent or adult in your home ever hit, beat, kick, or physically hurt you in any way?	
9. Did you feel that no one in your family loved you or thought you were special?	
10. Did you experience unwanted sexual contact (such as fondling or oral/anal/vaginal intercourse/penetration)?	
Your ACE score is the total number of checked responses	

Do you believe that these experiences have affected your health? Not Much Some A Lot

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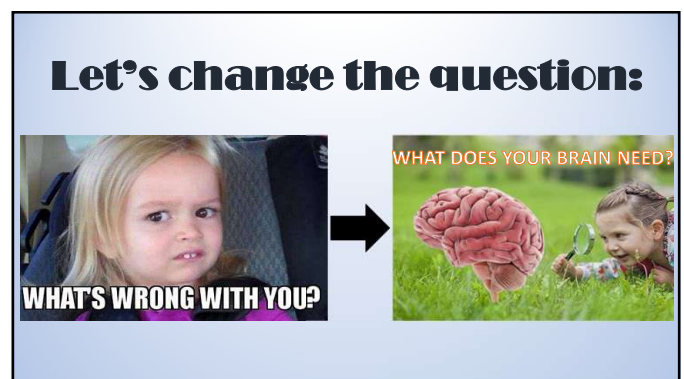
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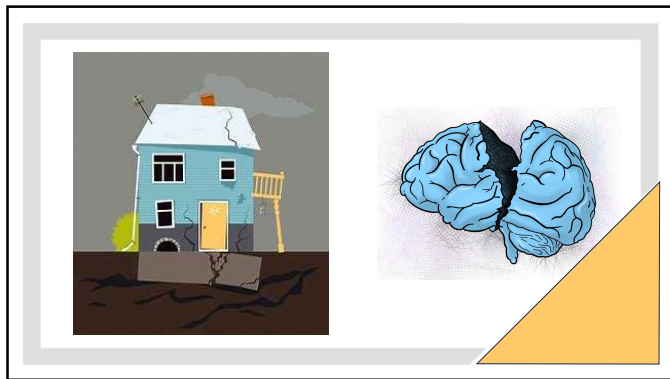
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Behaviors With the Brain in Mind



Explosive behaviors	Opposition
Verbal aggression	Mood instability
Hyperactivity	Inattention
Anxiety/worry	Withdrawal
Substance abuse	Manipulation
Depression	Self injury
Aggression	Defiance
Controlling behavior	Hypervigilance

(Gobbel 2025)

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How do we apply Trauma Informed Principles daily?

The Three Pillars

Felt-Safety Connection Regulation

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Cortex Language, reasoning, "thinking brain"

Prefrontal Cortex

Limbic System

Brain Stem Automatic functions, Energy regulation for survival

Felt-Safety Emotions, attachment; scanning 4x per second for danger-Safe? Not safe?

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Safe???

NOT Safe???

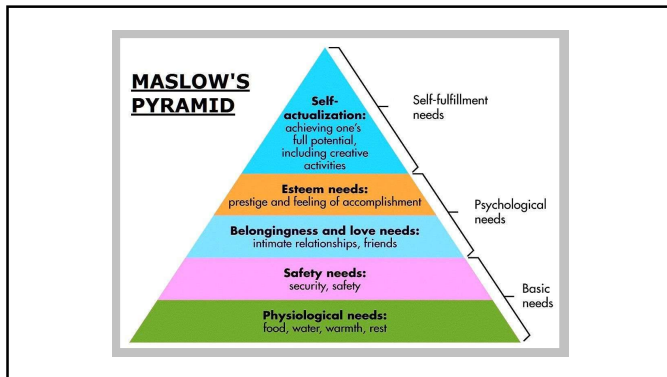
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Felt Safety

People who are safe don't necessarily feel safe.

What helps someone feel safe?

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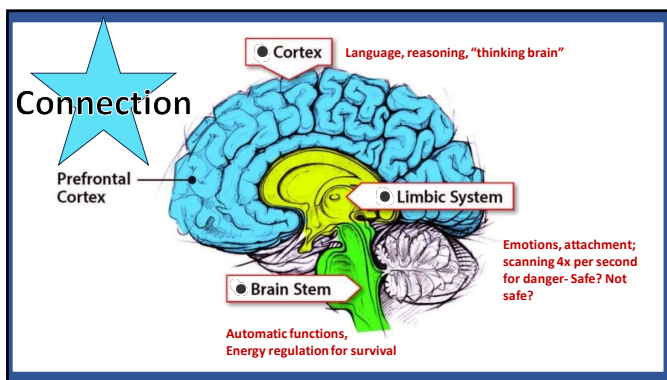
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Create 'felt safety' by...

- Meeting physical needs
- Predictability
- Routines
- Share power
- Offer choices

How can you apply this in your current role or position in the community?

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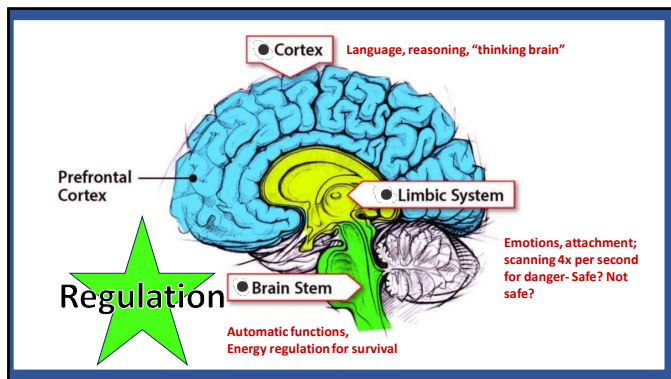
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Connection

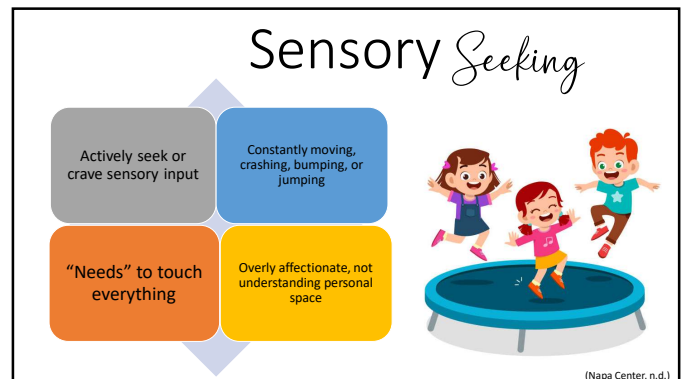
ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES

- Safe, healthy ways to connect with people in a language they understand
- Facilitate secure and healthy relationships
- Can be used by anyone

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PROPRIOCEPTION Knowing where your body is in space; Deep input in muscles, tendons, and joints		VESTIBULAR Movement and balance	
Pressure points	Sucking through straw	Skiping	Rolling
Rake leaves	Deep pressure hugs	Swinging	Dancing
Compression clothing	Climbing	Hand stands	Hopping/jumping
Exercise ball	Carry heavy items	Tumbling/gymnastics	Running
Pressure points	Shovel snow or dirt	Swimming	Yoga
Weighted Blanket	Climb up slides	Hanging upside down	Spinning in a chair
Gum	Monkey Bars	Skating/biking	Jumping on bed/couch
Jumping/running	Skating/biking	Wheelbarrow	Pogo stick

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How to Organize the Brainstem

Dr. Bruce Perry

RHYTHMIC

REPETITIVE

RELATIONAL

SOMATOSENSORY

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Why do toddlers melt down in similar ways?



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Chase the *Why*

Behind the child's
behavior

AND

My response



(Purvis et al., 2013)

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Is My Response...



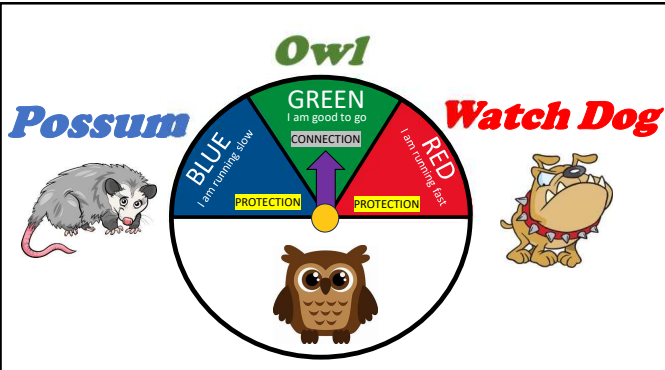
Helping Regulation?

Creating Connection?

Disarming fear?

(Purvis et al., 2013)

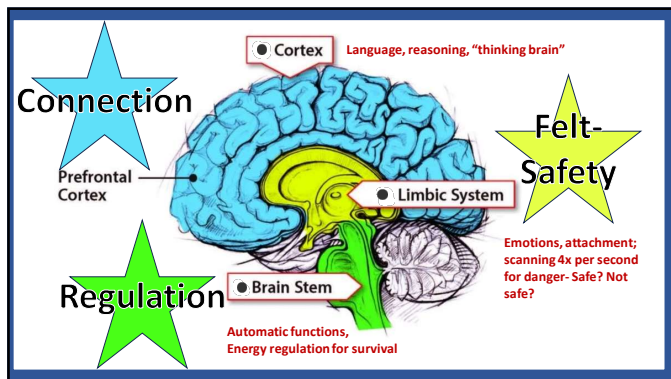
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Top 3 Favorite Trauma-Informed Resources

- Robyn Gobbel, MSW
 - <https://robyngobbel.com>
 - Amazing handouts and resources for caregivers
 - The Baffling Behavior Show Podcast
 - *Raising Kids with Big, Baffling Behaviors* by Robyn Gobbel (Watchdog/possum/owl brains)
- Marti Smith, OTR
 - <https://creativetherapies.com>
 - Resources, training, & trauma tips with regulating the brainstem in mind
 - Kalmar Assessment (kalmar.creativetherapies.com) to see what the brain needs
 - *The Connected Therapist and Sensory Healing After Developmental Trauma* by Marti Smith
- Karyn Purvis Institute of Child Development at TCU (Texas Christian University in Fort Worth, TX)
 - <https://child.tcu.edu>
 - Resources & Training on TBRI
 - *The Connected Child* by Dr. Purvis and Dr. Cross (developed TBRI)

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CASA GAL
 Court Appointed Special Advocates
FOR CHILDREN
 Guardian ad Litem
CROSS TIMBERS AREA



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