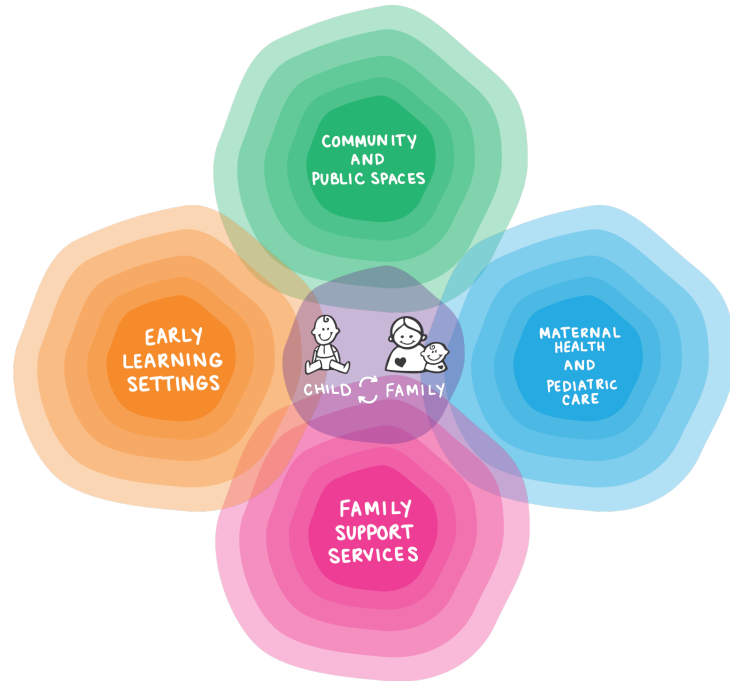


early relational health is ...

Junlei Li & Thelma Ramirez
Harvard Graduate School of Education



1

Healthy human relationships begin in **early childhood**.

Physical, behavioral, and mental health depend on **relational health**.

Our collective work can build the foundation of **early relational health** for children and families.

2

90%
of a child's brain development happens before age 5

Source: Harvard Center for the Developing Child

The 30 Million Word Gap by Age 3

WORD GAP BY AGE 3

ON AVERAGE
ECONOMICALLY ADVANTAGED CHILDREN KNOW
1100 WORDS

ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED CHILDREN KNOW
500 WORDS

THE TRUTH ABOUT ACES

WHAT ARE THEY?

ACES are ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES

The three types of ACEs include:

- ABUSE: Neglect, Physical Abuse, Emotional Abuse, Sexual Abuse
- MISDEED: Family Member Substance Abuse, Family Member Mental Illness, Incarceration
- HOUSEHOLD DYSFUNCTION: Divorce, Single-Parent Home, Unstable Housing, Family Financial Problems, Family Health Problems

INVESTMENT IN EARLY LEARNING \$1 = \$13 IN RETURN

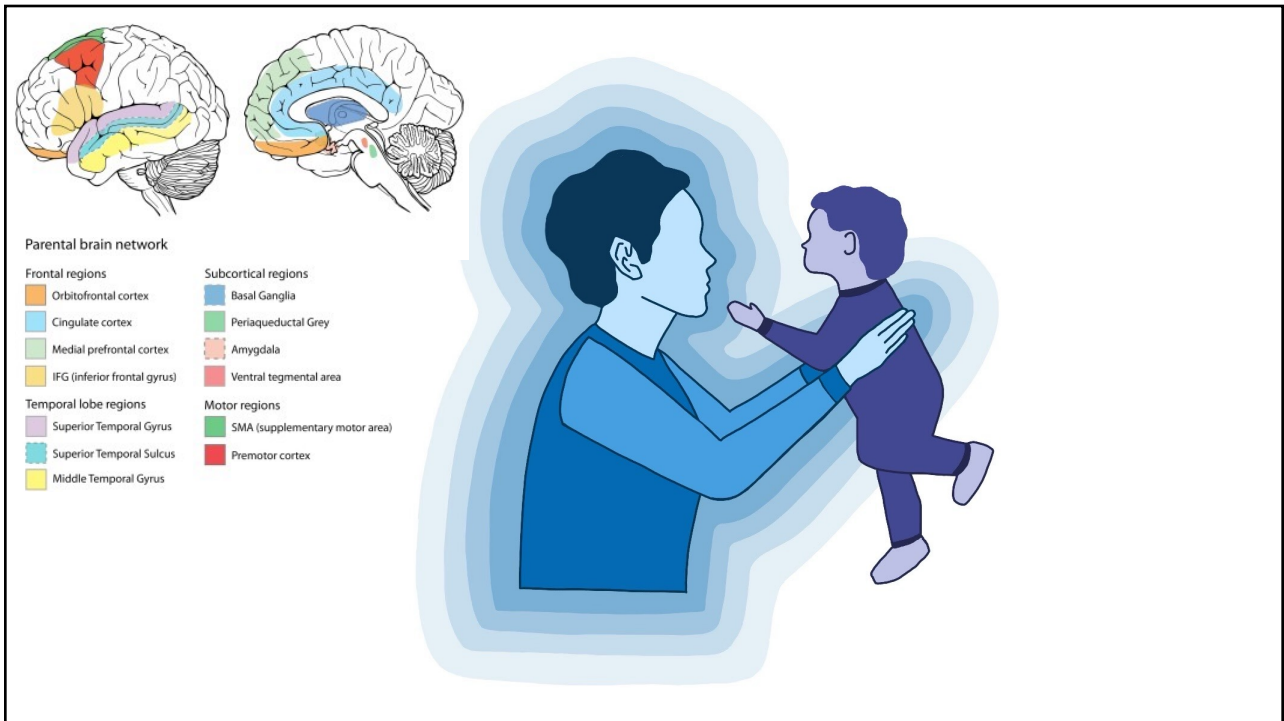
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Early Relational Health is ... well, relational.

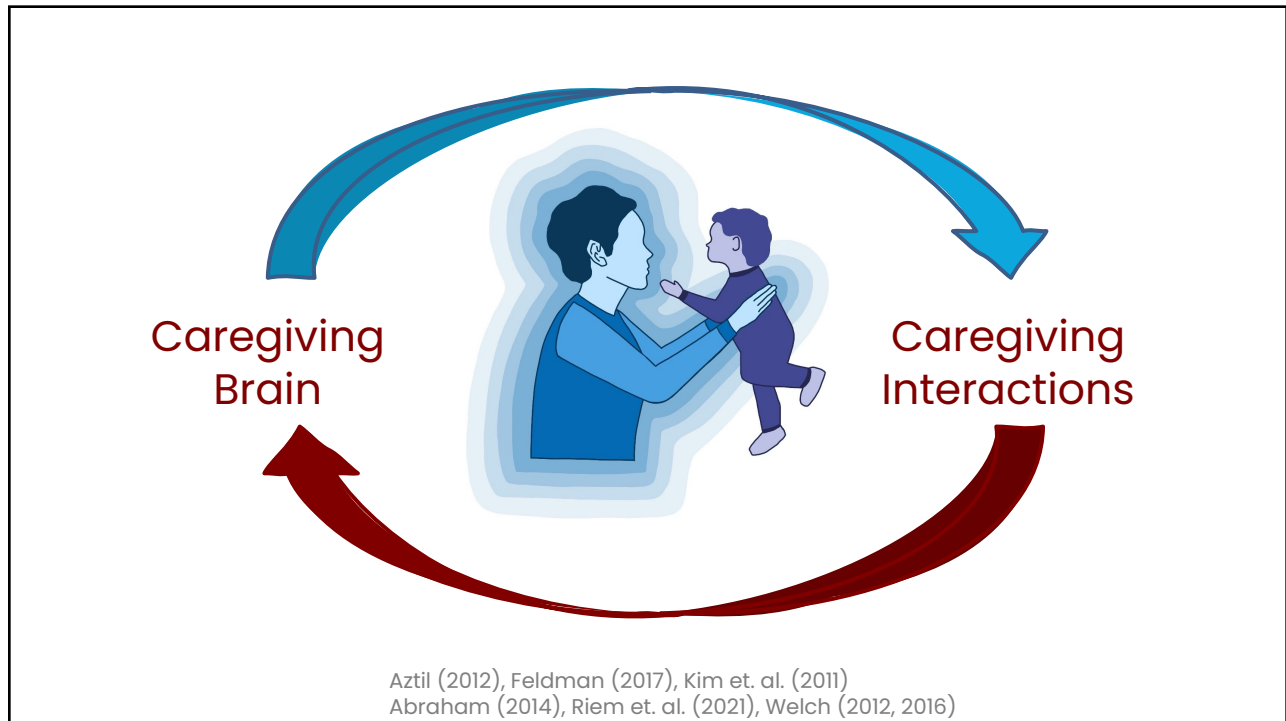
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6



7

Promoting early relational health starts with both understanding the relational **needs** of the children and respecting and supporting the relational caregiving **capacity** of the **adults, cultures, and communities.**

8

Early Relational Health is ... *ecological*.

9

The 30 Million Word Gap by Age 3

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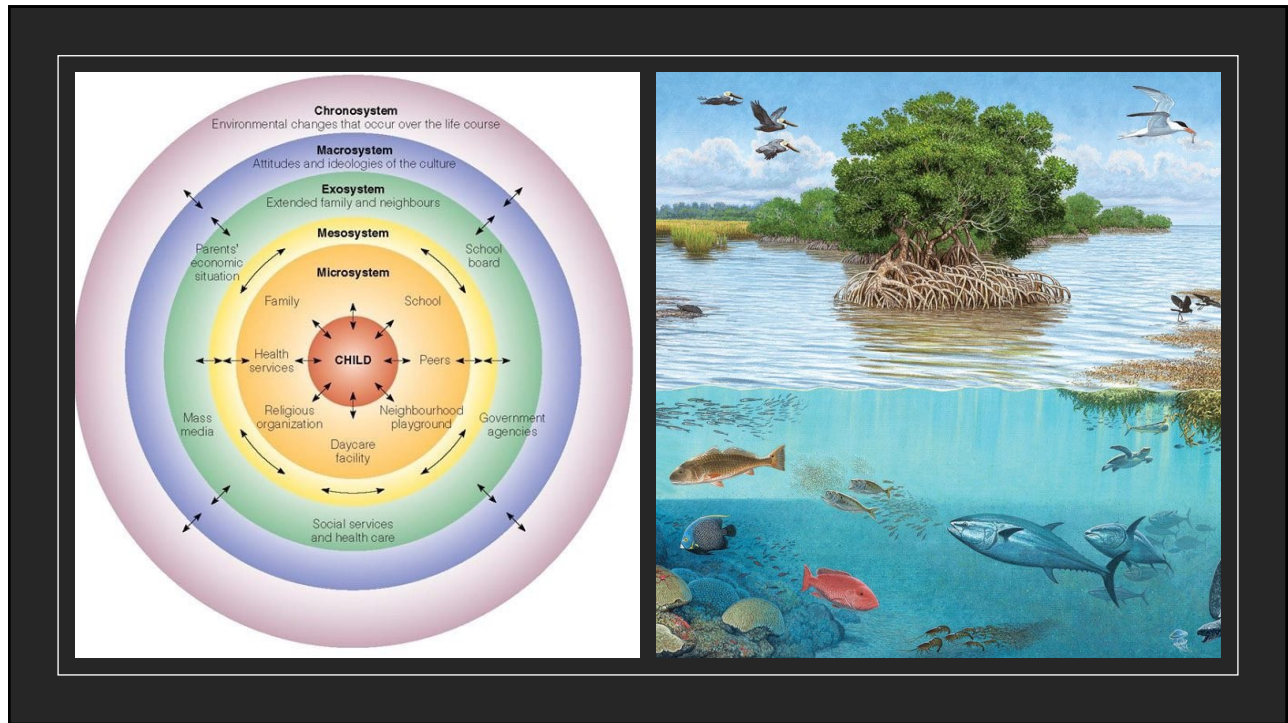
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INVESTMENT IN EARLY LEARNING
\$1

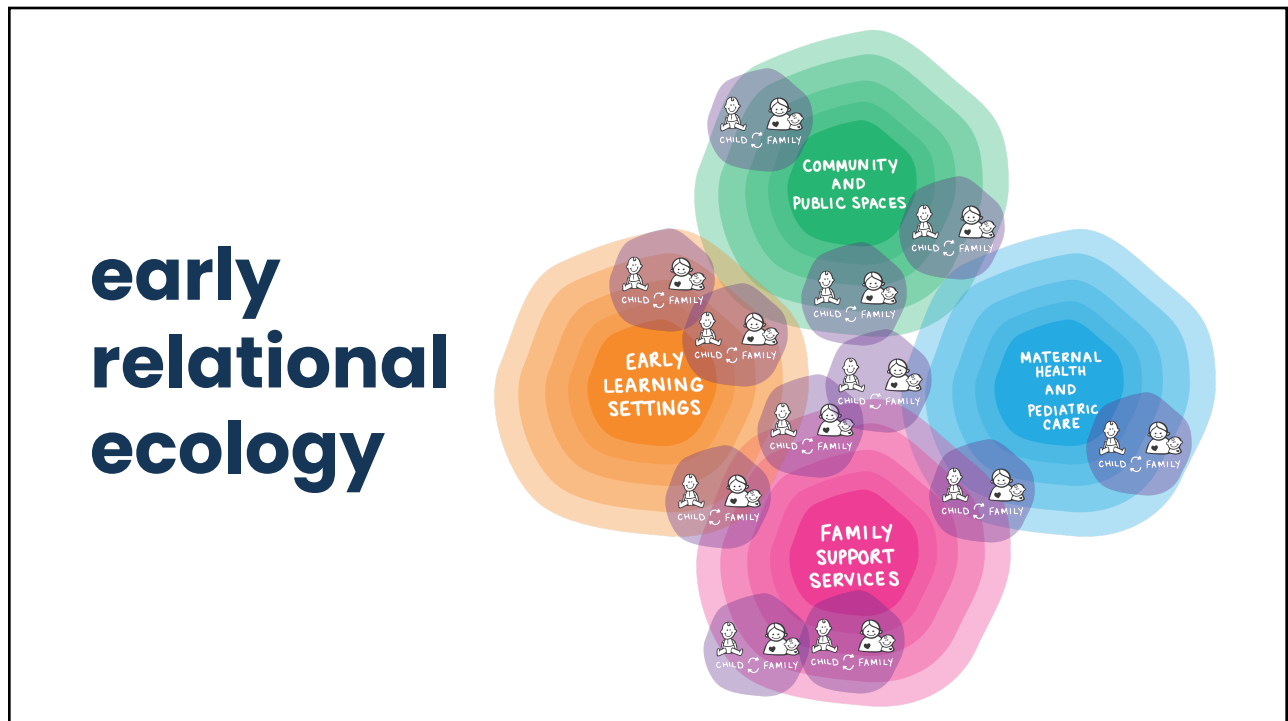
\$13
IN RETURN

SOURCE: ADAPTED FROM BETTY HAFF AND TODD B. WELLS, "LINGUISTIC DIFFERENCES IN THE EARLY EXPERIENCE OF YOUNG AMERICAN CHILDREN," BALTIMORE, MD: PAUL H. BROOKLYN, 1995.

10



11



12

**Adverse
Childhood
Experience
(ACEs)**



13

Early Relational Health is ... *hopeful.*

14

Positive Childhood Experiences (PCEs)

15

HOPE
HEALTHY OUTCOMES FROM POSITIVE EXPERIENCES

HEALTHY OUTCOMES FROM POSITIVE EXPERIENCES

Dr. Bob Sege
Director, Center for Community-Engaged Medicine, Tufts University

The HOPE framework can be used to promote PCEs for all children

The HOPE framework centers around the Four Building Blocks of HOPE, key types of positive childhood experiences that all children need to thrive, and helps organizations, communities, and individuals make changes to practices, policies, and programming to ensure that all children have equitable access to PCEs.

The Four Building Blocks of HOPE

The Four Building Blocks of HOPE provide an accessible, actionable way of talking about the key types of PCEs:

- Relationships**
Safe and supportive relationships within the family and with other children and adults.
- Environment**
Safe, equitable, and stable environments where children can live, learn, and play.
- Engagement**
Opportunities for social and civic engagement to develop a sense of belonging and connectedness.
- Emotional Growth**
Opportunities for emotional growth where children feel supported through difficult events and emotions.

16

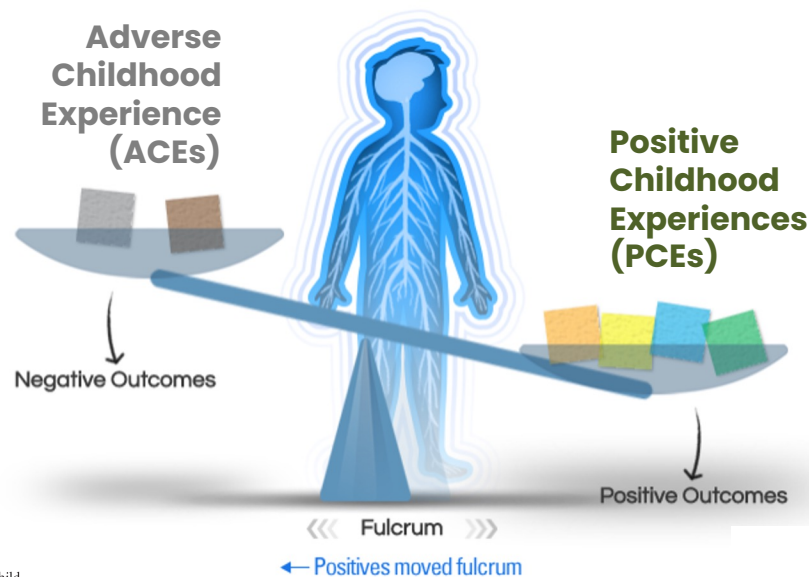
Positive Childhood Experiences (PCEs)

- **safe and protected** by an adult in their home;
- able to **talk to their family** about feelings;
- their **family stood by them** during difficult times;
- enjoyed participating in **community traditions**;
- a sense of **belonging** in school
- supported by **friends**
- had **at least 2 nonparent adults** who took genuine interest in them

Bethell, C., Jones, J., Gombojav, N., Linkenbach, J., & Sege, R. (2019). *Positive childhood experiences and adult mental and relational health in a statewide sample: Associations across adverse childhood experiences levels*. *JAMA Pediatrics*, 173(11), e193007–e193007.

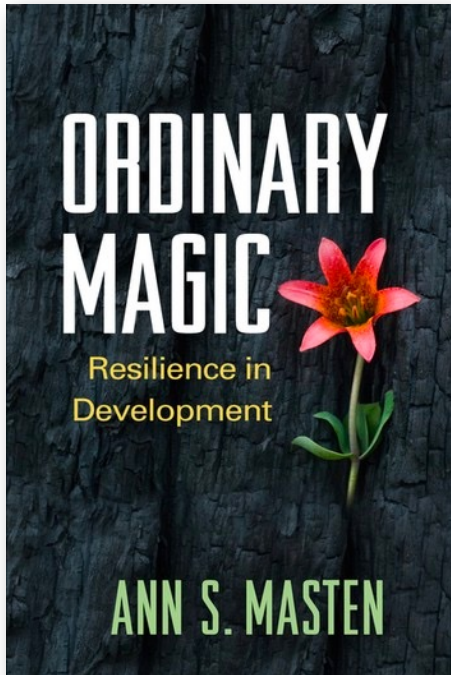
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The Resilience Scale



Adapted and modified by presenter. Original illustration credit to
 Center on the Developing Child
 HARVARD UNIVERSITY

18



"The biggest surprise (from the study of resilience) was the ordinariness of the phenomenon.

Most of the time, the children who make it have ordinary human resources and protective factors in their lives."

Ann Masten (2014)

19

"Safe, stable, and nurturing relationships (SSNRs) are promoted in safe, stable, and nurturing families that have access to safe, stable, and nurturing communities *with a wide range of resources and services.*"

Andrew Garner, MD, PhD, FAAP, Michael Yogman, MD, FAAP

Preventing Childhood Toxic Stress: Partnering With Families and Communities to Promote Relational Health

American Academy of Pediatrics 2021 Policy Statement

20

*"Safe, stable, and nurturing relationships? (SSNRs) are promoted in **safe**, stable, and nurturing families that have access to **safe**, stable, and nurturing communities with **a wide range of** resources and services."*

Andrew Garner, MD, PhD, FAAP, Michael Yogman, MD, FAAP

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American Academy of Pediatrics 2021 Policy Statement

21

ASK THE ESSENTIAL QUESTION

How can our _____ help to
(Practices, Programs, Policies)

Encourage, Enrich, and Empower

human relationships around children,
families, and their helpers?

22

The screenshot shows the Nurture Connection website header with navigation links: Contact Us, Blog, Newsletters, Invest in Nurture Connection, Search, About Us, Why Early Relational Health Matters, Family Partnership, Our Work, Resources, and a yellow 'Join Nurture Connection' button. Below the header are two resource cards. The first card, 'Early Relational Health: A Review of Research, Principles, and Perspectives', is dated Sept 2023. The second card, 'Putting Principles into Action: Building an Early Relational Health Ecosystem', is dated April 2024 and lists authors Charlyn Harper Browne, Juniel L.L. Callin O'Connor, Jenna E. Russo, and David Willis. To the right of the cards, the text for the first resource is displayed, including the author 'Harvard Graduate School of Education' and a 'Download Resource' link. Below that, the text for the second resource is displayed, including the author 'Nurture Connection' and another 'Download Resource' link.

23