

# Child Development 101: why the early years matter

August 21, 2019  
12pm-1pm EST



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE EDUCATION  
OF HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH

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# Session Objectives:

## To gain a better understanding of:

How to Build a Brain

Homelessness

What is Toxic Stress

How to Mitigate the Effects of  
Trauma

How to Build Resilience

# Principles of Play

- Provide safe and supportive environments to explore and research
- Opportunity to develop, enhance and maintain developmental milestones
- Foster social connections with peers and adults
- Promote self-confidence and positive self-esteem
- Buffers the effects of toxic stress and trauma

**“Play is the highest form of research” –Albert Einstein**

# At Birth - 3 months your baby should...



## Physical Skills

- Raises head & chest when on stomach
- Stretches & kicks on back
- Opens and shuts hands
- Brings hand to mouth
- Grasps and shakes toys



## Social Skills

- Begins to develop social smile
- Enjoys playing with people
- More communicative
- More expressive with face & body
- Imitates some movements & expressions



## Sensory Milestones

- Follows moving objects
- Recognizes familiar objects and people at a distance
- Starts using hands and eyes in coordination
- Prefers sweet smells
- Prefers soft to coarse sensations

Birth – 15 months



## Ages & Stages

- Safe experiences
- Dependent on adults
- Exploring all senses

## Environment

- Soft mats and structures
- Spacious floor area
- Crib Area
- Soft music
- Shoeless environment

## Daily Routines

- Individual schedules
- Meals
- Naps
- Diapering
- Play

## Learn & Play

- Socialization & positive interactions with adults promote trust/self-regulation skills
- Provide many opportunities for serve and return interactions.
- Develops body strength through tummy time and other exercises

# Toddler Growth & Development



## Physical Skills

- Walks alone
- Pulls toys behind when walking
- Begins to run
- Stands on tiptoe
- Kicks a ball



## Social Skills

- Imitates behavior of others
- Aware of herself as separate from others
- Enthusiastic about company of other children



## Cognitive Thinking

- Finds objects even when hidden 2 or 3 levels deep
- Sorts by shape and color
- Plays make-believe

# Toddler

15 months – 2.9 years



## Ages & Stages

- Uses expressive language to engage and share with others
- Thrives on independence
- Strong display of emotions

## Environment

- Child drawing/pictures on walls
- Distinct learning centers
  - Literacy/Arts & Crafts
  - Dramatic Play
  - Manipulatives
  - Blocks
  - Circle

## Routines

- Meals
- Naps
- Diapering/toilet training\*\*
- Transitions
- Parallel play

## Learn & Play

- Enjoys repeating familiar books & songs
- Gross motor play increased as balance in walking, running & jumping are more stable
- Interest in sensory activities like painting and water-play



## Preschool Growth & Development



### Physical Skills

- Climbs well
- Walks up and down stairs, alternating feet
- Kicks ball
- Runs easily
- Pedals tricycle
- Bends over without falling



### Social Skills

- Imitates adults and playmates
- Show affection for familiar playmates
- Can take turns in games
- Understands "mine" and "his / hers"



### Cognitive Thinking

- Makes mechanical toys work
- Matches an object in hand to picture in book
- Plays make believe
- Sorts objects by shape and color
- Completes 3 - 4 piece puzzles
- Understands concept of "two"



# Preschool

2.9 years – 5 years



## Ages & Stages

- Social & cooperative interactions
- Exercising problem solving & self regulating strategies
- Curious
- Understands group expectations

## Environment

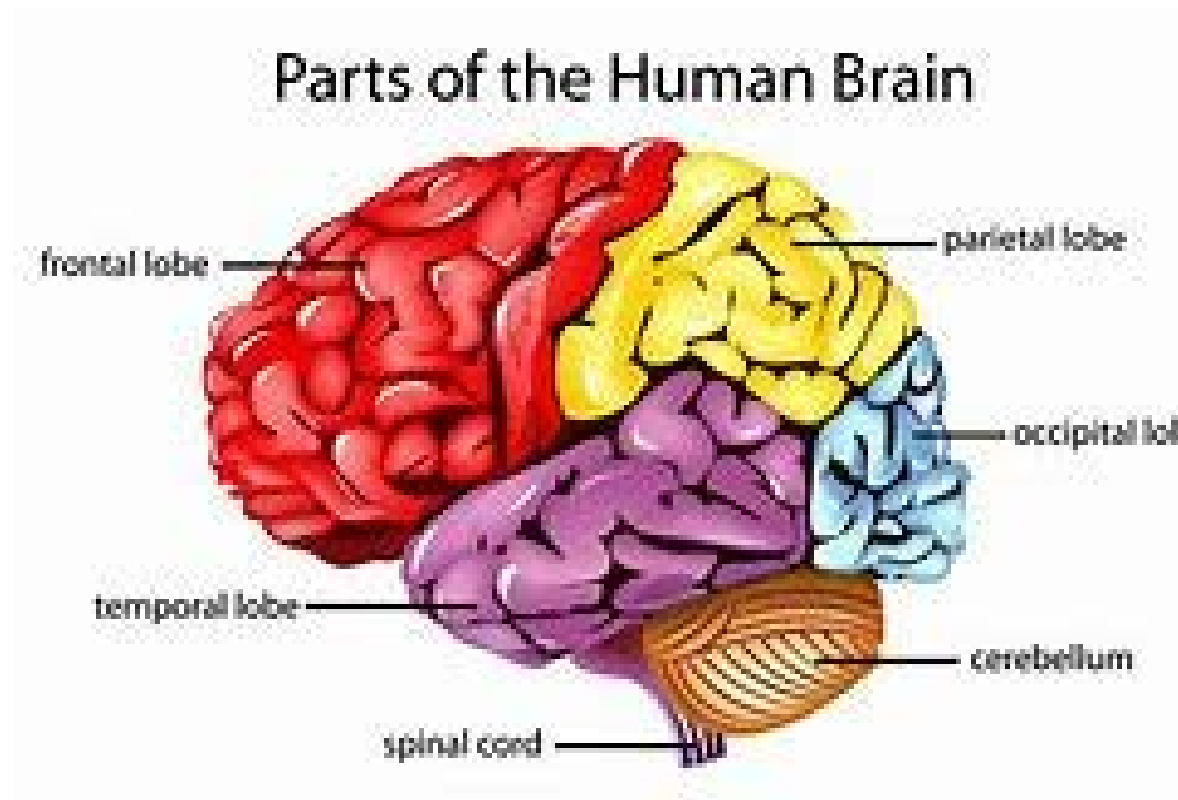
- Documentation of learning samples
- Learning center rules
- Opportunity for classroom help; “Today’s helper” list

## Routines

- Aware of class routines/schedules
- Meals
- Rest time
- Diapering/Toileting
- Transitions
- Structured & unstructured play

## Learn & Play

- Forming close relationships with peers
- Enjoys pretend/dramatic play to explore and test realities (mimic real life)
- Participates in more creative, focused and cooperative games/activities



<https://developingchild.harvard.edu/resources/brain-hero/>

<https://developingchild.harvard.edu/resources/inbrief-the-science-of-early-childhood-development>

## How Many Children and Families Experience Homelessness?

On a single night in January 2018:

- An estimated 180,413 people in families or 56,342 family households were identified as homeless.
- Approximately 16,390 people in families were living on the street, in a car, or in another place not meant for human habitation.
- Between October 1, 2016, and September 30, 2017, an estimated 478,718 people in 150,630 family households used an emergency shelter or a transitional housing program.

# The Causes of Homelessness

- Poverty
- Lack of affordable housing
- Domestic violence
- Lack of economic mobility related to incomplete education
- Decreasing government supports
- Substance abuse/mental illness
- Lack of social support

# Additional Losses

- Possessions
- Community
- Routines
- Privacy
- Security
- Dignity

# Effect of Homelessness

- Children without a home are twice as likely as poor-but-housed children to experience hunger, be in fair or poor health, and have higher rates of asthma, ear infections, stomach problems, and speech problems
- Chronic homelessness is associated with children's mental health problems, particularly internalizing disorders (e.g., anxiety, depression, social withdrawal, and somatic symptoms), which cannot be explained by poverty alone
- Hunger, threats to physical safety, lack of social support, and the unavailability of adequate shelter facilities may compromise a mother's capacity to respond fully and adequately to her children's needs
- Toxic Stress

<https://developingchild.harvard.edu/resources/toxic-stress-derails-healthy-development/>

# TRAUMA

When faced with reminders of traumatic experiences, children's brains and bodies are programmed to go into automatic **flight, fight, or freeze** response mode.

These behaviors can be confusing and there is a **tendency to misunderstand or mislabel** trauma-related responses.

Adapted from Connected Beginnings Resources



# Children with trauma may exhibit behaviors such as...

## Externalizing behaviors

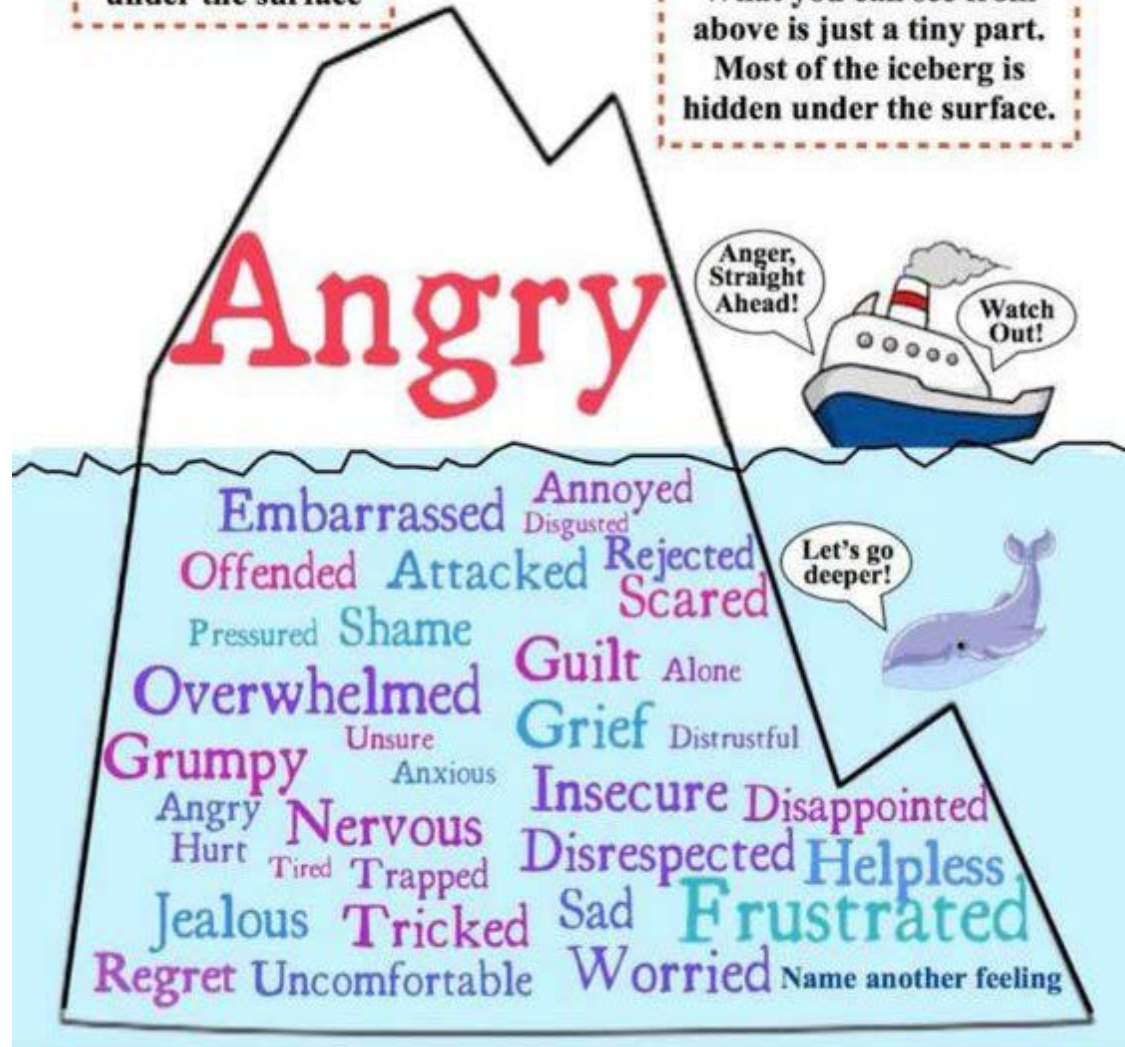
- Startle easily
- Aggression
- Destruction
- Impulsive/hyper
- Sudden anger
- Self-injury

## Internalizing behaviors

- Sadness
- Withdrawal
- Somatic complaints
- Fearfulness
- Hard to concentrate
- Avoidant

Sometimes when we  
are angry, there are  
other emotions  
under the surface

Icebergs are giant floating  
pieces of ice found in the  
coldest parts of the ocean.  
What you can see from  
above is just a tiny part.  
Most of the iceberg is  
hidden under the surface.



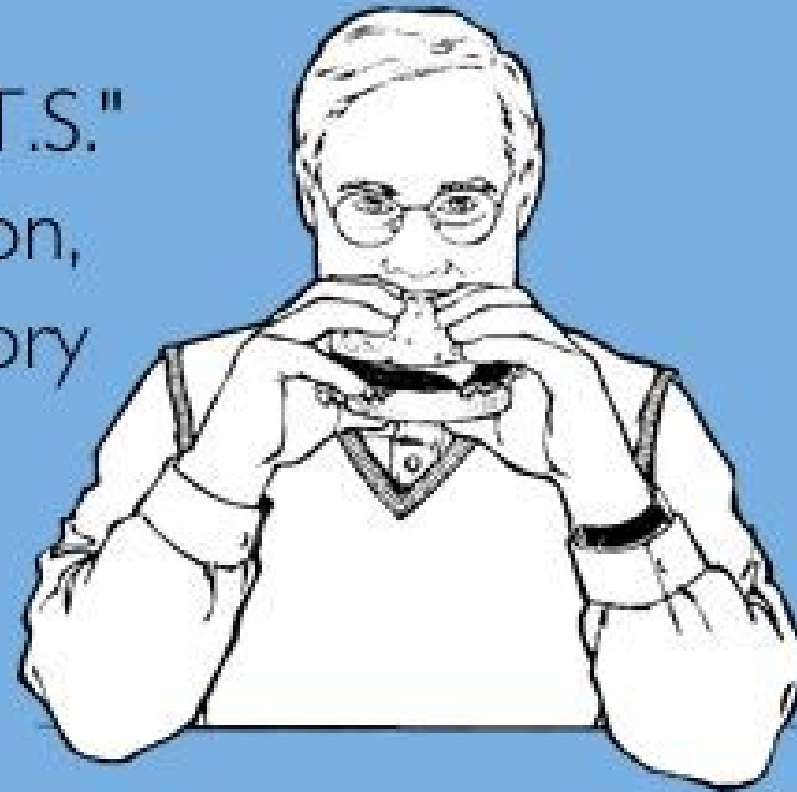
Trauma **sensitivity** does not mean  
attributing all behaviors to trauma,

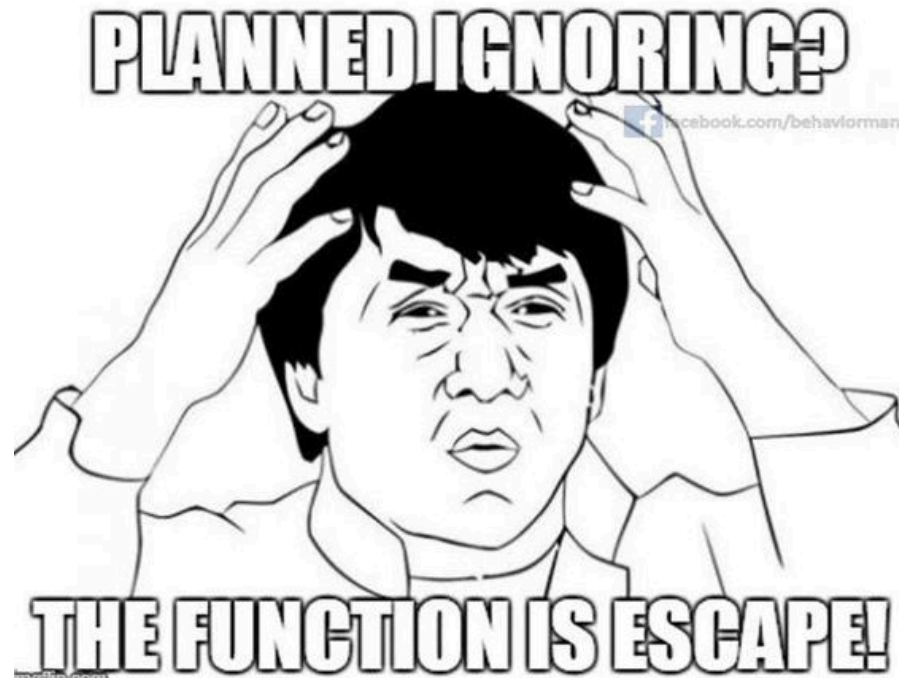
but instead, choosing to **intentionally**  
proceed with awareness and  
understanding of the possibility of  
trauma related factors

The four common functions of  
behavior:

"Everybody E.A.T.S."

Escape, Attention,  
Tangible, Sensory





**FUNCTION:**

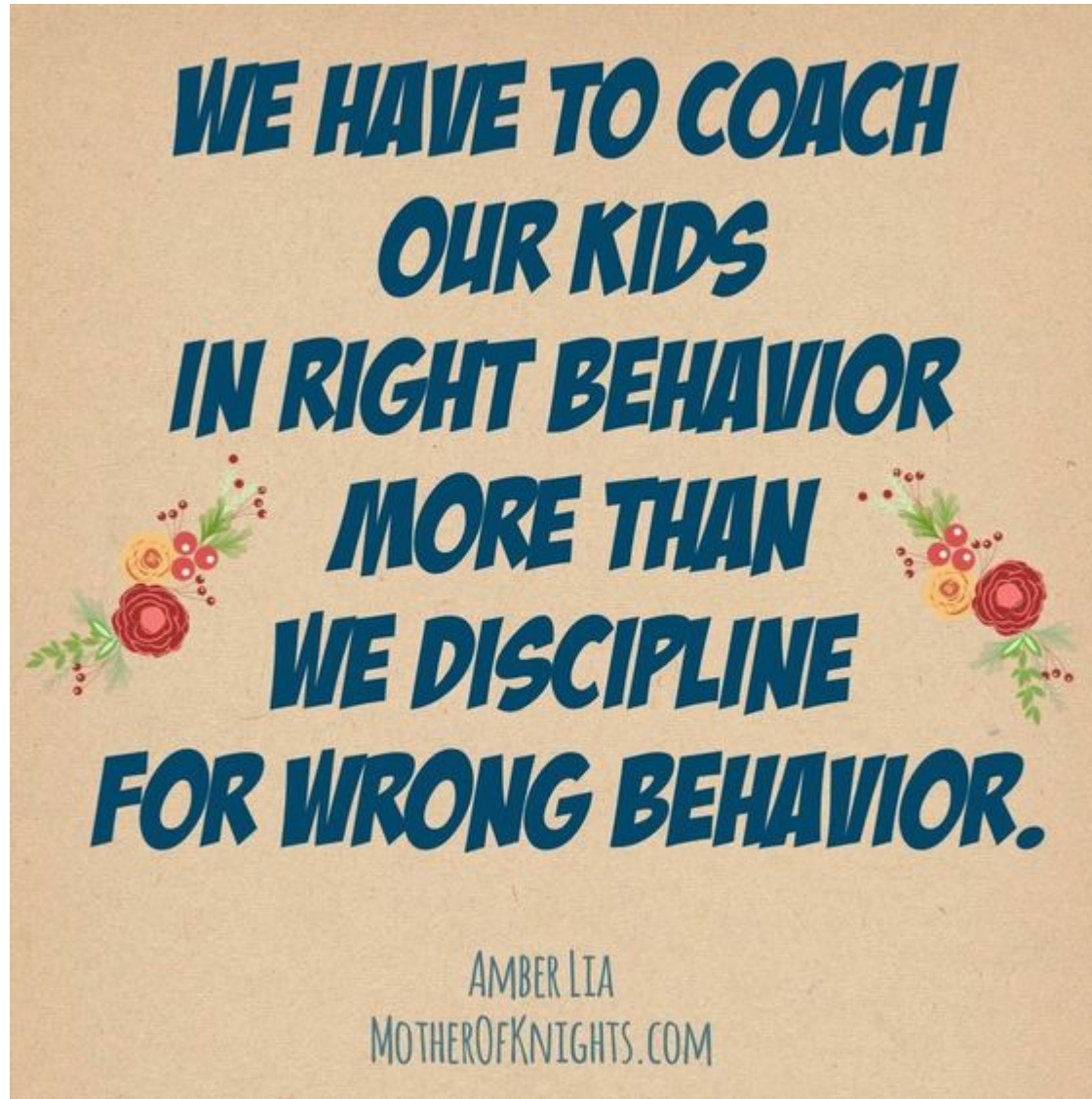
Why;  
what the behavior accomplishes

**FORM:**

Behavior; what you see

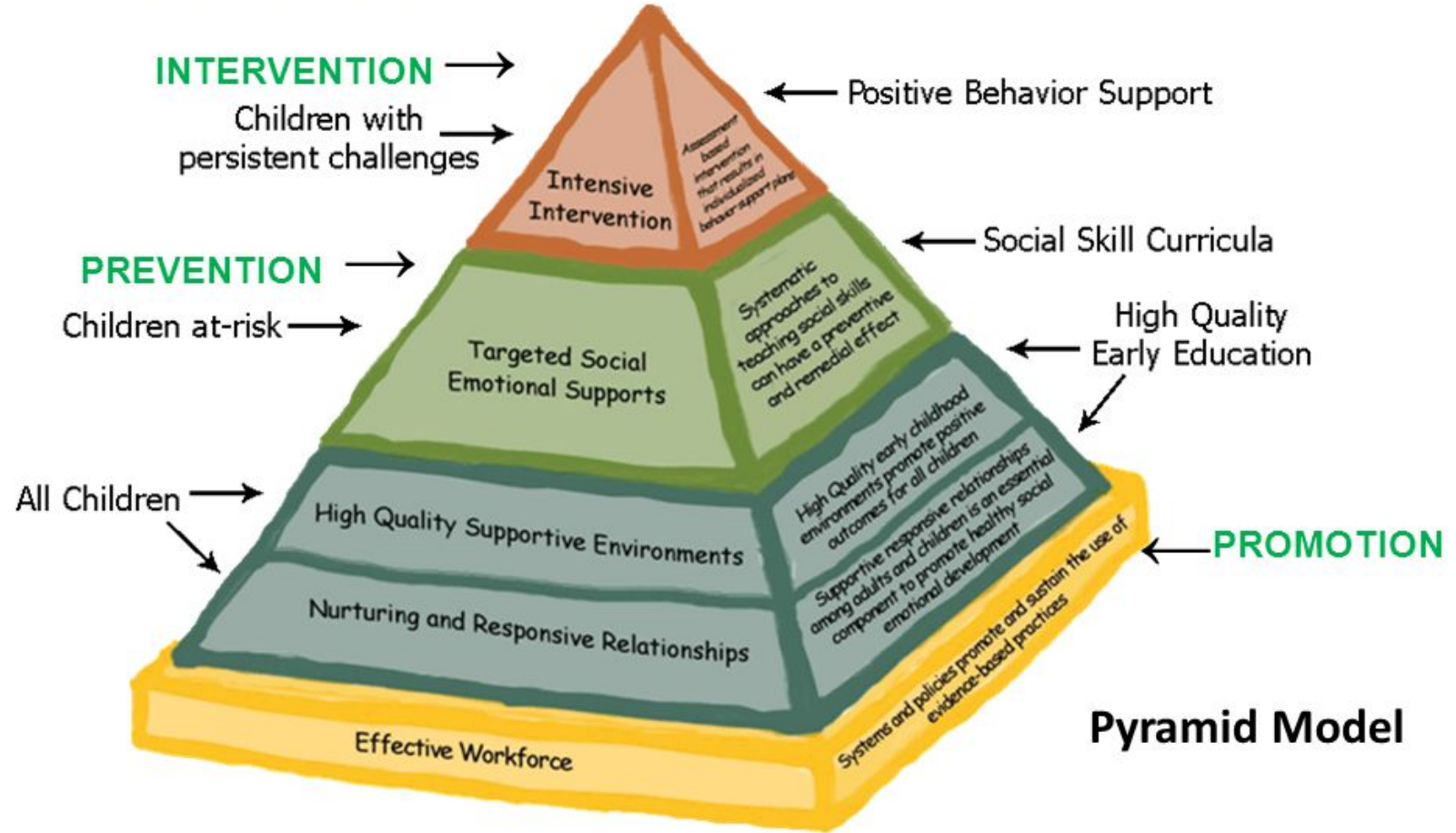






**Coach:** Have I taught what I expect? Have they learned what I expect? Have we practiced what I expect?

## The What





**All children** are at some level of learning how to self-regulate, meet their needs, and manage relationships. With learning comes frustration, with frustration comes behaviors.

**Ask children permission to offer your assistance.** “Can I play with you, would you like me to help tie your shoe, would you like to read a book.”

**Building relationships is based on trust.** Play is building trust. Asking permission is trust.

Be yourself and PLAY!

Do I really make a difference...

## 3 Principles to Improves Outcomes for Children & Families

1. Support Responsive Relationships
  - serve and return interactions
  - builds resilience
2. Strengthen Core Life Skills
  - Executive function
  - Self regulation
3. Reduce Sources of Stress
  - Adults better able to provide responsive relationships
  - Long term health issues
  - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v9wuyfcZOfE>



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Know their  
story. Highlight  
their strength.  
Foster their  
resilience.  
Empower their  
futures.



<https://developingchild.harvard.edu/resources/project-for-babies/>

**NAEHCY  
Talks  
Webinar  
Follow-up**

What happens after a webinar ends?

How can we continue the conversation?

How do we dig deeper and share resources?

Can we connect with others that have similar situations?

This year we have created a way to continue to the conversation after the webinar ends.

## What is #slack?

<https://slack.com/>

#slack is a collaborative hub where users can network, share resources, ask questions, work on projects and communicate one-on-one or in groups.

#slack is similar to Whats App, Google Hangout Rooms, etc.

As many organizations are turning to #slack, NAEHCY Talks will be the new format utilizing #slack as our webinar follow up!

## Joining the Conversation

1. Click the #slack link in the chat box at the end of the presentation.
2. Enter your email address.
3. Check your email to verify your account.
4. Confirm your email to join NAEHCY Talks Workspace.



NAEHCY Talks

Workspace URL: [naehcytalks.slack.com](https://naehcytalks.slack.com)

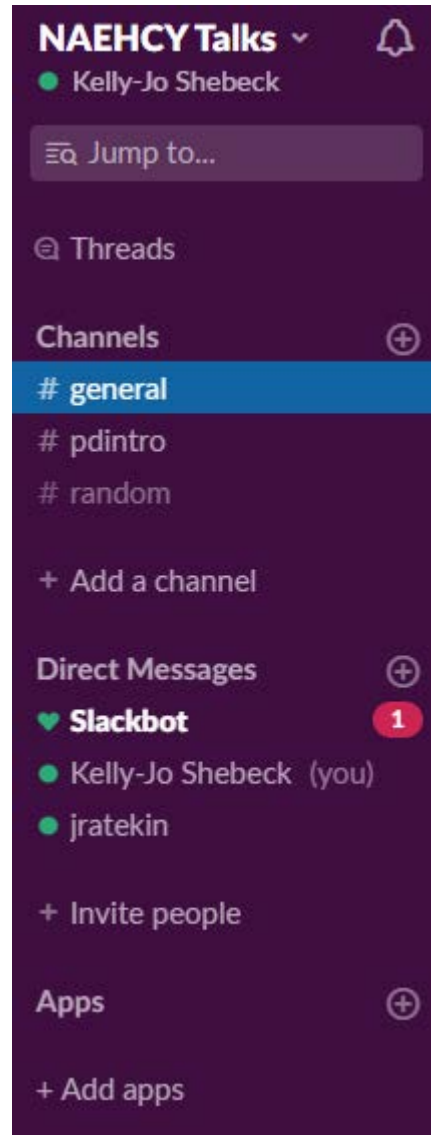
Following the Webinar you will receive an invitation to join our NAEHCY Talks Workspace and the channel for this webinar.





# Workspace

[naehcytalks.slack.com](https://naehcytalks.slack.com)



## Channels:

#general: everyone automatically enrolled

#childdevelopment101: enrolled when email is confirmed

#random: just that- random.

## Direct Messages:

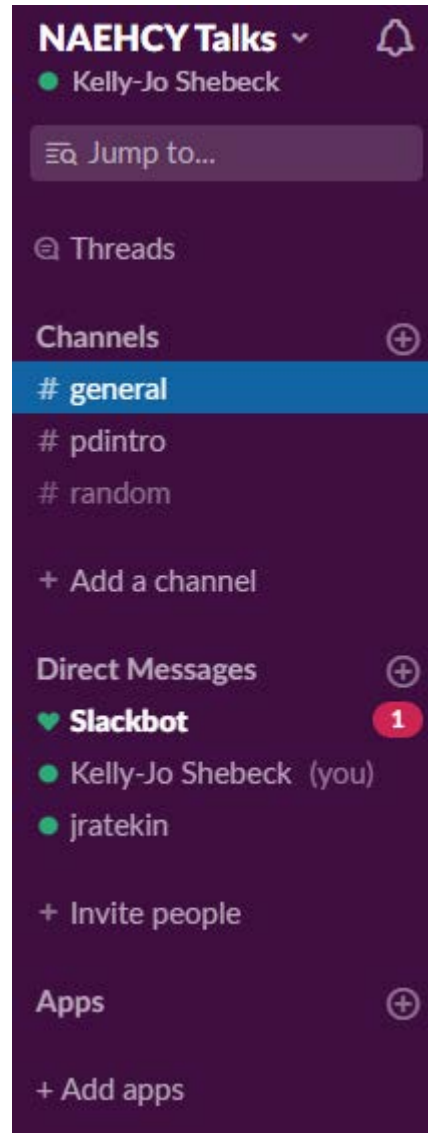
Ask a question or comment to a specific person rather than the entire channel.

Opportunity to connect offline.

Channel:

**#childdevelopment  
101**

[naehcytalks.slack.com](https://naehcytalks.slack.com)



#childdevelopment101:

- this channel will be open for webinar participants for 30 minutes following each webinar with presenters
- this channel will continue to be available for 1 week
- presenters will moderate the channel and check in regularly and answer questions as they arise



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# Channel:

# #childdevelopment

## 101

naehcytalks.slack.com

NAEH CY Talks

Kelly-Jo Shebeck

Jump to...

Threads

Channels

# general

# pdintro

# random

+ Add a channel

Direct Messages

Slackbot

Kelly-Jo Shebeck (you)

jratekin

+ Invite people

Apps

+ Add apps

Kelly-Jo Shebeck  
Kelly-Jo Shebeck

Set a status Ctrl+Shift+Y

Profile & account

Preferences

Set yourself to away

Help & feedback

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naehcytalks.slack.com

Your workspace is currently on Slack's Free plan.  
[See upgrade options](#)

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### Notifications

- Language & Region
- Messages & Media
- Sidebar
- Mark as Read
- Accessibility
- Advanced

### Notifications

**Desktop notifications are currently disabled**

We strongly recommend enabling notifications so that you happens in your Slack workspace.

[Enable desktop notifications](#)

- Notify me about replies to threads I'm following
- Use different settings for my mobile devices

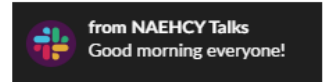
### Your preferences for NAEHCY Talks

#### Notifications

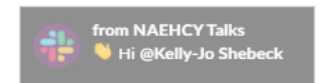
##### Notify me about...

About notifications ?

- All new messages**  
You'll be notified for every new message



- Direct messages, mentions & keywords**  
You'll be notified when a teammate mentions you, sends you a direct message, or uses one of your keywords



- Nothing**  
You won't receive notifications from Slack. Note: you will still see badges (1) within Slack



# Questions?

Thank you for joining us today!

Feel free to utilize #slack for any follow up questions or comments!



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