Child Development 101: why the early years matter

August 21, 2019
12pm-1pm EST
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
Infants

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
- Shows 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
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.

Angry, Straight Ahead!

Let's go deeper!

Named another feeling

- Angry
- Hurt
- Tired
- Trapped
- Jealous
- Tricked
- Regret
- Uncomfortable
- Disappointed
- Helpless
- Frustrated
- Unhappy
- Nervous
- Anxious
- Unsure
-Guilty
- Alone
- Distrustful
- Grief
- Sad
- Worried
- Disrespected
- Helpless
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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
FORM:
Behavior; what you see

FUNCTION:
Why; what the behavior accomplishes
Coach: Have I taught what I expect? Have they learned what I expect? Have we practiced what I expect?
The What

**Intervention**
- Children with persistent challenges

**Prevention**
- Children at-risk

**Promotion**

**Pyramid Model**

- All Children
- High Quality Supportive Environments
- Nurturing and Responsive Relationships
- Effective Workforce

- Positive Behavior Support
- Social Skill Curricula
- High Quality Early Education
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 Improve 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=vgwuyfcZOfe](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vgwuyfcZOfe)
Know their story. Highlight their strength. Foster their resilience. Empower their futures.

https://developingchild.harvard.edu/resources/project-for-babies/
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 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 WhatsApp, 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.

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

Thank you for joining us today!

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