Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs): Poverty, Parenting, and Stress

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GOALS
- Nature and Nurture
- Poverty and Parenting
- Acute vs. Chronic
- Identify factors in the environments of learners associated with ELS

Elijah is a toddler now

Wow ... he must have worked hard to be so successful?!

Elijah in 2018

1 Select an descriptor of Elijah to focus on today

Academic Success
Asthma
Obesity
Preterm Birth
Depression (or not)

Elijah in 2043

What is WRONG with him! Lazy? Doesn't care?

What does child development have to do with poverty or parenting?

Elijah in 2043

Academic Success
Asthma
Obesity
Preterm Birth

Elijah in 2018

What does child development have to do with environment / nurture?
Is your outcome more
Nature or Nurture?

Take Away
Parenting matters but so does the interaction with potential

It is not nature or nurture, Nor is it nature and nurture, . . . . Life emerges only from the interaction between the two. There are no genetic factors that can be studied independently of the environment, and there are no environmental factors that function independently of the genome. Phenotype emerges only from the interaction of gene and environment.—Meaney (2001, p. 51)


Let's focus on the 'nurture'
READ DAILY
USE CAR SEAT

Short list of Parent Jobs
- Meet basic needs
- Predictable routines and adults
- Feel safe and secure
- Love and hugs
- Lots of language and stimulating things

How is your parenting job related to
Child outcome?

Parenting Jobs

How is your parenting job related to
Child outcome?

Parenting Jobs

Nature vs Nurture

Take Away
Parents Control the Child's Environment

Short list of Parent Jobs
- Meet basic needs
- Predictable routines and adults
- Feel safe and secure
- Love and hugs
- Lots of language and stimulating things
In Arkansas, about how much is the hourly salary you need to rent a two bedroom house?

1. $15.50/hour
2. $10.00/hour
3. $8.50/hour
4. $5.00/hour

In Arkansas, what is the hourly salary you need to rent a two bedroom house?

- $14.00
- $10.00
- $8.50
- $5.00

$13.72 WHICH IS $5.22 MORE THAN THE $8.50 MIN WAGE IN AR
THAT'S ABOUT $28,500/YEAR
Low-income parents are often working
- 3 in 10 working families are low-income
- Nearly 3 in 10 college educated parents are low-income

And of children living in low-income homes
- more than half (54%) live with at least one parent employed full time, year round.
- More than half (52%) live with parents with a high school degree or less.

Take Away
- The US is behind other western countries in supporting low-income children.
- Low-income parents are often working and many have reasonable levels of education.
- Children and infants of color are most at risk in the US.
- It’s not just a matter of ‘having a job’

Mental Health

Parenting In Poverty

3 Barriers to Parent in Poverty

POVERTY SOMETIMES CONTROLS PARENTING

Neighborhood Safety

Income matters ...
Federal Cash programs linked to child
- Child tax credit provides tax refunds
- Earned income tax credit (EITC) is a refundable federal tax credit
  - Increase employment
  - Improve adult health

Prior to your 1st birthday:
- Did an adult or person at least 5 years older than you ever... Touch or handle you or have you touch their body in a sexual way? or Attempt or actually have oral, anal, or vaginal intercourse with you?

Questions
- Did an adult or a person at least 5 years older than you ever... Touch or handle you or have you touch their body in a sexual way? or Attempt or actually have oral, anal, or vaginal intercourse with you?

TANF is helping less...
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) - money for states to fund work and family support programs

WHAT IS AN ACE?

Take Away
Poverty Limits the Parenting Environment
- Limited financial resources also means limited emotional, health, and mental resources.
- Parents working while still in poverty means children lack parents time and materials.
- Federal Social Programs work.

Before age 1 if...
- Did a parent or other adult in the household...
  - Swear at you, insult you, put you down, or humiliate you? or Act in a way that made you afraid that you might be physically hurt?
- Did a parent or other adult in the household... Push, grab, slap, or throw something at you? or Ever hit you so hard that you had marks or were injured?

- Were your parents ever separated or divorced?
- Was your mother or another woman who raised you often... Scared, pushed, grabbed, slapped, or hit someone away as hard or sometimes, often, or very often kicked, bitten, hit with a fist, or hit with something hard or ever separately hit over at least one hour long? or Ever seriously hurt with a gun or knife?
1. Did you live with anyone who was a problem drinker or alcoholic, or who used street drugs?
2. Was a household member depressed or mentally ill, or did a household member attempt suicide?
3. Did a household member go to prison?

**Adverse Childhood Experiences Are Common**

**ACEs in Arkansas' Families**

- In Arkansas, the state with the highest prevalence, 30 percent of children have experienced at least one ACE.

**ACEs for Arkansas' Adults**

**In a Room of 30 Children...**

**What was your ACE score?**

- 0 – 1
- 2 – 4
- 5 – 6
- More than 6

**Take Away**

1. ACES are common
2. AR children are more at risk than any other state.
3. ACES are generally ongoing events.
EFFECTS OF ACES
More than just stress

Life expectancy

Side Effects of ACES

Positive
Tolerable
Toxic

Degrees of Stress

Learning
More likely to fail a grade
More likely to have emotional issues
More likely to struggle in school

Physical
More likely to be at risk for developmental delays
More likely to have a medical home
More likely to require special medical care

Academic Concerns

3 to 1 odds of adult heart disease
Developmental delay more likely as adversity risks increase

 THERE'S A LOT GOING ON BEFORE TWO

Newborn
6 months
2 years

Toxic stress damages developing brain
1. Consequences of ACEs can be lifelong and serious.
2. Toxic stress is very serious for children still developing.
3. Toxic stress from ACEs can alter the development of the immune system, brain connections, and gene expression.

Take Away

More than just Stress

1. Consequences of ACEs can be lifelong and serious.
2. Toxic stress is very serious for children still developing.
3. Toxic stress from ACEs can alter the development of the immune system, brain connections, and gene expression.

Change the question

What's wrong with you?

What happened to you?

What happened to Elijah?
Resilience in Communities
$4.59 in return for every $1 in early childhood programs

The past can tick away inside us for decades like a silent time bomb until it sets off a cellular message that lets us know the body does not forget the past.
~ Donna Jackson Nakazawa

Tell Others What You Have Learned
Getting More Information

*ACE studies are as revolutionary as germ theory was for the 20th century*

- Sandra L. Brown, M.S., National Collaborative on Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), 2013

Look for:
- CDC Adverse Childhood Experiences
- Harvard Center Developing Child
- Trauma-Informed Care