



Resources for Families and Providers

# Raising Resilient Children



Watch Bright Horizon's webinar, [Boosting Your Child's Resilience & Independence](#), to learn how simple, everyday experiences—like letting your child teach you something or getting involved in your child's play—can cultivate resilience, grit, independence, and perseverance. Find ways to [foster resilience in infants and toddlers](#).

[At-Home Learning Activities](#) offer families fun ways to extend their child's learning opportunities. For parents of infants through school-age children, we have created a database of learning activities to provide during teachable moments that naturally emerge from everyday life situations.



Positive Guidance Tips, Teaching Accountability and Gratefulness to Children, Helping Kids Cope with Anxiety and Stress, Understanding Preschool Friendships, Sibling Rivalry, and Encouraging Preschool Independence are topics addressed in the [Behavior and Discipline](#) portion in the [Family Room Blog](#) on the [Bright Horizons website](#). These tips help families teach concepts and skills that are essential for social and emotional development.

## E-NEWS: [Parenting tips, articles, strategies, and resources for your growing family:](#)

Written by early childhood education experts, Bright Horizon's E-News is a free weekly email providing advice, strategies, tips, resources, and news about current parenting issues you may be facing. Parenting topics range from making the most of your baby's first year to toddler toilet learning and from helping your preschooler make friends to fitness and recipes for the whole family.

## Activities to Promote Resilience At Home through Supportive Interactions

The resources offered in this section from the Devereux Center for Resilient Children will provide families with ideas, activities, strategies and resources that promote resilience and social and emotional health in preschoolers.



- **Parenting Webinars**

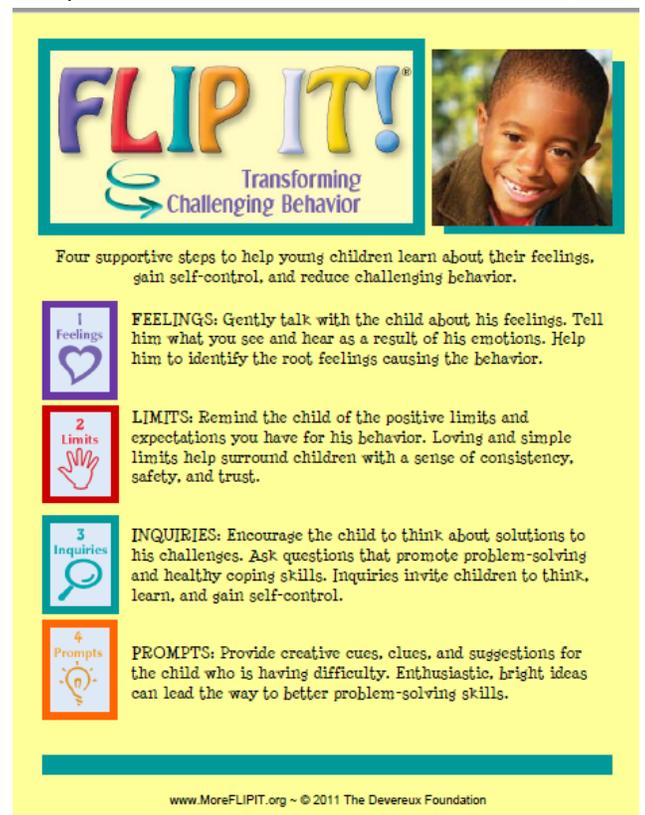
Is your child in the “I can do it myself!” stage? Whether your child tries to pour milk from the heavy carton, or jumps back on the jungle gym after a slip, she’s demonstrating independence and resilience. How can you foster these two incredibly important emerging skills? Early childhood education experts discuss parenting skills for topics such as toilet learning, breastfeeding, child nutrition, early learning and more. Our Family Matters Webinar series of parenting videos provide brief education sessions online, as well as offering guidance, tips, and resources to help you and your family navigate the many stages of childhood development and beyond.

- **Learning At Home Activities**

For parents of infants through school-age children, we have created a database of learning activities to provide during teachable moments that naturally emerge from everyday life situations. The activities cover key developmental and academic areas, including social skills, language acquisition, science, math, learning to read, and more. There are activities to use with [preschoolers](#) as well as [infants](#) and [toddlers](#).

- **Newsletter**

The [Resilience Quarterly](#) is a newsletter from the Devereux Center for Resilient Children. It offers a variety of information, articles, resources, graphics, toolkits, videos and webinars on resilience, trauma and toxic stress. In the latest newsletter, learn about free resources such as [FLIP IT!](#) Posters and PowerPoint slides about FLIP IT!, family resources and taking the D.A.N.C.E.R. Pledge.

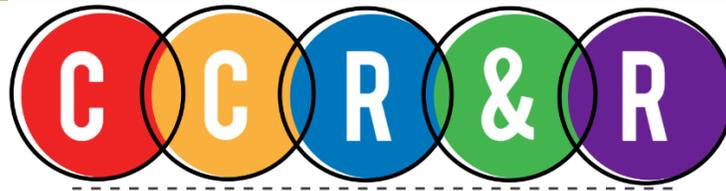


**FLIP IT!**  
Transforming Challenging Behavior

Four supportive steps to help young children learn about their feelings, gain self-control, and reduce challenging behavior.

- 1 Feelings** (Heart icon): **FEELINGS:** Gently talk with the child about his feelings. Tell him what you see and hear as a result of his emotions. Help him to identify the root feelings causing the behavior.
- 2 Limits** (Hand icon): **LIMITS:** Remind the child of the positive limits and expectations you have for his behavior. Loving and simple limits help surround children with a sense of consistency, safety, and trust.
- 3 Inquiries** (Magnifying glass icon): **INQUIRIES:** Encourage the child to think about solutions to his challenges. Ask questions that promote problem-solving and healthy coping skills. Inquiries invite children to think, learn, and gain self-control.
- 4 Prompts** (Lightbulb icon): **PROMPTS:** Provide creative cues, clues, and suggestions for the child who is having difficulty. Enthusiastic, bright ideas can lead the way to better problem-solving skills.

www.MoreFLIPIT.org ~ © 2011 The Devereux Foundation



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## Will You Pledge to be a D.A.N.C.E.R.?

The Devereux Center for Resilient Children invites you to [take a pledge](#) to promote the resilience of all children, and to educate yourself and others on the negative impacts of childhood trauma and the need for trauma-sensitive practices. Taking the pledge means that you will commit to doing the following:

**D**evelop a shared understanding of trauma and trauma-sensitive practices by watching and/or reading [Oprah Winfrey's 60 Minutes interview](#), focused on how trauma impacts childhood development.

**A**dvocate for organizations in your community – early childhood programs, schools, police departments, hospitals, etc. – to integrate trauma-sensitive practices.

**N**urture yourself. Adult wellness and child wellness are connected. Young children need the adults who take care of them to be happy and healthy to do the important work they do!

**C**onnect with others. Join ACEs Connection ([acesconnection.com](http://acesconnection.com)), which provides an online community of allies, advocates and experts in trauma-sensitive care.

**E**njoy and celebrate the fact that healing is possible.

**R**emember that relationships are key to resilience – make sure that the children in your life feel loved, valued, heard and seen.





## Videos for Families on Building Resilience

- [How Children and Adults Can Build Core Capabilities for Life](#)
- [In Brief: The Science of Resilience](#)
- [In Brief: What is Resilience?](#)

## [Podcasts for Parents On The Go](#)

Navigate your parenting journey with Bright Horizons' podcast series created with working parents in mind. Tune into our podcast, The Work-Life Equation, to hear about parenting, caregiving, and balancing work with everyday life. Whether you're a working or stay-at-home parent, you're likely always on-the-go. But throughout the daily hustle and bustle, you have questions, concerns, and simply need support. Our parenting and education experts are here to help you navigate the parenting journey with an "on-the go" podcast you can listen to when convenient for you.

### **4 things providers can do with these resources:**

1. Use the resources to build the capacity of teachers to use resilience practices in their classrooms.
2. Use the videos in a parent meeting or as a link on your website to emphasize the importance of families [supporting resilience in their children](#).
3. Use the [FLIP IT!](#) Videos and Posters in classrooms and give tips to families.
4. Provide professional development to teachers and staff on ways to foster resilience in the children in their care.

### **4 things families can do with these resources:**

1. Learn the importance of families in supporting [resilience](#) in their children at home.
2. Watch the [videos](#) to learn about trauma, toxic stress and resilience.
3. Learn about the [effects of trauma](#) on young children.
4. Use the [FLIP IT! Steps](#) to help their children learn about their [feelings, gain self-control, and reduce challenging behaviors at home](#).



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# Trauma & Toxic Stress



[Ted Talk: How trauma affects health across a lifetime!](#) Nadine Burke Harris MD

## The National Child Traumatic Stress Network

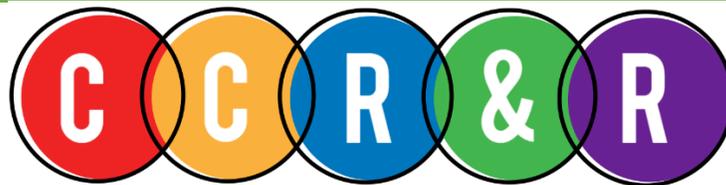
- [What is Child Trauma?](#)
- [What types of trauma affect young children?](#)
- [What populations are at risk for experiencing trauma?](#)
- [Identifying children \(Ages 0-5\) at risk for traumatic stress \(screening checklist\)?](#)

## Center on the Developing Child, Harvard University

- [A Guide to Toxic Stress](#)
- [Toxic Stress Derails Healthy Development](#)
- [In Brief: The Impact of Early Adversity on Children's Development](#)
- [What Are ACEs and How Do They Relate to Toxic Stress? \(Infographic\)](#)



[The Florida State University Center for Prevention & Early Intervention Policy](#) (FSU Center) focuses on infants, toddlers, and their families in the areas of infant mental health, trauma informed care, quality child care and home visiting providing training or direct services funded through state or federal grants. Visit [FloridaTrauma.org](http://FloridaTrauma.org) for resources.



## Resources for Families and Providers

### WHAT ARE ACES? AND HOW DO THEY RELATE TO TOXIC STRESS?

"ACEs" stands for "Adverse Childhood Experiences." These experiences can include things like physical and emotional abuse, neglect, caregiver mental illness, and household violence.

The more ACEs a child experiences, the more likely he or she is to suffer from things like heart disease and diabetes, poor academic achievement, and substance abuse later in life.

### TOXIC STRESS EXPLAINS HOW ACES "GET UNDER THE SKIN."

Experiencing many ACEs, as well as things like racism and community violence, without supportive adults, can cause what's known as **toxic stress**. This excessive activation of the stress-response system can lead to long-lasting wear-and-tear on the body and brain.

The effect would be similar to revving a car engine for days or weeks at a time.

### WE CAN REDUCE THE EFFECTS OF ACES AND TOXIC STRESS.

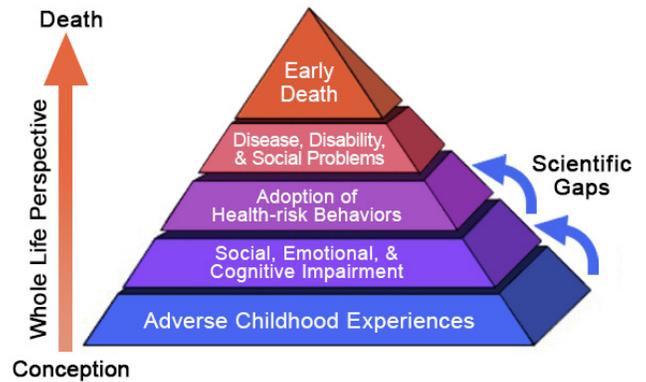
The ideal approach, however, is to prevent the need for these responses by reducing the sources of stress in people's lives. This can happen by helping to meet their basic needs or providing other services.

For those who have experienced ACEs, there are a range of possible responses that can help, including therapeutic sessions with mental health professionals, meditation, physical exercise, spending time in nature, and many others.

Likewise, fostering strong **responsive relationships** between children and their caregivers, and helping children and adults build **core life skills**, can help to buffer a child from the effects of **toxic stress**.

ACEs affect people at all income and social levels, and can have serious, costly impact across the lifespan. No one who's experienced significant adversity (or many ACEs) is irreparably damaged. Though we need to acknowledge trauma's effects on their lives. By reducing families' sources of stress, providing children and adults with responsive relationships, and strengthening the core life skills we all need to adapt and thrive, [we can prevent and counteract lifetime harm.](#)

Center on the Developing Child | HARVARD UNIVERSITY  
Learn more about ACEs from the [Journal for Children and Providers](#)  
For more information: [www.developingchild.harvard.edu/aces](#)



- ❖ [Adverse Childhood Experiences \(SAMHSA\)](#)
- ❖ [Take the ACES Quiz – And Learn What It Does And Doesn't Mean](#)
- ❖ [How Children and Adults Can Build Core Capabilities for Life](#)
- ❖ [How a Child's Brain Develops Through Early Experiences](#)
- ❖ [Adverse Childhood Experiences: ACES](#)
- ❖ [Excessive Stress Disrupts the Architecture of the Developing Brain](#)
- ❖ [In Brief: The Science of Neglect](#)
- ❖ [Trauma-Sensitive Settings and the Devereux Early Childhood Assessment \(DECA\) Program](#)
- ❖ [CDC ACES Infographic](#)



## Resources for Families and Providers

### Trauma Sensitive Approaches for Home & School Video 1 Fact Sheet: Understanding Trauma



#### What is Trauma?

Trauma refers to experiences that cause intense physical and psychological reactions to stress.



It can refer to a single event, multiple events, or a set of circumstances that are physically and/or emotionally harmful or potentially harmful and result in lasting adverse effects on an individual's physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being.<sup>1</sup>

#### What is Traumatic Stress?

Child traumatic stress includes reactions resulting from exposure to one or more traumas over the life course. These reactions persist and affect a child's daily life even after the events have ended. The stress experience may overwhelm a child's ability to cope with daily demands. Responses and symptoms vary but may be more evident when the child is reminded in some way of the traumatic event(s).<sup>2</sup>



#### Causes/Kinds of Trauma



- Natural disasters
- Sexual abuse
- Physical abuse
- Domestic violence
- School violence
- Neglect and deprivation
- Traumatic grief
- Accidents
- Medical injury, illness, or procedures
- Loss of a parent/caregiver
- Exposure to community violence or terrorism

Instead of asking "What's wrong with you?", a more constructive question is "What's happened to you?"

#### Types of Trauma

Acute, Chronic, Complex, Systemic, System Induced



#### Signs of Trauma

Reactions to trauma can include a variety of responses, signs, or symptoms, including:<sup>3</sup>

- Loss of appetite or overeating
- Unexplained irritability or anger
- School avoidance
- Fixation on certain events
- Problems focusing on projects, schoolwork, and conversations
- Regression or loss of skills
- Too much or too little sleep; nightmares
- High levels of worry, trouble with change, or a high level of feeling unsafe
- Angry outbursts, high levels of emotions, or poor focus
- Disruptive, disrespectful, sullen, withdrawn, avoidant, or anxious behaviors
- Physical symptoms, such as aches and pains
- Problems relating to others or forming attachments
- Older children may abuse drugs or alcohol and behave in risky ways



#### Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

The initial ACE study, by the Centers for Disease Control and Kaiser Permanente, identified an association between 10 experiences of childhood maltreatment and later problems with adult health and well-being. The study uses the ACE score, a total count of the number of adverse childhood experiences reported by respondents, to assess the total amount of stress during childhood. The greater the number of ACEs, the greater the risk for the following problems later in life including alcoholism, depression, multiple sexual partners, suicide attempts, smoking and liver disease among other negative health related issues.



Ultimately, this study showed the direct link between childhood trauma and poor health outcomes in adulthood.

ACEs are important because they trigger the fight, flight, or freeze response, which can lead to negative internalizing emotions and externalizing behaviors. The 10 ACEs defined by the study are:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Verbal abuse
- Physical neglect
- Emotional neglect
- Losing a parent to divorce, separation, or other reason
- Witnessing a mother abused
- A family member who is:
  - Depressed or diagnosed with another mental illness
  - Addicted to alcohol or another substance
  - In prison

#### Trauma's Impact on School

When children who experience trauma and traumatic stress operate in a fight, flight, or freeze mode, they may have trouble meeting the demands of school.



Teachers and other school staff may see big, acting-out behaviors. Some children may 'fly under the radar' and use avoidant behaviors. Each child's response to trauma is unique. Educators should look behind the behaviors to determine the student's needs.

<sup>1</sup>1 Cite: US Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.  
<sup>2</sup>2 Cite: National Child Traumatic Stress Network. Note: Traumatic stress is a common term for reactive anxiety and depression, although it is not a medical term and is not included in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM).  
<sup>3</sup>3 Note: Signs of trauma may mimic characteristics of depression or anxiety. Clinical evaluation may be necessary to determine if other diagnosable mental health conditions exist.

Videos are available at [www.FormedFamiliesForward.org](http://www.FormedFamiliesForward.org).



Resources for Families and Providers



### [Helping Foster and Adoptive Parents Cope with Trauma](#)

A Guide for foster and adoptive parents: *Helping Foster and Adoptive Parents Cope with Trauma from the American Academy of Pediatrics*

### [Resources for Families](#)

This page features a number of external and [Formed Families Forward](#) resources on childhood trauma, responding to trauma and trauma-sensitive schools.

### [Resources for Schools](#)

- [Helping Traumatized Children Learn](#)
- [Why We Need Trauma-Sensitive Schools](#)
- [Trauma Training Videos from FFF – Trauma Sensitive Approaches for Home and School](#)
- [The Importance of Relationships](#): Video of Webinar from the Fairfax, Va. Trauma-Informed Care Network



The [Child Care Resource and Referral Dropbox](#) has many more resources on resilience, toxic stress, trauma and trauma-informed care.



*Resources for Families and Providers*

**4 things providers can do with these resources:**

1. Use these resources to provide professional development for staff on the causes and effects of trauma on young children and their families.
2. Examine the center, child care home or learning environment to see if it is “trauma sensitive” for young children.
3. Share family resources with families of young children who have experienced trauma.
4. Have family meetings or workshops for families who have children who have experienced trauma or for parents who have experienced trauma. Use some of the videos or materials during the meetings or invite community partners who support families who have experienced trauma ([SEDNET](#), [Healthy Families](#), [Bright Horizons](#), [FSU Center for Prevention & Early Intervention](#)).

**4 things families can do with these resources:**

1. Learn how to recognize the [signs of toxic stress and trauma](#) in their children.
2. Learn to recognize trauma-sensitive early childhood settings from the [Devereux Center for Resilient Children](#).
3. Read about the [effects of toxic stress on the developing brains](#) of young children.
4. Find out about the [ACES study and the effects of ACES](#) on children as they grow.

