

SUPPORTING YOUTH WITH ACEs: Healing Strategies for Response and Connection

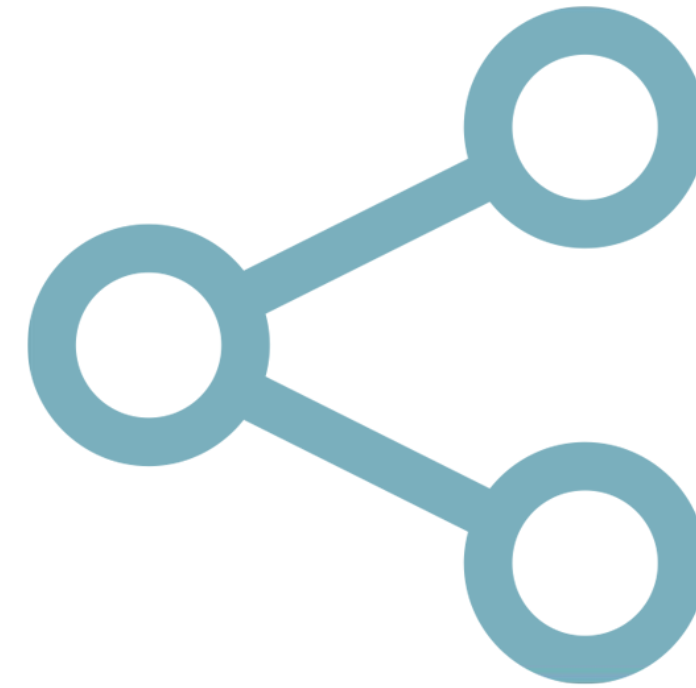




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PUTTING HEALTH CARE IN SCHOOLS

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Supporting Youth with ACEs: Healing Strategies for Response and Connection

UCLA/UCSF ACEs Aware Family Resilience Network (UCAAN)
January 29, 2025

Presenters



Jada Imani Carter

ACEs Aware Young Adult
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Live Beyond Campaign
Advisor



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ACEs Aware Young Adult
Patient Advisor
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Rachel Gilgoff, MD

Child Abuse Pediatrician and
Integrative Medicine Specialist
Senior Clinical and Science
Advisor, ACEs Aware
Adjunct Clinical Faculty,
Stanford

Learning Objectives

1. Describe the role and importance of School-Based Health Centers (SBHC) in supporting youth with Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs).
2. Describe and apply trauma-informed communication strategies with youth in SBHCs.
3. Discuss and apply stress-mitigation strategies with patients and students.
4. Identify examples of community-based support services for stress-mitigation strategies.

Mindful Moment

Reflections and Experiences

- Elementary school SBHC
- Destigmatizing SBHC
- Sexual health
- ACEs
- SBHC as a safe space to decompress
- Unique position of SBHC in the community

Gather Information Using Trauma and Resilience-informed Inquiry for Adversity, Distress, and Strengths (TRIADS)

- A framework to talk to patients about ACEs and create healing relationships
- Evidence-informed practices for screening, provider response, and patient education about ACEs



<https://cthc.ucsf.edu/triads/>

Elements of the TRIADS Approach

Adversity	PEARLS/ACE Score	<u>Review Screening</u> What happened to you? What is happening to you now?
Distress	ACE-Associated Health Conditions (AAHC) Current Stressors	<u>Collect Medical and Social History</u> <u>Perform Physical Exam</u> How is your health? How are you feeling? How are you holding up?
Strengths	Resiliency and Protective Factors Stress Busters	<u>Evaluate Protective Factors</u> Who helps you? What helps you? What has helped in the past?

Example: Using TRIADS to Review Screening

- Provide simple rationale for ACE screening without judgment
 - “We’re learning that difficult experiences that happen to children can affect their health later in life, just like positive experiences can.”
 - “Your answers can help us understand your health better, and we can make decisions together.”
- Normalize adversity
 - “ACEs are really common, so we’re starting to screen everyone.”
- Ask permission, giving the patient the power
 - “Would it be OK if I ask you some questions about your childhood?”
 - “You don’t have to answer any questions that make you feel uncomfortable.”
- Acknowledge with empathy – sometimes this is all you need to do
 - “Wow, that sounds like it was difficult. Thank you for telling me.”
 - “We’re finding these things happen to a lot of people, and there is a connection between what happened to them and their health. Does that resonate with you?”

Example: Using TRIADS to Discuss Medical and Social History

- **Ask about distress/AAHCs; stay curious without judgment**
 - “So how do you think your past experiences are affecting how you’re doing, how you’re feeling, and your overall health today?”
- **Ask about strengths/resilience**
 - “What has helped you in the past? Who has helped you? What/Who is helping you now?”

Recommendations when Working with Youth at SBHCs around ACEs

Stress and trauma can have
a profound impact on a
child's health,
development, and ability
to learn.

IMPACT TO CHILDREN IN SCHOOL

- Lack of school engagement
- Not completing homework
- Absenteeism, repeating a grade
- behavioral/learning disabilities
- increased diagnosis of ADHD
- Impaired executive and relational functioning,
- need for special education

Using Stress Biology to Inform Our Clinical Approach

Clinical Response to ACE Screening



Prevent/Address ACEs & Other Stressors
(External Events and Environment)



Treat Toxic Stress Physiology
(Internal Biology)



Improved health



Address Stressors

- Partner with individuals and communities to lower the stress load

Address Internal Stress Responses

- Skills to calm the stress response in the moment
- Long-term healing strategies and interventions

Improve

- Health and Wellbeing
- Opportunity
- Equity

Source: Gilgoff R, Schwartz T, Owen M, Bhushan D, Burke Harris N. Opportunities to Treat Toxic Stress. *Pediatrics*. 2023 Jan 1;151(1):e2021055591.

Address the Stressors

- Assess current **safety** and provide any needed resources.
- **Anticipate:** What are the stressors and triggers?
 - For example, if loud noises are a stressor, identify quiet spaces, and use sound-canceling headphones.
- Find tools and resources on www.acesaware.org/managestress to support you and your patients.
- Connect to resources using www.findhelp or [your local 2-1-1](#), which can also provide resources, such as housing, child care, and legal services.
- Leverage your networks of care resource list for the resources most often needed in your community.

Trauma-Informed Care Principles

The following key principles of trauma-informed care should serve as a guide for all health care providers and staff:



- Establish the physical and emotional **safety** of patients and health care teams
- **Build trust** between providers/staff and patients/clients
- **Recognize** the signs and symptoms of trauma exposure on physical and mental health
- Provide connections to **peer support**
- Promote **patient-centered, evidence-based care**
- Ensure provider and patient **collaboration**
- Provide care that is sensitive to the patient's/client's **racial, ethnic, and cultural background, and gender identity**

Trauma-Informed Care Principles

What's wrong with
you?



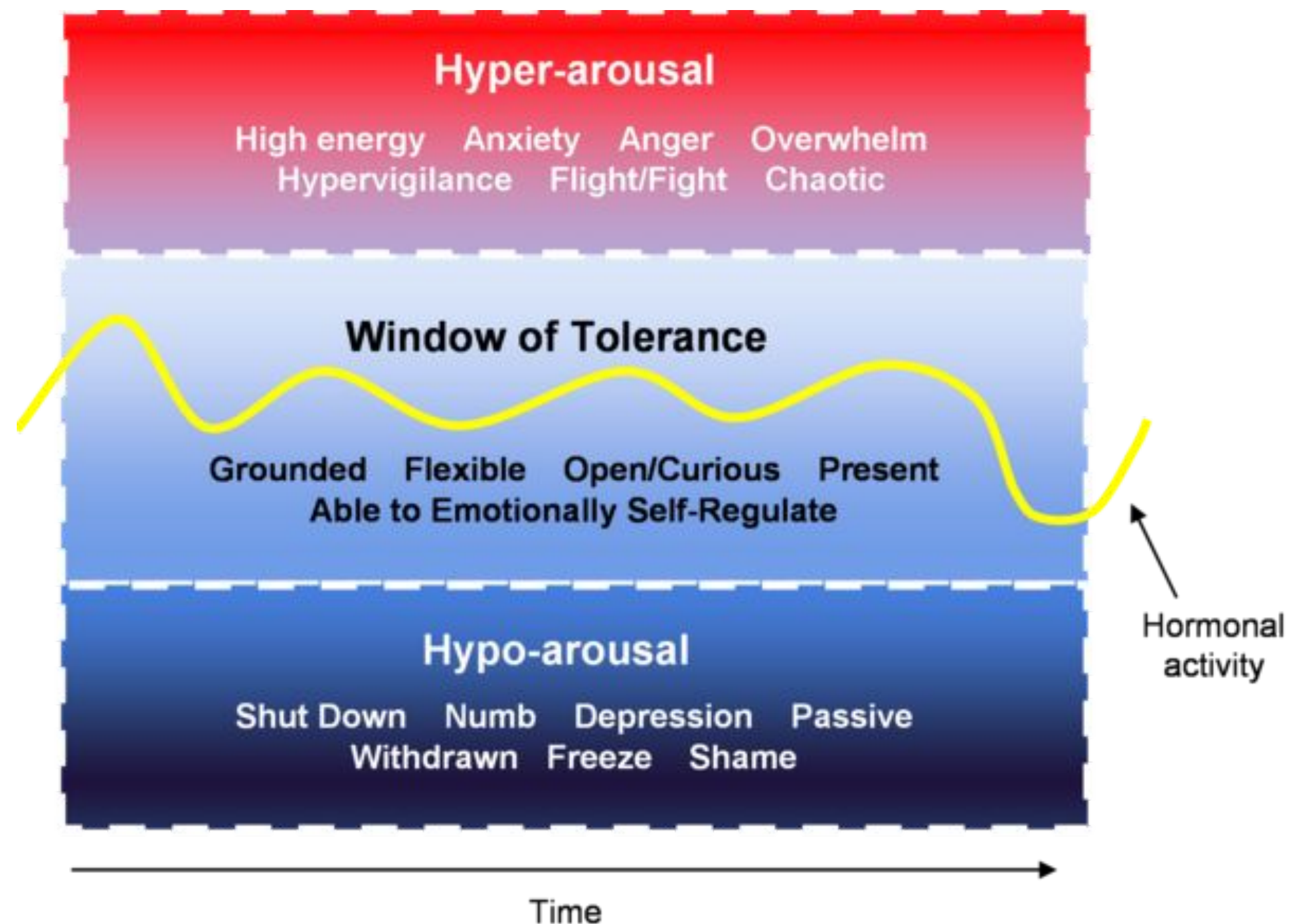
What happened to you?

What's right with you?

What's healing for you?

Immediate Stress Response:

Build skills and coping strategies

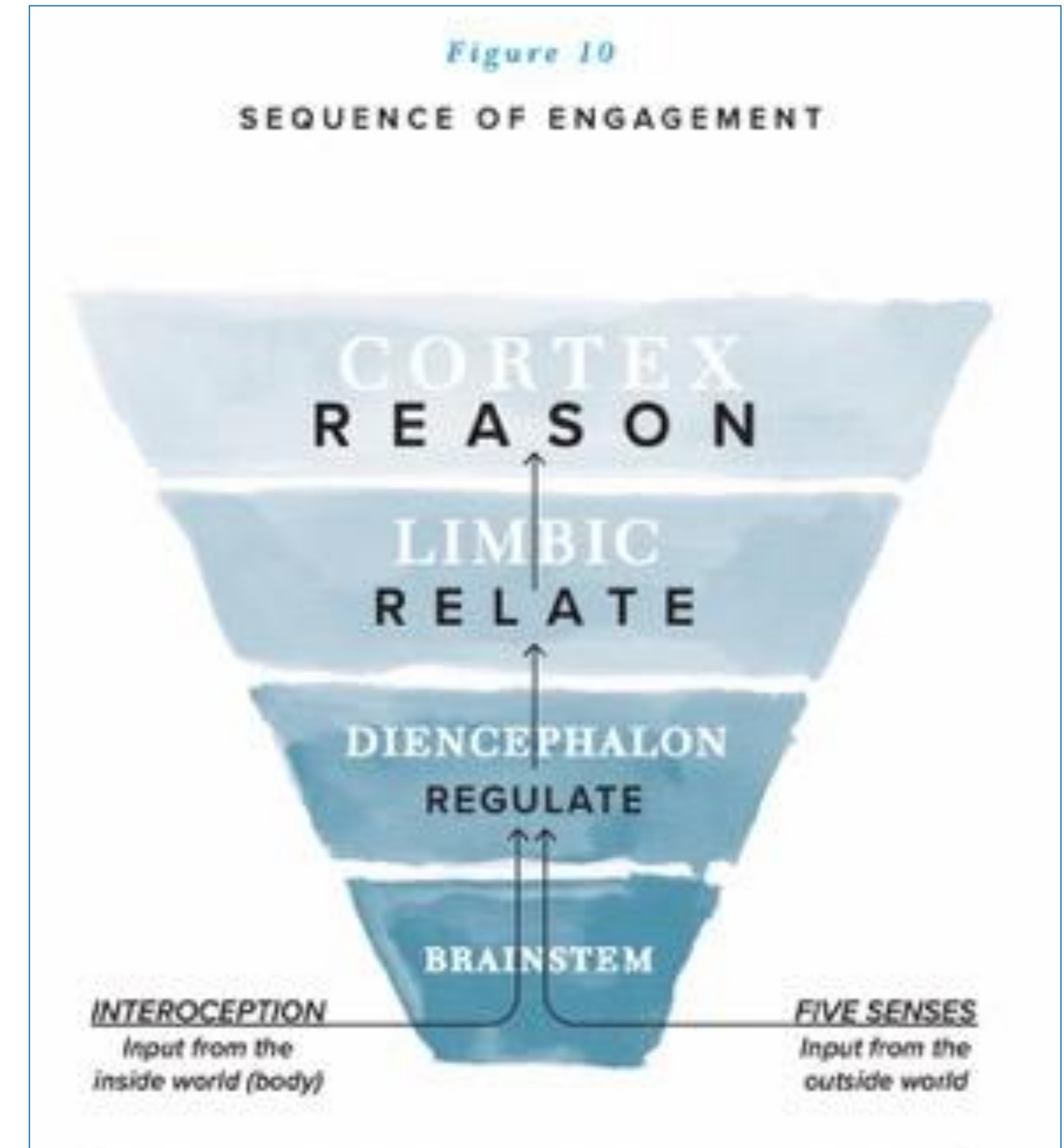


- Grounding techniques
- Breathing techniques
- Sensory support
- Progressive muscle relaxation
- Move your body
- Reach out to your support person

Source: Cole, E. Expanding the "Window of Tolerance" Psychology Today. April 10, 2020

Dr. Bruce Perry's Regulate, Relate, Reason: A Neurosequential Approach

1. Brainstem: First, regulate ourselves and co-regulate the other person. Help them feel safe and calm, reducing their stress responses.
2. Limbic: Then relate to their emotions. Help them feel understood and connected.
3. Cortex: Once the other person feels safe, connected, and understood, engage them to process what happened through reason.



Source: Dr. Bruce Perry. The Neurosequential Model.

Skill Building and Collaborative Problem Solving

- **Behavior as communication:** When children are acting out, they are trying to communicate something.
- **Teach skills:** Often kids who are not doing well cannot do well because they are missing a skill (usually affect regulation). It is not because they need more “motivation,” but they were not taught or modeled these skills.

www.thinkkids.org

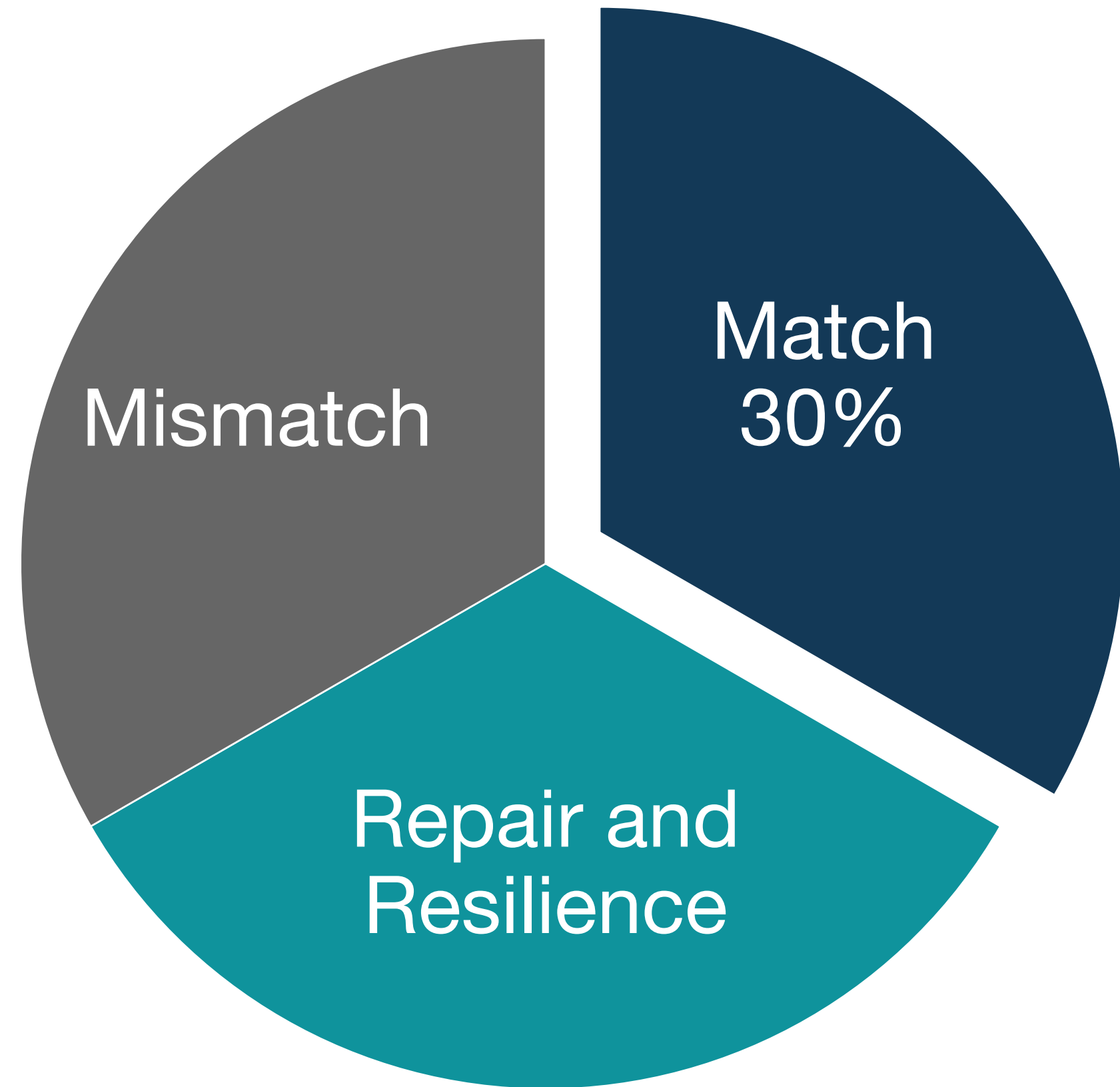
www.livesinthebalance.org

“Kids with challenging behavior don’t lack the *will* to behave well.

**They lack
the *skills* to behave
well.”**

**Collaborative Problem
Solving**

**Mismatch + Repair
=
Connection + Resilience**



Stress Busters as a Framework for Long-Term Healing

Long-Term Healing

Address long-term effects from toxic stress

Consider strategies and interventions that can improve neurologic, endocrine, immune, and metabolic function.

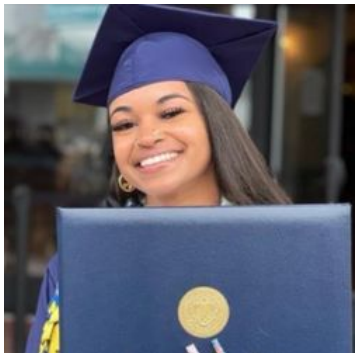


Image Source: Bhushan D et al. Office of the California Surgeon General. Roadmap for Resilience: The California Surgeon General's Report on Adverse Childhood Experiences, Toxic Stress, and Health. Office of the California Surgeon General, 2020

ACEs Aware Youth and Young Adult Council and Young Adult Patient Advisors



Baani Sabharwal



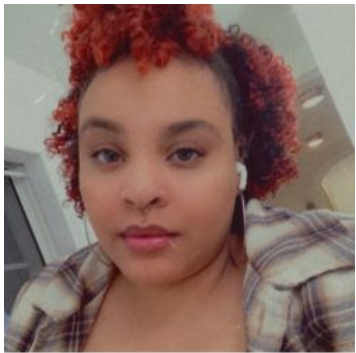
Celeste Walley



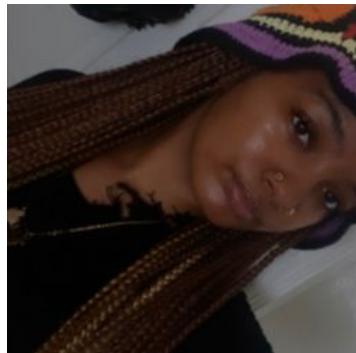
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Christian Jeff Yu Menguito



CiCi Williams



Elita Jasmine Young



Jose Cruz



Josue (Swey) Pineda



Julio Sagastume



Laura Avila



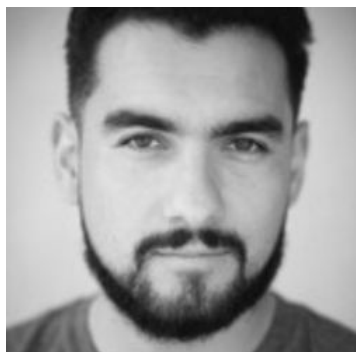
Luis Wualdemar Tun Orozco



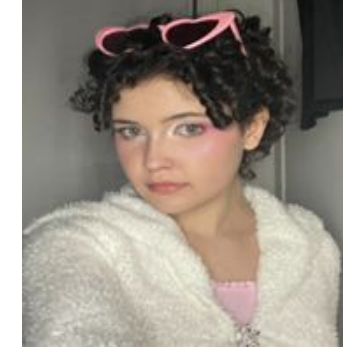
Jada Imani Carter



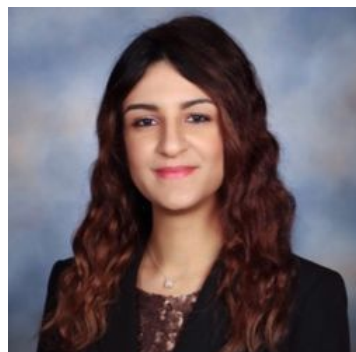
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Ronaldo (Ronnie) Villeda



Juniper Brown



Setareh Harsamizadeh Tehrani



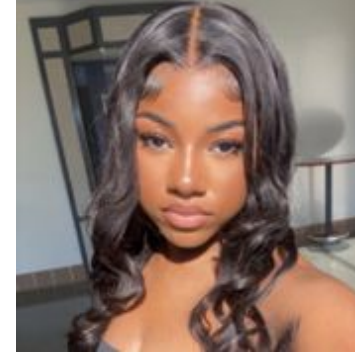
Shae Dellamaggiore



Shamar Knox



Sharon Tang



Zen'ayah (Zee) Finley

- 19% self-identify as non-binary/gender non-conforming
- 14% Asian American and Pacific Islander
- 33% Hispanic/Latinx
- 24% Black/African American
- 10% White
- 4% mixed identities, inclusive of Native American/Alaskan Native and Middle Eastern

Representation from: Alameda, Fresno, Imperial, Los Angeles, Madera, Orange, Sacramento, San Joaquin, San Diego, San Francisco, Santa Barbara, Stanislaus, and Ventura counties

Live Beyond Campaign, Office of the California Surgeon General

Supportive Relationships

- Literacy programs such as "Talk Read Sing" and "Reach Out and Read"
 - Encourage “time in” – with your children, friends and relatives!
 - Universal home visiting
 - Multidisciplinary group clinic visit model
- Connect with community programs, faith programs
 - Support groups
 - Parenting programs: Triple P, Video Interaction Project, Incredible Years
- Mental health, Family Therapy, and targeted dyadic interventions:
 - Couples Counseling, EFT and Gottman, Attachment and Biobehavioral Catch-up (ABC), Child-Parent Psychotherapy (CPP), and Parent-Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT)

Balanced Nutrition

- Stress can INCREASE or DECREASE appetite
 - Stress can increase cravings for high-fat and high-sugar foods
 - Western diet associated with increased inflammation
 - Anti-inflammatory diet: fruit, vegetables, fish, whole grains
- Consider Omega-3 Fatty Acid supplementation
 - Trauma-informed weight loss programs
 - Tie into other domains - eat with family and friends, physical activity, mindful eating
 - Nutritionist or Dietician support
- Referral to a specialist

Physical Activity

- Physical activity - improved memory, attention, cognition, mental health, immune function
 - May help promote the positive stress response, metabolize increased energy associated with anxiety or stress, and increase resilience factors
- Brief physical activity breaks to release excess energy
 - Moderate-intensity aerobic activity, for longer durations, three times or more a week
 - Activities that combine physical activity with self-regulation skills and breathing techniques, such as martial arts and yoga, may also be beneficial
- Low mood and stress have been identified as barriers to exercising; professional support may help patients overcome these barriers.

Mindfulness Interventions

- Nonjudgmental, moment-to-moment awareness that involves attention, intention, and a kind attitudeCan support trauma healing and regulation of stress
 - Improved cardiovascular and immune health
- Online resources and downloadable apps
 - UCLA Mindful, Mindfulness Coach, Sesame Street in Communities
 - Other mind-body practices: including tai chi, yoga, acupuncture, breathing techniques, and massage therapy
- Mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR) and Mindfulness Based Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (MB-CBT)

Experiencing Nature

- Parks, local green spaces, playgrounds, and even indoor plants.
 - Decreases diabetes, depression, heart rate, blood pressure, and mortality
 - Calms the stress response system and increases healthy behaviors such as physical activity, mindfulness, and relational health
- Park Prescriptions! Visit [Parkrx.org](https://parkrx.org), and the [Children and Nature Network](#)
 - Encourage green space.
 - Providers can recognize that there may be cultural, community, and policy barriers to equal access to nature. Access to nature is a social justice health issue.
- Referral to ecotherapy or adventure-based treatment programs.

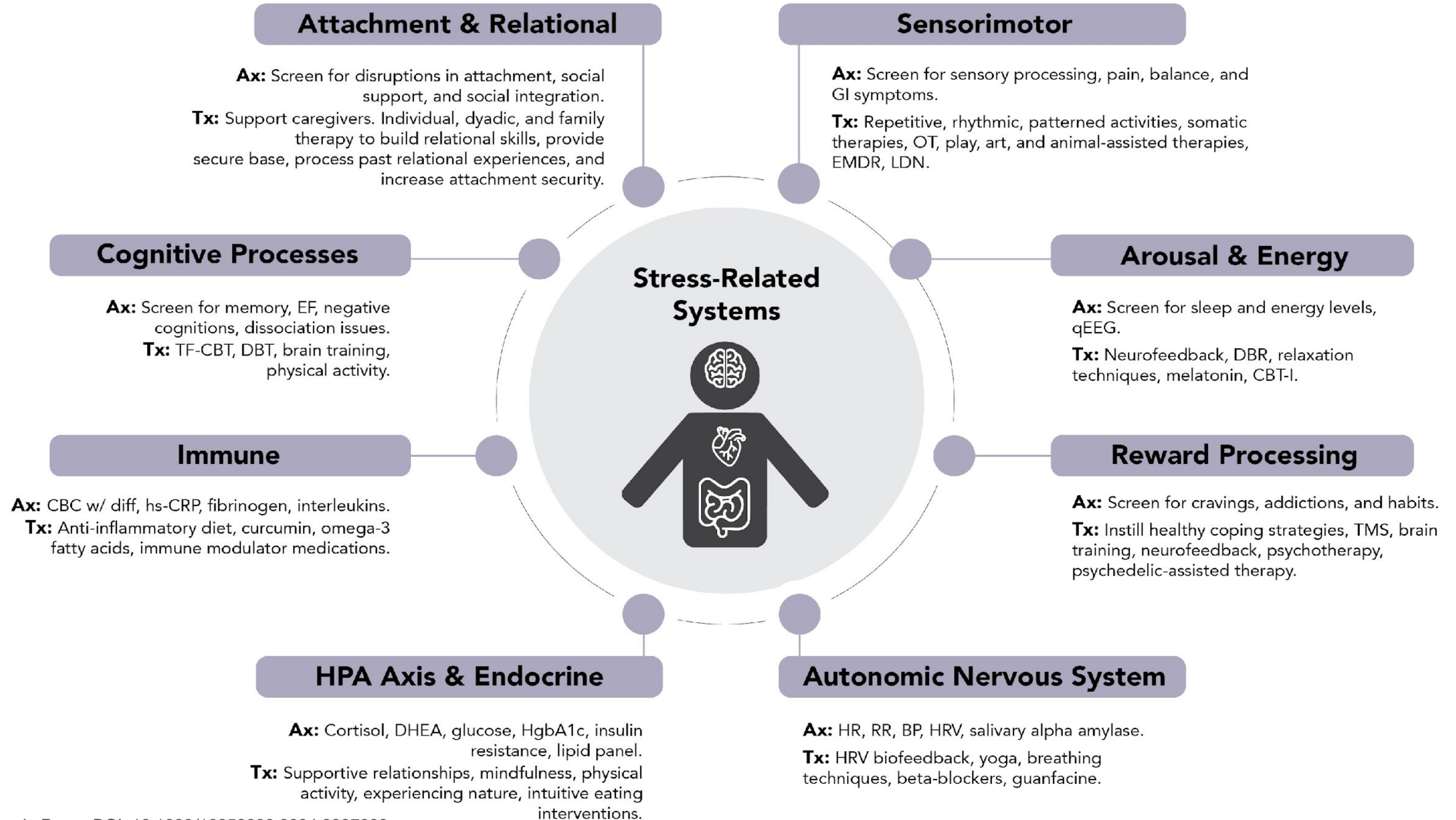
Quality Sleep

- Sleep disturbances are common.
 - Healthy sleep can improve neurological, endocrine, metabolic and immune regulation
 - Sleep hygiene
- Additional support: night light, weighted blanket, relaxation techniques, journaling, or conversations with a trusted adult/friend to address specific worries.
 - Meditation, yoga, exercise during the day
- Medications
 - Sleep study and referral to sleep specialist
 - Referral to mental health for cognitive-behavioral therapies.

Mental and Behavioral Health

- Decrease stigma
 - Talk about everyday practices that can support mental health and well-being: gratitude, fun-time, activities that provide meaning and purpose, stress busters
- Address barriers to mental health services (access, engagement, stigma)
 - Teach coping skills to widen the window of tolerance
 - Teach Dr. Bruce Perry's 3 Rs
- Consider the underlying stress biology to inform trauma-responsive treatment plan
 - Medications

Stress Phenotyping Framework



Recommendations when Working with Youth at SBHCs around ACEs

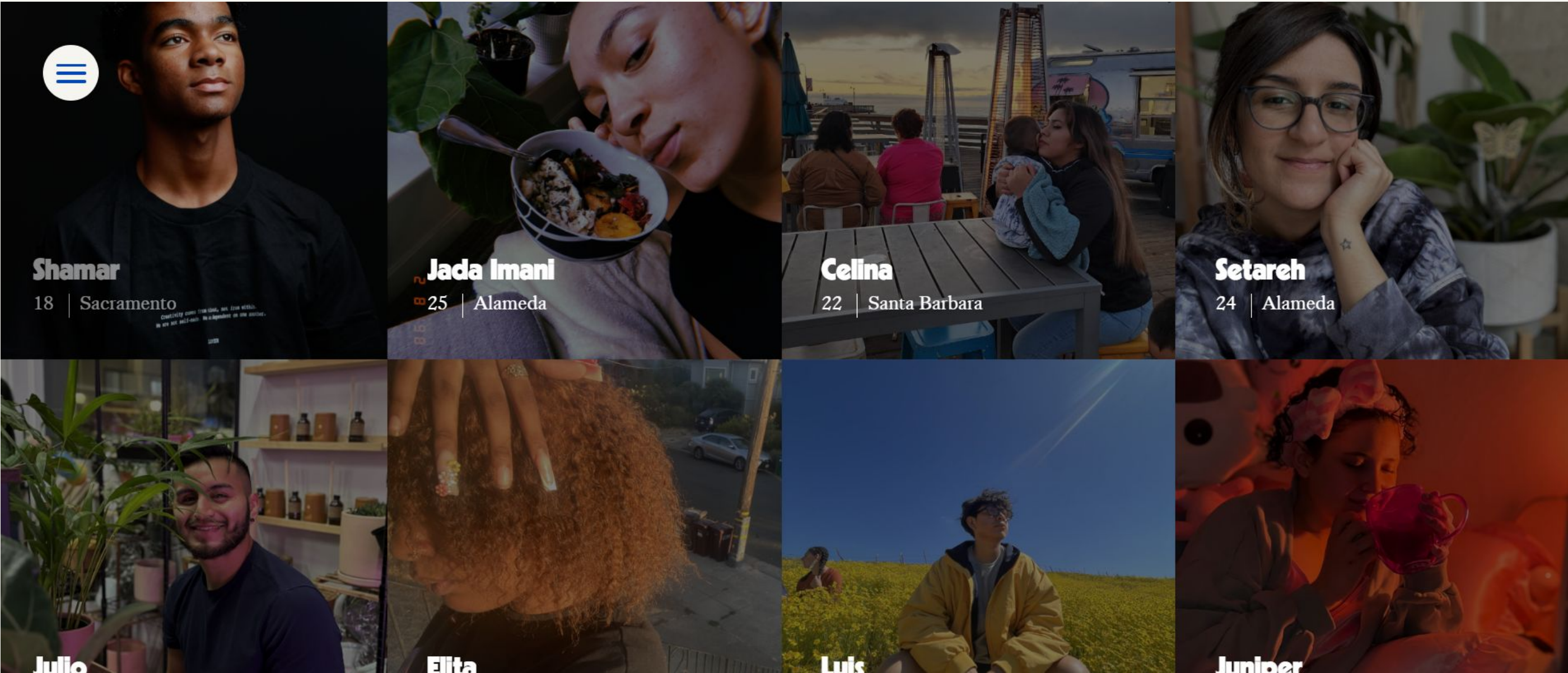
livebeyondCA.org campaign site featuring youth stories!



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26 posts 306 followers 69 following

Live Beyond
California's campaign to support healing from the im
journey today.
[livebeyondca.org](#) + 1



Personal Stories - Julio



Instagram Caption:
Young people all over are experiencing the impacts of ACEs. Meet Julio, a 24-year-old from LA County talk about the moment he realized how ACEs were impacting him.

You can read more about Julio's journey at the link in our bio.



Safe Spaces

Foundations of Trauma-Informed
Practice for Educational & Care Settings



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Resources for the Clinical Response to ACE Screening

STRESS BUSTERS



STRESS BUSTERS

Supportive Relationships

Quality Sleep

Balanced Nutrition

Physical Activity

Mindfulness Practices

Experiencing Nature

Mental Healthcare

Stress Busters: Seven Ways to Manage Stress

We all have stress in our lives, but did you know that using strategies to manage stress, or prevent it in the first place, can help us live healthier and longer lives?

Stress Busters are seven ways you can manage your day-to-day stress as well as counter toxic stress from Adverse Childhood Experiences. All Stress Busters have been shown to improve brain health and immune function and balance stress hormones. See which ones might work best for you and the people you care about.

Check out Stress Buster tips and strategies in our new patient handouts, and find additional resources on the individual Stress Buster webpages listed below.

[READ THE STRESS BUSTERS OVERVIEW HANDOUT](#)

More information and resources on the seven Stress Buster strategies:



SUPPORTIVE RELATIONSHIPS



QUALITY SLEEP



BALANCED NUTRITION



PHYSICAL ACTIVITY



MINDFULNESS PRACTICES



EXPERIENCING NATURE



MENTAL HEALTHCARE

Go to acesaware.org/managestress to find:

- Patient handouts
- Online course for providers
- Short videos
- Crisis and safety resources
- And more!



ACEs Aware Resources

Website:

- www.ACEsAware.org

Social Media Channels



[@acesaware](https://twitter.com/acesaware)



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Comments and Questions

<https://www.acesaware.org/contactus/>

questions@acesaware.org

rachelgilgoffmd@gmail.com

CSHA WEBINARS

ACES Aware Series Webinar #1: Healing Starts Here: Addressing ACEs in School-Based Health Centers

October 1, 2024

- [Slides](#) and [Recording](#)

Supporting LGBTQ+ Students Through Increased Hate

Thursday, February 6, 11:00 am-12:00 pm Pacific

- [Registration Link](#)



FREE RESOURCES AVAILABLE



[www.schoolhealthcenters.org/
our-work/](http://www.schoolhealthcenters.org/our-work/)

The cover of the "From Vision to Reality" toolkit. It has a red and white color scheme. At the top is the California School-Based Health Alliance logo. The main title "FROM VISION TO REALITY:" is in white on a red background, followed by the subtitle "How to Build a School Health Center from the Ground Up" in white.

VISION TO REALITY

From Vision to Reality, our toolkit on starting a school-based health center (SBHC), is a comprehensive resource for anyone seeking to expand health services for students.

The cover of the "Planning a School-Based Health Center: Key Steps" overview. It features a photograph of a group of people, including children and adults, working together to plant a tree in a dirt area. The title "Planning a School-Based Health Center: Key Steps" is at the top.

KEY STEPS TO PLANNING

The first steps of establishing a new school-based health and wellness center can feel daunting. Our Key Steps to Planning overview outlines the high-level activities to get started.

An icon consisting of a blue square with a white checklist and a pencil, positioned above a yellow school building with a red roof and a heart with a cross inside.

BEST PRACTICES CHECKLIST

The Best Practices Checklist is designed to help school-based health and wellness center staff identify areas where they can strengthen their practices and improve the quality and sustainability of services.

STAY CONNECTED

 schoolhealthcenters.org

 info@schoolhealthcenters.org

 [sbh4ca](https://twitter.com/sbh4ca)

 [sbh4ca](https://www.instagram.com/sbh4ca)

Gracias

謝謝

Thank you

Cảm ơn

Salamat

Amy Blackshaw, Behavioral Health Project Director



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