FACILITATING RESILIENCE FOR YOUTH WITH SIGNIFICANT BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CHALLENGES

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RESILIENCY AN EXPECTATION

• Resiliency is an EXPECTATION and not an exception for youth with significant emotional and/or behavioral challenges

• Resiliency is an ordinary process available to all youth (Ann Masten)

“The question is not whether we can afford to invest in every child; it is whether we can afford not to.”
Mariann Wright Edelman

RESILIENCY DEFINITION (RESILIENCY LEADERSHIP OHIO)

• Resiliency is an inner capacity that when nurtured, facilitated, and supported by others—empowers children, youth, and families to successfully meet life’s challenges with a sense of self-determination, mastery, hope, and well-being.

Nurtured
Facilitated
Supported
Family, Faith & Friends
Services, Supports, & Accommodations
Community Education, Opportunities, Resources, & Safety

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RESILIENCY PROTECTIVE FACTORS
[R. FRIEDMAN; A. MASTEN]

- Positive connections and supportive relationships in key life domains
  - Positive parenting: structure, predictability, clear expectations, and positive communication
  - Adult mentors
  - Peer social peers and activities

- Competencies: Skills, Abilities, Talents
  - Problem solving skills
  - Emotional regulation skills

- Contribution: Giving back to others
- Hope and optimism: Positive view of self and future
- Expectations that maximize potential: Realistic and achievable expectations.

BUILDING BLOCKS OF RESILIENCY

WELL-BEING
- Quality of Life
- Hope and Optimism (Future Orientation)
- Sense of Meaning and Joy

MASTERY
- Competencies: Self Wisdom: Courage and Confidence
- “What I know and what I can do”

CONNECTIONS
- Positive Connections & Supports
- Expectations that Maximize Potential
- Contribution and Participation

BASIC NEEDS & RESOURCES
- “What I need”
- Basic Needs and Resources: Validation; Sanctity; Justice

RESILIENCY COMPONENTS

- Consistency
- Safety
- Social Skills
- Self-Regulation
- Charismatic Adults
- Social Peer Group
- Chores & Tasks
- Greater Good
• Competence in developmental tasks at one age forecasts good future development
• Resilience tends to endure
• Competence beget competence
• Emerging adulthood may be an important window of opportunity for changing direction
• Late resilience is possible

_It is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men._
Frederick Douglass

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**POWER OF DEVELOPMENTAL ASSETS**

  - External Assets: Positive, structured growth environments
  - Internal Assets: the values, skills, and self-perceptions needed for self-regulation

The more assets the greater the reduction of risk behaviors

The more assets the better protection

Holds true across race and culture

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**THE POWER OF ASSETS TO PREVENT**

[MARC MANNES, SEARCH INSTITUTE]

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Calculating the estimated probabilities of attempting suicide for adolescents with increasing numbers of risk and protective factors revealed that the presence of 3 protective factors reduced the risk of a suicide attempt by 70% to 85% for each of the gender and racial/ethnic groups, including those with and without identified risk factors.

PROTECTIVE FACTORS FOR PREVENTING SUICIDE

SUCIDE PREVENTION RESOURCE CENTER

- External constraints: Safe environments (home, school, & community); Safety proofing access to highly lethal means of suicide

- Supportive connections: with family, school, peers, community, and with medical and mental health care relationships; Social supports are even more important for LGBT youth

- Individual skills: problem solving; conflict resolution; handling problems in a non-violent way; emotional regulation and distress tolerance

- Internal constraints: Cultural and religious beliefs that discourage suicide and support self-preservation; hope and futures orientation

- Effective and accessible clinical care: for mental, physical, and substance use disorders; Easy access to a variety of clinical interventions

MULTIPLE INTERVENTIONS TO COUNTER MULTIPLE RISKS

(PBERGROFF, GUTMAN, AND PECK, 2003)

- Interventions need to be as complex as the multiplicity of risk factors and contexts.
- Most interventions in single domains have not produced major reductions in problem behaviors.
- Most youth experience multiple risks in multiple social contexts, so, interventions need to address all the social contexts in which the risks occur.
- Target factors that promote resiliency and healthy development – not just risk factors and illness (Hobfoll)

BOTH THE PERSON AND THE CONTEXT MATTER

(PETER BENSON ET AL., 2006, SEARCH INSTITUTE)

- Both the person and the context matter: Avoid focusing only on building young people’s skills or only changing the environment or contextual variables; the best results occur with simultaneous efforts to do both.
- Build compensatory strengths: Strengths in one area may compensate for challenges in another.
- Build assets across settings: Build in redundancy.

Peter Benson et al., 2006, Search Institute
RESILIENCY IN CONTEXT

School +
-
-

Informal Supports +
-
-

Family +
-
-

Peers +
-
-

Youth

Community +
-
-

Work +
-
-

= Protective Factors
- = Risk Factors

PROJECT COMPETENCE LONGITUDINAL STUDY
MASTEN & TELLEGEN, 2012

• Harm reduction strategies
  • Reduce or eliminate exposure to trauma and risk environments before damaging effects on development can occur.
• Mobilize or improve adaptive systems
  • Increase protective influences: Systemic, relational, and contextual
    • Attachment relationships (supportive adults): positive connections
    • Parenting skills and stability
    • Positive schools and neighborhoods
• Interventions that target assets or resources
  • Competence begets competence: initiate positive developmental cascades.
    • Self-efficacy, mastery motivation, competencies
    • Emotional or behavioral self-regulation
    • Problem-solving ability
  • Tailor interventions to susceptibilities or strengths of the person. Strategic accommodation and optimization of resources and skills

Translating Resiliency into Practice

Asset Building, Futures Orientation, and Meaningful Contribution

Establish Positive Connections & Functional Success Through Relational Support & Strategic
STABILIZE, REDUCE RISKS, PLAN FOR SAFETY
FIRST, ACT TO PREVENT OR LIMIT RESOURCE LOSS.
STEVEN HOBFOLL, PH.D.

- Stabilization: Protect the resources the youth and family already have
  - Prevent a chain reaction of negative life events (Mark Katz)
- Build resources and supports where they are needed
  - Basic needs
  - Develop safety net of supports
- Establish basic safety
  - Create trauma-free recovery environments
  - Crisis stabilization
  - Safety planning
- Reduce risk factors
  - Decrease risk generating environments and people (e.g., negative peers)

RESILIENCY-ORIENTED ENGAGEMENT
Validation and Cultural Competency

RESILIENT MINDSETS

- Mindsets are the assumptions and expectations we have for ourselves and others that guide our behavior and interactions.
- Resilient Mindsets can help those who touch the hearts and minds of children and youth with special needs.
  - Brooks, 2012
BELIEFS OF RESILIENT MINDSETS

• My mistakes are experiences from which to learn.
• I have a sense of humor, including being able to laugh at, but not ridicule, myself.
• I appreciate and am comfortable with others who can help and support me.
• I can solve problems & make decisions.
• I can make a positive difference in the world.
• I know my strengths, but don’t avoid my problems.

PRACTICE RESILIENT MINDSETS: BROOK’S 3 C’S

• Commitment
  • Discover what brings purpose to your life and work for it.
• Challenge
  • Interpret difficult situations as opportunities.
• Control
  • Focus your time and energy on areas in which you have influence

CONNECTIONS

• Be a charismatic adult
• Engagement
• Naming
• Check-ins & Check-outs
  • Feeling Charts
  • Ball Toss
  • Weather Report
  • Thumb Voting
  • News Update
  • Continuums
SUPPORTING PEOPLE FROM A RESILIENCY-ORIENTED PERSPECTIVE

• Honor personal expertise
• Appreciative perspective: Families are doing the best they can do, given their current abilities and life circumstances.
• Validation: The youth and family are validated for their expertise, courage, efforts, and persistence
• Valuing: Understand and respect the unique beliefs, values, customs, languages, abilities, traditions, and life experiences
• Respectful Humility: Be a student of the family’s culture
• Provide Hope: Foster the possibility of hope and a positive future

APPRECIATIVE PERSPECTIVE (FAMILIES)

• What would you want someone on the outside to know so they could better understand how hard it is for you right now?
• What are some special qualities about you that people don’t always see?
• You are an expert on your family. What can you tell me that will help us develop solutions to the current problem?

RELATIONAL SUPPORT STRATEGIES

• Much of the impact of community comes from adults outside young people’s own families. Recent research has documented clearly the value of formal mentoring relationships for young people. Unfortunately, the limited evidence suggests that only 15% of young people report experiencing a “rich” level of relationships with adults other than their parents (Benson et al., 2006, Insights and Evidence)
• Utilize wraparound/child and family teaming process to identify and link youth with positive adult mentors in his or her life
• Utilize a resource and support focused Genogram to identify relatives who can provide support to the youth and/or family
• Utilize therapy process to facilitate nurturing and supportive relationships in all aspects of the youth’s life
• Create youth and family safety net of resources and supports (formal and informal) in multiple areas of the youth and family’s life: Family, Faith, and Friends
RELATIONAL SUPPORT STRATEGIES: SCHOOLS

“Success experiences are to mastery as failure is to learned helplessness.” Mark Katz

• Identify personal champion for youth at school and develop support plan involving them.
• Hold a school and family meeting to facilitate positive connections and relationships.
• Develop a plan for school to notify parent of positive behaviors at school.
• Increase behavioral successes—Mark Katz
• Changing people’s perspective on mental illness (stigma busting: education)

CREATE A SAFETY NET OF FORMAL & INFORMAL RESOURCES & SUPPORTS

• Who is available to the family for support?
  • Family, faith, friends, neighbors, etc.
• For what purpose?
  • Respite
  • Support (Emotional, Informational, Practical)
  • Basic Needs
• Under what circumstances?
  • Assess for extended family support burnout
  • Focus on building/re-building natural support systems
  • Resource and Support Genogram
  • Social Support Network Map (Betsy Tracey)
• How does the family support each other?
  • Facilitate nurturing and supportive family relationships

REWARDS AND CONSEQUENCES

RULES FOR UNRULY CHILDREN, R. MUNGER

• Basic privileges are things such as shelter, food, clothing and love, which should not be contingent upon certain behaviors. Basic food and clothing does not refer to desserts, snacks, or designer labels.
• Growth privileges are activities such as church activities, athletics, Scouts, etc. which contribute to the child’s pro-social development and should not be taken away.
• Optional privileges are any reinforcer that is not a growth privilege. Optional privileges can be given as a reward for good behavior and withheld as a punishment for problem behavior.
WHAT CAN YOU DO?
NEVER LOOK DOWN ON ANYBODY UNLESS YOU'RE HELPING HIM UP. JESSE JACKSON

- Be part of the youth’s safety net of supports and sanctuary
- Create safe environments
- Validate youth and family
- Facilitate nurturing and supportive relationships and positive connections
- Foster hope and futures orientation
- Identify and promote youth’s strengths, abilities, and talents
- Build coping skills
- Create contexts where youth can be successful (strategic accommodations): “Children do well if they can.” (Ross Greene)
- Help reduce stigma
- Establish realistic expectations based on functional abilities
- Increase behavioral successes—Mark Katz
- Facilitate opportunities for positive contributions, leadership, and giving back

RESILIENCY BUILDING BLOCKS

- Attachment
- Self-Regulation
- Competency

“Treating Traumatic Stress in Children and Adolescents: How to Foster Resilience through Attachment, Self-Regulation, and Competency”
Braunstein & Kiviruohut, 2010
ATTACHMENT INTERVENTIONS
• Caregiver Affect Management
  • Deep Breathing
  • Muscle Relaxation
  • Breaks
• Attunement
  • Feeling Charades
  • Child-directed Play

ATTACHMENT INTERVENTIONS
• Consistent Caregiver Response
  • Behavior Skills Training
  • Homework
• Routines and rituals
  • ID Trouble Spots
  • Create Routines

SELF-REGULATION INTERVENTIONS
• Affect Identification
  • Feelings Flashcards
  • Feelings Charades
  • Body Awareness
  • My Feelings book
SELF-REGULATION INTERVENTIONS

• Modulation
• Emotion scales
• Anger Thermometer
• Feeling Pie
• Toolbox
• Alternating States
  • Slo-Mo
  • Red Light, Green Light

SELF-REGULATION INTERVENTIONS

• Affect Expression
• Circles of Trust
• Feelings Detective
• Personal Bubble
• I Statements

COMPETENCY INTERVENTIONS

• Strengthen Executive Functioning
  • ABCDE Problem Solving
• Self-development & Identity
  • All About Me book
  • Pride Wall
“The great danger I see in the idea of resilience is in expecting children to overcome deprivation and danger on their own... There is no magic here; resilient children have been protected by the actions of adults, by good nurturing, by their assets, and by opportunities to succeed. We cannot stand by as the infrastructure for child development collapses in this nation, expecting miracles.”

Quote from Dr. Ann Masten

SUMMARY

- Trauma effects the brain
- Resiliency can overcome trauma
- Resiliency can be nurtured, facilitated and supported

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