Learning Session #2: Impact of COVID on children's social-emotional development

April 19, 2022
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Care Transformation Collaborative of RI

This program is brought to you through the Medicaid Pediatric Healthcare Recovery Program and funded through American Rescue Plan Act Funds for RI

Agenda

Topic	Duration
Welcome, Learning Objectives, Pedi PRN	5 minutes
Understanding social-emotional (SE) development	20 minutes
Impact of COVID-19 pandemic on SE development	20 minutes
Supporting caregivers in supporting healthy SE development in context of COVID-19 pandemic	20 minutes
Cases/Examples *Group*	15 minutes

CTC-RI Conflict of Interest Statement

Session presenters have no financial relationships with a commercial entity producing healthcare-related products used on or by patients.

If CME credits are offered, all relevant financial relationships of those on the session planning committee have been disclosed and, if necessary, mitigated.

Learning Objectives

- Describe the primary tasks and goals of children's social-emotional development

- Understand the kinds of developmental tasks that have been impacted by the pandemic across children of different ages

- Develop strategies to help parents mitigate the effects of the pandemic on their children's development

PediPRN Enrollment/Access to Newsletter

Enrollment
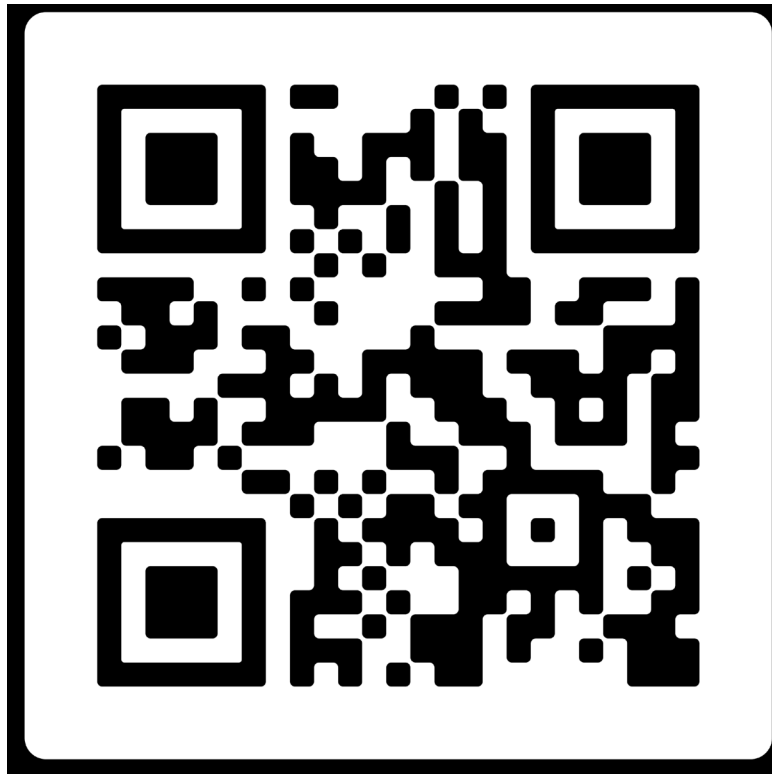
Newsletter

What do we mean by social-emotional dev't?

SE Development

- Learning to understand, express, regulate emotions
- Learning to develop social skills and healthy relationships

How is this achieved?

- Consistency
  - Routines
  - Caregiver responses/expectations
- Exposure/experience with peers
  - Positive and negative
- Positive adult relationships
  - Response to distress
  - Positive discipline/teaching
  - Security

All areas of development are connected…

Physical Development
- Strong, healthy bodies
- Fine & large motor skills
- Stress management
- Coordination
- Physical confidence
- Agility

Cognitive Development
- Scientific & mathematical thinking
- Research & inquiry skills
- Independent thinking
- Language skills
- Literacy skills

Play Develops Children Four Ways

Social Development
- Cooperation
- Negotiation
- Collaboration
- Socialization
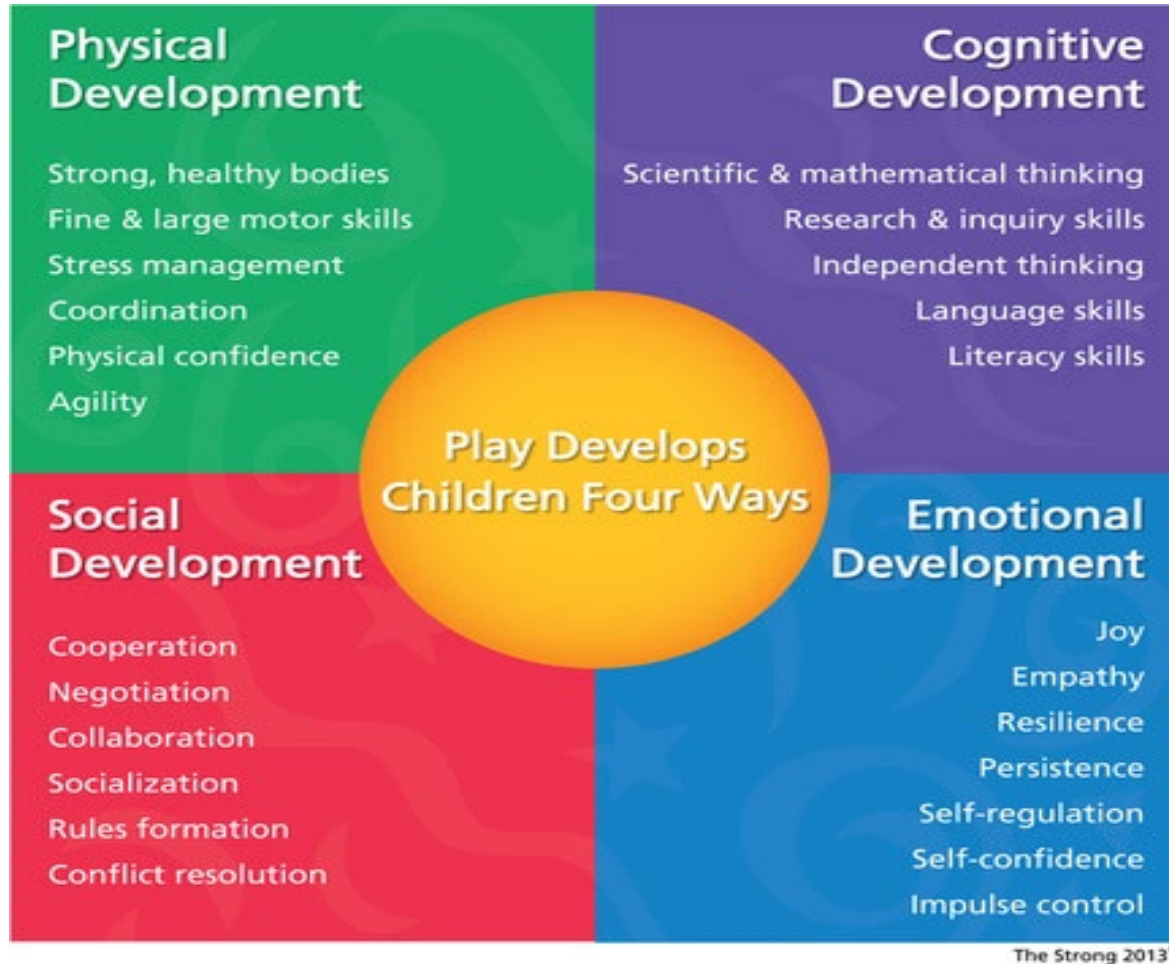- Rules formation
- Conflict resolution

Emotional Development
- Joy
- Empathy
- Resilience
- Persistence
- Self-regulation
- Self-confidence
- Impulse control

The Strong 2013®

- Physical exploration is connected to cognitive development
  - E.g. Problem solving, understanding physical properties of the world

- Language development is connected to emotional development
  - E.g. Developing emotion vocabulary

- Cognitive development is connected to social development
  - E.g. Being able to consider an alternative perspective

Challenges *everyone* faced during the pandemic

- Disrupted routines

- Separation/isolation

- Missed important events

- Increased anxiety/insecurity

- Unmet medical needs

- Reliance on technology, increased "screen time" for all kids

Additional stressors that *some* families faced

- Family member/loved one sick with COVID

- Long COVID

- Family member/loved one died of COVID

- Critical unmet medical needs

- Financial strain/job loss/eviction

- Food insecurity

- Child abuse/neglect

- Substance use

Toxic Stress

Equity

Sources of Traumatic Stress
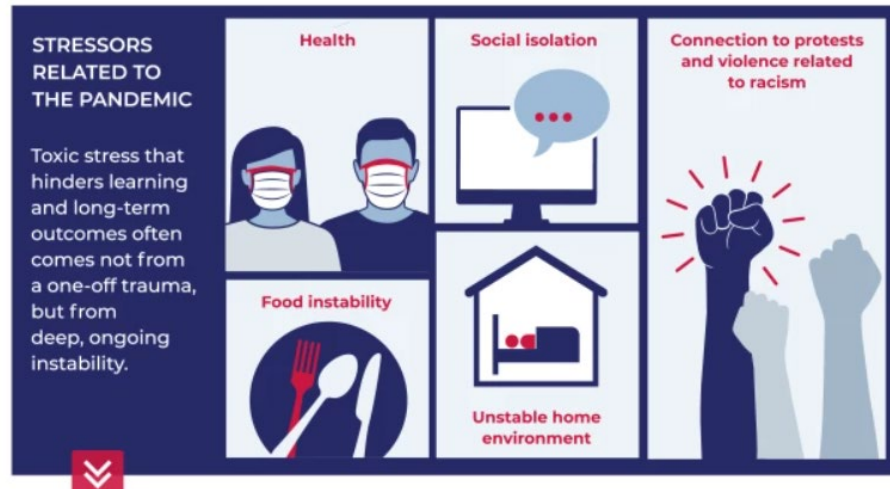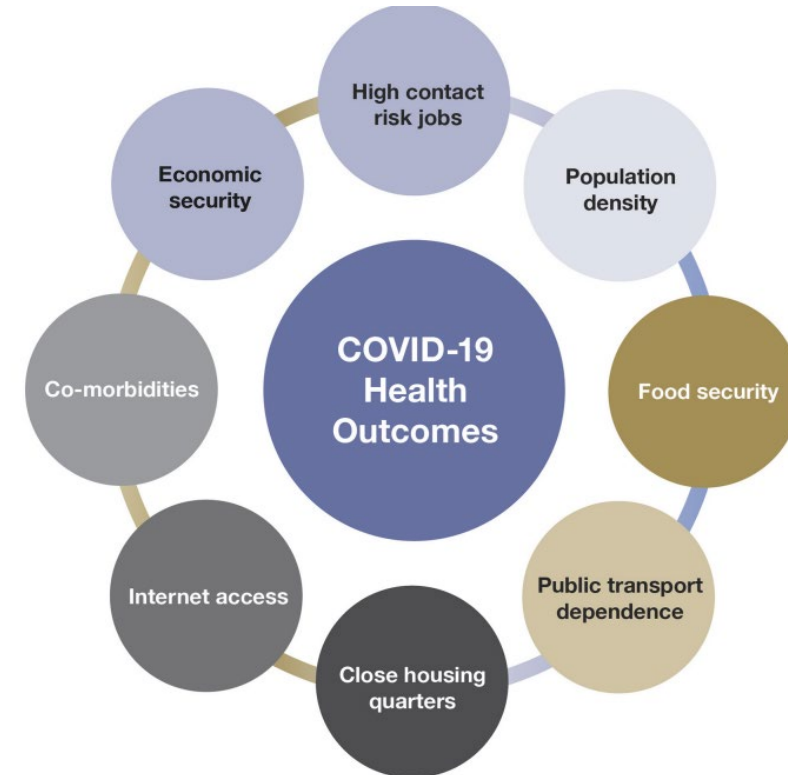
Let's not forget the positives!

- More time with family, less time/stress commuting

- Educational (and work) innovations using technology

- Families had to be resourceful, resilient, and figure out how to cope

Any/all of these could have a positive impact on children's development

Society has to help kids heal, not just parents

School Response

U.S. Department of Education

Search...

| Student Loans | Grants | Laws |

U.S. Department of Education Releases New Resource on Supporting Child and Student Social, Emotional, Behavioral and Mental Health during COVID-19 Era
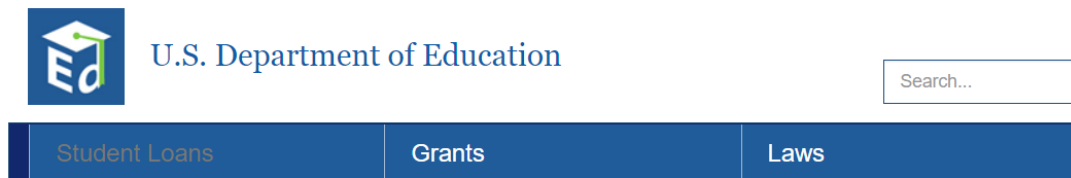
OCTOBER 19, 2021

Mental health Response

AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION SERVICES, INC.

Written Testimony
of
Arthur C. Evans, Jr., PhD
Chief Executive Officer
American Psychological Association

Putting Kids First: Addressing COVID-19's Impacts on Children

Before the U.S. House of Representatives
House Committee on Energy and Committee
Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations

September 22, 2021

School Response

Key evidence-based practices that maximize students' social, emotional, and academic benefits include:

- Creating a framework for meeting students' social, emotional, and academic needs;

- Building strong and trusting relationships among students, families, and educators;

- Establishing safe, positive, and stable environments;

- Explicitly teaching critical social, emotional, and academic skills;

- Actively engaging students in meaningful and culturally and linguistically relevant learning experiences rooted in high academic expectations for all students;

- Providing supportive and specific feedback to encourage skill growth across all domains;

- Providing access to support from school counselors, psychologists, and trusted staff members; and

- Establishing building-level wellness teams to address the SEL needs of both students and staff.

https://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/us-department-education-releases-new-resource-supporting-child-and-student-social-emotional-behavioral-and-mental-health-during-covid-19-era

School Response

To support students' social and emotional learning as schools reopen, educators are encouraged to:

- Measure social and emotional well-being through the use of engagement surveys;

- Provide time for regular check-ins with students and families;

- Implement restorative circles or "mindful moments" that provide students with space to self-regulate emotions;

- Establish morning or closing meetings, or other rituals within each school day; and

- Provide opportunities for student voice to be represented in classroom or school decision-making.

To help remove the stigma and ensure students can access mental health programs when they are available, the American Psychological Association recommends school leaders and educators:

- Share educational resources with staff and students that provide a better sense of what mental health means;

- Talk about mental health and allow students the opportunity to speak openly about life, school, the future, and anxiety; and

- Let students know they are not alone and that others are going through similar situations and provide them the time needed to heal.

Mental Health Response

Current U.S. Treatment Approach

- 5% Severe Mental Illness
- 20% Diagnosable Mental Disorder
- 75% Everyone Else

Population Health Approach

Goal		People
Effective & Efficient Clinical Care		Diagnosed
Mitigate Risk & Early Intervention		At Risk
		Healthy

https://www.apa.org/news/press/releases/2021/09/covid-19-children-testimony.pdf

Special populations – different challenges

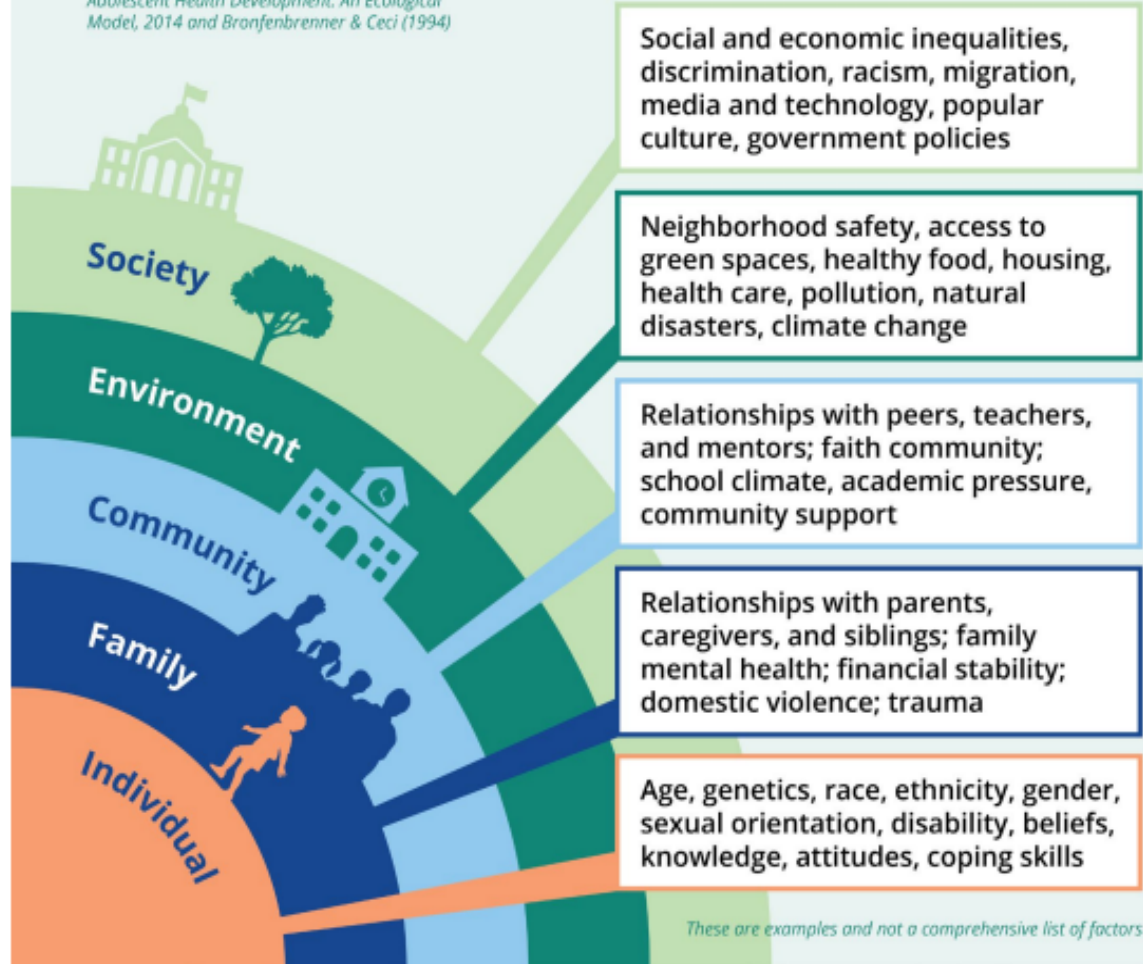➢Children with Neurodevelopmental Challenges

- ▪ Learning Difficulties
- ▪ ADHD
- ▪ Autism

➢Children with anxiety

- ▪ Generalized anxiety
- ▪ Social anxiety

FACTORS THAT CAN SHAPE THE MENTAL HEALTH OF YOUNG PEOPLE

Impact of COVID on MH of kids

- vs. impact on development more globally

- Risk Factors and Protective Factors influence MH impact, e.g.:

  - Pre-existing BH concerns (risk factor)
  - Quality of friendships/support (protective factor)

Picture From: Protecting Youth Mental Health: The U.S. Surgeon General's Advisory
https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/surgeon-general-youth-mental-health-advisory.pdf

ADVANCING INTEGRATED HEALTHCARE

Primary SE developmental tasks for preschoolers:

- Self-soothing, increasing self-regulation
- Sharing
- Following directions, paying attention
- Developing (emotion) language
- Exploring/curiosity/play

Primary SE developmental tasks for 6-12 y.o

- Early Middle Childhood
  - Increase independence from caregivers
  - More future oriented
  - Increased understanding of roles
  - Increased focus on friendships
  - Development of teamwork/team-orientation
  - Desires to be liked and accepted by friends/peers.

- Later Middle Childhood
  - Increased focus on peer relationships,
    - deeper relationships (best friend),
    - identity development related to friendships,
    - same gender friendships
  - Peer pressure
  - Body image, puberty – like/different than others

Primary developmental tasks for teens (from a biopsychosocial perspective)

- Physical maturation
- Personal identity
- Intimate relationships
- Independence/autonomy

These are acquired through **interaction** *with the environment*

Christie, D., & Viner, R. (2005). Adolescent development. *BMJ (Clinical research ed.)*, *330*(7486), 301–304. https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.330.7486.301

Early teens

- Coping with changes (so many!):
  - Physical
  - Cognitive
  - Social
  - Emotional
- Starting to develop an identity
- Increasing focus on peers
- Increasing independence and self-reliance
- Decreasing reliance on parents (but still dependent for most things, inc. medical care, transportation, diet, etc.)

- Increased sense of personal identity –
  - who I am/what I'm interested in/what my values are
- More concern about the future
- Romantic relationships, sexuality, intimacy
- Decreasing reliance on parents
  - Less conflict with parents
  - Less time with parents
  - More responsible for own health

Cognitive shift from early to late adolescence

Concrete thinking

You said I'd get ill if I missed my asthma inhalers. But I forgot them twice, and I stayed fine, so I don't need them any more

Abstract thinking

I missed my inhalers a couple of times, but I think I got away with it because I wasn't doing much exercise. I think I'll still need them in the future if I'm doing lots of exercise or in cold weather
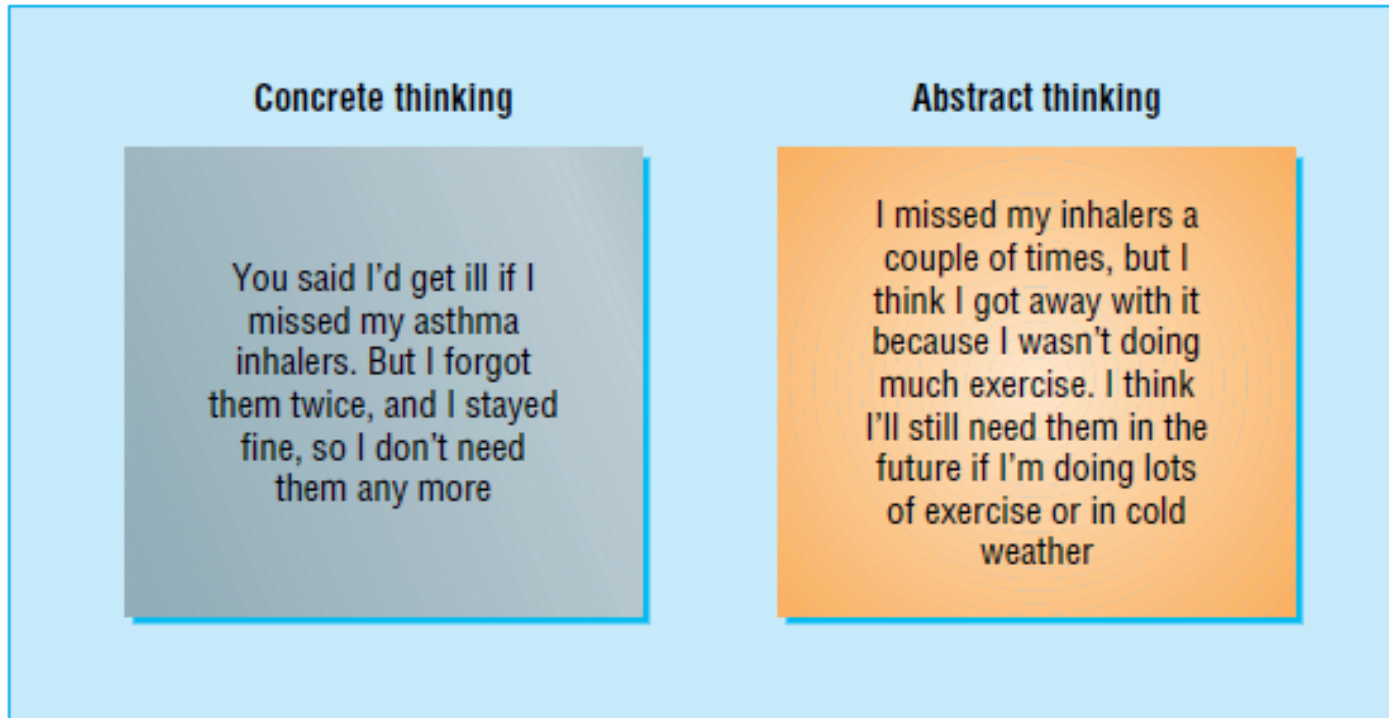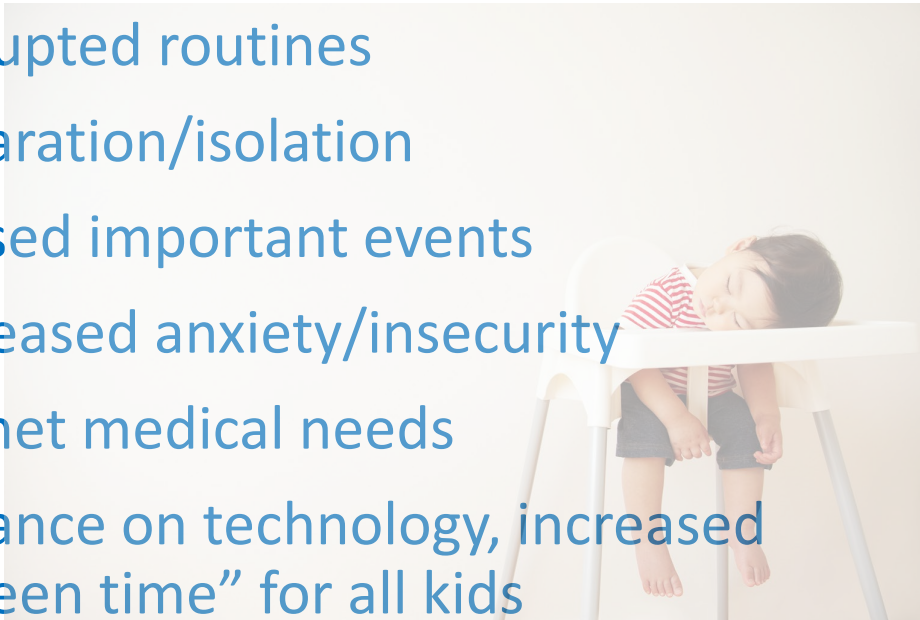
Examples of concrete and abstract thinking by young people in clinical interactions

Christie, D., & Viner, R. (2005)

Impact of these challenges on young children

Stressors

- Disrupted routines
- Separation/isolation
- Missed important events
- Increased anxiety/insecurity
- Unmet medical needs
- Reliance on technology, increased "screen time" for all kids

Impact

- Insecurity/emotional lability
- Parent-child attachment, separation anxiety, play limited, sharing limited
- Decreased time with extended family – limited bonds
- Foundational family traditions disrupted
- Caregiver guilt
- Increased messaging that world/others is unsafe
- Delays in language development
- Delays in sensory development related to self-regulation
- Increased fears associated with medical visits/providers

Impact of these challenges on 6-12 y.o. children

Stressors

- Disrupted routines

- Separation/isolation

- Missed important events

- Increased anxiety/insecurity

- Unmet medical needs

- Reliance on technology, increased "screen time" for all kids

Impact

- Feelings/associations with schooling disrupted
- foundation of school routines/expectations/teacher relationships disrupted
- Decreased shared experiences with peers, group/teamwork limited
- Loss of foundational social experiences (transition to middle school, first dance, sleep overs, etc)
- Future orientation includes uncertainty
- Screens=social experiences (disparities in access) – role of parental monitoring and supporting boundaries
- Maintained reliance on parents for communication of feelings and needs

Impact of these challenges on adolescents

Stressors

- Disrupted routines →

Impact

More dependent on parents

Sleep patterns disrupted

Many routines reinstated

- Separation from peers →

Less time learning how to develop intimate relationships

It's more challenging to develop social coping skills when you're not in the situations you're supposed to be learning to cope with

School resumes, together again

Impact of these challenges on adolescents

Stressors

Impact

- Missed important events → Feelings of loss, sadness

  Can't get those back but there will be new ones

- Insecurity, uncertainty → Increased anxiety/depression

  We know more now

- Unmet medical needs → Health sequelae

  Access to medical care

- Less need for physical activity → Weight gain, health sequelae

  Sports and school resume

Screen media use during the pandemic...increased

Healthy Use   **vs.**   **Problematic or Excessive Use**

- Connecting/seeing family
- Connecting with friends
- Learning/exploring/humor
- Helpful Apps
  - ADHD org'l support
  - Anxiety/CBT
  - Mindfulness
  - Fitness

- When it <u>interferes</u> with daily functioning:
  - Physical activity
  - Educational tasks
  - Healthy eating
  - Household responsibilities
  - Sleep
- When the child is <u>dependent</u> on it
- When it is unsafe or <u>age-inappropriate</u>

Screen media during the pandemic

Benefits

"While there are certainly risks of screen media use in childhood, screen media use can also serve as a buffer for adjustment, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. Screen media use can foster social development in online spaces and connections with distant family members, which is of particular relevance when children may not be able to see older family members like grandparents during the pandemic (Chassiakos et al., 2016; Eales et al., in press; Grose, 2021)"

Screen media during the pandemic

One study conducted in Fall 2020 (Charmaraman et al. 2022)

████████████. Overall, we did not find any strong support that the changes in well-being that adolescents experienced during the COVID-19 social distancing was meaningfully related to their social technology use, which is counter to the popular assumption that adolescent well-being is intricately tied to their social technology use.

The researchers acknowledged that digital technologies can be a "positive tool for adolescent development, fostering social connections and enhancing mental health."

Steps to Help Provide Stability and Support to Adolescents

- Maintain a normal routine

- Talk, listen, and encourage expression

- Give honest and accurate information

- Teach simple steps to stay healthy

- Be alert for any change in behavior

- Reassure adolescents about their safety and well-being

What can parents do?

✓ Recognize the stress and anxiety – talk about it
✓ Encourage prevention, safety
✓ Encourage healthy choices/eating/sleeping
  - Resume medical care, dental care, specialty care
✓ **SUPPORT SOCIAL ACTIVITIES**
  - What social opportunities are the school/community providing?
  - Allow/encourage positive social media use
✓ Model good coping, use breathing to calm, self-talk to reassure and avoid catastrophizing, etc.
✓ Instill hope – things to look forward to
✓ Remind children what they CAN control – promote self-efficacy
✓ Discuss benefits of pandemic – skills the family/teen learned, e.g.

https://www.cdc.gov/mentalhealth/stress-coping/parental-resources/adolescence/index.html

Parents supporting emotional communication and development

Show affection

Read

Differential attention

Model/teach ways to show feelings

Steps to problem solving

Choices (limited)

Model/teach behaviors you expect

Age appropriate household responsibilities

Focus on praising behaviors rather than traits

Model/teach setting achievable goals

Delayed gratification/self-reward

Encourage pride in self

Thinking about possible consequences

Clear consistent rules/expectations

Facilitate inc independence with problem-solving and decision making esp related to friends

Active listening

Increasing independence with decisions (transition to role of advisor)

Start talking about puberty

Clear expectations – independence with achieving them

Honest, openness re sensitive topics

Monitor mood, talk about changes

Parents supporting social activities and development

PLAY!!

Leader/follower

Encourage speaking for self (role play)

Model/teach about sharing

Plan with entering new social environments (role play)

Age appropriate household activities

Respect starts at home

Model/teach helping others

Practice patience, others going first

Cooperative games, activities

Connect with school

Support child joining groups/team activities

Support development of right/wrong behaviors with others

Talk about peer pressure
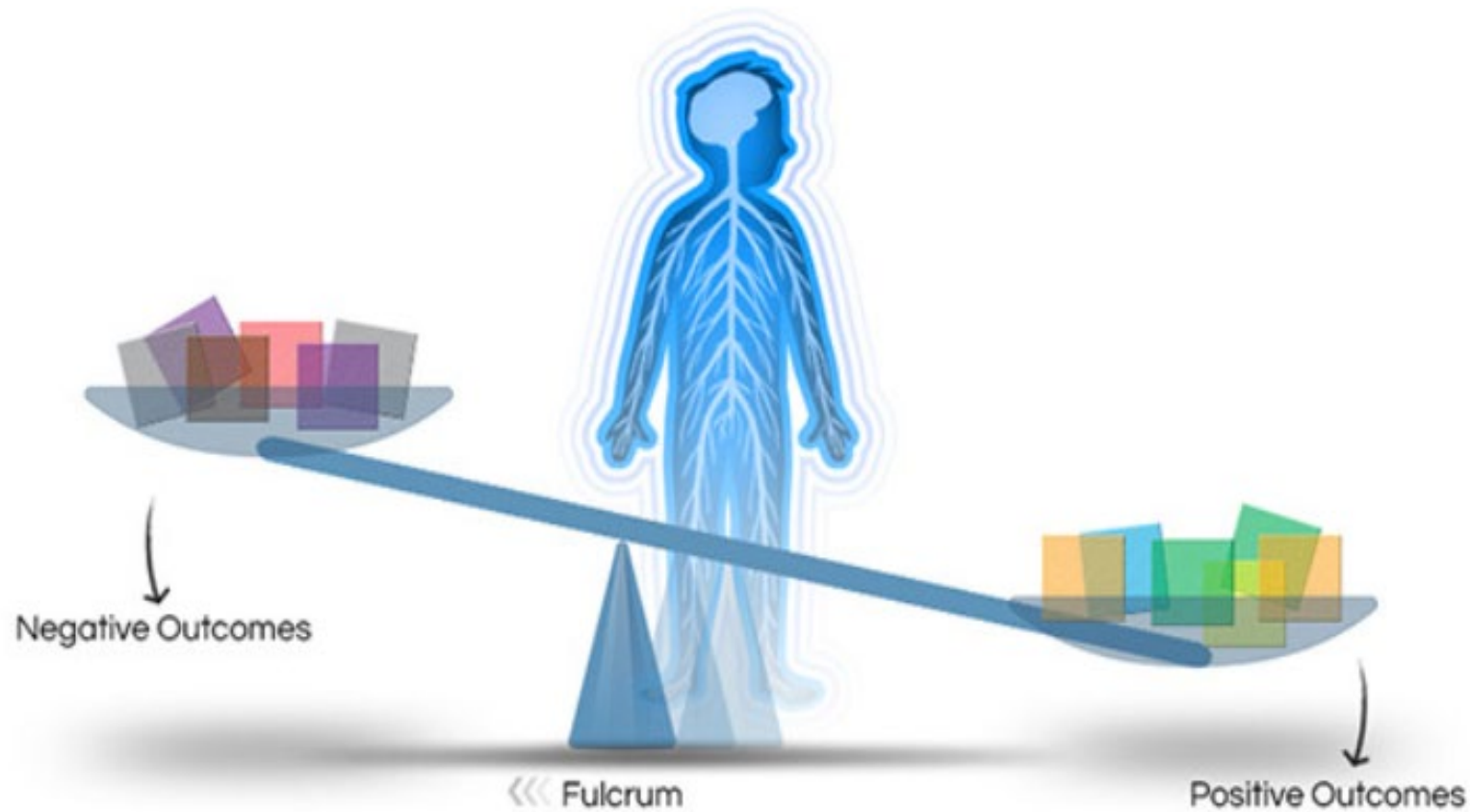
Model/teach financial responsibility

What to do with bullying/neg peer interactions

Meet/know their friends

Support their activities – participate, observe, etc

Model/teach volunteering/helping

Model/teach healthy electronic use – MONITOR

Talk about discrete peer pressures

Resilience

Resources

For pediatricians

- Zero to three
  - https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/240-12-24-months-social-emotional-development
  - https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/241-24-36-months-social-emotional-development
- CDC Handouts for parents on SE development:
  - https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/childdevelopment/freematerials.html
  - https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/freematerials.html
- Resilience:
  - https://developingchild.harvard.edu/resources/how-to-help-families-and-staff-build-resilience-during-the-covid-19-outbreak/
  - https://developingchild.harvard.edu/science/key-concepts/resilience/

For parents

- https://www.cdc.gov/mentalhealth/stress-coping/parental-resources/index.html

References and additional reading

Christie, D., & Viner, R. (2005). Adolescent development. *BMJ (Clinical research ed.)*, *330*(7486), 301–304. https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.330.7486.301

Charmaraman, L., Lynch, A. D., Richer, A. M., & Zhai, E. (2022). Examining Early Adolescent Positive and Negative Social Technology Behaviors and Well-Being During the COVID-19 Pandemic. *Technology, Mind, and Behavior*, 3(1: Spring 2022). https://doi.org/10.1037/tmb0000062

Eales, L., Gillespie, S., Alstat, R. A., Ferguson, G. M., & Carlson, S. M. (2021). Children's screen and problematic media use in the United States before and during the COVID- 19 pandemic. *Child Development,* 92, e866–e 882.

U.S. Department of Education Releases New Resource on Supporting Child and Student Social, Emotional, Behavioral and Mental Health during COVID-19 Era.   https://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/us-department-education-releases-new-resource-supporting-child-and-student-social-emotional-behavioral-and-mental-health-during-covid-19-era

Psychology's Understanding of the Challenges Related to the COVID-19 Global Pandemic in the United States. https://www.apa.org/about/policy/covid-statement.pdf

Putting Kids First: Addressing COVID-19's Impacts on Children. https://www.apa.org/news/press/releases/2021/09/covid-19-children-testimony.pdf

Next Learning Sessions

May 12, 7:30-9:00AM **Behavior Plan Basics**

In this learning session, we will provide training on how to help parents create a basic behavior plan for younger kids with disruptive behaviors and behavioral contracts that support healthy routines in older children (e.g. sleep, managing electronics). We encourage participants to bring specific cases or questions to the session. Handouts/resources will be provided.

Zoom: https://ctc-ri.zoom.us/j/95924498814?pwd=SklTUUd4UjVZNjlaS0JpYzhpTTdUQT09
     Meeting ID: 959 2449 8814#; Passcode: 646876#
     One tap mobile: +13017158592,,95924498814#,,,,,,0#,,646876#

Evaluation & CME

- Completion of the evaluation form is **required** to meet the Psychosocial and Behavioral Health TA requirement for the Medicaid Pediatric Recovery Program third payment.

- Please provide us your feedback!

- Evaluation/Credit Request Form: https://forms.office.com/r/J69PnPzeiM

- Please request CME credits when filling out the evaluation at the end of the meeting.

The AAFP has approved 'Advancing Community-Oriented Comprehensive Primary Care Through Improved Care Delivery Design and Community Health,' for AAFP credit.
Physicians should claim only the credit commensurate with the extent of their participation in the activity.
NPs and RNs can also receive credit through AAFP's partnership with the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) and the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners Certification Board (AANPCB).