



***Promoting generational healing by addressing
Positive and Adverse Childhood Experiences
(PACEs)***

Disclosures

I have no conflicts of
interest to report.

Objectives

1

Appreciate the context of perinatal mood, anxiety, and trauma related disorders

2

Review the ACEs study main findings and compare with the conventional and expanded ACEs in perinatal patients in the Mother-Baby Program.

3

Introduce Positive Childhood Experiences (PCEs), and the idea of PACEs.

4

Discuss healing and family centered multigenerational approaches to perinatal mood, anxiety and trauma related conditions

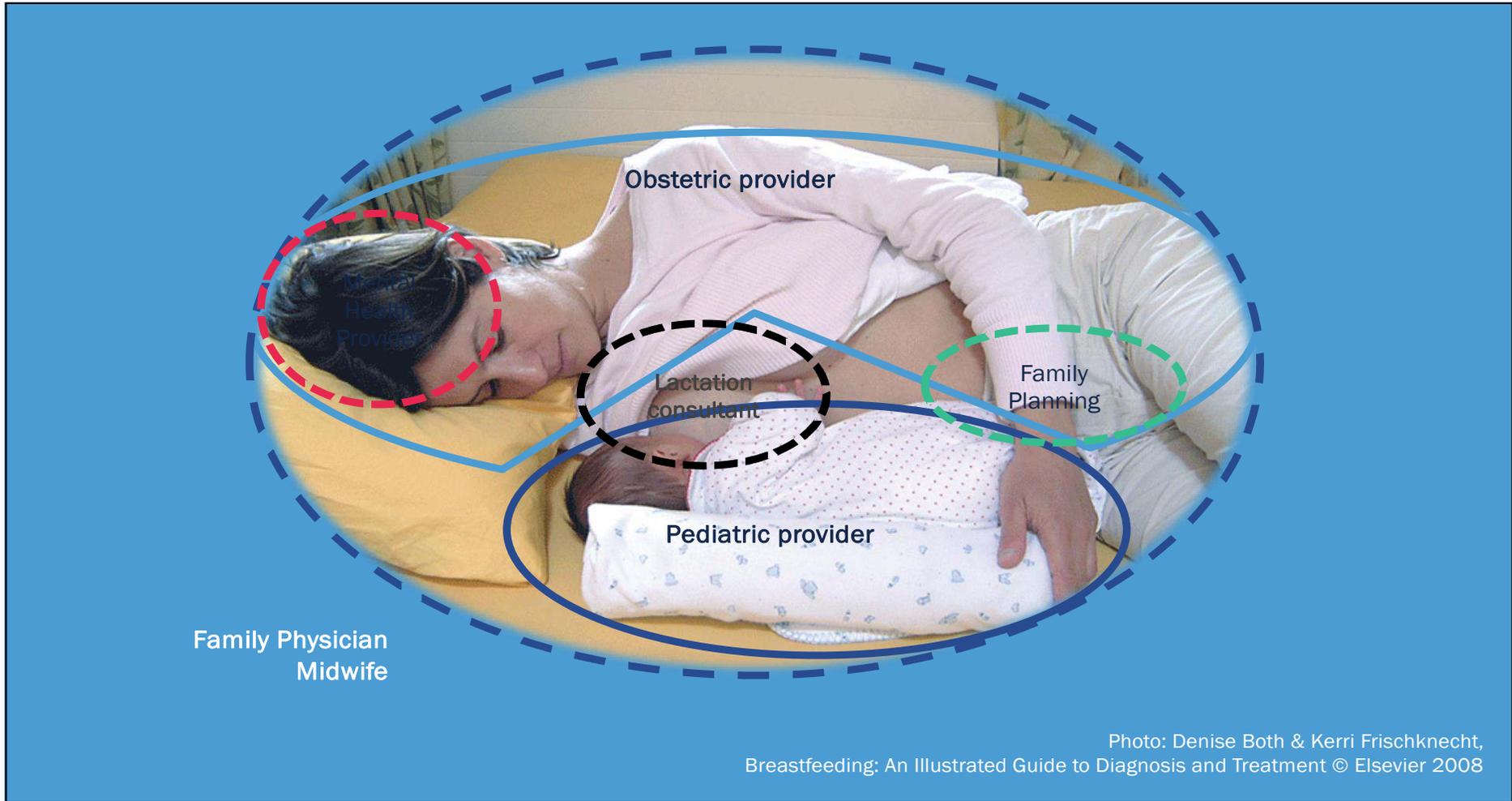
Objective One

Appreciate the context of perinatal mood, anxiety, and trauma related disorders



The Context of the Perinatal Period in the U.S.





The Brain Develops in the Context of Relationships



the quality of early experiences matters

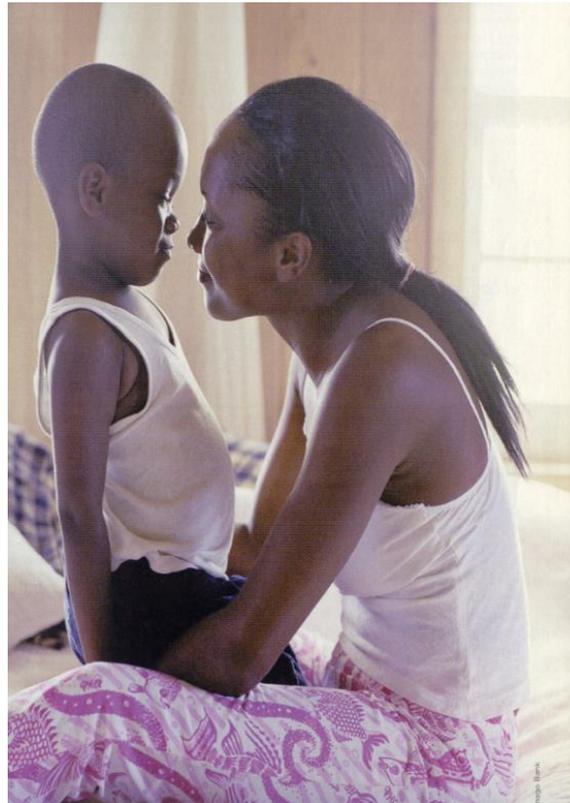
Perinatal Context

- Gap between the hoped for experience and the reality of what happened for conception, pregnancy, delivery, postpartum, and breastfeeding experience
- Intense developmental transition
- Both/And: Time of vulnerability and opportunity for growth and healing

THE PERFECT POSTPARTUM STORM:

*HIGH RISK TIME FOR PARENTAL DEPRESSION AND
CRITICAL WINDOW OF DEVELOPMENT FOR 0-5 YEAR OLD KIDS*

Child's urgent
developmental
needs for
support and
protection



Parent's urgent
needs for relief from
depression and
suffering



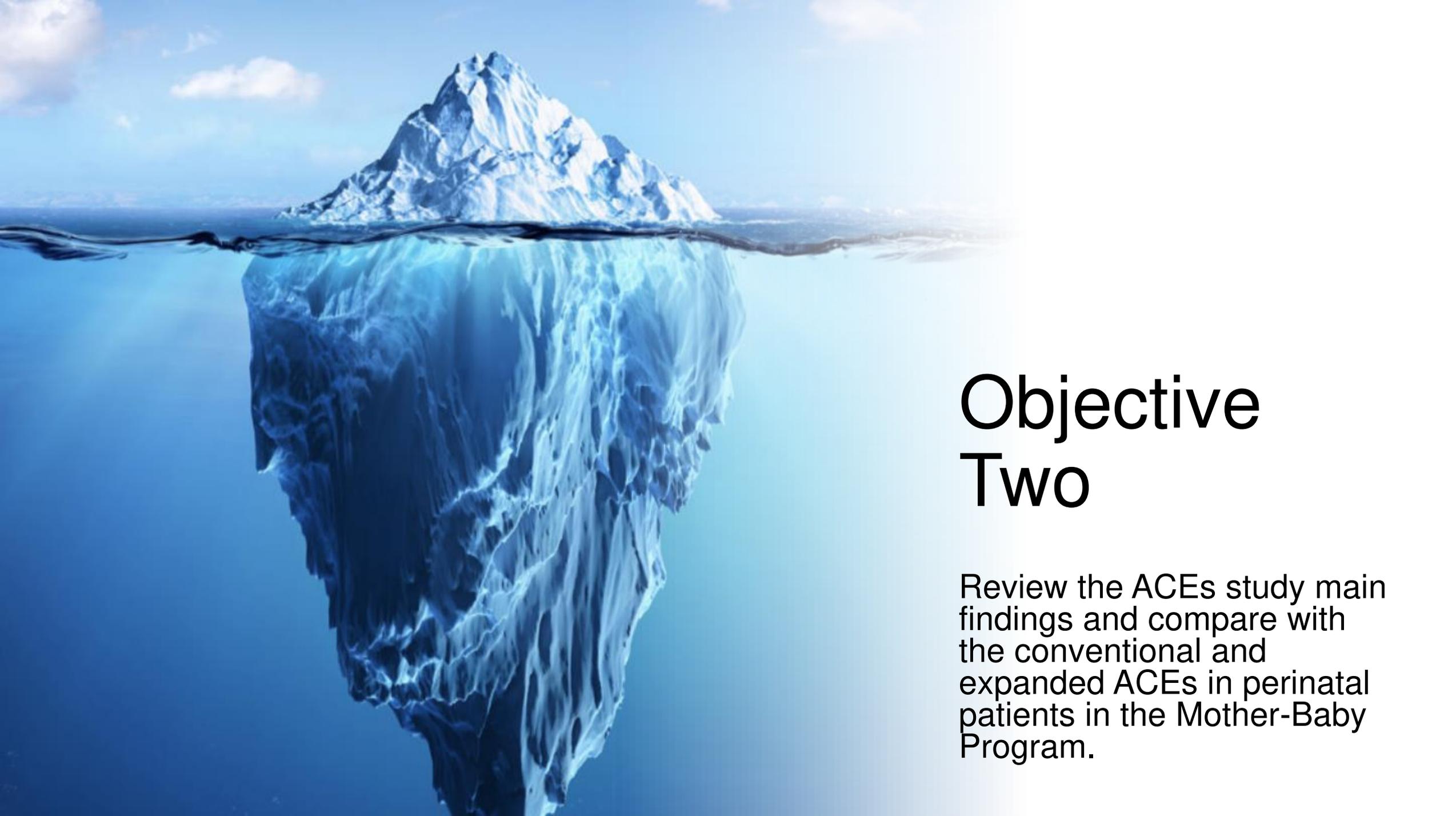
where the streams meet: opportunities for healing

*Parent's urgent
mental health needs*

And

*Child's urgent
developmental needs for
support and protection*





Objective Two

Review the ACEs study main findings and compare with the conventional and expanded ACEs in perinatal patients in the Mother-Baby Program.

Adverse Childhood Experiences

ACE Study

- Dr. Vincent Felitti & Dr. Robert Anda
- Study to examine how childhood events affect adult health
- 17000 participants
 - Middle class
 - Middle aged
 - 75% white
 - 40% with college degrees
 - all with jobs and good health care
- 10 Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)



The three types of ACEs include

ABUSE



Physical



Emotional



Sexual

NEGLECT



Physical



Emotional

HOUSEHOLD DYSFUNCTION



Mental Illness



Mother treated violently



Divorce

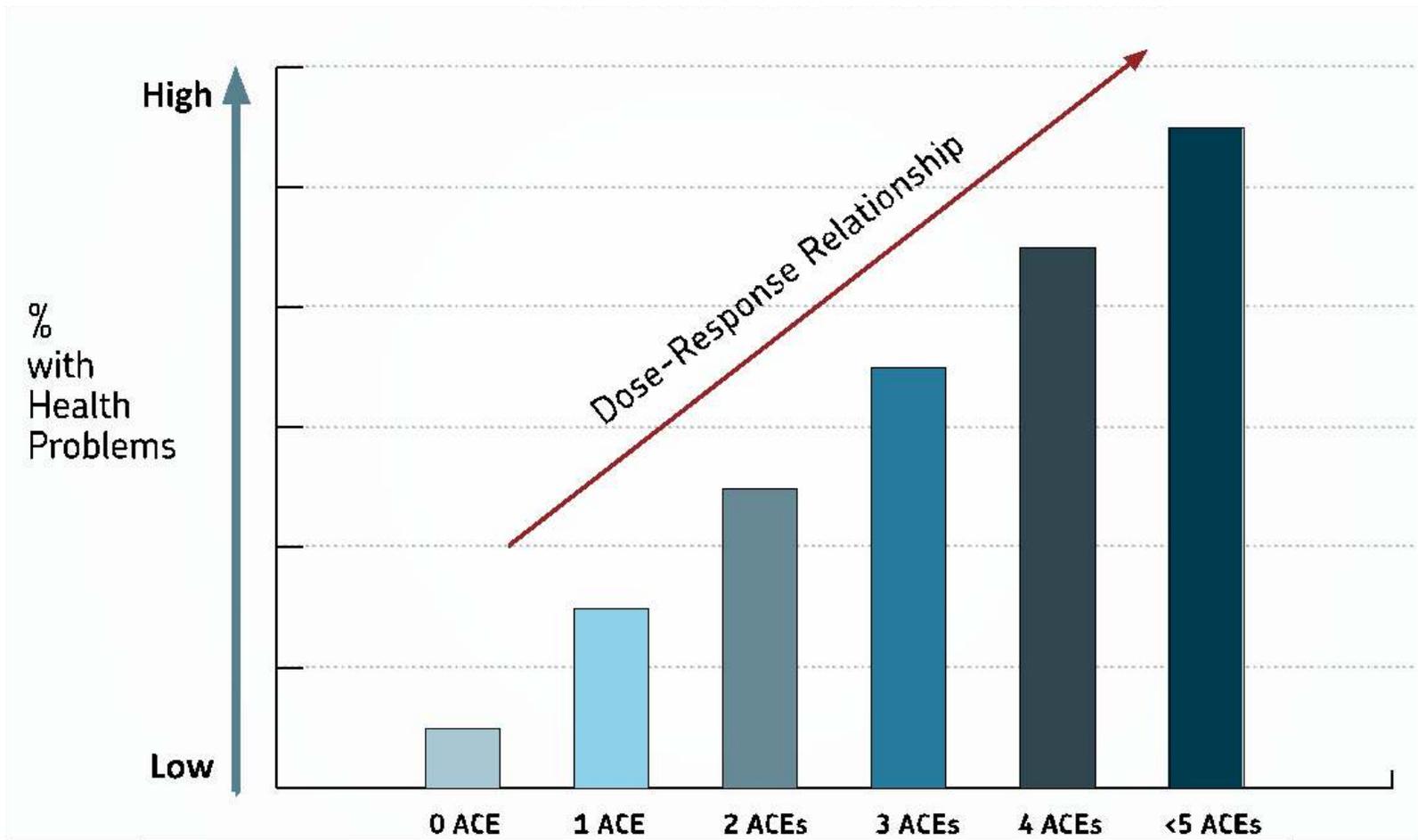


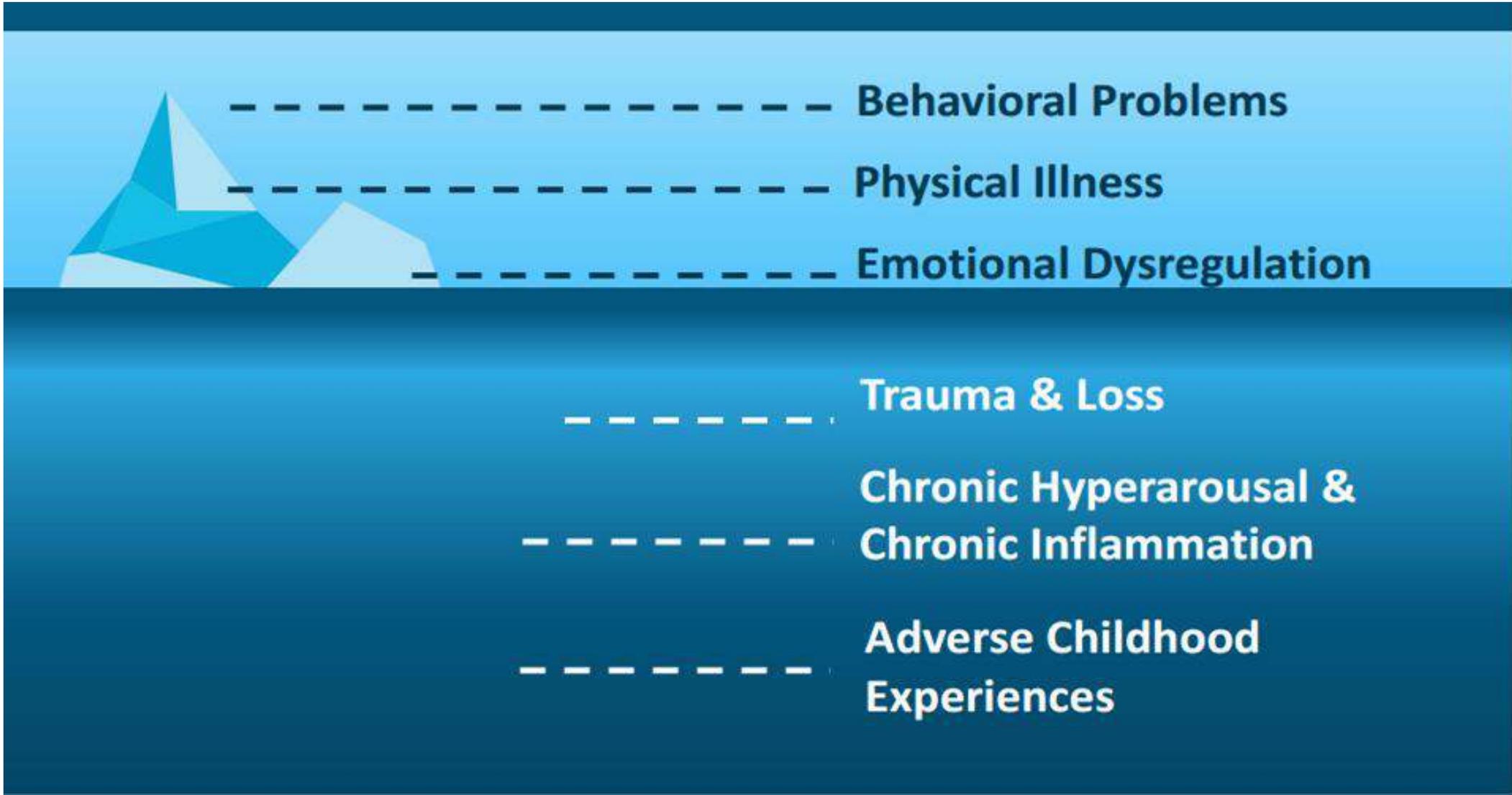
Incarcerated Relative



Substance Abuse

ACE Score and Health Problems





ACEs Study

- Groundbreaking public health study that discovered that childhood trauma leads to adult chronic diseases, depression and other mental illness, substance use, financial and social problems.
- Hundreds of additional research papers based on the ACE Study have also been published.
- Other ACE surveys have expanded the types of ACEs to include racism, gender discrimination, and other forms of adversity

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)



Figure 1. Linking Adverse Childhood Experiences to health behaviors. From the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. 2019. <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/acestudy/resources.html?>

MB Day Hospital: where the streams meet,
opportunities for generational trauma healing



Reproductive Status (n=272)

Pregnant	12%
0-12 months PP	78%
More than one year PP	10%

Demographics

Married/Partnered	70%
Public Insurance	44%
College or beyond	50%
Lack of social support	88%
First-time mom	51%
Food insecurity mod/high	40%
Housing instability mod/high	40%

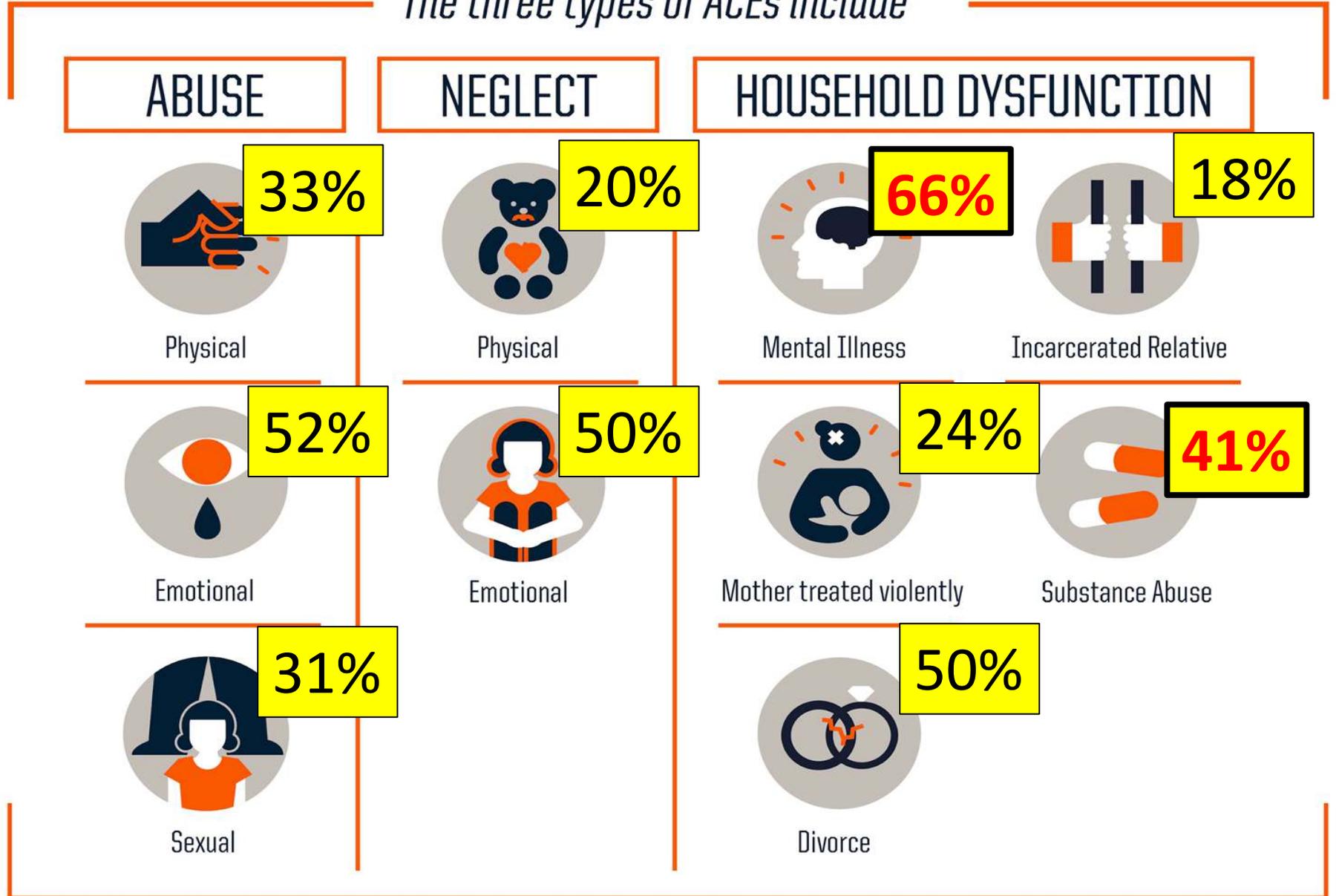
Adverse Childhood Experiences

At least 4 ACEs = 57%
(vs 15% in ACEs study)

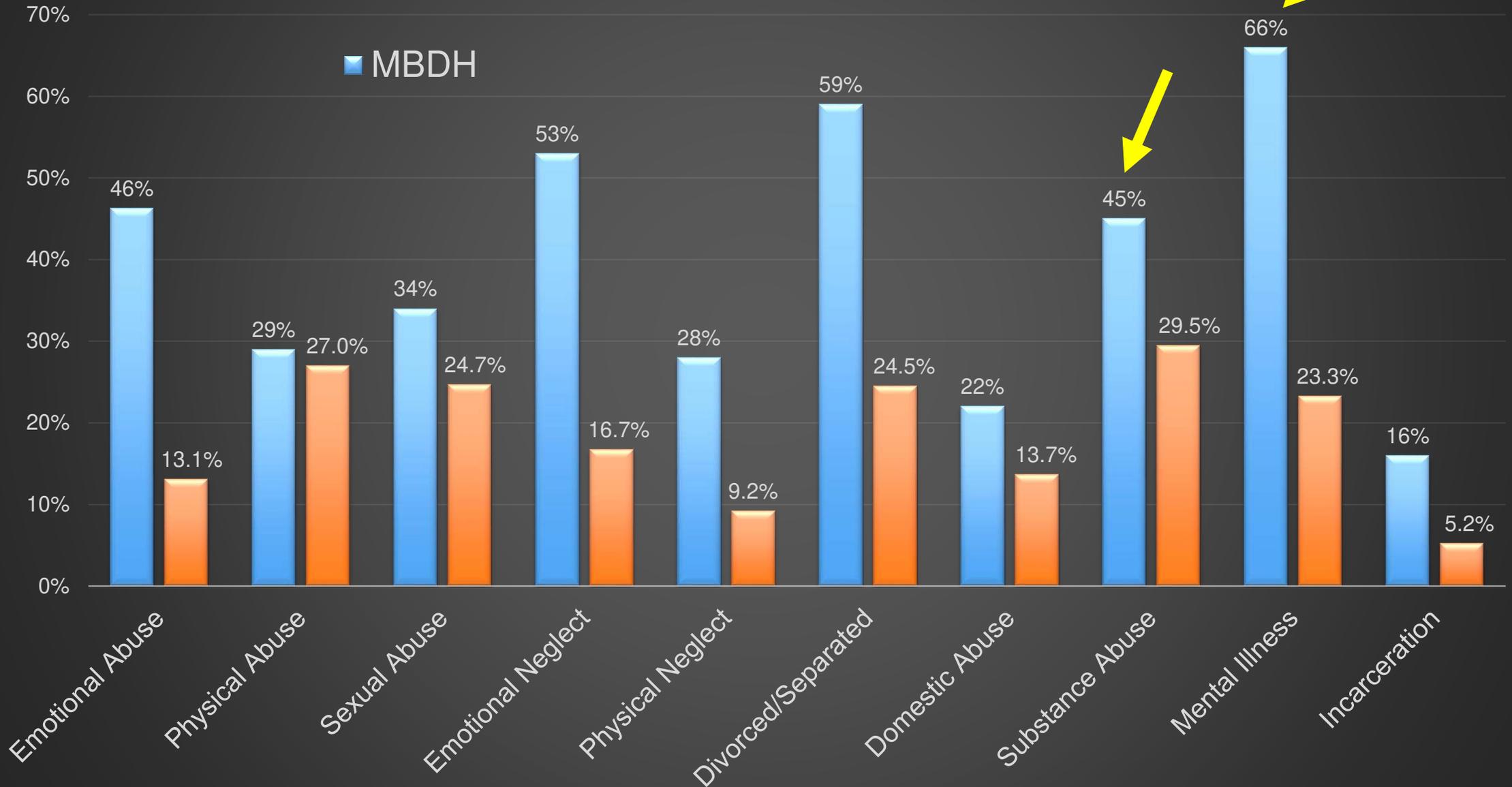
The three types of ACEs include

*Maternal ACEs:
Generational
trauma healing
opportunities*

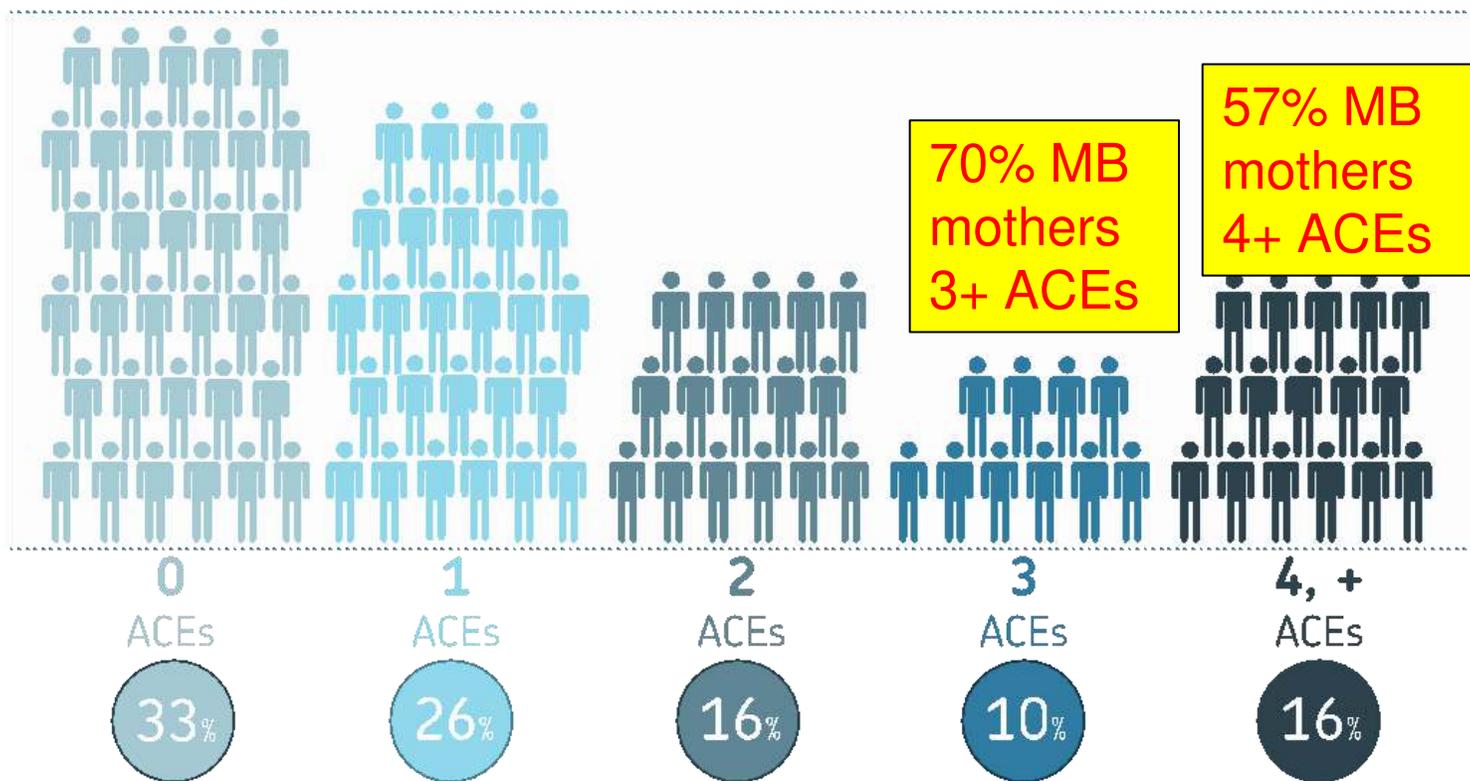
Mean #ACEs = 3.9



Prevalence of ACEs in MBDH vs. Women in CDC-



ACE Score = Number of ACE Categories



ACE Scores Reliably Predict Challenges During the Life Course

Expanded/Urban ACEs

Roy Wade, MD, PHD Children's Hospital of Philadelphia

- Witnessing violence (seeing/hearing someone being stabbed, beaten, shot)
- Living in an unsafe community
- Experiencing racism
- Living in foster care
- Experiencing bullying

ACE Questionnaire: Expanded (Urban) ACEs

ACE Category	Question	Choices
Expanded ACEs		
Witness Violence	How often, if ever, did you see or hear someone being beaten up, stabbed, or shot in real life?	Many times A few times Once Never
Felt Discrimination	How often did you feel that you were treated badly or unfairly because of your race or ethnicity?	Very often true Often Sometimes true Rarely true Never true
Unsupportive Neighborhood	Did you feel people in your neighborhood looked out for each other, stood up for each other, and could be trusted?	All the time Most of the time Some of the time None of the time
Unsafe Neighborhood	Overall, did you feel safe in the neighborhoods you grew up in?	All the time Most of the time Some of the time None of the time
Bullied	How often were you bullied by a peer or classmate:	All the time Most of the time Some of the time None of the time
Lived in Foster Care	Were you ever in foster care?	Yes No

Prior to the age of 18, black women compared to white women were:

3.4X more likely to have experienced emotional abuse

4.1X more likely to have experienced physical abuse

5.2X more likely to have experienced sexual abuse

**Conventional
ACEs**

8X more likely to have witnessed violence

89x more likely to have experienced discrimination

16x more likely to have lived in an unsafe neighborhood

**Expanded/
Urban ACEs**

Trauma

Physical, emotional, psychological, or spiritual injury in response to a distressing or life-threatening event like an accident, abuse, violence or natural disaster

“Too much, too soon, too fast without protection or support”

Acute trauma

An event that is time-limited

Ex: birth trauma

Complex Trauma

Exposure to multiple traumas that are often invasive or interpersonal and have wide-ranging, long-term impact

Ex. childhood abuse

Historical Trauma

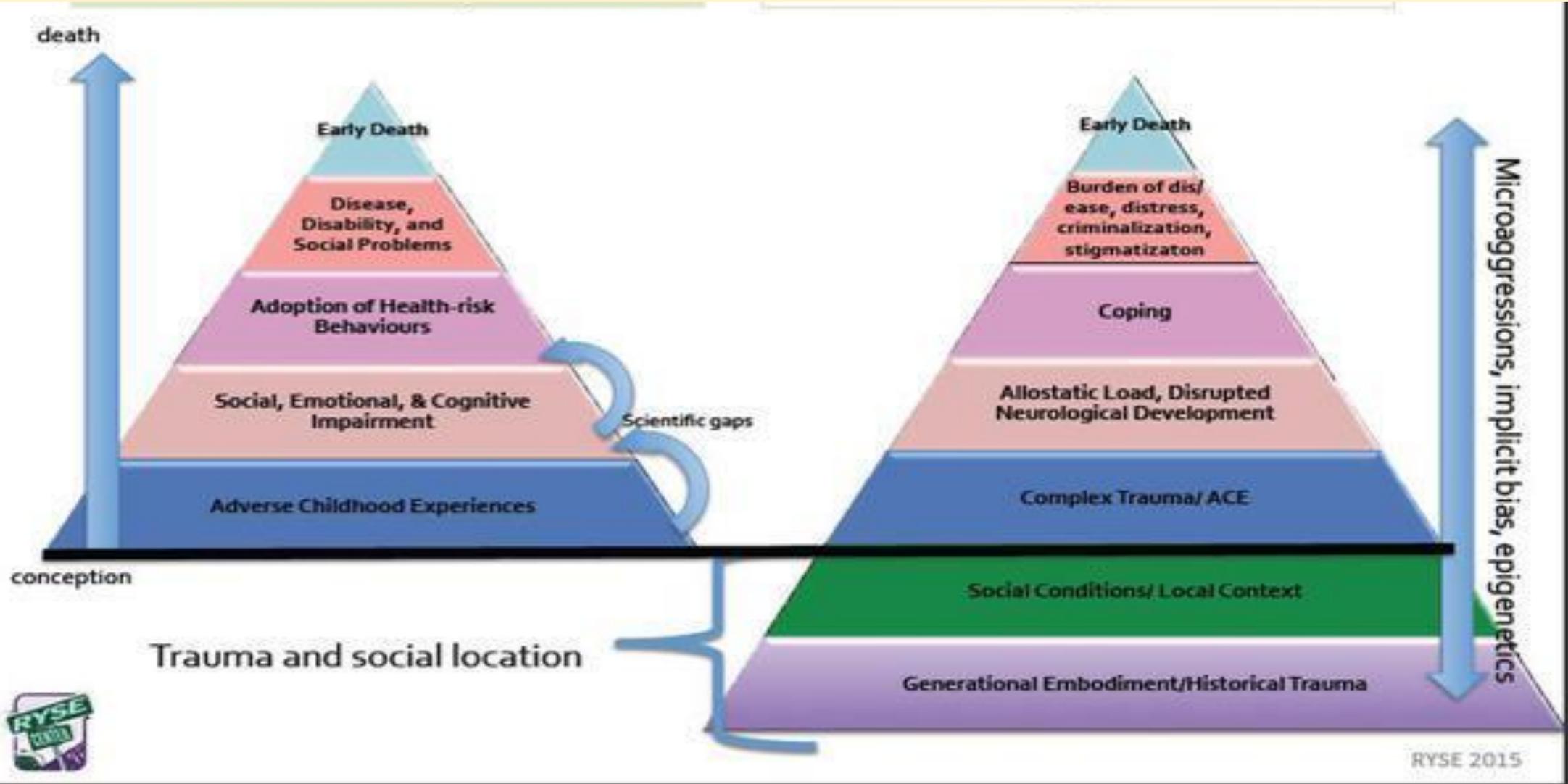
Cumulative, collective experience of emotional, psychological, physical harm in communities and in descendants.

Ex. slavery, genocide of Native communities, forced separation of Black and Native families

System-induced trauma

Ex. Forced medical experimentation of BIPOC communities, child separation policies that disproportionately impacted BIPOC families

Beneath and infused throughout the ACEs pyramid.... Historical Trauma, Systemic Racism, Implicit Bias



3 Realms of ACEs

Adverse childhood and community experiences (ACEs) can occur in the household, the community, or in the environment and cause toxic stress. Left unaddressed, toxic stress from ACEs harms children and families, organizations, systems and communities, and reduces the ability of individuals and entities to respond to stressful events with resiliency. Research has shown that there are many ways to reduce and heal from toxic stress and build healthy, caring communities.



Thanks to Building Community Resilience Collaborative and Networks and the International Transformational Resilience Coalition. Please visit [ACESConnection.com](https://www.acesconnection.com) to learn more about the science of ACEs and join the movement to prevent ACEs, heal trauma and

3Realms_092520





Objective Three

Introduce Positive
Childhood Experiences
(PCEs), and the idea of
PACEs.

If you have a high
ACE score, are
you doomed?
NO!

The brain is “plastic” and changes in response to the environment.

One can heal and build resilience through decreasing toxic stress and increasing health-promoting practices.

Evidence for mindfulness practices, exercise, good nutrition, adequate sleep, and healthy social interactions

**WE ARE MORE THAN OUR ACEs
and more than the bad things that
have happened to us.**

> [JAMA Pediatr.](#) 2019 Nov 1;173(11):e193007. doi: 10.1001/jamapediatrics.2019.3007.

Epub 2019 Nov 4.

Positive Childhood Experiences and Adult Mental and Relational Health in a Statewide Sample: Associations Across Adverse Childhood Experiences Levels

[Christina Bethell](#)¹, [Jennifer Jones](#)², [Narangerel Gombojav](#)¹, [Jeff Linkenbach](#)³, [Robert Sege](#)⁴

Dr. Robert Sege, HOPE in 2021 and Beyond: Spreading HOPE, 4/15/2021

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-BT0pMHmiag>



Positive Childhood Experiences Scale



1. Felt able to talk to their family about feelings
2. Felt their family stood by them during difficult times
3. Enjoyed participating in community traditions
4. Felt a sense of belonging in high school
5. Felt supported by friends
6. Had > 1 non-parent adults who took genuine interest in them
7. Felt safe and protected by an adult in their home



Positive Childhood Experiences (PCEs) Protect Adult Mental Health

- 6-7 vs. 0-2 PCEs: 72% lower odds of depression or poor mental health
- 3-5 PCEs v 0-2 PCEs: 52% lower odds of depression or poor mental health
- 48% v. 12.6%, OR 0.28; 95% CI 0.21-0.39. 3.8x higher rate for 0-2 vs. 6-7 PCEs.



0-2 PCEs



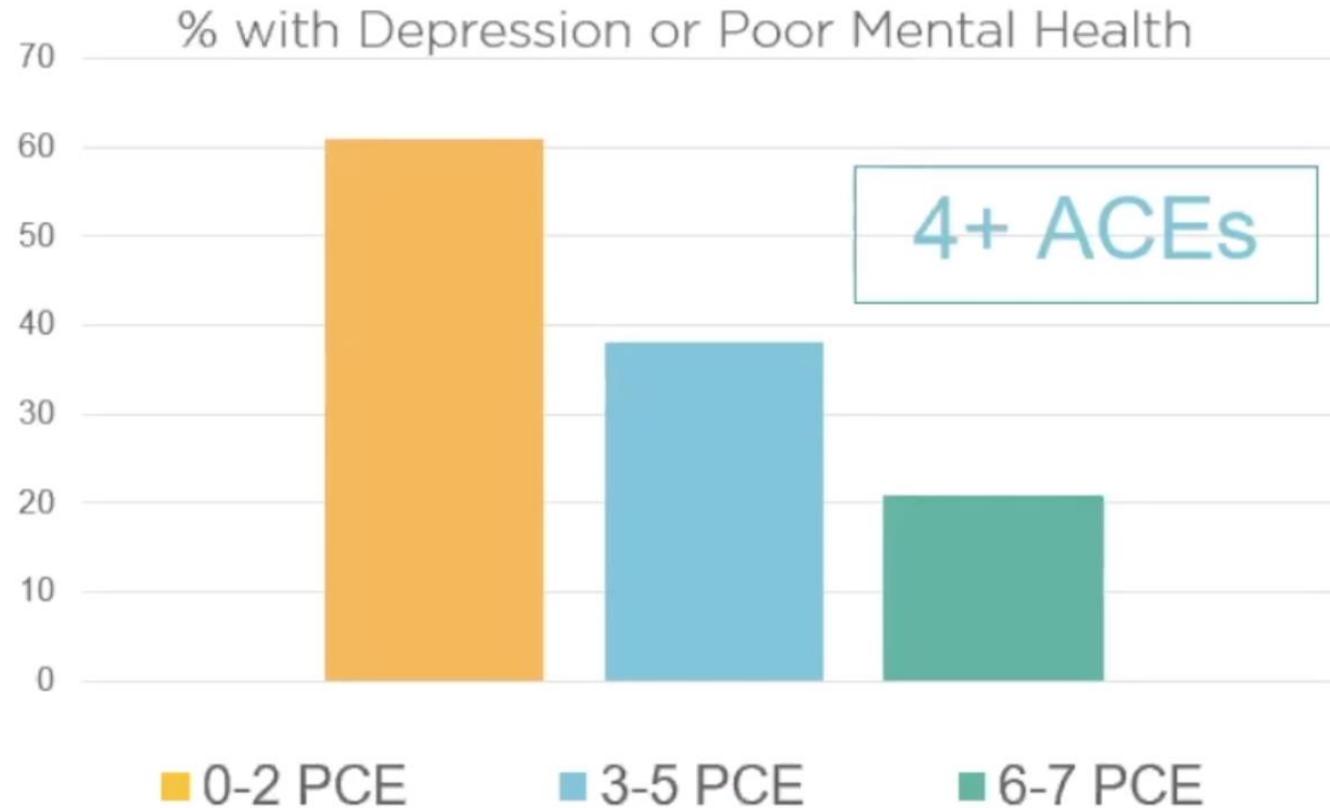
3-5 PCEs



6-7 PCEs



Positive Childhood Experiences Mitigate ACEs Effects



Bethell C, Jones J, Gombojav N, Linkenbach, Sege R, Positive Childhood Experiences and Adult Mental and Relational Health in a Statewide Sample: Associations Across Adverse Childhood Experiences Levels, *JAMA Pediatr.* 2019; e193007

A large field of sunflowers stretches across the foreground and middle ground, leading towards a distant horizon. The sun is low in the sky, creating a bright, hazy glow that filters through the scene. The sky transitions from a pale yellow near the horizon to a clear blue at the top. The sunflowers are in various stages of bloom, with their dark brown centers and bright yellow petals clearly visible. The overall atmosphere is warm and serene.

Objective Four

Discuss healing- and family-centered multigenerational approaches to perinatal mood, anxiety and trauma related conditions

“Parenting patterns rooted in one’s own history and experiences are not easily altered by information alone; one must feel seen to see, feel understood to understand, feel cared for to care.”

(Weatherston & Ribaudó, 2020)

Traditional leaf approach to healthcare

"mental health leaves"

- ✓ Depression
- ✓ Anxiety
- ✓ Chemical dependency
- ✓ Marital strain
- ✓ Parenting strain

"physical health leaves"

- ✓ Insomnia
- ✓ Irritable bowel
- ✓ Endometriosis
- ✓ Joint Pain
- ✓ Fatigue
- ✓ Migraines

Healing through multi-generational, integrative, trauma healing approaches

What is healing?

What is regulating?

- **Safety**
- Support/Connection/Community
- Sleep
- Gut health/Nutrition
- Movement
- Purpose

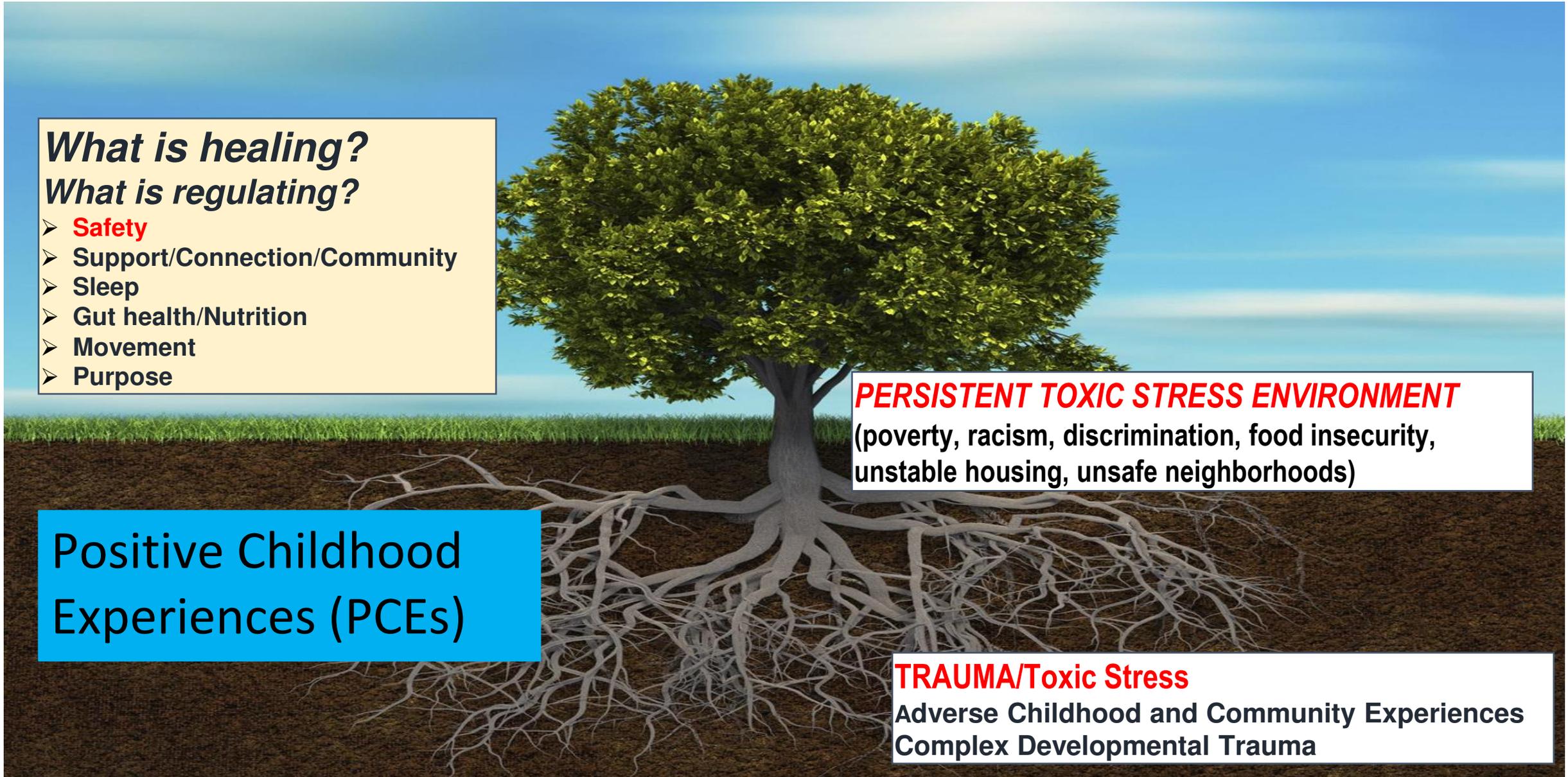
Positive Childhood Experiences (PCEs)

PERSISTENT TOXIC STRESS ENVIRONMENT

(poverty, racism, discrimination, food insecurity, unstable housing, unsafe neighborhoods)

TRAUMA/Toxic Stress

Adverse Childhood and Community Experiences
Complex Developmental Trauma

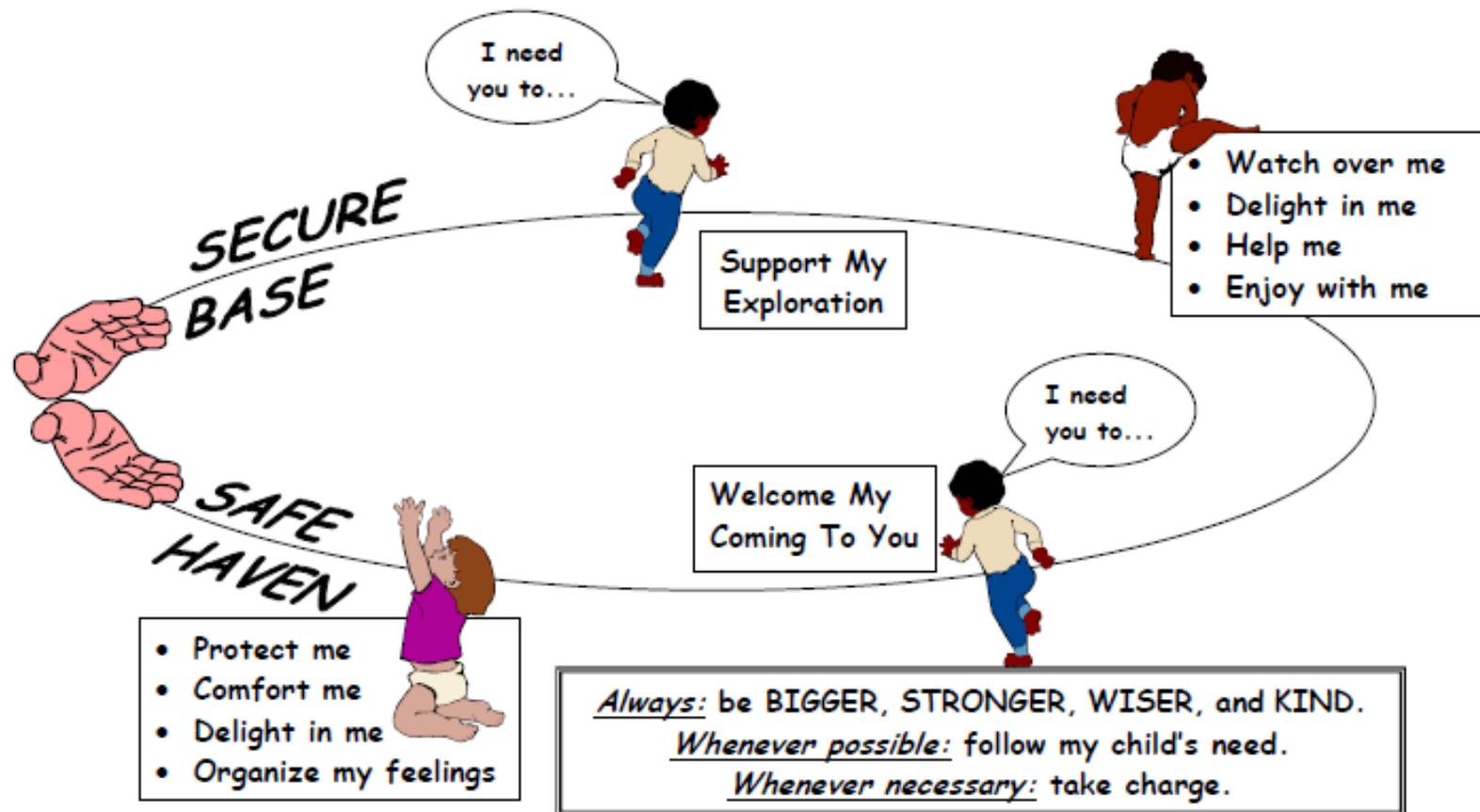


From Perinatal Mental Health to Integrative, Multi-generational, Trauma-informed, Healing Centered

- Multi-generational
 - Focus on the attachment relationship between mother and baby and between mother and her own attachment relationships/supports
- Trauma-Informed/ healing-centered
 - Seeing how trauma affects adult functioning
 - Supporting new strategies to manage emotions and create healthy relationships
 - Exploring the sense of identity that both trauma and motherhood can impact
- Integrative
 - Mind/body/spirit awareness and integration

CIRCLE OF SECURITY

PARENT ATTENDING TO THE CHILD'S NEEDS





Disorder versus Distress

Disorder: A manifestation of a behavioral, psychological, or biological *dysfunction* within the individual.

Distress: *normal* human response to overwhelming stress & sustained through continued response to stress.



How can ACEs shift the frame from disorder to distress?

*<http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/cestudy/pyramid.html>

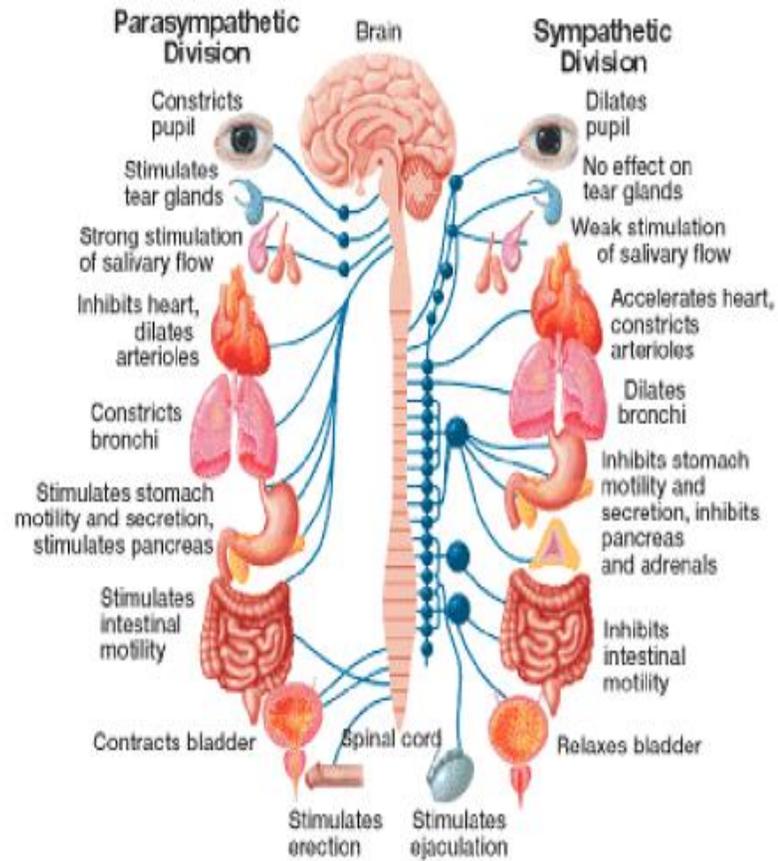
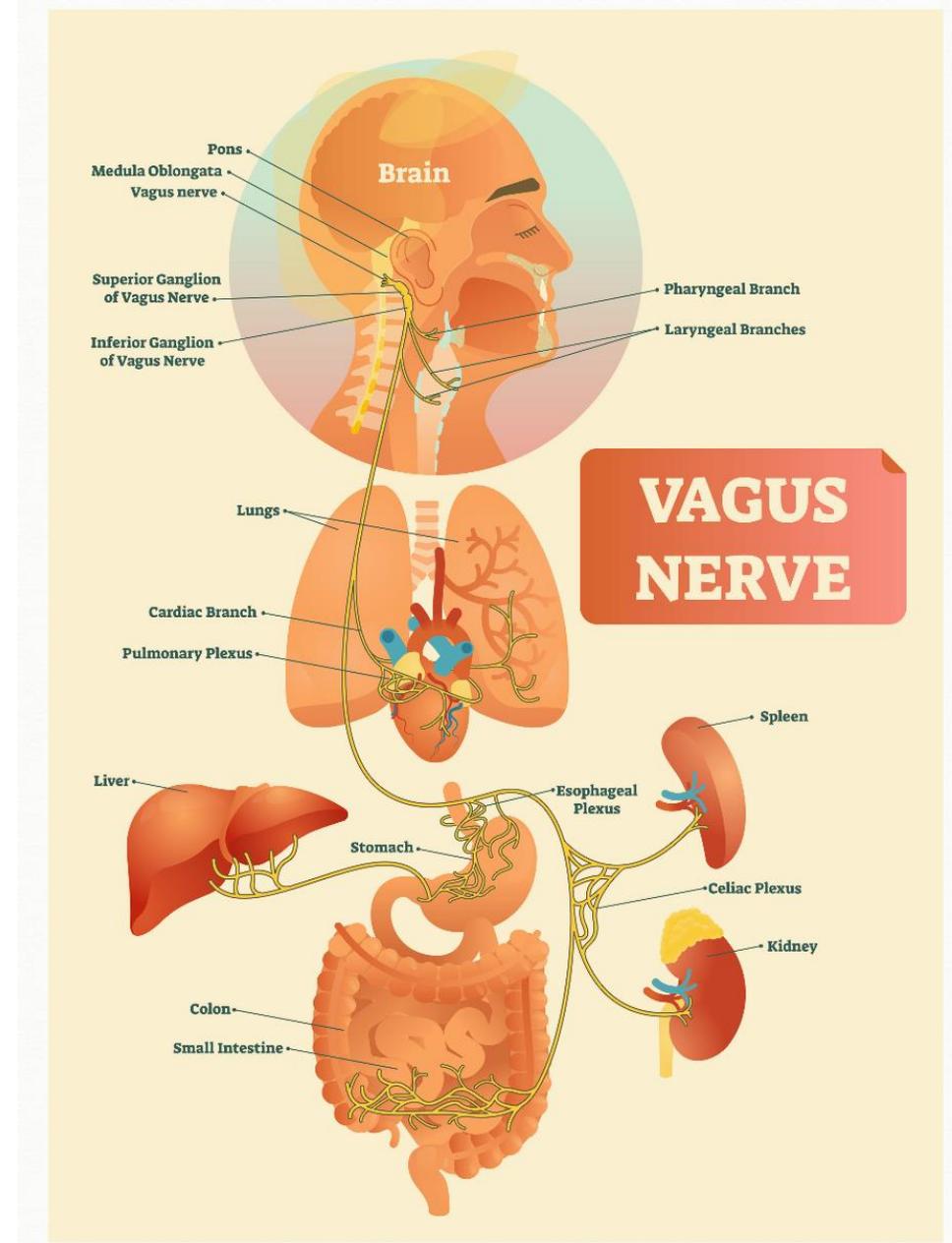
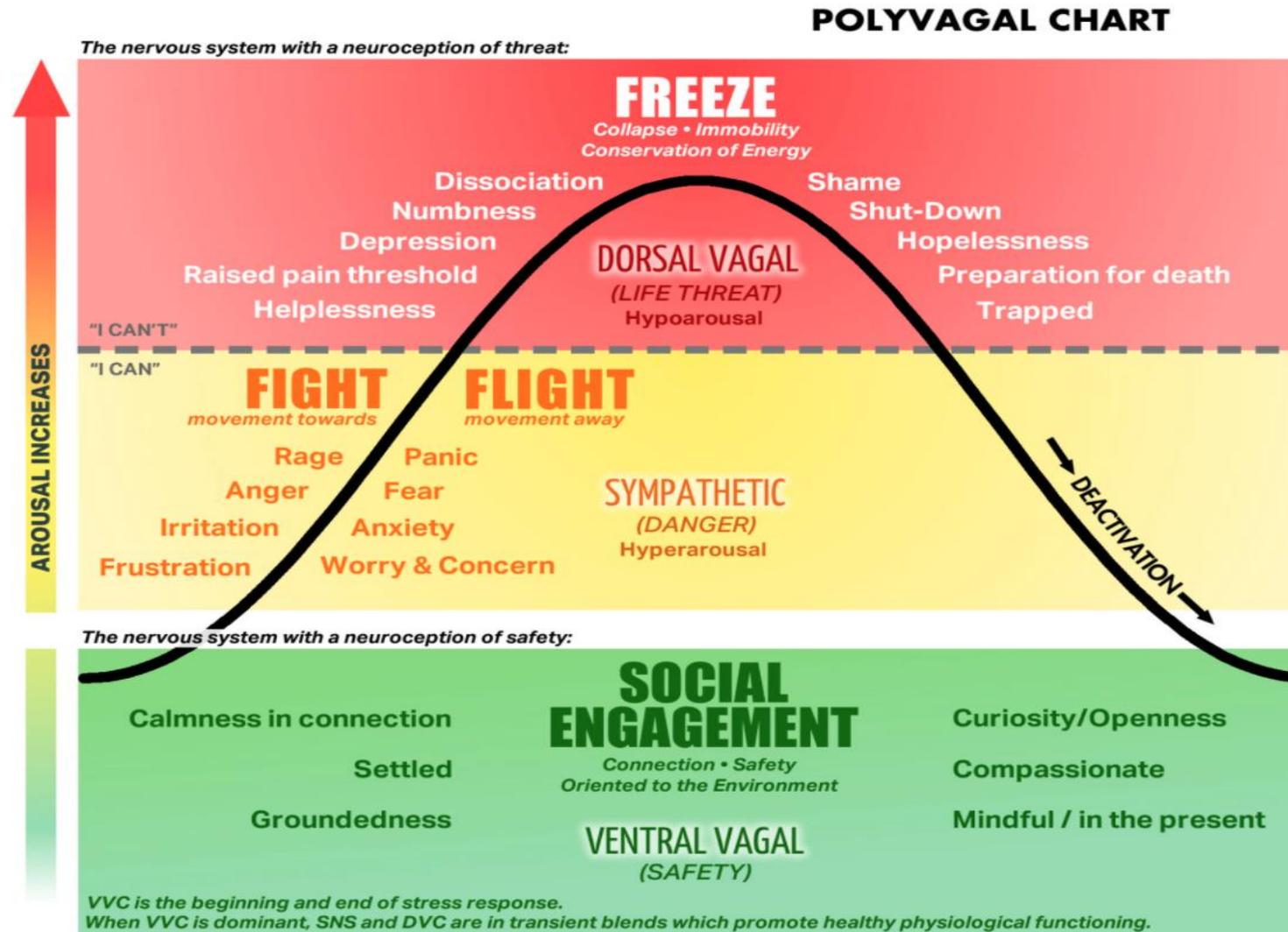


Figure 2.1. The autonomic nervous system: Parasympathetic and sympathetic divisions (from Morris & Maisto, 2001, p. 72).



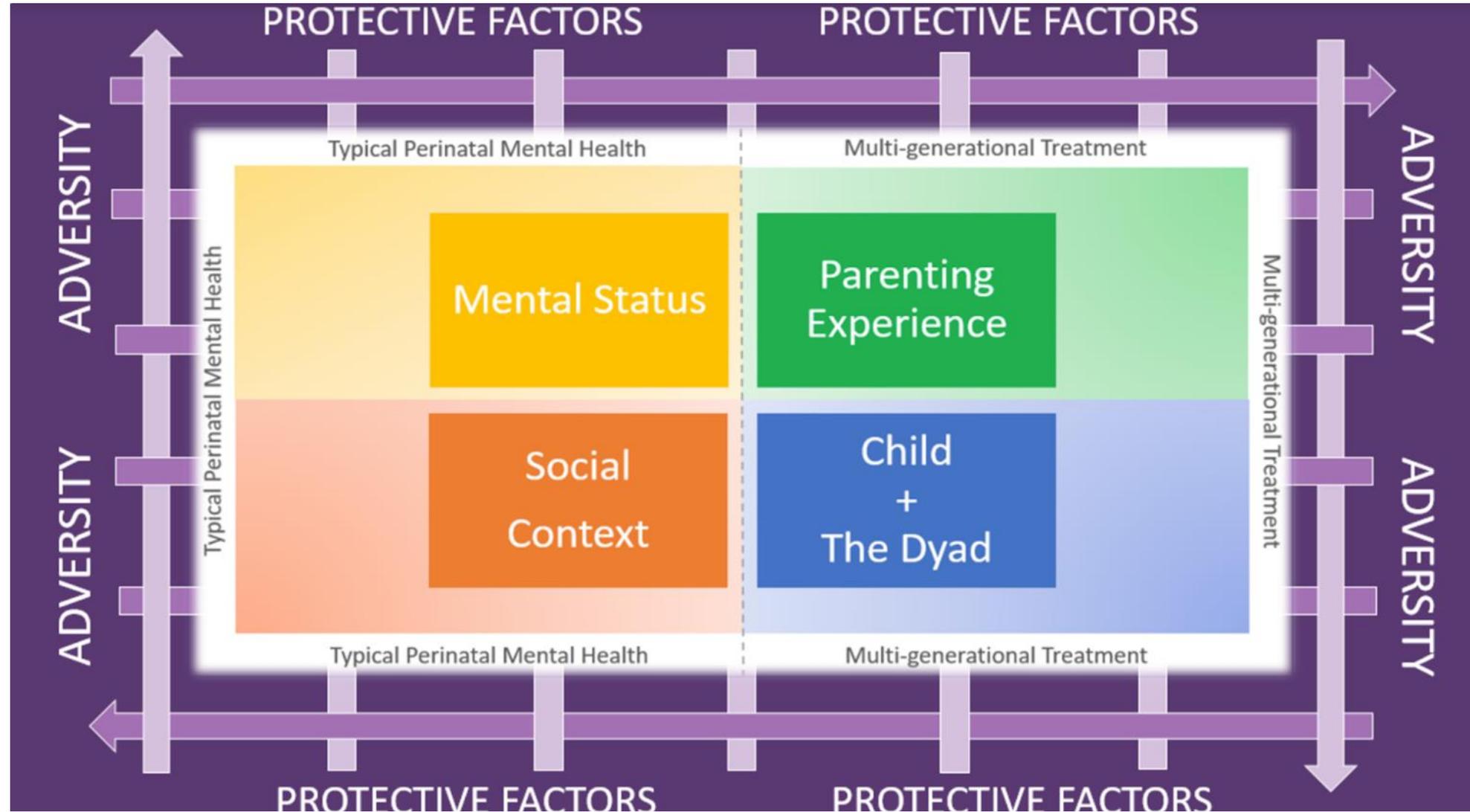
Polyvagal Theory



M

- 30 year old mom of a 10 year old son.
- ACEs (adverse childhood and community experiences), historical and generational trauma
- PCEs (maternal grandmother)
- PTSE (persistent toxic stress environment including everyday racism, limited resources, system barriers and harm, limited support)
- Started using opioids to manage pain following murder of father.
- Started on suboxone and had severe side effects, then struggled to get back to Addiction Med. On restricted care per her insurance and can only go to 2 specific providers and go to one specific pharm.
- No car. Just got eviction notice. Son was expelled from school for “behavioral issues”.

Assessment Domains: Mother-Baby Program Four-Square





OUR MISSION

Healing happens in relationships.

The mission of the Redleaf Center for Family Healing is to save and improve lives through multi-generational mental health, integrative, and parenting support services for pregnant and postpartum mothers, fathers, and families raising young children.

Grounded in social justice, lived experience, and research, our work focuses on the entire family. We aim to relieve suffering and break generational cycles of trauma by supporting parents in developing skills to provide the consistent and nurturing care all children need to thrive.