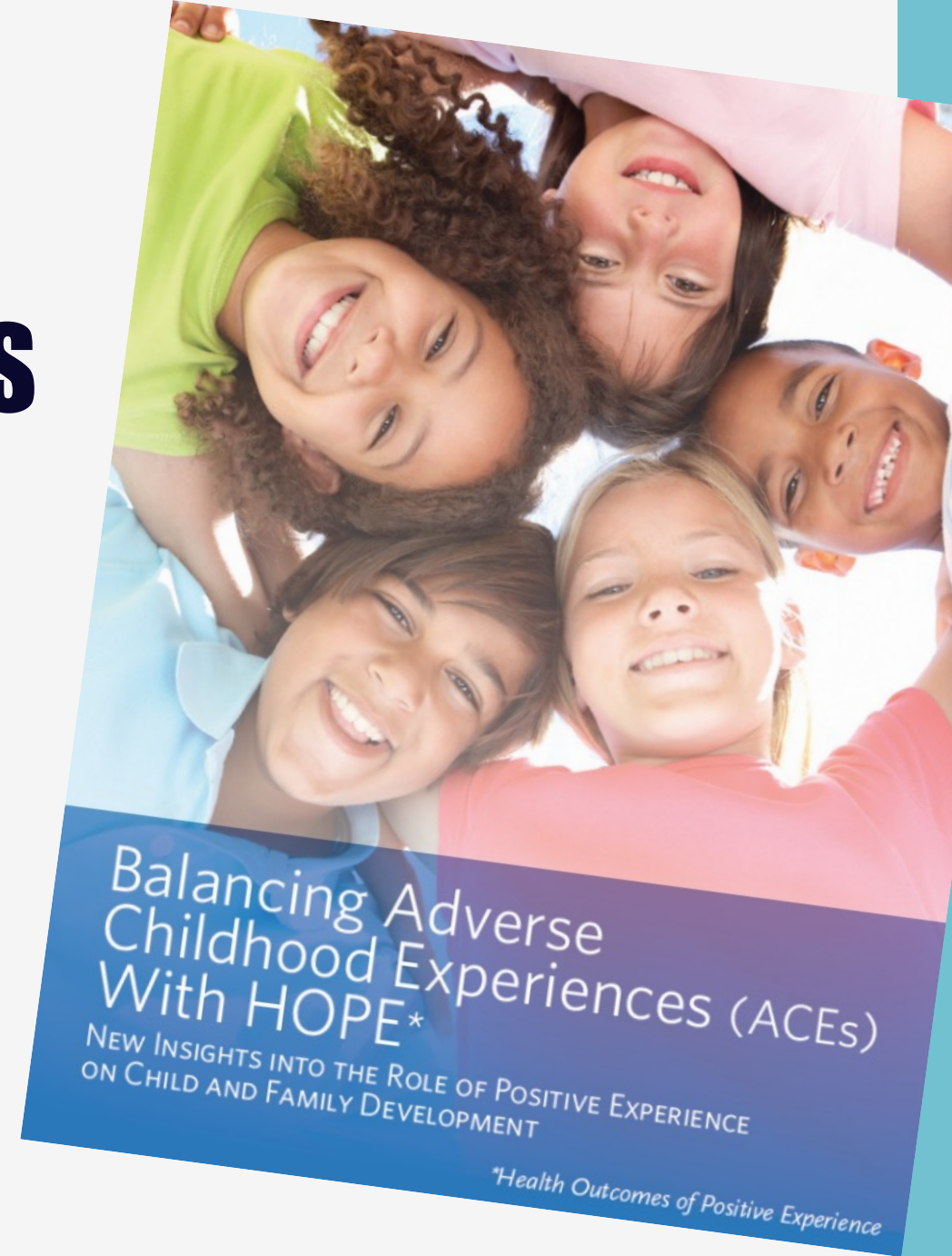


BALANCING ACES WITH HOPE: HEALTH OUTCOMES OF POSITIVE EXPERIENCES

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- Reviewers: Cohen (CSSP), Dreyfus (Alliance), Klevens (CDC), Langford (CSSP), Tait (AAP), Whitaker (Temple University)
- In memory of Paula Duncan, MD who inspired this work

THINKING ABOUT HOPE – THE SCIENCE OF THE POSITIVE

- Including positive experiences reflects the **spirit** of engagement with families
- **Science:** positive experiences effect child and brain development
- **Action:** creating conditions that promote positive experience drives programming
- **Return:** assessing strengths promotes program improvement

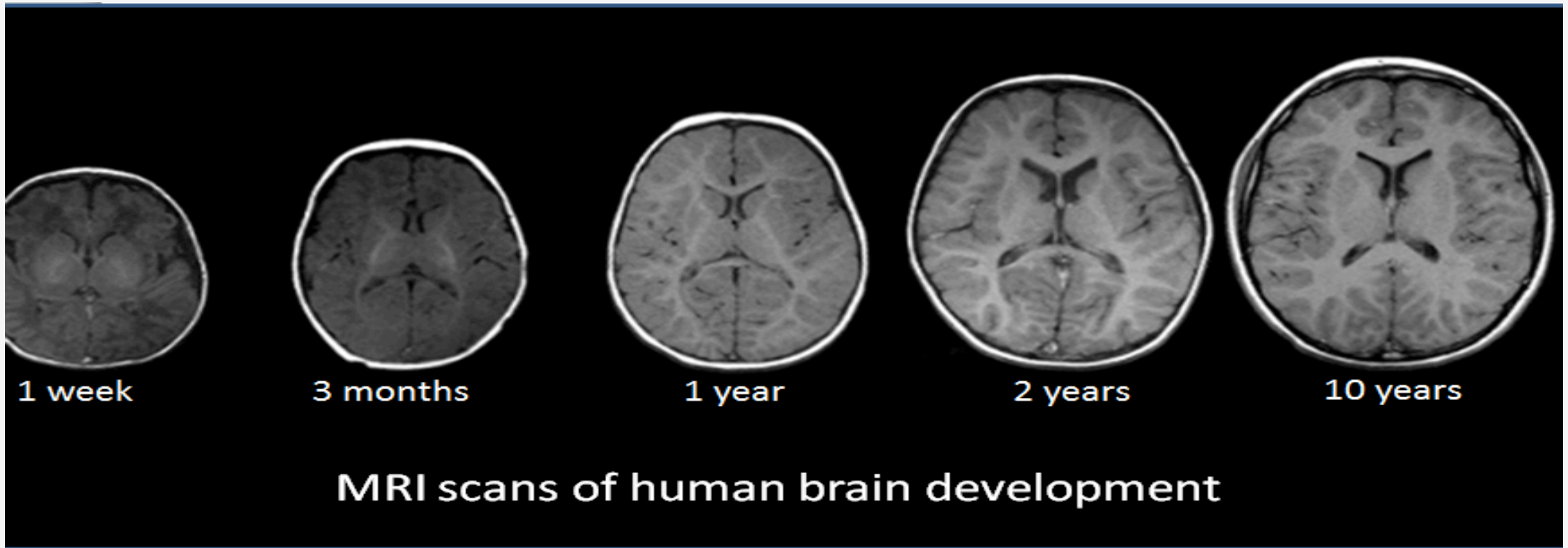


BACKGROUND



- **Experience** shapes brain growth and development
- Especially during **rapid periods** of brain growth and
 - early childhood
 - adolescence
- **Adverse experiences** can derail healthy development

GROWING BRAIN CONNECTIONS




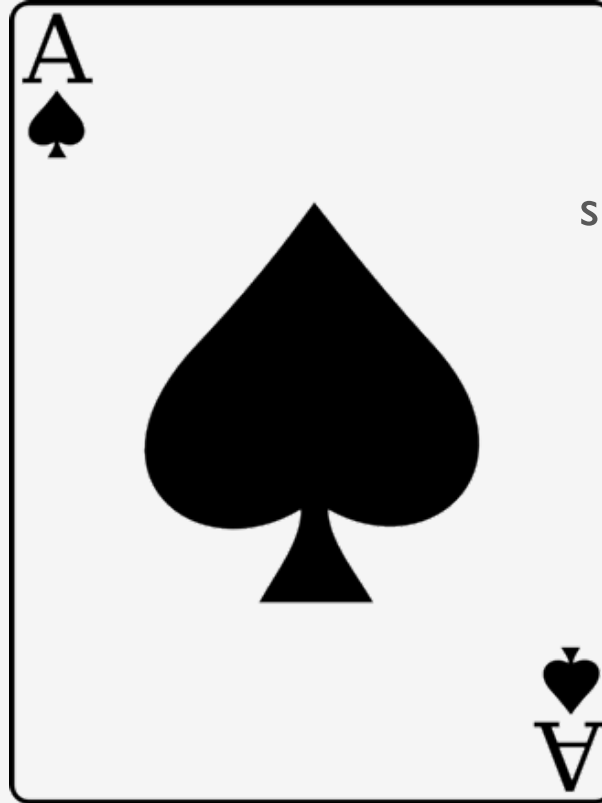
HUMAN BRAIN DEVELOPMENT

Three Core Concepts in Early Development

1 Experiences Build Brain Architecture

NATIONAL SCIENTIFIC COUNCIL ON THE DEVELOPING CHILD

Center on the Developing Child  HARVARD UNIVERSITY



- First reported in 1998
- Middle class employed adults
- Compared recollections of childhood experiences with adult health

The Adverse Childhood Experiences Study <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/acestudy/>

ACES ITEMS

CHILD

1. Emotional abuse
2. Physical abuse
3. Sexual abuse
4. Emotional neglect
5. Physical neglect
6. Lost a parent through divorce, death, abandonment, etc.

HOUSEHOLD

7. Domestic violence
8. Alcohol or drug abuse
9. Household mental illness or suicide attempt
10. Household member imprisoned

Detrimental Health Effects of ACEs

- Alcoholism & alcohol abuse
- Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)
- Depression
- Fetal death
- Health-related quality of life
- Illicit drug use
- Ischemic heart disease (IHD)
- Liver disease
- Risk for intimate partner violence
- Sexually transmitted diseases (STDs)
- Smoking
- Suicide attempts
- Unintended pregnancies
- Adolescent pregnancy

A young child with curly hair, wearing a red and white striped sweater with a floral design and the word 'ALAZDHAR' on it, sits on the ground. The child is looking directly at the camera with a serious expression. The background shows a makeshift camp with tents and debris on a dirt ground.

Beyond ACEs: Community and Societal Factors that Contribute to Toxic Stress

Poverty and deprivation
Institutional racism
War and migration
Neighborhood effects

ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES LEAD TO POOR HEALTH

Adverse
Experiences

```
graph TD; A[Adverse Experiences] --> B[Toxic stress]; B --> C[Poor child and adult health];
```

- Children react to their environments

Toxic stress

- Severe, chronic, unbuffered stress leads to changes in the child's physiology

Poor child
and adult
health

- e.g., obesity, high blood pressure, poor decision-making

AND . . .

- *Adversity* is only one aspect of a child's experience

THINK ABOUT SOMEONE YOU KNOW . .



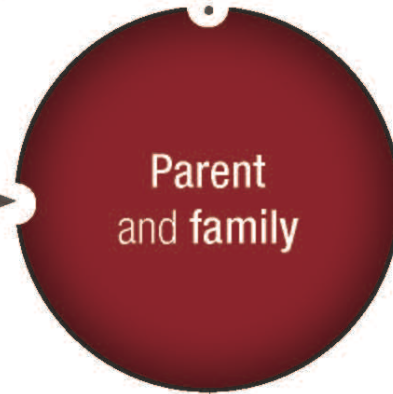
Adversity is not destiny

HEALTH OUTCOMES FROM POSITIVE EXPERIENCES

- 1. Improve family support by using an understanding of how positive experiences can buffer the effects of adversity and trauma**
- 2. Dispel myths about ethnic and racial differences in endorsement of positive parenting practices**
- 3. Cultivate social norms about caring for children to improve the policy environment**

Each of these factors influences parent and family beliefs and behaviors.

Source: Prevent Child Abuse America

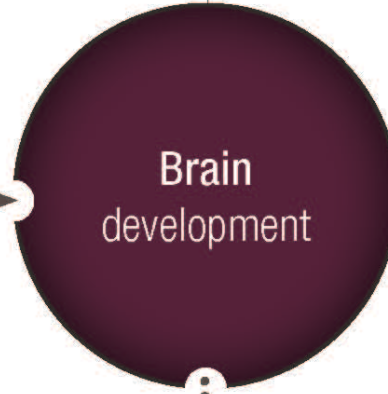


Positive experiences and social norms regarding parenting practices contribute to child development.

Sources: CDC Essentials for Childhood Program and Prevent Child Abuse America

Childhood experiences directly impact brain development.

Source: The Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University

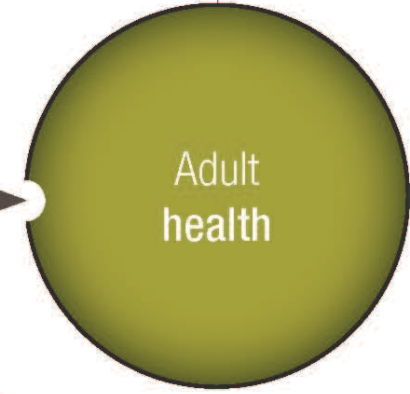


Brain development and childhood experiences directly affect physical health and behavioral outcomes.

Source: The National Survey of Children's Health 2011-2012

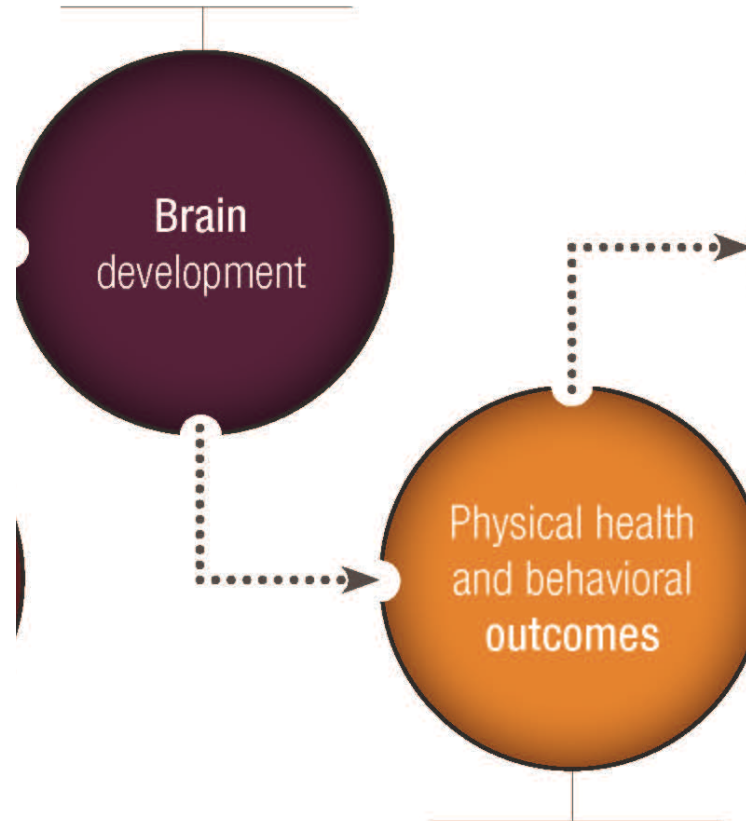
Positive childhood experiences can impact adult health, even among adults who reported adverse childhood experiences.

Source: 2015 Wisconsin Behavioral Risk Factor Survey



Childhood experiences directly impact brain development.

Source: The Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University



Brain development and childhood experiences directly affect physical health and behavioral outcomes.

Source: The National Survey of Children's Health 2011-2012



NATIONAL SURVEY OF CHILDREN'S HEALTH

Moves beyond risk

Changes the way we think about
and measure children's health

Describes outcomes like
“flourishing”

Incorporates ecological model

Data available online:

www.childhealthdata.org

2016 Survey Results now available

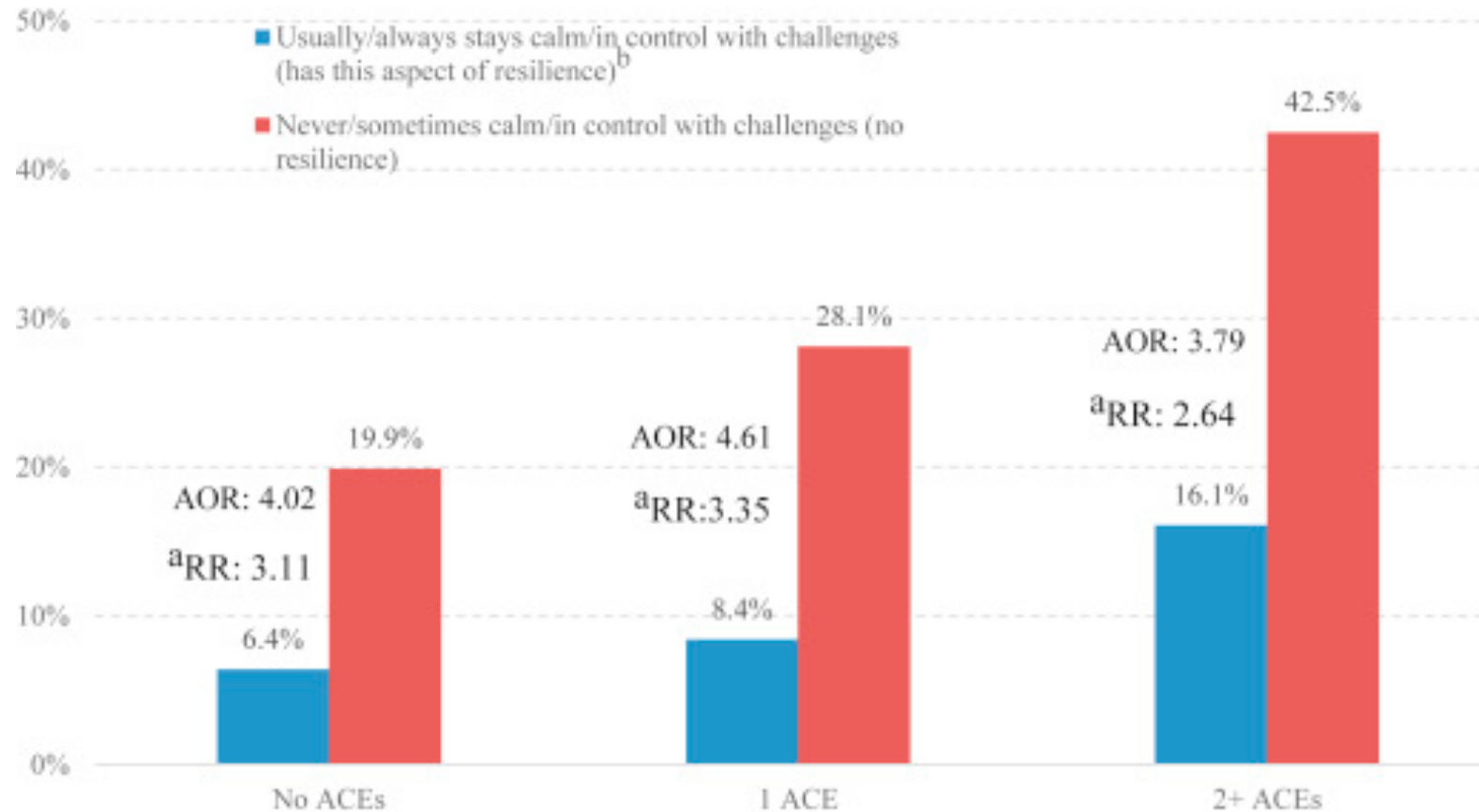
THE NATIONAL SURVEY OF CHILDREN'S HEALTH 2011-23

- Domains
 - Childhood health and functioning,
 - Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs),
 - Family relationships and parental health,
 - School and neighborhood conditions,
 - Childhood flourishing
- 2011-12 sample size = 95,677
- Sponsored by the federal Maternal and Child Health Bureau

NSCH Result: Parenting matters

- Home environments support child wellbeing
 - Sharing meals
 - Spending time together
 - Parent participation in children's activities
- Strong association between childhood experience and maternal health and child wellbeing
- Results apply to normally developing children, and those with special health needs

Prevalence of Emotional, Mental, and Behavioral Conditions by Adverse Childhood Experiences and Resilience Status (all US children ages 6-17)



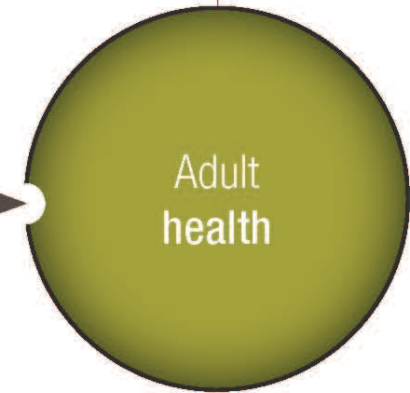
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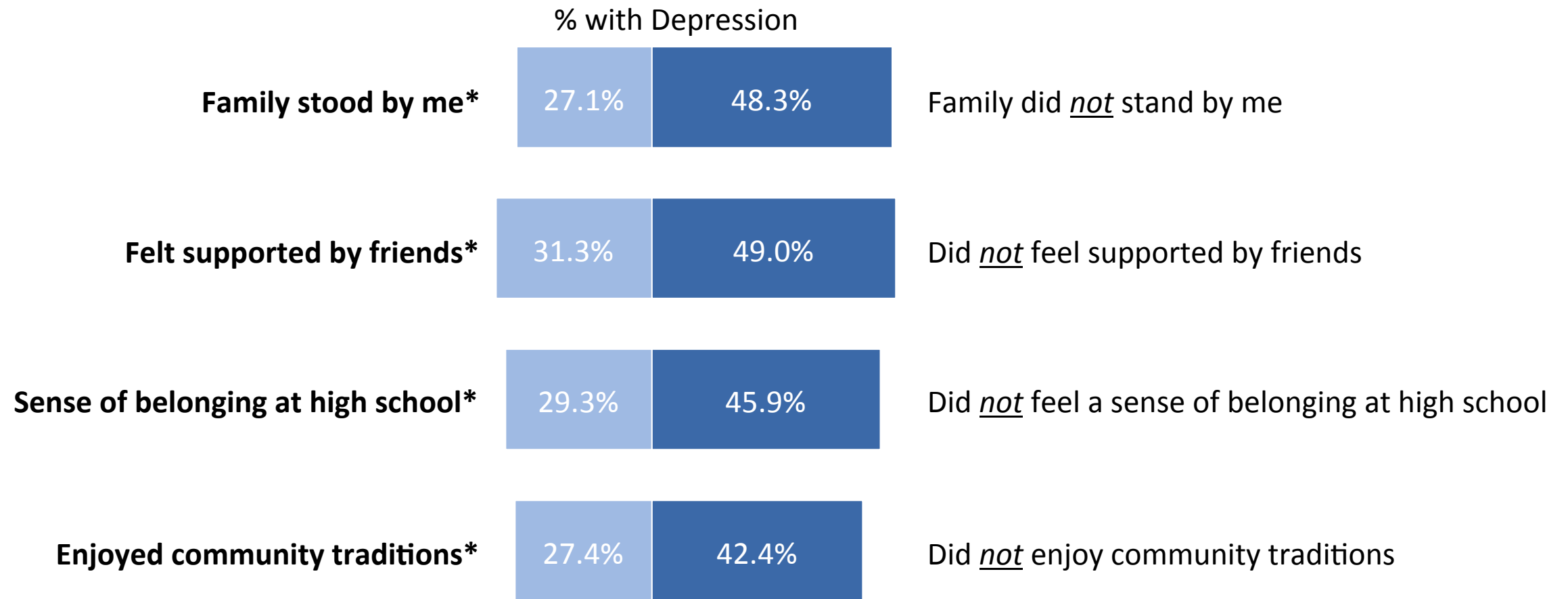
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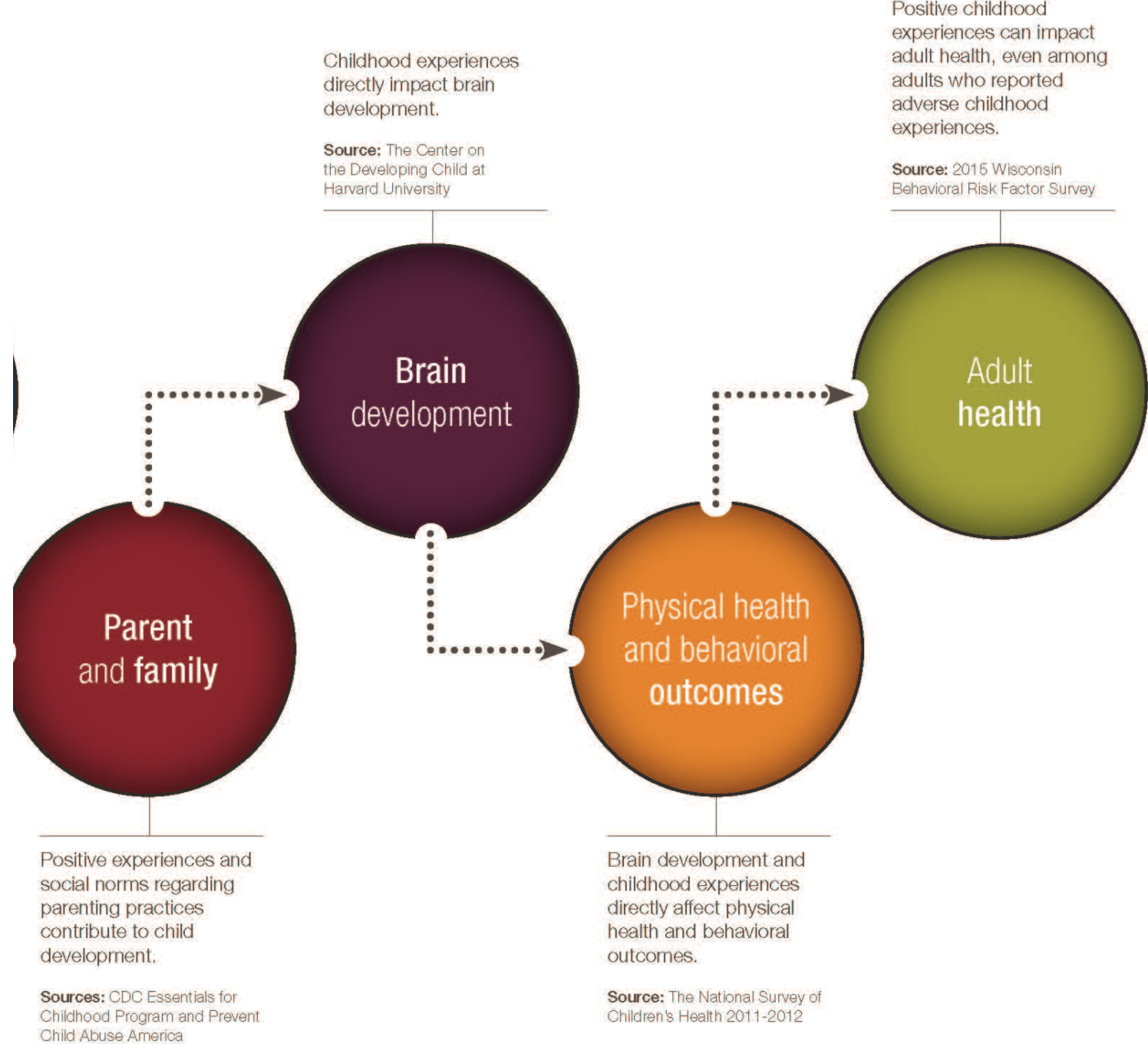
Wisconsin BRFs:

Health Effects of Positive Experience in Adulthood

- The Wisconsin Behavioral Risk Factor Survey (BRFS) was expanded in 2014 and 2015
 - 8 items related to child poverty and neglect (2014)
 - 6 items pertaining to factors promoting child and youth resilience (2015)
 - Adopted with permission from the *Child and Youth Resilience Measure* created by Dr. Michael Ungar, Resilience Research Center, Nova Scotia

Adults with >3 ACEs AND selected positive childhood experiences had **lower** rates of depression. (all $p < 0.05$)

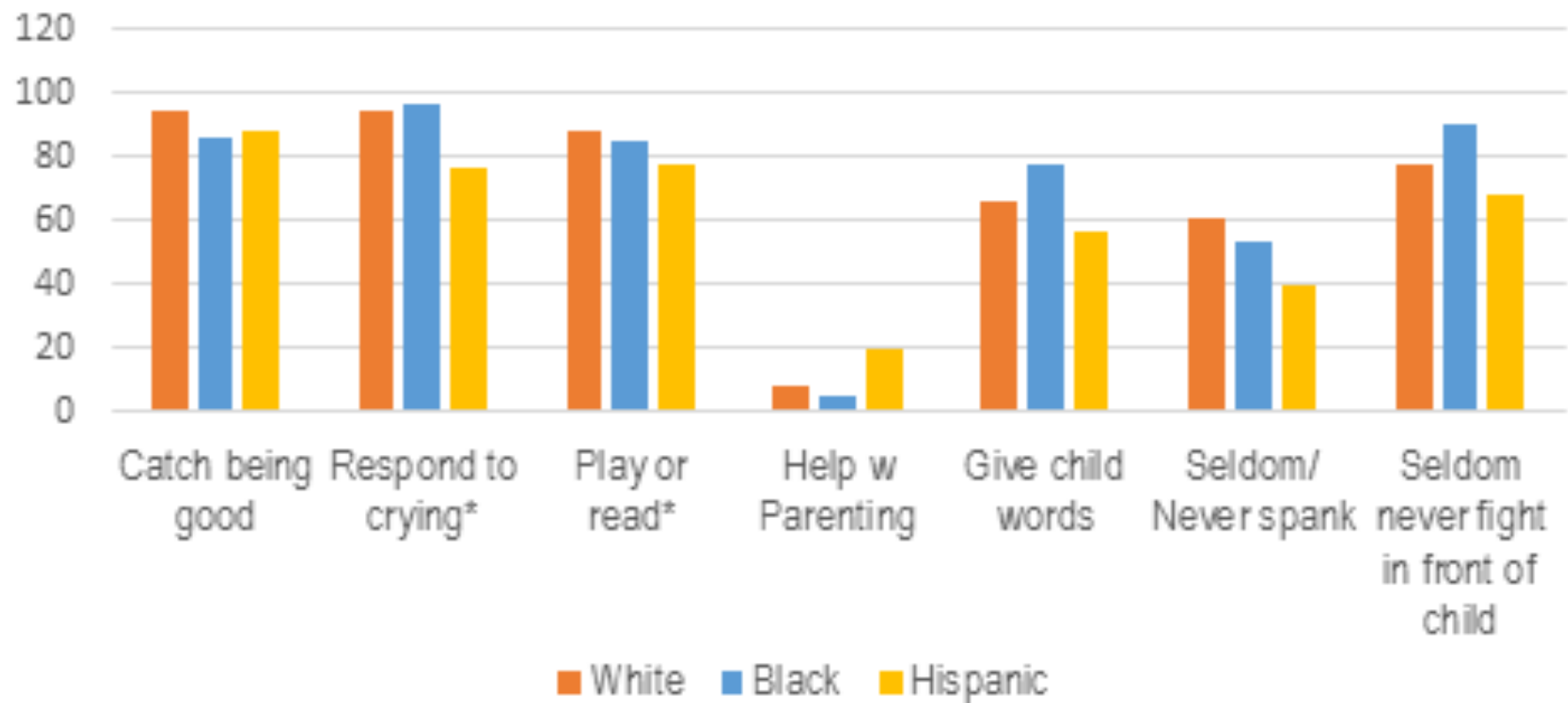




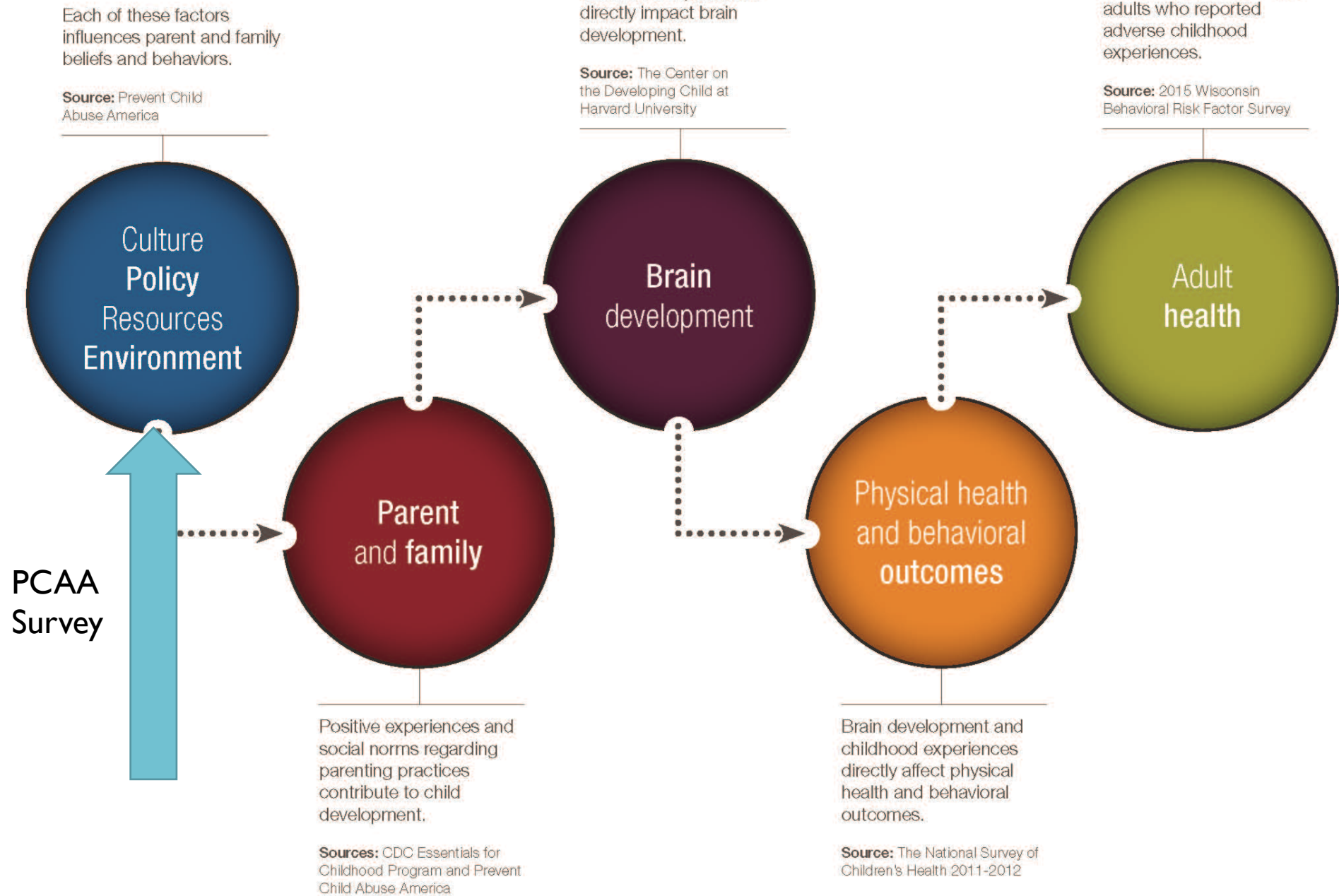
YUGOV.COM SURVEY: PARENTING PRACTICES OF US ADULTS

- Survey conducted by yougov.com; data courtesy of the CDC
- Items probed practices and beliefs concerning parenting, using a social norms approach.
 - Respondents with children under age 5 years in the home were asked about their own parenting practices,
 - All respondents were asked about how other parents in their state raised their children
- Sample size: 2,500 Americans

**Figure 5. Positive Parenting Practices
by Race and Ethnicity in the Yougov.com Survey
(N=416)**



Support for Cultural and Policy Change



PCAA Survey: Social Norms Related to CAN Prevention

- Surveys conducted by the Montana Institute for Prevent Child Abuse America
- Surveys probed social norms
- First survey (2014): Telephone poll of 1,000 US adults
- Second Survey (2015): Telephone poll of 500 US adults
- 87% of respondents think that child abuse and neglect is a serious problem

ACTUAL AND PERCEIVED NORMS

STATEMENT	IN AGREEMENT
Child abuse and neglect is a serious problem	87%
<i>Most adults think child abuse and neglect is a serious problem</i>	75%
Child abuse and neglect is preventable	87%
<i>Most adults think that child abuse and neglect is preventable</i>	74%
I would take action if suspected child abuse and neglect	97%
<i>Most adults would take action if suspected child abuse and neglect</i>	87%
Should take action if child abuse and neglect is suspected	98%
<i>Most adults believe that they should take action if child abuse and neglect is suspected</i>	91%

MOST OF US ARE ALREADY HELPING

Prompt	Percent
ENGAGED IN ANY PREVENTION ACTIVITIES	27%
DONATED GOODS, MONEY OR TIME TO AN ORG. SUPPORTING CHILDREN AND FAMILIES	80%
VOLUNTEERED WITH CHILDREN THROUGH PLACES OF WORSHIP, SCHOOL, SPORTS OR CLUBS	70%
PROVIDED MENTORSHIP TO A CHILD IN FAMILY, NEIGHBORHOOD, OR COMMUNITY	56%

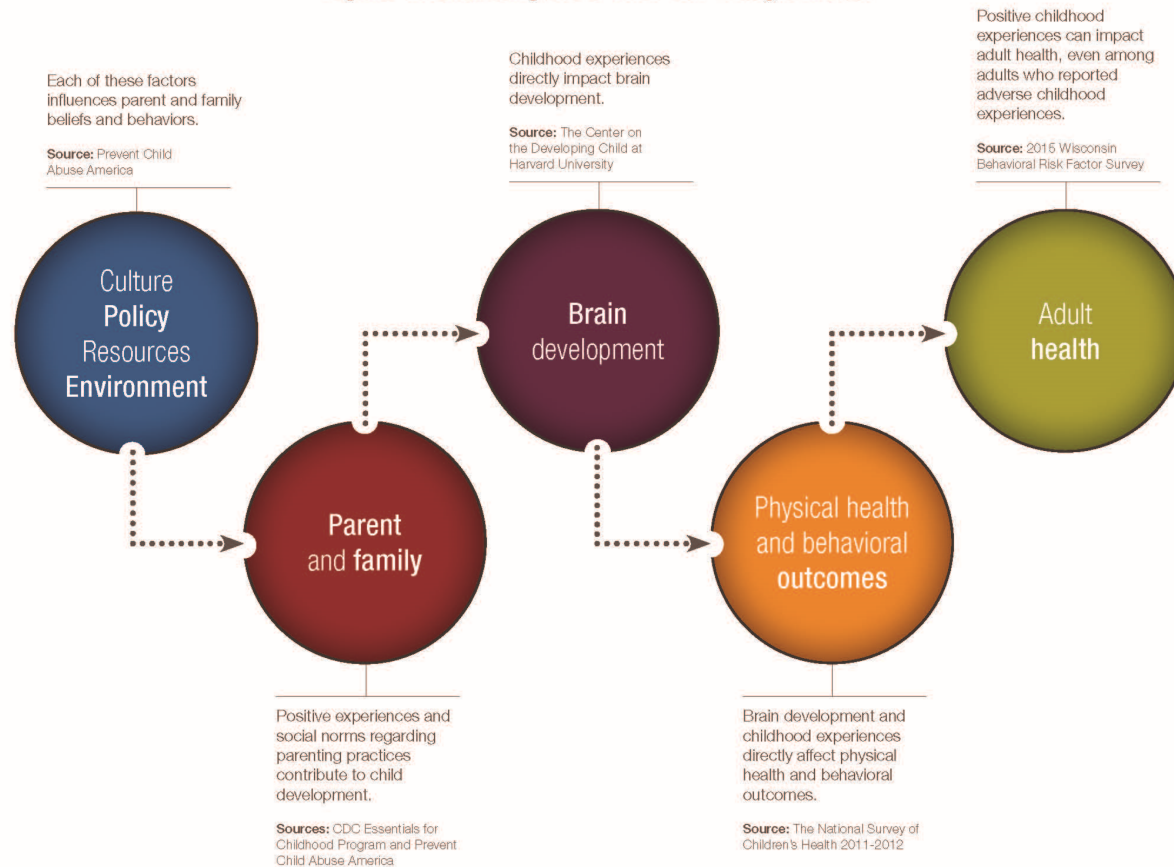
TALK ABOUT PREVENTION

What sort of activities do you, your co-workers, and neighbors do to support young children and their families?

Have you ever thought of it as Child Abuse Prevention?

Is it helpful or harmful to frame community activities as child abuse prevention?

Figure 1. Balancing ACEs with HOPE Logic Model



March 2017

SUMMARY

Children's brains develop as a result of everything a child **experiences**: positive, negative, and indifferent.

These experiences are **influenced by**:

Parents and family (NSCH)

Parents and families are **influenced by**:

Culture, Policies, and Environment

(PCAA and yougov.com)

Child development and brain growth **influences**:

child health (NSCH)

adult health (WI BRFS)

Summary: There are short and long-term health benefits from positive experiences.









THE FOUR POSITIVE EXPERIENCES THAT MATTER

1. **Being** in nurturing supportive relationships
2. **Living, playing, and learning** in safe, stable, protective and equitable environments
3. **Engaging** in constructive social / civic activities that develop a sense of connectedness
4. **Learning** social and emotional competencies

Sege and Browne. Responding to ACEs with HOPE: Health Outcomes from Positive Experiences. Academic Pediatrics 2017; 17:S79-S85

BEING in supportive relationships

Parents can create conditions that favor positive experiences – *and create memories of supportive relationships*

Ideas

- Interactive activities: talk, play, read, sing
- Include fathers, grandparents, other adults who parent the child
- Build relationships with other children [and their parents]

IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

There is plenty of evidence to begin now with programmatic changes that incorporate HOPE

Resources:

Healthychildren.org

<https://www.cdc.gov/parents/essentials/>

Importance of parental wellness

Ideas:

- Time and permission for self-care
- Promote activities known to improve health: exercise, mindfulness, sleep
- Promote relationships with others who provide support

IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

Parental mental and physical health promotes child development



RESOURCES FOR PARENTS WITH TOXIC STRESS

Discussion

- Parental self-care can be trauma-informed:
 - Awareness that child-rearing brings back memories of childhood
 - Reassurance that history is not destiny
 - Assistances in accessing evidence-based mental health services

Living, playing, and learning Environments



POLICIES AND PRACTICES

Safe outdoor space for play

Equitable support for high
quality early care and
education

Positive school environments

Engaging in activities that develop a sense of connectedness

Ideas:

- Personal support for participation
- Family fun days
- Join activities with churches, community groups, etc.
- Ask parents for their ideas

IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

Social support for both children and adults is an essential ingredient in the creation of positive experiences

Connect with ethnic, faith, neighborhood and occupational communities

How can family resource centers serve as a hub for connection?



Learning social and emotional competencies

Ideas:

- Positive school environments
- Out of school time activities (sports, arts, scouting)
- Opportunities to teach younger children
- Unsupervised (safe) play time



IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

Training and support for program staff

Materials (books, etc) to support this idea

Development and support of interactive out of school time activities

Materials from Committee for Children

Discussions with parents / clients

- Policies that support HOPE also prevent abuse and neglect
- **Ideas:**
 - Safeguard concrete supports for all children
 - Paid parental leave
 - Improve access to quality early childhood education
 - Healthcare policies that promote parental mental and physical health

IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY

There is widespread awareness, and broad willingness, to support programs and ideas that prevent child abuse and neglect

POLICY & CULTURE



COMMUNITY



FAMILY

strengthening families
A PROTECTIVE FACTORS FRAMEWORK

Home Visiting

CHILD

ACES — HOPE



CALL TO ACTION

- HOPE is ready for prime time
- What resources are needed:
 - For programs / front line workers?
 - For parents and other adults who parent children?
- Opportunity to develop a cooperative program across state Children's Trust Funds
 - Joint funding
 - Joint products – adaptable to state needs
 - Opportunities for collaborative learning
- National will convene a working group

SUMMARY

- **Spirit:** HOPE reflects successful practice
- **Science:** Positive experiences during childhood
 - Promote healthy development, AND
 - Prevent abuse and neglect
 - Break the link between ACEs and toxic stress
- **Action:** we know enough to incorporate HOPE into our work
- **Research:** need for standard language and measures

TAKE HOME LESSONS

1. Protection from and mitigation of adversity is only part of the picture
2. Positive Experiences have immediate and lifelong health effects
 - Most of these experiences involve relationships
3. Choose your metaphor:
 - ACEs malnourish the brain / HOPE feeds it
 - Positive Experiences for people = rain and sunshine for plants



It is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men

-Frederick Douglass

In order to carry a positive action we must develop here a positive vision

-Dalai Lama