

MARCH 20, 2018

## STRESS & EARLY BRAIN GROWTH

### Understanding Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

**What are ACEs?** ACEs are serious childhood traumas that result in toxic stress that can harm a child's brain. This toxic stress may prevent a child from learning, from playing in a healthy way with other children, and can result in long-term health

**Parenting a Child Exposed to Trauma?**  
This two page flyer is an excellent resource to share with others who have frequent contact with your child.

### [VIEW TWO PAGE FLYER ON CHILDHOOD TRAUMA](#)

#### How do ACEs affect health?

**Through stress.** Frequent or prolonged exposure to ACEs can create toxic stress which can damage the developing brain of a child and affect overall health.

Reduces the ability to respond, learn, or figure things out, which can result in problems in school.

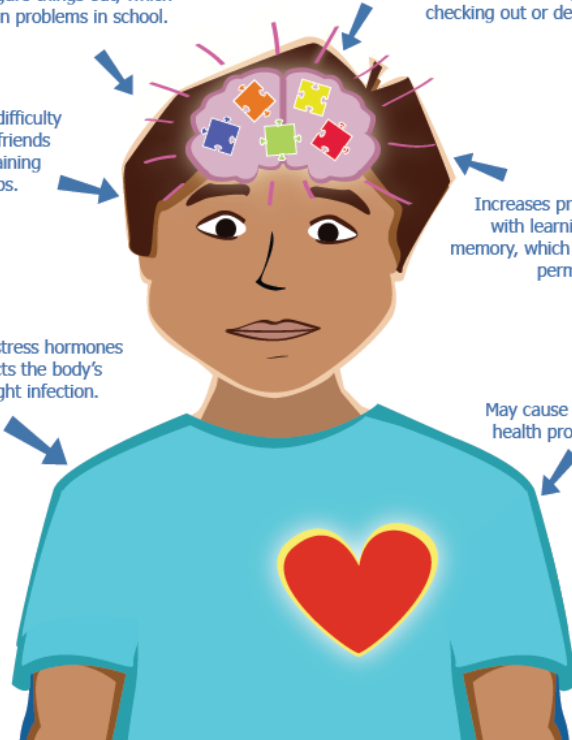
Lowers tolerance for stress, which can result in behaviors such as fighting, checking out or defiance.

Increases difficulty in making friends and maintaining relationships.

Increases problems with learning and memory, which can be permanent.

Increases stress hormones which affects the body's ability to fight infection.

May cause lasting health problems.



**A Survival Mode Response** to toxic stress increases a child's heart rate, blood pressure, breathing and muscle tension. Their thinking brain is knocked off-line. Self-protection is their priority. In other words:  
"I can't hear you! I can't respond to you! I am just trying to be safe!"



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Find even more fascinating articles we want to share with you...

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[Foster Mom Starts Company and Makes Perfect Baby Swaddle](#)

#### [CHILDHOOD TRAUMA](#)

[A Sheriff and a Doctor Team Up to Map Childhood Trauma](#)

#### [PARENTING TEENS](#)



## The Amazing Brain:

What Every Parent and Caregiver Needs to Know

By Linda Burgess Chamberlain, PhD, MPH

How your child's brain develops each and every day is being shaped by the environment and experiences you provide. The world your child lives in actually affects how their brain grows. Your child needs lots of new, positive experiences in a safe, stable home environment to build a healthy brain. Healthy relationships are the most important experience your child can have. We can help children grow healthy brains by following these [SIX SIMPLE STEPS](#).



## Silliness Builds a Bridge

Written By: Gari Lister

My middle daughter has started to follow in her older sister's footsteps and taken to hiding in her room. Oh, she's not literally hiding — she's "cleaning" it or she's "reading". But it takes hours, doesn't seem to make an enormous difference in the cleanliness of the room or the number of pages read and, more importantly, it precludes her from spending time with the rest of the family. Because all three of my girls are adopted, I worry about that. A lot. Frustrated last night, I took a page out of a strategy I used years ago with my oldest daughter, who has struggled with reactive attachment disorder because of early trauma and eleven years in Russian orphanages. [CONTINUE READING](#)

# Shame Does Not Teach Children to Do Better

*Why Parents May Want to Reconsider Shame as a Parenting Tactic*

Have you seen the children in the "This is our get along shirt"? What about children with the signs: "Don't trust me. I am a thief and will steal from you" Or the girl that was made to wear some thrift shop outfits to look like a girl she had been teasing?


Shaming and making a child feel badly about stealing, teasing, bullying and other missteps have become such an unfortunate trend in parenting. While it may give parents a sense that they are doing something and teaching their child a lesson, the lessons connected to feeling shame are most often far from helpful:

**Shame can lead to a child feeling incapable, alone and discouraged** – all which have the potential to lead to more negative behavior and unacceptable choices. As parents we should be building our children up, not tearing them down. **Shame and humiliation teach shame and humiliation.** Children that bully and shame others have most typically experienced the same from a parent, caregiver or peer. Using shame to "teach" perpetuates the cycle of shame, humiliation and bullying.

**Shame and humiliation lead to negative feelings of self-worth.** Several different bodies of research\* show that punishment (including shame tactics and spanking) will not lead to any long term results. On the contrary, it actually shows that over time, punishments can have negative impacts on a child's esteem, confidence and overall well-being.

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What shame may be teaching children to think about:	What parenting without shame can teach children to think about:
"I am worthless."	"I belong."
"I'm incapable of solving problems."	"Problems can be solved"
"I can't trust anyone."	"I can trust my parents to guide me"
"I am bad and I do bad things."	"I made a mistake. I can make amends."
"Power always wins out."	"Everyone deserves respect."



Positive Parenting Connection