

Accommodations Through an ACE's Lens

Strengthening Connection & Regulation

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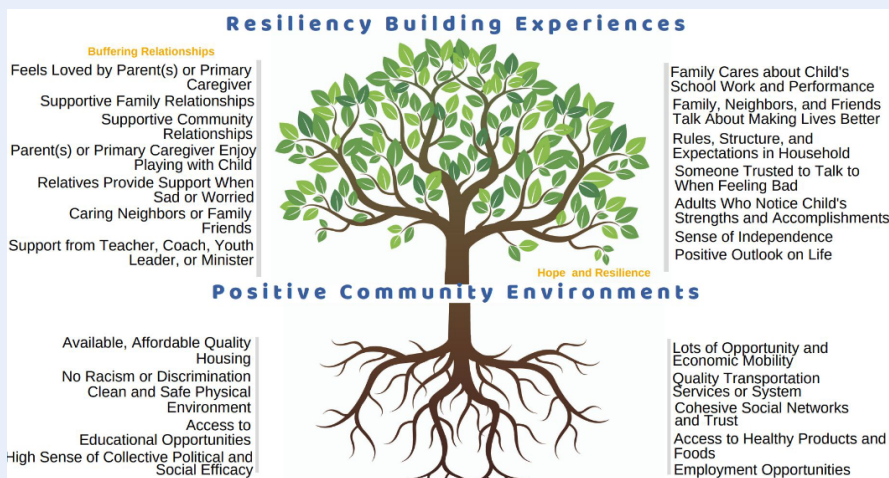
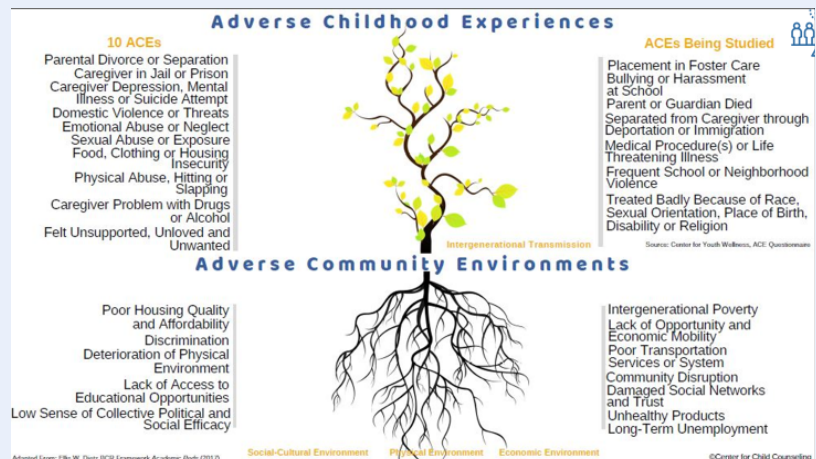
What do you need? | What can we do to make it better? | How can I help?

What do you need?

Many of our students who need sensory and emotional support and resources do not have an IEP, 504, or a team of educators and staff available to consistently attune to their sensory and regulatory needs. This absence of support is impacting felt safety each day. Our students often come to school in a survival nervous system state. They are plagued by the adversities that have accumulated throughout the days, weeks, months, or years. This template is

created collaboratively to support all students who carry significant adversities/trauma and therefore elevated stress response systems into our schools. These supports and resources address pain-based behaviors. Sometimes they will be needing accommodations and possible modifications during the school day regarding their environmental, relational, and sensory needs that impact learning and cognition. These

supports will address the critical needs of attachment and regulation through a culturally sensitive lens. Often, as students move to different classrooms and environments, the adults are not consistent in providing a routine of two or three practices that can be implemented to find accumulating moments of felt safety. (These images are from



the work of Dr. Wendy Ellis, Assistant Professor and Director, Center for Community Resilience)

What can we do to make it better?

We are not adding more work to what we are already doing. These relational and sensory accommodations are intentionally & transparently built into our procedures and routines. **Behaviors are only indicators of a nervous system that is dysregulated and when dysregulation is ongoing, our children and youth cannot access the cortex where learning occurs.** Pain based behaviors can show up in disrespectful, defiant, or shut-down ways. Therefore, reaching for the root of the presented behavior can occur when we address nervous system needs, through these accommodations. Brain aligned bell work and focused attention practices can occur naturally through our procedures, routine, transitions, morning bell work, and meetings!

How can I help?

We know that many of our students carrying adversity and trauma into schools do not have the accommodations with accompanying accountability and trusted adults that are able to provide mutual feedback. **As a district, school, department, classroom, or grade level, we need to create these accommodations so they are consistently dispersed, discussed, and implemented each day.**

Are you ready to tackle this with me?



Because our students spend over 13,000 hours in school during their K-12 span, educators have the opportunity and the obligation to address the social and emotional skills, and competencies, through creating the accommodations and

BEFORE WE BEGIN THIS IEP MEETING:

I want to take a moment and tell you how amazing your child is, and although we will discuss some challenges during this meeting, it is only to strengthen their potential, learning, and creativity we all see in this time. Your child is unique in how they experience the world. They teach me how to tap into the individual strengths, passions, and interests they carry. Today, we will be focusing on these challenges, but it is because we want to provide the supports and resources that they will need to be successful and thrive.

adjustments needed for emotional, social, and cognitive well-being. In order to

address these experiences at school, we need to cultivate a safe and connected space and presence for our students.

Why?







If our social and emotional learning outcomes, programs, and competencies are to be reflective of the current brain research addressing the impact of severe life disruptions/accumulating adversities and trauma that are occurring in our student populations across the country, we need to address specific areas of brain development with regard to acquiring these competencies. Brain and nervous


system development is complex. Even today, we know very little about how individual regions of the brain work collectively through neuronal connections and projections. **However, we do know that human brains are not complete at birth, but, by design, continue to develop throughout a person's life.** This development is intimately impacted by experiences.



How Traditional Accommodations and Accommodations for Adversity (ACE's) Support One Another



Our physiological states are inherently social, affecting everything we feel, sense, and do, as the brain and body development of children and youth is constantly being shaped by experiences with others and the perceptions of environments. The chronic behavioral challenges we face in our schools are often communicating nervous system states of threat and protection. The growing research from the social and relational neurosciences shares that education requires 'state regulation' so we can access and integrate the cognitive and mental tasks we need to succeed in school and to navigate our life experiences. For these developmental reasons, accommodations for supporting the felt adversity and trauma our children are carrying in are critical for social, emotional, and therefore cognitive well-being.




Traditional accommodations and accommodations for adversity and trauma work well together. We do not hesitate to give more time for an assignment, integrate assistive technology, or provide spaces that are quiet and non-distracting for academic work. We need to generate the same type of accommodations for children and youth that may be experiencing acute, chronic, or developmental adversity and trauma. **These accommodations do not replace an IEP or 504, but they provide the resources and support for our students that need felt safety and predictability in our classrooms and schools.** Below are examples of how accommodations for academic, social, and emotional support with an available, safe adult can provide for the safety and connection of students. Predictable adults can share their calm regulated nervous system. This is discipline. This is co-regulation. This is the bio-social and emotional environment that provides the nurturing 'nests' that are foundational for our students' overall well-being.

Traditional Accommodations	Accommodations using ACE's Lens
Seating at the front of the class 	I need a seat where I feel safe and secure. <i>Dr. Stephen Porges suggests a classroom would be best as a circle of learners where all students have their backs against the wall.</i>
Graph paper to line up math problems 	Two adults in the building I can trust and a place to walk when I begin to feel triggered
Multiplication table or use of a calculator 	A personalized routine of 3 interventions that I can implement when I begin to feel anxious, angry, or negative in any way (getting a sip of water, 5 deep breaths, drawing for a few moments)
Repetition and explanation of directions when needed 	Access to sensory area or table in our classroom for patterned repetitive activities used to calm me

	down
Pre-printed classroom notes from the teacher 	A personalized set of my accommodations given to all who work with me to allow me to de-escalate and calm down and become ready to learn

School Accommodations:	
Traditional Accommodations	Accommodations using ACE's Lens
Occupational therapy every Wednesday 	Meeting with my resiliency team each week (two or three individuals at school I trust)
Math one on one tutoring twice a week during study hall 	One on one scheduled time with my pre-arranged mentor whom I meet with regularly as a check-in and who I can go see to help me co-regulate as needed

Test Accommodations:	
Traditional Accommodations	Accommodations using ACE's Lens
Extended time on tests and quizzes 	Extended time to regulate if I need this and academic modifications of my assignments when I am dysregulated
Quiet testing room with small group setting 	Quiet area for me to use when I need to regulate my nervous system - routine of three options

My Goals:	
Traditional	ACE's Lens Goals
Improve my mental math skills 	Learn to regulate with an adult before I reach the tipping point
Get better at asking for help when needed 	Use the resiliency team and the amygdala reset area
Join a school club or activity 	Create a journal of my ups and downs to track my progress

<u>Determining Goals:</u>	
What are this student's strengths?	
What are this student's areas of interest and expertise?	
Who are the adults in the building that can support and unconditionally co-regulate with this student through conflicts & celebrations?	
Key mentors assigned to this student:	
What are the experiences, events, sights, sounds, smells, relationships, and people who can unexpectedly activate or trigger this student resulting in anxiety or negative emotion? How can we mitigate those activators? (Review 'Recast' document)	

EDUCATION DISCIPLINE PROTOCOLS

MUST BEGIN TO PRIORITIZE

NERVOUS SYSTEM REGULATION.

DR. LORI DESAUTELS

REVELATIONS IN EDUCATION