

Video: Understanding Stress and Resilience in Young Children



NATIONAL CENTER ON
Early Childhood Health and Wellness

Background

This video first and foremost exists to tell the stories of families who have experienced adversity and how they continue to grow and heal in an environment that recognizes the need for the whole person to be addressed if true healing is to occur.

Operation Breakthrough houses the largest Head Start program in Missouri, serving more than 300 children each day in its center. The model it is pursuing is one that emphasizes a multidisciplinary approach and includes a unique partnership with the local children's hospital, which staffs an on-site clinic for the children enrolled in the program.

Topics Addressed in the Video

Breaking Through was designed to raise awareness and educate. It provides the perspectives of parents, Head Start staff, health care professionals, and others on the issues of adverse childhood events (ACEs), toxic stress, and resilience. More specifically, the footage from the video can be used to educate on issues such as:

- The effect of ACEs on parents and their children
- The effect of toxic stress on
 - brain development
 - the body's ability to respond to stress
 - a person's physical, mental, and social health
- Effective interventions and models to support children and families affected by toxic stress
- The power of resilience
- Breaking the generational cycle of ACEs and toxic stress
- A vision for the future: healing and prevention

Audiences

There are a variety of audiences who would benefit from seeing the video. For some, it will be purely an educational experience, making them aware of the science involved with toxic stress and its effect on children, families, and communities. For others, the video can be used to generate interest and support for activities in Head Start and Early Head Start programs and in partner organizations that help identify and care for families affected by ACEs and toxic stress.

Some suggested audiences include:

- Head Start and Early Head Start staff and teachers
- Head Start Health Services Advisory Committees
- Local health care providers and their institutions
- Students, including medical students, residents, social work interns
- Local community leaders, including local government
- Families
- Faith communities
- Funders
- Others

Using all or portions of the video

The video is approximately 21 minutes, 30 seconds long. While meant to be viewed in its entirety and in one sitting, it is also useful to use shorter segments to address particular areas of interest. To that end, bookmarks denoting the time segments and the topics they address are outlined in the following table.

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Topic addressed	Specific features	Start time stamp	End stamp
Introduction	Brief background on the video	0:00	0:14
Parental adverse childhood events (ACES)	<p>Tells the story of several parents whose children are enrolled in Head Start. These are parents whose own exposure to ACEs has affected how they parent now. ACEs and other forms of trauma addressed include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Family and intimate partner violence ● Substance abuse ● Poverty and general family instability ● Death of a parent ● Multigenerational trauma 	0:15	2:00
The science and effect of toxic stress	<p>Learning about the role of health care through a case study involving several missed opportunities for intervention. Some of the red flags missed include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Missed well-child visits ● Diagnosis and increasing severity of attention-deficit/ hyperactivity disorder-like symptoms ● Frequent emergency department visits involving violent behavior 	2:01	4:08
	The struggle with where to refer	4:09	4:33
	Toxic stress as a chronic disease that affects generations	4:34	4:54
	Toxic stress and its effects on early childhood	4:55	5:27
	<p>Addresses the science behind the effect of toxic stress on brain development and the body's stress response system. Discusses the risk factors and the shift from responses meant to be adaptive to those which are maladaptive.</p> <p>Discusses the effect on the way early education must respond, emphasizing social-emotional development in the curriculum</p> <p>Provides detail on the ACEs study, including how ACEs are defined, the population studied, statistics, and the dose-response relationship that was discovered (ie, persons with more ACEs had higher morbidity)</p>	5:28	6:38
Identifying children and parents affected by ACEs and toxic stress	Discusses the issue of screening for ACEs in a health care setting and the need to take a dual-generation approach in pediatrics	9:16	9:57
	A brief look at the history of ACEs with parents whose children are enrolled in Head Start, emphasizing the need to look at the parent-child relationship as a vital sign	9:58	10:19

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Ways to begin responding to ACEs and toxic stress	Provides some general comments on the importance of social-emotional learning in the Head Start setting, intervening early, and using a trauma-informed approach	10:20	11:00
	Looks at the model being used by Operation Breakthrough, emphasizing the multidisciplinary approach to addressing the needs of the whole family	11:01	11:23
	Continues discussing the model used by Operation Breakthrough, focusing specifically on the mental health/case management aspect	11:24	11:57
	Looks at the parents' experiences and what type of support they have found helpful	11:58	12:47
	The regional Head Start staff provides perspective on what is unique about this model: the importance of a multidisciplinary approach and engaging parents	12:48	13:18
	Emphasizes the strengths that families have and the importance of maintaining or restoring hope	13:19	13:58
Resilience	Discusses the key components to protecting children from toxic stress, particularly the importance of a loving adult in the child's life.	13:59	15:49
Breaking the generational cycle of toxic stress	Emphasizes the point that brains can heal with the appropriate evidence-based interventions. Discusses the importance of first identifying children and parents affected by ACEs and being prepared with resources to respond	15:50	17:50
The need to educate and raise awareness	Promotes education and awareness building as the next logical step in more effectively addressing toxic stress. Discusses steps already taken in health care and mainstream media, with suggestions to move forward	17:51	18:58
Setting the vision	Using the public health crisis of HIV as an example, looking to the future when there are effective, accessible interventions available to families impacted by toxic stress and negative outcomes are anomalies.	18:59	20:19
The hope and closing the story out	Returns to the parents introduced in the beginning minutes of the video, engaged and enjoying their children and demonstrating the progress they've made in their own healing from toxic stress	20:20	21:19
Closing credits	Acknowledgments	21:19	21:29

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