

Strengthening Our Families

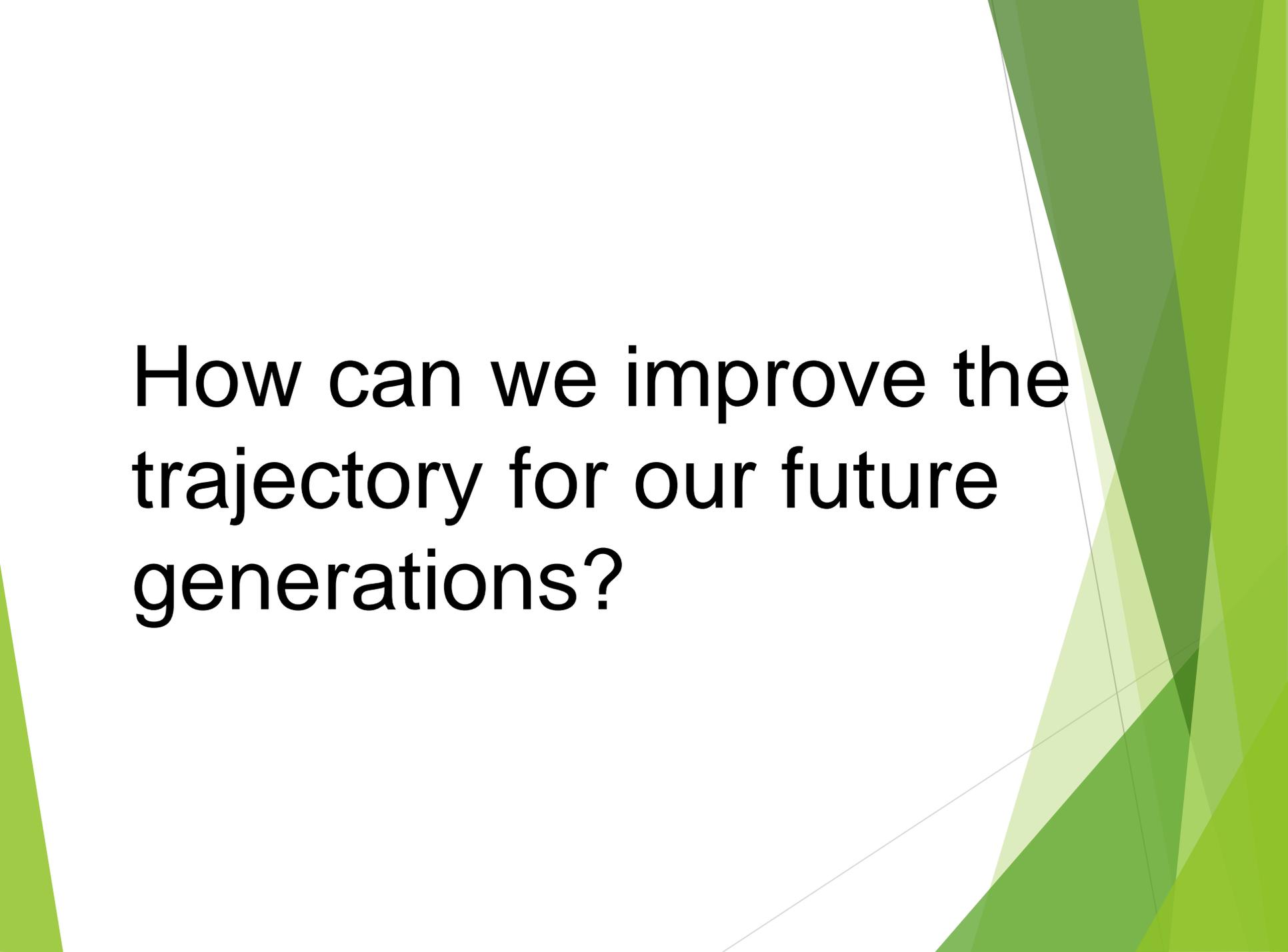
Building Protective Factors in our Community



OUR PURPOSE: REDUCE CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT STARTING WITH CHILDREN 0-5

- The very highest rates of abuse and neglect occur for children under 4. This age group is a third of all children entering foster care and who are likely to stay the longest.
- The brain's primary architecture is developing in years 0-5, when family stability, skills and knowledge have the greatest impact on development.
- Adverse experiences at an early age create lifelong risk for multiple problems; mitigating these traumas early is most effective.





How can we improve the trajectory for our future generations?

By mobilizing partners,
communities and families to build
family strengths and protective
factors, we can promote optimal
development and reduce child
abuse and neglect

The Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study

- The largest study of its kind ever done to examine the health and social effects of adverse childhood experiences over the lifespan (18,000 participants)
 - The majority of participants were 50 or older (62%),
 - were white (77%),
 - and had attended college (72%).
- “Finding Your ACES score”

The Adverse Childhood Experiences Study (ACES)

▶ Abuse

- ▶ Physical (beating, not spanking 28%)
- ▶ Contact Sexual Abuse (28% women, 16% men, 22% overall)
- ▶ Emotional -recurrent threats, humiliation (11%)

▶ Neglect

- ▶ Physical (10%)
- ▶ Emotional (15%)

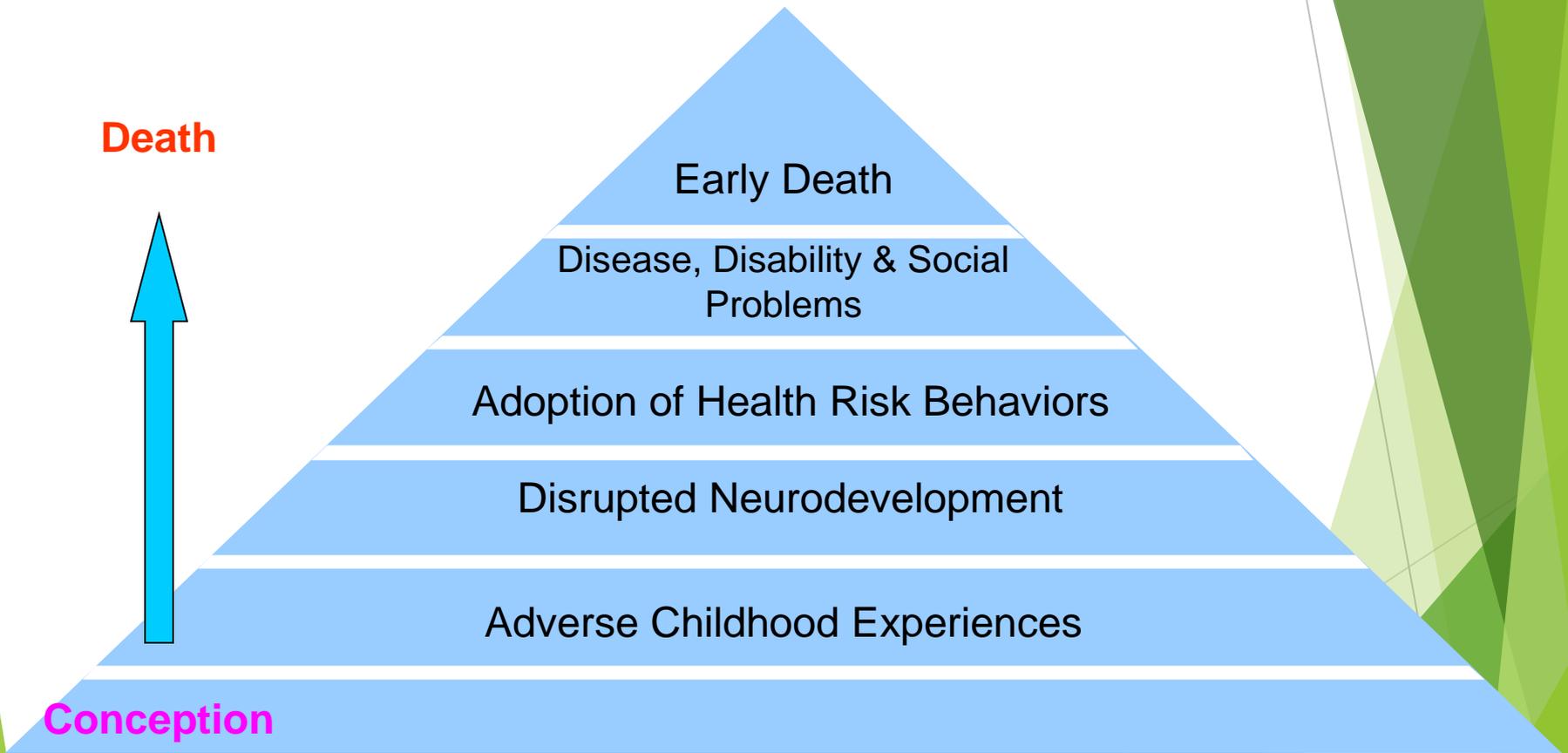
The Adverse Childhood Experiences Study (ACES)

▶ Household Dysfunction

- ▶ Domestic Violence -(13%)
- ▶ Substance Abuse - (27%)
- ▶ Mental Illness -(17%)
- ▶ Separation/Divorce (17%)
- ▶ Crime/Incarceration (6%)

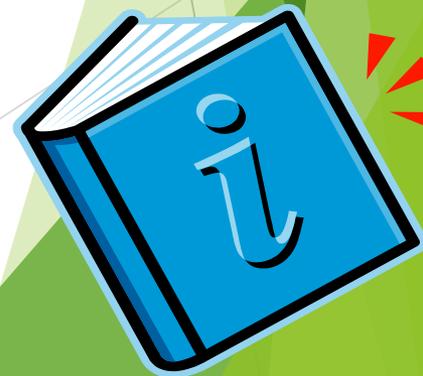
❖ Almost two-thirds of participants reported at least one ACE and more than one third reported five or more!!!

ACEs influence health & well-being throughout the lifespan



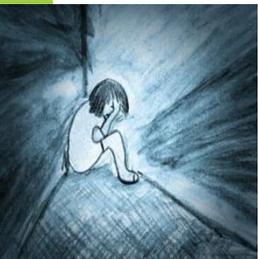
Impact of ACEs ?

- ▶ Fetal death
- ▶ Alcohol/substance abuse
- ▶ Untreated mental illness
- ▶ Sexually transmitted diseases (STD's)
- ▶ Smoking
- ▶ Pre-teen/adolescent pregnancy
- ▶ Depression
- ▶ Distorted reasoning
- ▶ Learned helplessness
- ▶ Domestic violence



Risk factors
are not
predictive
factors due to
the presence
of Protective
Factors.

-Carl Bell, M.D.
Psychiatrist



What we know: Families thrive
when protective factors are
robust in their lives and
communities

Our Approach...

- ▶ Benefits ALL families
- ▶ Builds on family strengths, buffers risk, and promotes better outcomes
- ▶ Can be implemented through small but significant changes in everyday actions
- ▶ Builds on and can become part of existing programs, strategies, systems and community opportunities
- ▶ Is grounded in research and practice

Current System of Family Services

“US”

“THEM”

Social Service Agencies and Child Welfare Systems

- Utilize multiple case management systems and refer to various services
- Direct the Family Case Plan
- Manage Families according to agency's goals and outcome requirements
- Give referrals to services
- Adhere to various governance
- Work to meet requirements/outcomes by funders
- Utilize separate data mechanisms
- Often lack human resource capacity to get the job done

Social service agencies try to locate families who are lost

Case Plans given to family to complete

Families

- have to take referrals and go from agency to agency for services
- stay isolated from system and each other
- have no individual or collective voice
- passively try to accomplish objectives on support plans
- limited access to information or personnel

Family tries to connect back to system via referrals

Child Welfare as an Ally

- ▶ Potential to partner and provide families with customized, culturally appropriate supports they need to remain strong and healthy
- ▶ Reduce stigma and recognize family strength
- ▶ Child welfare systems are not alone in their mission to improve outcomes for children and their families. Early care and education, family support, home visiting, and other sectors have overlapping goals with child welfare systems and can serve as a powerful network

Desired Model for Family Services

“WE” Partnership

Social Service Agencies

- Have access to Peer Advocates
- Seek solutions **with** families
- Meet requirements for family involvement
- Have accessible resources for families in need
- Less duplication of effort and need for referral follow-up
- Better data for evaluation
- Families have access to counseling intervention
- Families have access to parenting with flexibility
- Evidence-based programming and data driven decision-making

Family Services

- Promote social equality
 - Family Counselors
- Peer Advocates and navigators to help with referrals when needed
- Many services available on site
 - Shared Data
 - Social Connections
- Place where family directs case plan with assistance when needed
- Aligns with local, state and national recommendations
- Foster families and relative caregivers who are custodians of children removed from the home have additional resources and Peer Support

Families

- Equal partners
- Socially connected
- Valued individual and collective voice
- Direct access to support
- Human resource to assist other families and social service agencies
- Greater understanding of resources and systems in order to navigate more effectively
- Drivers of their individualized plan with greater accountability
- Make meaningful contributions to the community

So What Are Protective Factors?



Parent Resilience

Be strong and Flexible



Social Connections

Parents need positive friends



Concrete Support in times of need

Everybody needs help sometimes



Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development

Being a great parent is part natural and part learned



Healthy Parent - Child Relationships

Give your children the love and respect they need



Social and Emotional Competence of Children

Help children communicate





**Let's work together to keep them ALL
safe, healthy, and happy!**



Thank You!!

Cafe Talk

Café Talk Agreement Rules

- **Speak from your own experience**
Use “I” statements
 - **Listen Attentively**
Do not interrupt
 - **No Judgment, positive or negative**
 - **Do not Give Advice**
 - **Confidentiality**
- Turn your cell phone off**
or silence it



Reflections/Moving Forward

- ▶ How has today's experience impacted you?
- ▶ How can you use the protective factors in your life, work and faith community?
- ▶ How can we work together to help our families lead the way?
- ▶ Can we create more Café Dialogue opportunities?

