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Your client has a  
high ACE score...

What next?



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Me...

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## My goals for this hour...

Provide you with some talking points about  
ACEs, trauma, toxic stress, ...and resilience.

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Provide some tools for how to respond with a “trauma lens”.

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And hopefully, spark some ideas for further thinking  
about your own work and organization.

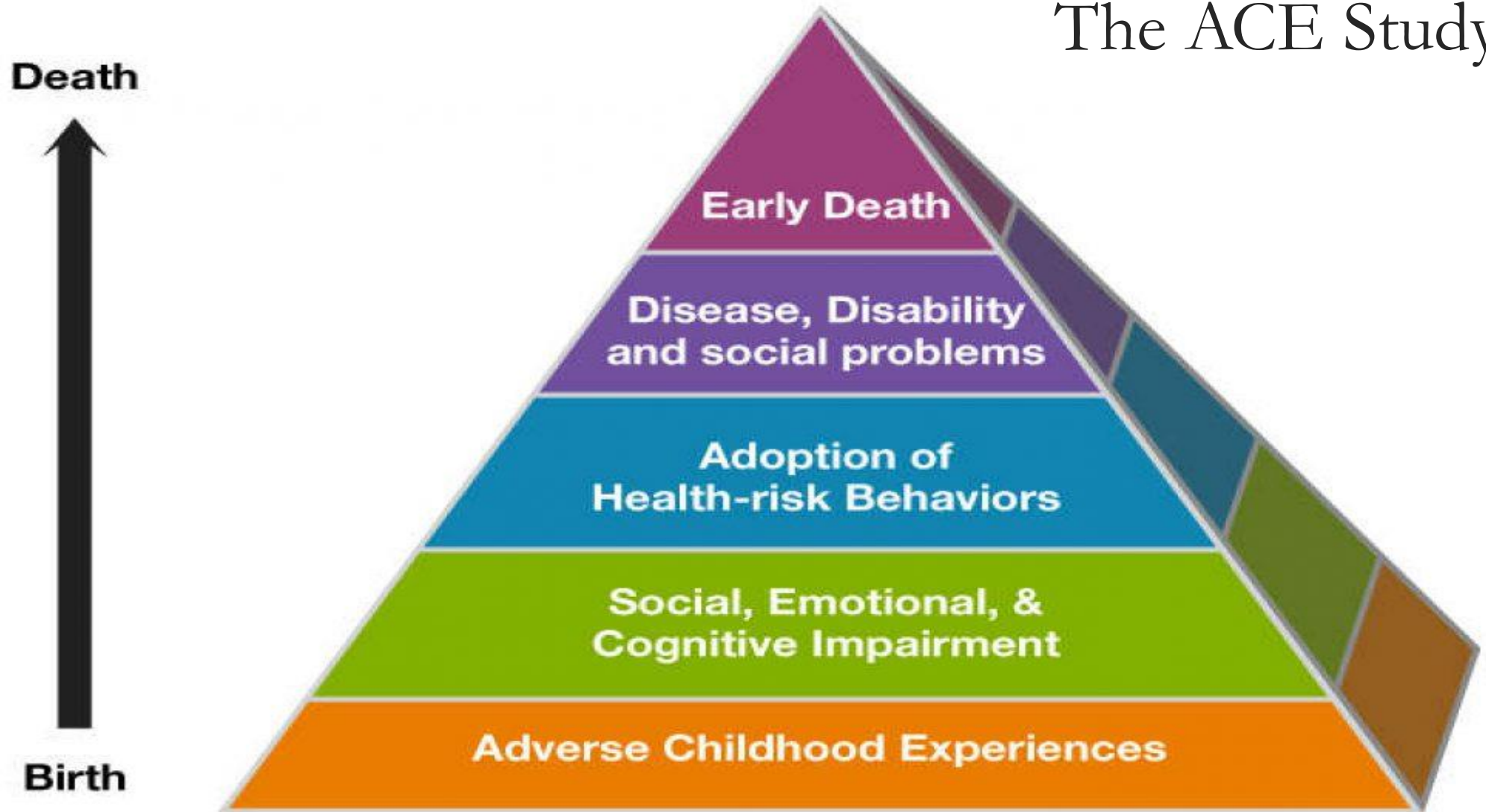
What do we mean by...

- “ ACES?
- “ Trauma?
- “ Toxic stress?





# The ACE Study



## Some things the ACE study tells us...

- “ ACEs are common.
- “ ACEs cluster. The more ACEs you have, the greater risk for chronic disease.  
For example, having 4+ ACES significantly increases the risk of heart disease, cancer, diabetes, alcoholism and suicide.
- “ ACEs have been linked to workplace absences and higher health care costs.
- “ ACEs contribute to our major economic and social issues.

**So why don't more people know about it???**

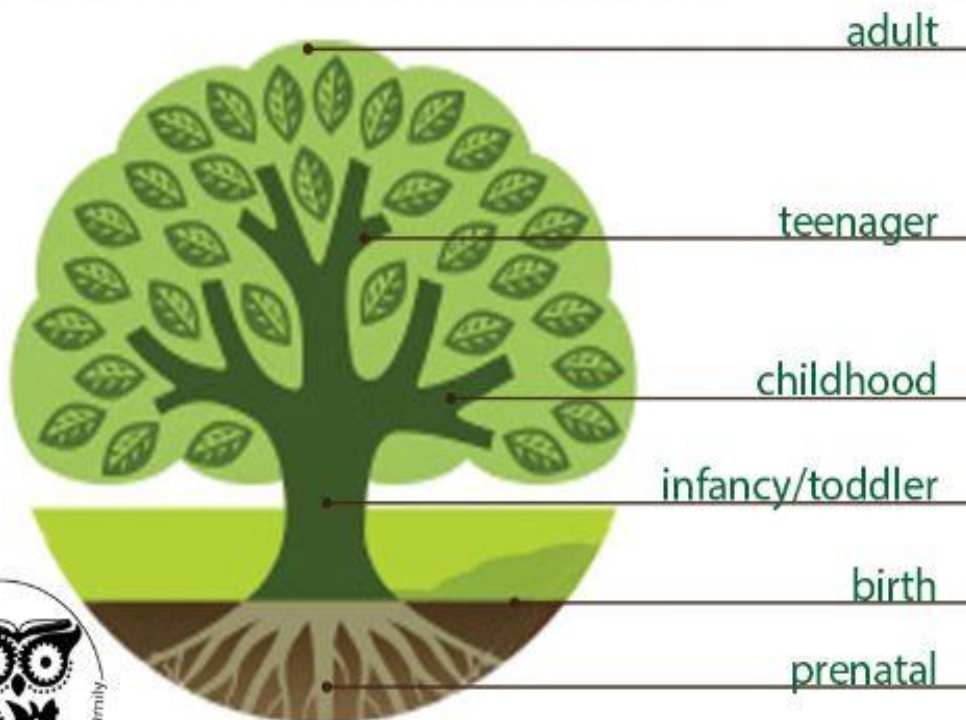


# What is psychological **trauma**?

Trauma is not just an ***event*** itself,  
but a ***response*** to a stressful experience  
in which a person's ability to cope is overwhelmed.



# THE TRAUMA TREE



[www.STEAMPoweredFamily.com](http://www.STEAMPoweredFamily.com)



“ Trauma is not a story of  
what happened to you  
a long time ago,  
it is what is in your body.”

Bessel van der Kolk

# Brain Builders video

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“ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LmVWOe1ky8s> ”



# *Toxic Stress*



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Disruption of the development of  
a child's brain architecture  
that can result from prolonged activation of  
the stress response systems,  
especially in the absence of adequate adult support.

- Jack Shonkar, Harvard Center for the Developing Child

## What is Developmental (or Complex) Trauma?

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- A biological injury that results from toxic exposure to stressful events during critical periods of brain development.
- “ Derails typical development across all domains.
- “ Experiences occur within the caregiving system.
- “ Impact is immediate and long term.



How does having a “trauma lens” make a difference?

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Patty’s story

# THE PARADIGM SHIFT



Cathy S Harris, MSW, LCSW copyright 2011





# The “how” of screening

- “ Use a universal precautions approach.
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- “ Anyone who screens is trained and prepared in how to ask questions and manage the responses.
  - “ Screening needs to happen in the context of a relationship.
  - “ If we ask the question, we ‘own the answer’.  
(and...If we don’t ask the question, we still own the problem!)
  - “ Have resources for referral (ideally a “warm handoff”).

# What kinds of screens are out there?

“ **Event** based screens (ie. ACEs or ACEs- informed)

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“ **Functional** based screens (ie. PTSD-5)

“ **Screening questions** (ie. “Have you ever been in a situation when you thought that you might die or be hurt very badly?”)

“ Make your own screen (ie. WCMHS)



# “The ACE Antidote” - Nadine Burke Harris

Six elements critical for healing from toxic stress:

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- “ Sleep
- “ Nutrition
- “ Healthy Relationships
- “ Mental Health
- “ Exercise
- “ Mindfulness

# What is Resilience?

Commonly *resilience* has come to mean ‘an individual’s ability to overcome adversity.’

I prefer Michael Ungar’s definition:

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## Resilience is:

“The capacity of individuals to *navigate* their way to psychological, social, cultural and physical resources,

*AND*

“Their capacity individually and collectively to *negotiate* for these resources to be provided in culturally meaningful ways.”



# Dr. Michael Ungar

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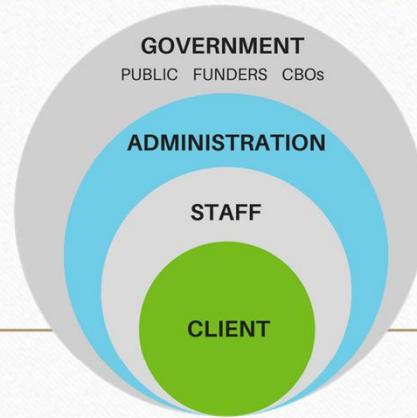
” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=15D1QuNLH0c>

# Transforming Our Organizations



## TRAUMA-ORGANIZED

- Reactive
- Reliving/Retelling
- Avoiding/Numbing
- Fragmented
- Us Vs. Them
- Inequity
- Authoritarian Leadership



## TRAUMA-INFORMED

- Understanding of the Nature and Impact of Trauma and Recovery
- Shared Language
- Recognizing Socio-Cultural Trauma and Structural Oppression



## HEALING ORGANIZATION

- Reflective
- Making Meaning Out of the Past
- Growth and Prevention-Oriented
- Collaborative
- Equity and Accountability
- Relational Leadership

From Trauma Transformed

TRAUMA INDUCING

TO

TRAUMA REDUCING



## Maine THRIVE trauma-informed guiding principles:

**Physical and Emotional Safety** assesses whether secure reception/waiting areas, non-judgmental treatment and flexible scheduling, among others, promote a sense of safety.

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**Youth and Family Empowerment** is whether policies and practices empower clients through strength-based participation and/or community-based partnerships.

**Trustworthiness** is whether factors such as consistency, accessibility of staff and interpersonal boundaries foster trust between an agency, the staff, and the consumer.

**Trauma Competence** is the extent to which staff, policies, procedures, services and treatment serve the unique experiences and needs of trauma survivors.

**Cultural Competence** is the extent to which staff, policies, procedures, services and treatment accommodate the cultures, traditions and beliefs of youth and family consumers and staff.

**Commitment to Trauma-Informed Philosophy** is the extent to which all agency staff members integrate a trauma-informed philosophy in everything they do.

# Applying Trauma-Informed Principles

## Resilience and Recovery

- “ What steps will you take to take care of yourself?
- “ What are some things you can do for/with each other?
- “ What do you need from your workplace to enhance well-being for all?





# Dr. Nadine Burke Harris

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“ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=95ovIJ3dsNk> ”



## Resources

- " Michael Ungar, Resilience Research Centre, Halifax, NS
- " Nadine Burke Harris, Center for Youth Wellness, San Francisco, CA
- " Bruce Perry, Child Trauma Academy, [childtrauma.org](http://childtrauma.org)
- " Attachment, Regulation, Competency (ARC), [arcframework.org](http://arcframework.org)
- " Center on the Developing Child, Harvard University;  
[developingchild.harvard.edu](http://developingchild.harvard.edu)
- " Trauma lens on Facebook
- " National Child Traumatic Stress Network, [nctsn.org](http://nctsn.org)
- " Kenneth Ginsburg, <http://www.fosteringresilience.com>



## Resources on trauma-informed organizations:

- "Creating Cultures of Trauma-informed Care", Falot and Harris, 2009.
- "Developing Trauma-informed Organizations", 2014, Institute for Health and Recovery, MA.
- "Trauma Transformed.org
- "THRIVE, Maine Dept of Health and Human Services