

# An Integrated Approach to Trauma & Resilience



INSTITUTE FOR  
PUBLIC  
STRATEGIES



Today's  
Presenters...

David Shorey

Program Manager  
IPS, San Diego County

Marcus Fisher

Assistant Youth Coordinator  
IPS, San Diego County

# Why we're here...

to explore the  
parallels of caring  
for ourselves as we  
care for our  
communities

Understanding  
the impact of  
ACEs

How trauma  
affects the whole  
body

Addressing  
self-care and  
self-compassion





# INSTITUTE FOR PUBLIC STRATEGIES

Vision: Safe, secure, vibrant, and healthy communities where everyone can thrive.

Mission: We work alongside communities to build power, challenge systems of inequity, protect health, and improve quality of life.



# Some acknowledgments before we start...



- Public Health perspective
- Trauma is complex
- ACEs are an average experience
- Practice self-care
- We're all here to learn together



# Memories help form our personality



# Adverse Childhood Experiences

- “ACEs” come from the CDC- Kaiser Adverse Childhood Experiences Study
- 1995 to 1997
- Two waves of data collection
- One of the most extensive investigations of childhood abuse, neglect, household challenges, and later-life health and well-being

# Adverse Childhood Experiences

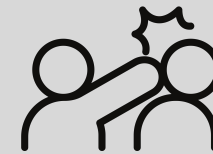
## Abuse



## Neglect



## Household Dysfunction



About 61% of adults surveyed across 25 states they had experienced at least one type of ACE before age 18, and nearly 1 in 6 reported they had experienced four or more types of ACEs.



# 3 DIMENSIONS OF ACES



## HOUSEHOLD

MENTAL ILLNESS  
PHYSICAL & EMOTIONAL ABUSE  
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE  
INCARCERATION  
HOMELESSNESS  
DIVORCE  
MATERNAL DEPRESSION  
SUICIDE OR DEATH

FOOD INSECURITY  
SUBSTANCE USE  
PHYSICAL & EMOTIONAL NEGLECT  
BULLYING

WATER & AIR QUALITY  
INFECTIOUS DISEASE  
CHEMICAL POLLUTION  
FORCED MIGRATION  
PESTS  
CROWDING  
NOISE & LIGHT



## ENVIRONMENT

LACK OF JOBS  
LACK OF SOCIAL CAPITAL & MOBILITY  
POOR HOUSING QUALITY & AFFORDABILITY  
SUBSTANDARD WAGES  
POOR ACCESS TO CARE  
SUBSTANDARD SCHOOLS



## COMMUNITY

HISTORICAL TRAUMA  
POVERTY  
PUBLIC SAFETY  
STRUCTURED RACISM  
VIOLENCE



# Internal & External Results of Trauma





# Trauma & the Brain





# The Functions of the Brain

## Hippocampus

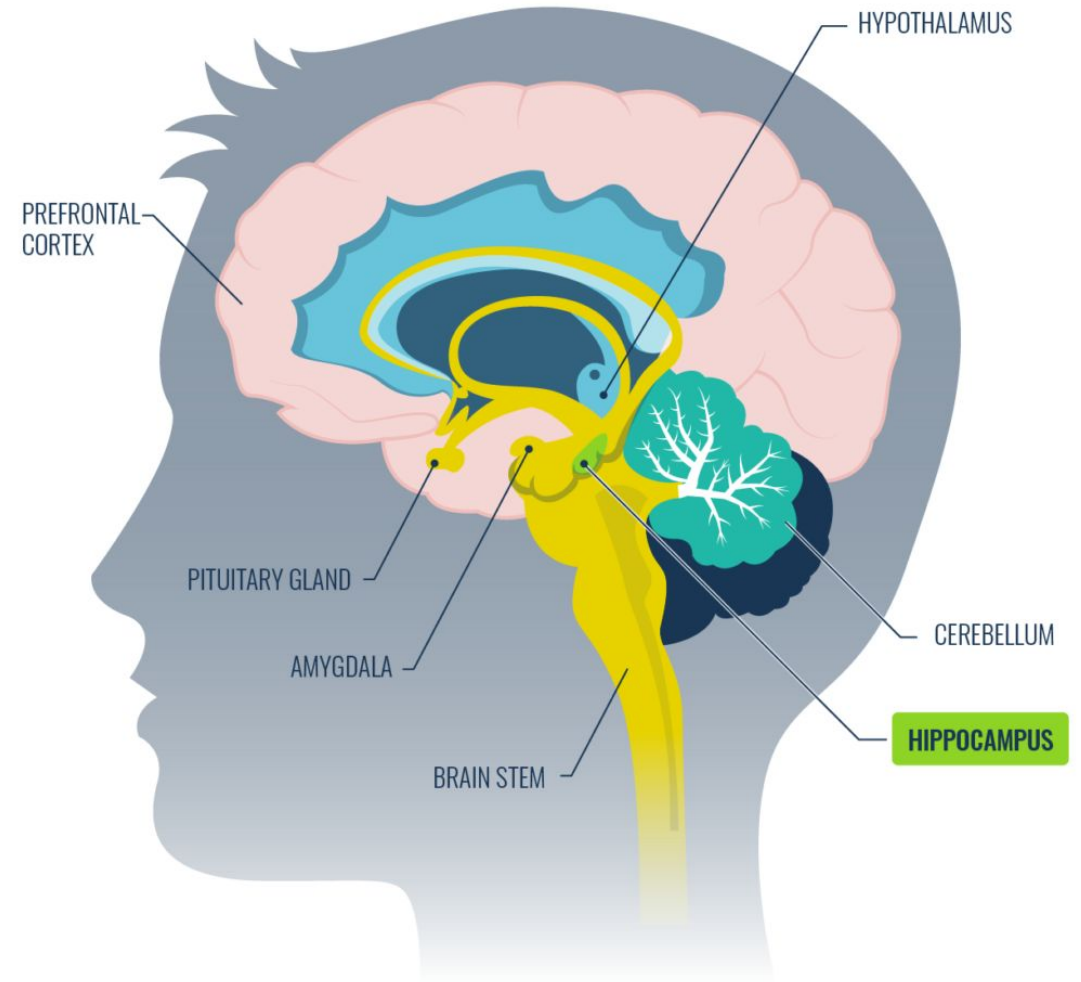
- Our learning & memory bank

## Amygdala

- Alarm system & sensory bank

## Pre-frontal Cortex

- Reaction & emotion regulator



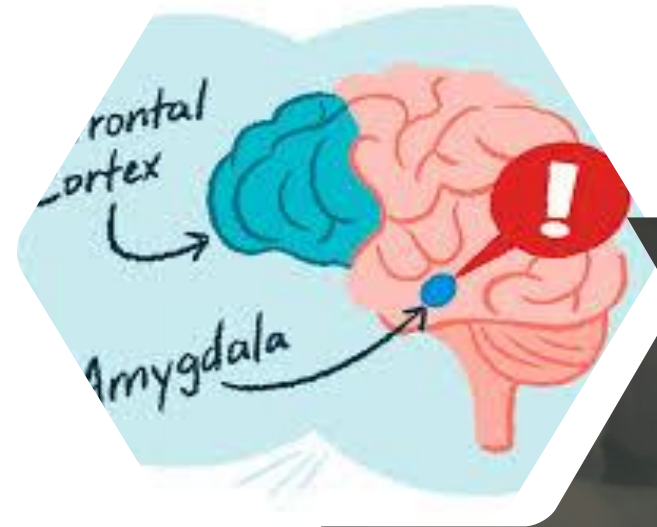
# Living in Constant Survival Mode

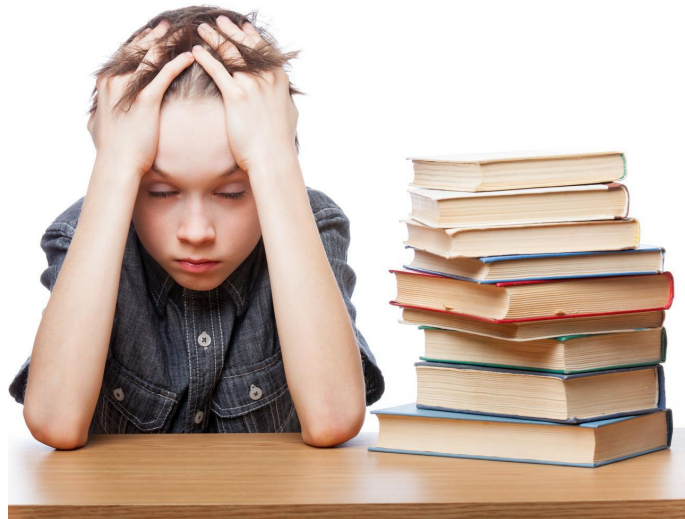
## Results:

- Early stored traumatizing memories can cause “amygdala hijacks” without the person’s conscious knowledge
- Wanting to find safety first versus anything else
- Defense/Offense options

## Triggers

- Seeing, feeling, hearing, or smelling something that is a reminder of a past trauma activates the alarm system
- The response is as if there is a current danger
- The thinking brain automatically shuts off in the face of triggers
- Past and present danger become confused





## Building Relationships

- Family and friends help us learn how to build trust with one another
- Regulate emotions and self-soothe when conflict happens
- When familiar relationships become problematic, we have difficulty trusting others or ourselves
- You can develop difficulty regulating your emotions, even in the world around us

## Memory & Learning

- Difficulty organizing
- Challenges remembering things
- Understanding cause and effect
- Understanding things from others' perspectives
- Difficulty regulating emotions, making decisions, or being excited about what is being taught



**BUT WAIT!**  
**The Brain**  
**can heal!**



# Positive Childhood Experiences

In 2019, a team of researchers — Dr. Christina Bethell, Jennifer Jones, Dr. Narangerel Gombojav, Dr. Jeff Linkenbach, and Dr. Robert Sege found that for every number of ACEs a patient experienced, they had the same or more significant amount of positive experiences.





# Positive Childhood Experiences

Defined as “feeling safe in our families to talk about emotions and things that are hard and feeling supported during hard times. Examples of PCEs include:

- Being able to talk openly to a family member or as a family about feelings and feel heard, accepted & supported
- Belief that family stood by them during hard times
- Feeling safe and protected by an adult in the home







## Positive Childhood Experiences

---

Friends and communities can be sources of PCEs. Examples of non-family PCEs include:

- Feeling supported by friends
- Having a sense of belonging and connection with a larger group
- Enjoyment of participation in community traditions
- Relationship with at least one non-parent adult who takes genuine interest in them

# Resilience:

The ability to recover from or adjust to misfortune or change.

The brain is continually changing in response to the environment. If the toxic stress stops and is replaced by practices that build resilience, the brain can slowly undo many of the stress-induced changes.

- The goal is to change our internal reactivity
- Notice what is going on inside our bodies; Be still
- Accept and understand
- You can create something new, rich and wonderful



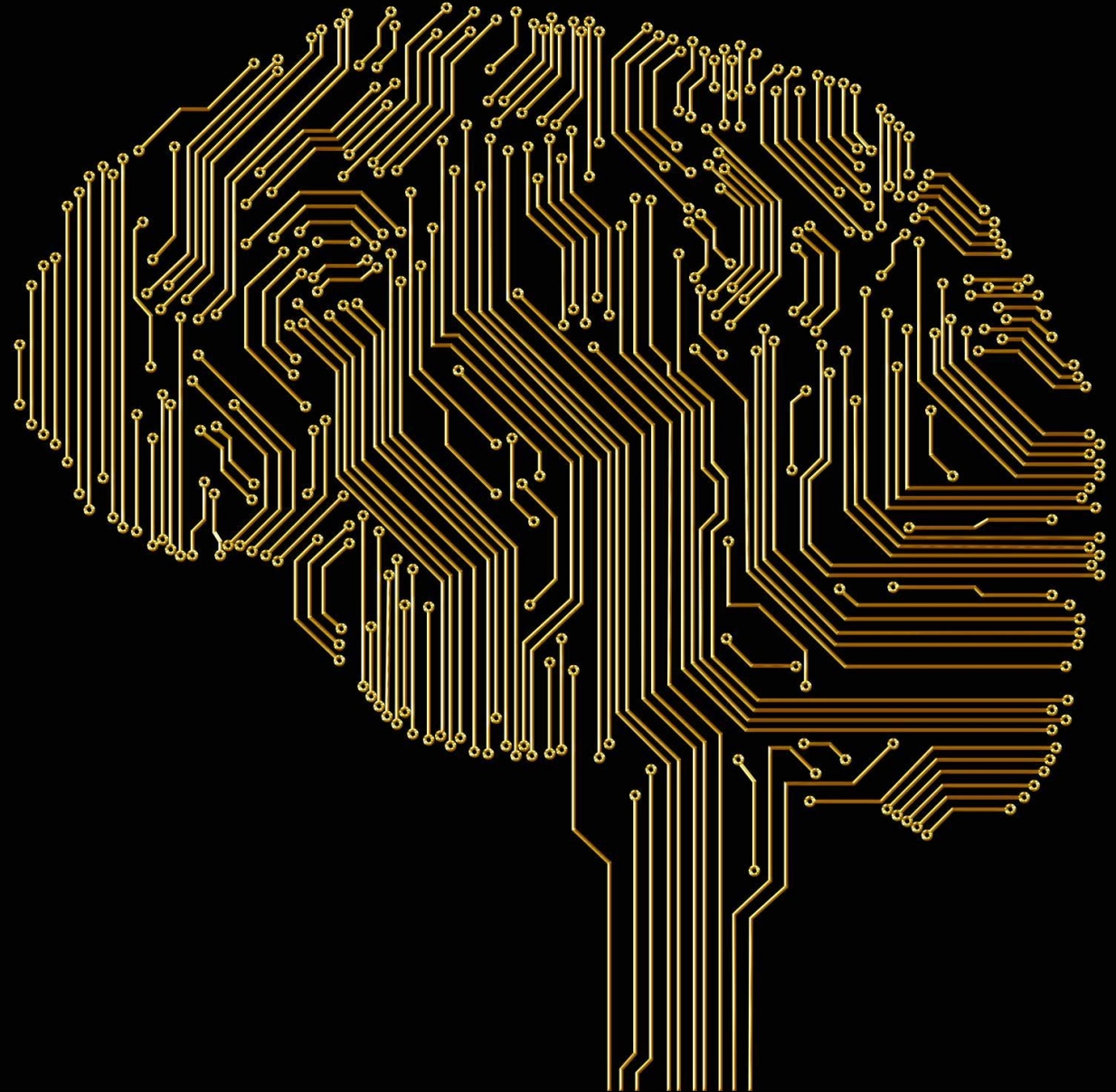


# Resilience Work

---

- Increased Stress – Stress Management
- Intrusive Thoughts – Coping Skills
- Changed Belief Systems – Self Discovery
- Impacted Spirituality – Meaningful Experiences
- Foreshortened View of the Future – Living in the Moment

*The good news is that the brain has neuroplasticity, and the body wants to heal.*







## When understanding our trauma, it's important to remember

- It happened in the past
- We are responsible for our future
- It's not our fault
- We can still learn and grow





# Train the Brain

---

## Self-soothing Exercises

- Mindful Breathing
- 5-4-3-2-1
- Body Scan
- Coloring

# We are all works in progress

---

- There are no quick fixes
- Do what works for you
- When there's discomfort, there's growth
- Healing does not grow in isolation, it grows in community
- Know where to get help





Thank  
You!

David Shorey

Program Manager  
IPS, San Diego County  
dshorey@publicstrategies.org

Marcus Fisher

Assistant Youth Coordinator  
IPS, San Diego County  
mfisher@publicstrategies.org

[www.publicstrategies.org](http://www.publicstrategies.org)

# Survey

(Thank you!)



**IPS Training and TA:**

[info@publicstrategies.org](mailto:info@publicstrategies.org)



[@VibrantHealthySafeCommunities](https://www.facebook.com/VibrantHealthySafeCommunities)