Stress, Determinants of Health & Connectedness Impacts on Well-Being
Stress, Determinants of Health and Connectedness: Impacts on well-being

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Suzanne Witt-Foley
Educational Consultant and Speaker

Patricia Scott-Jeoffroy
Consultant, HC Link

Moderated by:
HC Link

RECORDING NOTICE: This webinar is recorded and will be made available to the general public on the HC Link website.
This webinar is brought to you by PAD and hosted by HC Link.

Parent Action on Drugs (PAD) is a provincial organization that addresses issues related to youth substance use, and has programs for parents, youth, educators, and communities. More information at www.parentactionondrugs.org.

PAD is a member of HC Link. HC Link provides consulting services, learning and networking events, and resources for health promotion in English and French. More information at www.hclinkontario.ca.
Key Themes

- **Enhance** our understanding of the social determinants of health as a key source of toxic stress.
- **Discover** how ‘toxic stress’ is an underlying key factor in the development of chronic illness, mental illness and addiction.
- **Explore** a framework for understanding its impact.
- **Discuss** strategies that can circumvent/mitigate toxic stress and why relationships & social connectedness are essential.
Health is the state of physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.

World Health Organization
Understanding What Determines Health:

- Health is not just the result of genes, lifestyle, access to care.
- It's also determined by the day-to-day conditions in which we work, live & play.
Factors Impacting Good Health

- Living conditions: 50%
- Biology/genetics: 25%
- Physical environment: 10%
- Health care delivery: 15%
The Canadian Perspective

- Aboriginal Status
- Disability
- Early life
- Education
- Employment and working conditions
- Food security
- Health services
- Gender
- Housing
- Income and income distribution
- Race
- Social exclusion
- Social safety net
- Unemployment

Tips for Staying Healthy - A Lifestyle Approach

- Don’t smoke. If you do, stop. If you can’t, cut back.
- Eat a balanced diet, eat plenty of fruits and vegetables.
- If you drink, do so in moderation. Don’t drink and drive.
- Keep physically active.
- Cover up in the sun and protect your children.
- Practice safe sex.
- Manage your stress.
- Maintain social ties
Tips for Staying Healthy - A Social Determinants Approach

• Don’t be poor. If you can, stop. If you can’t, try not to be poor for too long.

• Own a car – but use only for weekend outings. Walk to work.

• Practice not losing your job and don’t become unemployed.

• Don’t have poor parents.

• Don’t live in a poor neighborhood.

• Don’t be illiterate.

• Avoid social isolation.

–Ichiro Kawachi, MD, 12/2004
Factors Impacting Well Being

- Income gap
- Lack education
- Early childhood
- Low income
- Poor quality housing
- Social isolation
- Family conflict chaos
- Violence discrimination abuse, trauma
- Unemployment
- Insecure/poor working conditions

Unrelenting Chronic Stress or Toxic Stress
Disrupt Sense of Balance and Harmony
Fight or Flight

FIGHT or FLIGHT

Chronic Stress

Homeostasis

Perceived Threat

Exhaustion

Return to Homeostasis
There are only two times I feel stress: Day and Night.
Factors Impacting Well Being

- low income
- Income gap
- lack education
- early childhood
- insecure/poor working conditions
- poor quality housing
- social isolation Family conflict
- Violence Discrimination abuse
- unemployment

Imbalance or Toxic Stress

Mental Wellbeing & Chronic Illness

Access to care
Genetics
Coping with Substance Use

www.HCLinkOntario.ca  www.ReseauCS.ca
Mental health: Global effort sought

By Michelle Roberts
Health editor, BBC News online

Experts around the globe are calling for a joint effort to tackle the world’s leading cause of suffering and disability - mental health disorders.

Nearly 450 million people have mental health disorders and more than three-quarters live in developing countries.

According to the World Health Organization
Figure 1: Cause of death, Ontario residents, 2007

Data source: Death, Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, IntelliHealth ONTARIO. Date last refreshed Oct, 2011.

Female drinking on the rise as alcohol companies target women

Experts suggest women catching up to male peers in alcohol consumption
What triggers stress response are threats (or perceived threats) to our survival.....

- Pain is central to stress response
- Pain or threat of pain (fear) trigger stress response....
What are one or two of the most painful experiences of your life?

• Broken leg or fall?
• Social pain
  – Loved one dying
  – Relationship breakup
  – Public humiliation

Brain responds much same way to threat or damage to social bond as physical pain
Still face experiment
Interconnection of Social Pain/Stress and Physical Pain

- Social pain and physical pain both activate the same region of the brain (Dorsal Anterior Cingulate Cortex)
- Social attachments function by piggybacking onto physical pain system
- Social pain can be eased with opioids (and even Tylenol) or through connectedness and attachment
Bullying

• We acknowledge physical assault to a greater degree than emotional assault
• bystanders = mass rejection
• We all have a need to belong. Signs that we are liked, admired, loved, treated fairly, praise are signs that we belong.
In summary......

• Our capacity to feel social pain and pleasure forever links our wellbeing to social connectedness

• Evolution has built us to get together, work and care for one another – everyone wins = Survival
Factors Impacting Well Being

Unrelenting Chronic Stress or Toxic Stress

Social Connectedness & Relationships

Mental Illness & Chronic Illness

Coping with Substance Use
early childhood
General Population Studies

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) study (1998)

Examined the cumulative effects of multiple adverse childhood experiences on physical and mental health.

Felitti and Anda (1998)
What is the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study?

• 10 year study
• 17,000 people involved
• Looked at effects of adverse childhood experiences over the lifespan
• Largest study ever done on this subject
## Childhood Adversity by Categories (18 years or younger)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abuse</th>
<th>Household</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Psychological (by parents)</td>
<td>Substance Abuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical (by parents)</td>
<td>Mental Illness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual (anyone)</td>
<td>Parental separation/divorce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional neglect</td>
<td>Mother Treated Violently</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical neglect</td>
<td>Imprisoned Household Member</td>
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[Source: CDC, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention]
<table>
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<tr>
<th>ACE Study</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strong, graded relation to childhood adversity in childhood:</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smoking</td>
<td>Attempted suicide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COPD</td>
<td>Re-victimization</td>
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<tr>
<td>Heart Disease</td>
<td>Teen pregnancy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Diabetes</td>
<td>Fractures</td>
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<tr>
<td>Obesity</td>
<td>Promiscuity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hepatitis</td>
<td>Sexually transmitted disease</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alcoholism</td>
<td>Poor job performance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other substance abuse</td>
<td>Poor self-rated health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depression</td>
<td>Violent relationships</td>
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Poverty
• Did cocaine harm the long-term development of children like Jaimee, who were exposed to the drug in their mother's womb?

• The researchers had expected the answer would be a resounding yes. But it wasn't. Another factor would prove far more critical.
"Poverty is a more powerful influence on the outcome of inner-city children than gestational exposure to cocaine," Hurt said at her May lecture.

"Given what we learned," Hurt said, "we are invested in better understanding the effects of poverty. How can early effects be detected? Which developing systems are affected? And most important, how can findings inform interventions for our children?"

On the upside, they found that children being raised in a nurturing home - measured by such factors as caregiver warmth and affection and language stimulation - were doing better than kids in a less nurturing home.
Early Childhood Poverty and Brain Development at Ages 6-12 Years
(Luby et al., 2013, online first October 28, 2013)

- Poverty --> smaller white matter, cortical gray matter, and hippocampal and amygdala volumes on MRI
- Effects mediated by life stressors
- Effects also mediated by caregiving (nurturing protected developing brain)
Response to Stress

Positive
Brief increases in heart rate, mild elevations in stress hormone levels.

Tolerable
Serious, temporary stress responses, buffered by supportive relationships.

Toxic
Prolonged activation of stress response systems in the absence of protective relationships.
“Children can be shielded from the most damaging effects of stress if their parents are taught how to respond appropriately. One thing that is highly protective is the quality of the relationship between the parent and the child”

-Dr. Darcey Lowell, Associate Clinical Professor, Yale University
Income gap
Canada Income Gap: Richard Wilkinson, Inequality Guru, Says Canada Risks Becoming 'Anti-Social,' Violent

Video: How economic inequality harms societies
Widening Gap Between Rich & Poor

I am not happy with this. I was told we are bottom. Who put us on the bottom? Have we been consulted? Why not they merge all 5 into one big social class!
The World Health Organization states:

• “This unequal distribution of health-damaging experiences is not in any sense a ‘natural’ phenomenon but is the result of a toxic combination of poor social policies and programmes, unfair economic arrangements, and bad politics.”

The Roseto Effect

Outliers
The Story of Success
MALCOLM GLADWELL

The Roseto Story
An Anatomy of Health
JOHN G. BRUHN AND STEWART WOLF

The Power of Clan
THE INFLUENCE OF HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS ON HEART DISEASE
STEWART WOLF AND JOHN G. BRUHN

www.HCLinkOntario.ca  www.ReseauCS.ca
“Social connectedness is the magic bullet.”

“Social connectedness comes through cultural and community development -- building connectedness in the places where we live. That's what we need to be doing: building local connectedness on a global scale.” Gabor Mate
Strengthening Families Program: The Muskoka Story
History
Key Concept

- Necessary to have environment of relationships within family and outside - INVESTED
In SFPY – We shifted our focus from Achievement to Relationship

• Building trust and safety...leads to “ownership”
• Engage people through genuine caring and creation of relationship and building relationship within their family, not what they are going to achieve or learn
Investment
DINNER'S READY!

The crowd eagerly drifted into the room as they assembled for the weekly meal. Everyone was excited about the idea of a healthy, family-friendly meal, but they also knew that things might get a little noisy. The goal was to build strong family bonds and teach healthy eating habits. The meal was designed to cater to all ages, with a focus on nutrition and well-being.

The meal planning was a team effort, with each family participating in the process. Youth and adults worked together to create a menu that everyone could enjoy. The menu included a variety of options, ensuring that there was something for everyone's taste.

As the guests arrived, they were greeted with a warm welcome. The atmosphere was relaxed and welcoming, with plenty of space for everyone to interact and share stories. The food was served family-style, encouraging everyone to share and enjoy their meal with others.

After the meal, the group had a chance to relax and chat. Some families brought along their pets, adding to the cozy atmosphere. The evening was filled with laughter and good conversation, as everyone enjoyed each other's company.

The evening ended with a sense of satisfaction and gratitude, knowing that they had come together as a community to share a meal and strengthen their relationships. The organizers couldn't have been more pleased with the turnout and the success of the event.

The evening was a success, and the organizers knew that they had created a space where families could come together and enjoy each other's company. They were already looking forward to the next event, where they could continue to build stronger connections and create more memories.
Enjoy dinner while strengthening the family

Parents in Muskoka looking for a little extra support with the challenging job of raising a family have a helping hand to guide them.

Strengthening Families for the Future is a 14-week evening program running in Bracebridge starting Feb. 24.

“The crowd eagerly digs into a healthy meal. The group is noisy, with everyone catching up on what’s been going on since last week. It looks like a regular gathering of close friends,” says Suzanne Witt-Foley of the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health who is one of the program co-ordinators.

“But in this gathering, the meal is doing more than just feeding the body. It is nourishing relationships between parents and children. It is also feeding a sense of belonging and connectedness to other families – all factors that are known to increase youth resilience.”

The meal is the first part of each session. After everyone eats, the children go off to their group and parents gather in a separate room to learn new skills. Family members will come together again for the last hour where together they will practice what they have been learning.

Strengthening Families is an evidence-based program supported by Healthy Communities funding in partnership with Family Youth and Child Services of Muskoka, Muskoka Family Focus and Children’s Place, Community Living South Muskoka and the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health.

Mom Tracy spends time with her boys Hayden and Bradley at the Strengthening Families program where they have time to play and learn.

Healthy Communities funding in partnership with Family Youth and Child Services of Muskoka, Muskoka Family Focus and Children’s Place, Community Living South Muskoka and the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health.

The Muskoka program recently received $21,000 funding to ensure the program’s viability for the next two years after applying to the Healthy Communities Grant Fund of the Ministry of Health Promotion and Sport. With the loss of local funding in March 2010, the future of this valuable program was uncertain after nine years of operation and assisting more than 70 families. Muskoka was one of the first communities in the province to offer the Strengthening Families Program.

The program is offered at Community Living South Muskoka, which has room for a large family dinner plus space for program rooms and childcare. The next program begins Thursday, Feb. 24. Parents must have at least one child between the ages of 7 to 11 years of age, be in need of additional parenting support and able to attend sessions once per week for 14 weeks. The program is free and free transportation is also available.

“Strengthening Families is an effective program because it allows opportunities for a parent and his or her child to come together and create new memories and rituals which are really critical in mending and strengthening family bonds,” says long-time program facilitator Susan Biehn-Smith. “Evidence shows this can reduce children or adults’ intention to use alcohol or other drugs, reduce behaviour problems and improve family communication.”

Families will benefit from Strengthening Families through an increased in parenting skills, increase in children’s life skills and improvement in family relations.
Mindset for raising children...
Let’s not forget the little things...
Drum circle
Integrating the framework into our work

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Thank You

Suzanne Witt-Foley
Linking for Healthy Communities: Action for Change
Nov 12-13, Toronto
BMO Institute for Learning

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