



Center on the Developing Child
HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Leveraging Advances in Science to Strengthen the Early Foundations of Both Learning and Health

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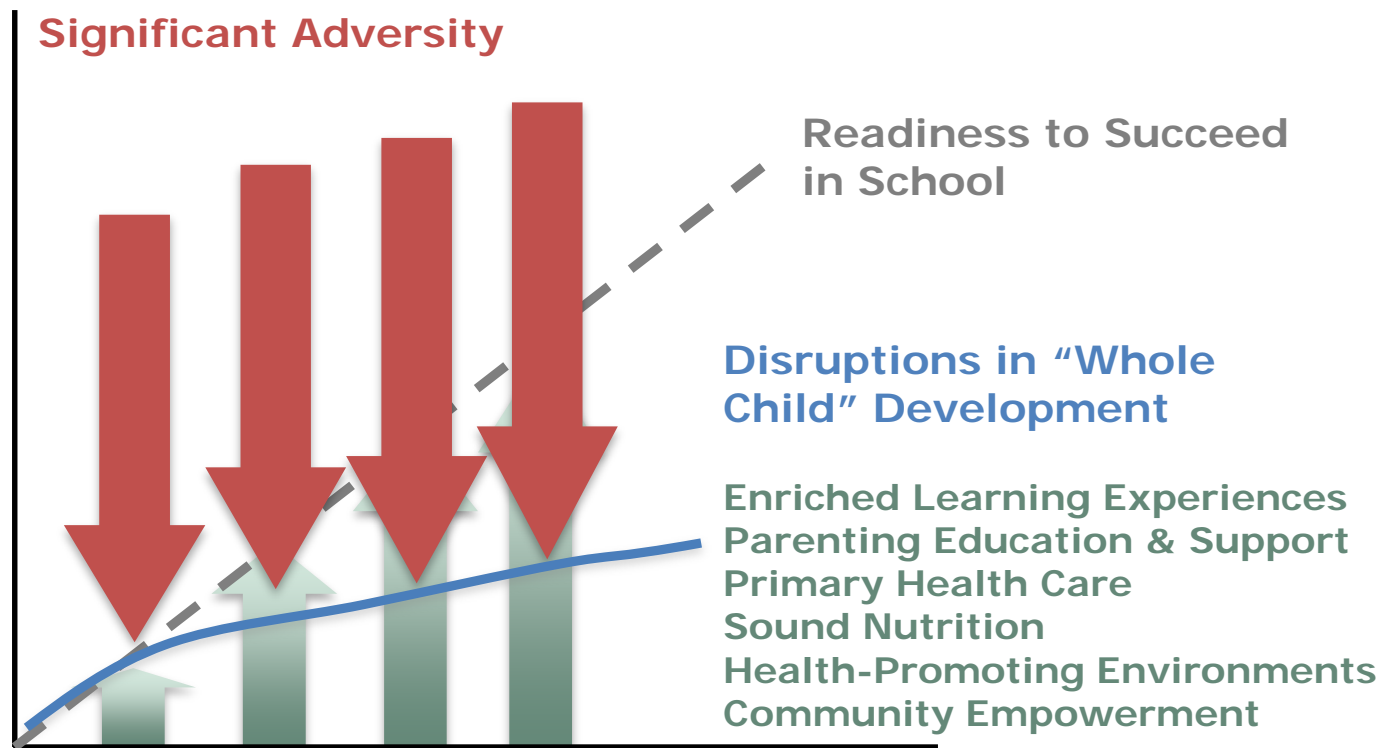


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The Framework That Has Guided 50+ Years of Early Childhood Policies and Services is Conceptually Sound But Variable in Impact



The Biology of Adversity and Resilience Explains How Excessive Stress Undermines the Foundations of Healthy Development



Genetic
Variation

X

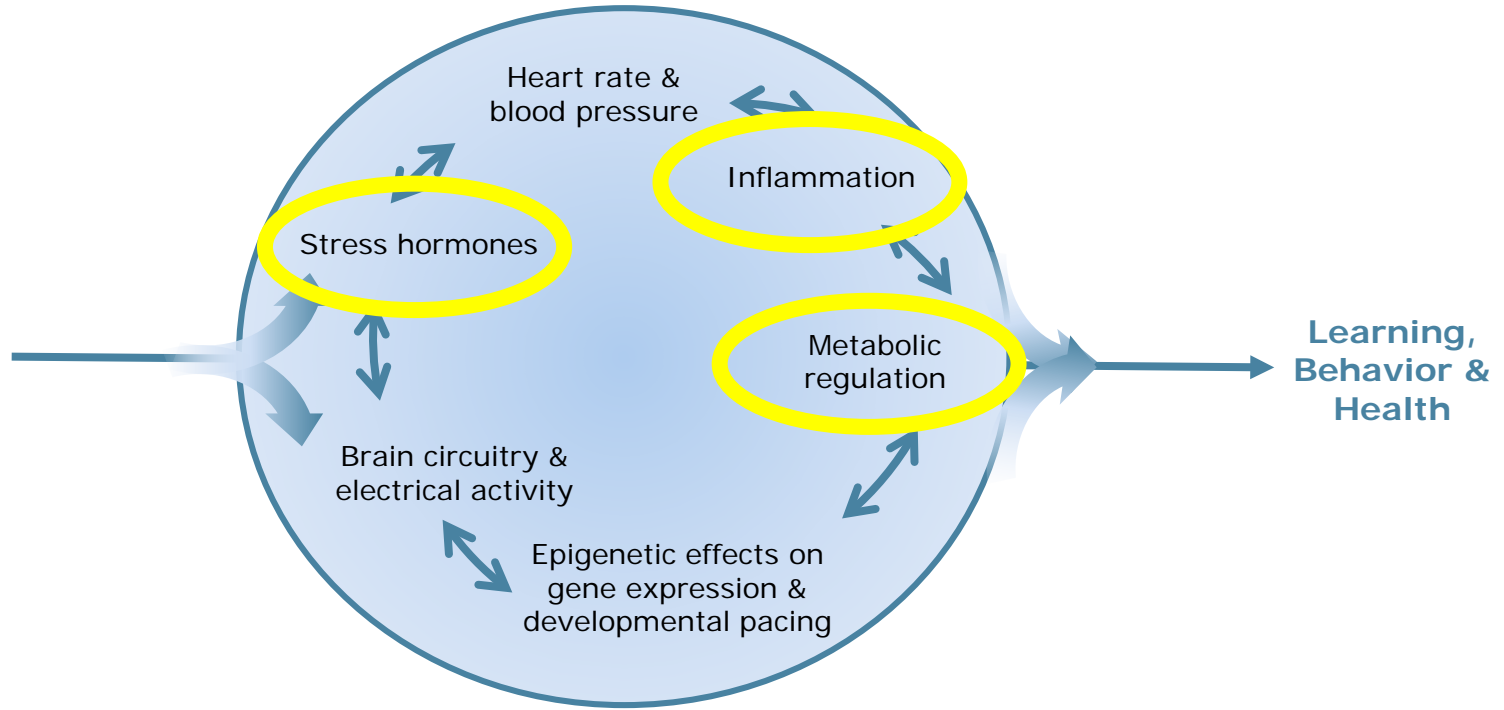


Environmental
Stressor

X



Time



3 Core Concepts Grounded in 21st-Century Science Underscore the Potential Power of a New Mindset for Early Childhood Policy

Connecting the Brain to the Rest of the Body



Variation in Sensitivity to the Environment

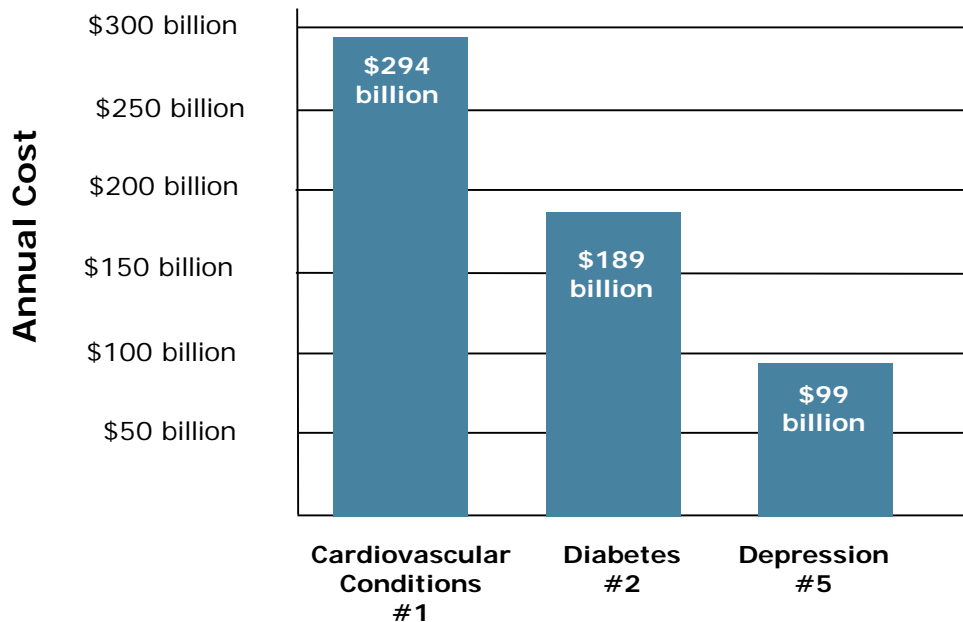


Timing & Critical Periods



PN-3 Policies that Strengthen Conditions that Support Healthy Development Will Generate a Substantially Larger ROI

3 of the 5 Most Costly Adult Diseases are Associated with Early Life Adversity

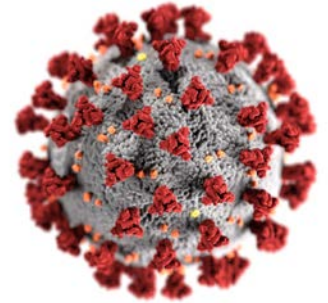


Take-Home: Science-informed investments that reduce hardships and adverse exposures faced by pregnant women and families raising very young children offer a promising pathway to enormous savings in health care costs.

Sources: Waters, Graf (Milken Institute, 2018); Greenberg et al. (2015)

Relevant Lessons Learned From COVID-19

Predictable impacts of poverty, racism, and other structural inequities on health—with striking variations in both susceptibility to illness and response to treatment.



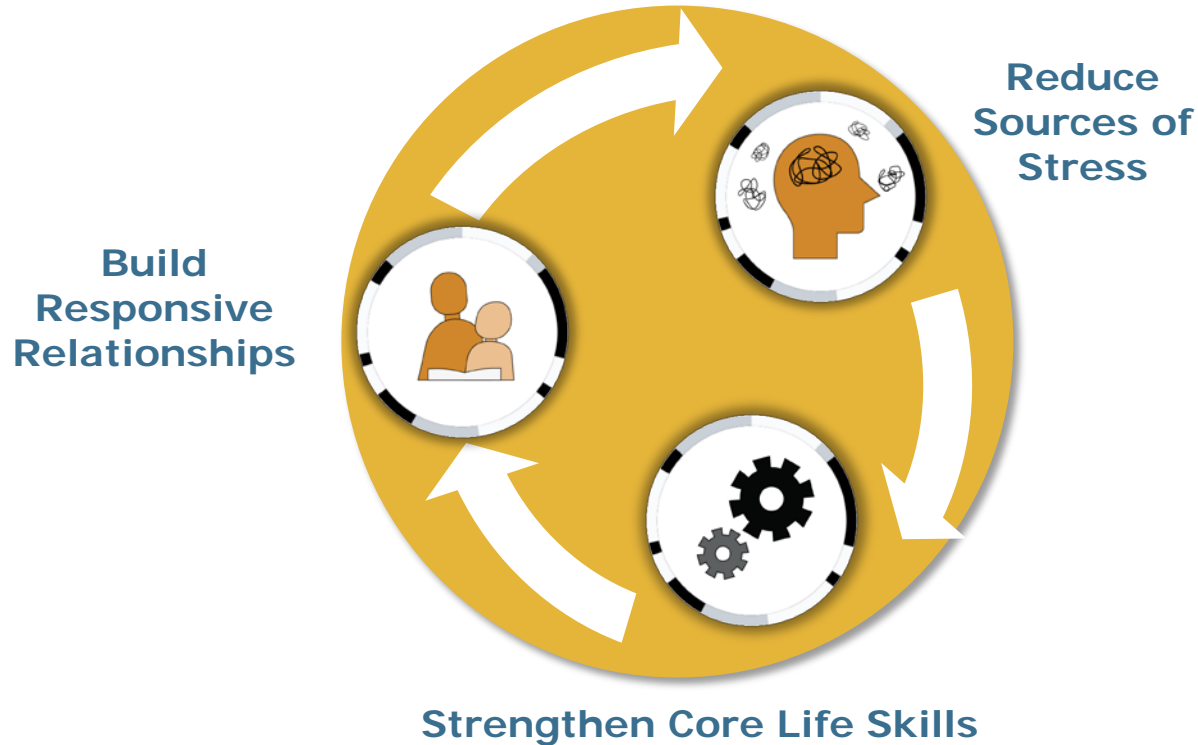
The need for credible scientific knowledge and trusted metrics to inform both prevention and treatment.

The influence of lived experiences and personal beliefs on policymaking and implementation.

The challenge of high-stakes decisions in the face of incomplete information.

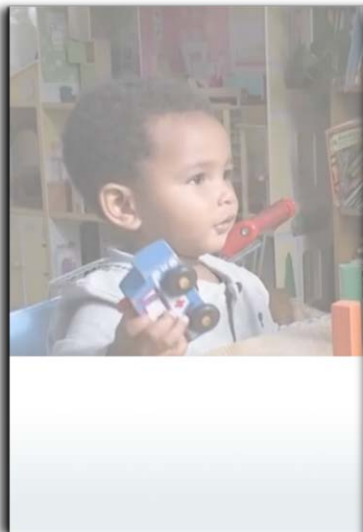
3 Science-Informed Principles Can Strengthen the Roots of Whole Child Development Across the PN-3 Roadmap

But the Devil is in the Details





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The Brain and Motivation

Experiences Create Pathways

Hover over the labels on the brain regions or the highlighted text below to learn more about the role each plays in reward and motivation.

1. Experiences trigger neurons (brain cells) in certain regions of the brain to send chemicals to other neurons in different regions.
2. Repeated experiences create different pathways in the brain that link those experiences to thoughts, memories, and behaviors.
3. These linked pathways create powerful associations between what we do and the memories of how that made us feel physically and emotionally, and that drives our behavior.
4. We are motivated to repeat those experiences that made us feel good, and to avoid those that

IDEAS Impact Framework Training

Remagining Program Development and Evaluation

What will this training do for me?

Since 2018, the IDEAS Impact Framework Training has helped people in critical paths and knowledge. The training is ideal for anyone involved in the implementation, or evaluation of programs for children and families who want to go beyond the best of what the field has achieved so far. Past participants have learned how to:

- improve the impact of their interventions,
- understand the underlying mechanisms of an intervention by co-creating an evaluation plan with multiple stakeholders,
- identify programs with the greatest potential to impact kids and families facing adversity,
- redefine how they evaluate program effectiveness, and
- orient their businesses around impact and reach.

What does the agenda include?

- Opening Presentation: [Three Principles to Improve Outcomes for Families](#)
This presentation will cover three design principles that we can use to improve policies and programs for children and families.
- An Overview of the [IDEAS Impact Framework](#)
An introduction to the framework designed to help innovators overcome barriers and go beyond the status quo to increase impact.
- IDEAS Impact Framework Case Studies: [Theory of Change](#)

NATIONAL SCIENTIFIC COUNCIL ON THE DEVELOPING CHILD

Connecting the Brain to the Rest of the Body: Early Childhood Development and Lifelong Health Are Deeply Intertwined

WORKING PAPER 15

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