Increasing Resilience by Educating & Empowering Caregivers to Participate in the Therapeutic Process
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Protection Factors
- Caregiver support
- Academic support
- Community support and resources
- High self-esteem
- Goal setting
- Spiritual or cultural beliefs

Risk Factors
- Negative caregiver response to trauma
- Lack of community resources
- Isolation
- Poor academic support
- Disorganized attachments

Building Resilience

Importance of a Positive Caregiver-Child Relationship

Research names a strong support system as a key protective factor.
Quality of caregiver involvement and support has been shown to increase the likelihood of a positive outcome in regard to child's mental health following a traumatic event (Yasinski et al., 2016).

Remember resilience can be cultivated by ONE supportive, positive relationship.

How?

ASSESSMENT OF CAREGIVER READINESS
PSYCHOEDUCATION
PARENT INCLUSION
PARENT SKILL BUILDING
MODELING

Assessment of Caregiver

Green Light
- Emotionally stable and flexible
- Believes child about trauma
- Able to be child-focused
- Poised to give praise
- Open to potential for growth narrative

Yellow Light
- Emotionally fragile
- Has questions about what happened
- Talks about own feelings or trauma
- Has difficulty praising child
- Caregiver is unsure about the value of narrative

Red Light
- Emotionally unstable and rigid
- Disputes child's experience
- Can't put own feelings or experiences aside
- Mired in negative view of the child
- Closed to potential for growth narrative

What impact does complex trauma have on the brain?
Mindfulness
Awareness of Self in Environment

Hand Model of the Brain
(Dr Daniel Siegel)

Reptilian or Primitive Brain
- Brain Stem
  - Superior Colliculus
  - Transmission of information
  - Periaqueductal Grey
  - Fight, Flight, and Freeze
  - Connects to the spinal cord

Limbic or Emotional Brain
- Limbic System
  - Hippocampus
  - Stops filing memories during a traumatic event
  - Start pumping cortisol throughout the body
  - Amygdala
  - Increase in functioning during trauma

Thinking Brain
- Cerebral Cortex
  - Consciousness
  - Medial Prefrontal Cortex
  - Mindfulness and awareness

False Evidence Appearing Real

Mindfulness
Awareness of Self in Environment

- Have child stand on one side of the room and then
  - Make their way slowly towards you as they describe what it is their body is doing
  - I’m picking up my foot
  - I am moving my foot forward
  - I am putting my foot down

- You can get creative with this—try leading your child to walk slowly, crawl slowly, etc. And remember, always give the child a signal so you can stop and say, “What is it that your body is doing?”
Self-Care Wheel

Building Blocks To Positive Communication

Materials:
• 2 sets of identical blocks
• Same color
• Same shape
• 10 blocks in each set

Goal:
• Teaches reflective listening skills and their importance.
• Demonstrates how easily misunderstandings occur.

If met with a resistant caregiver, some of the following strategies may be helpful:
• Address barriers up front
• Validation: Validate and reflect the caregiver’s experience
• Normalize: Let them know they are not alone in their experience
• Remind them that behavior is designed to suit a need
• Tell parent what you’re working on—communication is key!
• Have child teach or show parent intervention at end of session

References