

In Module 1, we covered WHY your role is important in helping children by teaching their parents and caregivers about brain development and ways to reduce child maltreatment.

In Module 2, we covered WHAT the protective factors are and WHO is involved in building “circles of caring”/ protective factors for families. DISCUSS FINDINGS FROM STAFF SURVEY (Leader/Leadership Team should have looked at survey results by this point and identified top areas of strength and challenge. Avoid “singling out” individuals during the training).

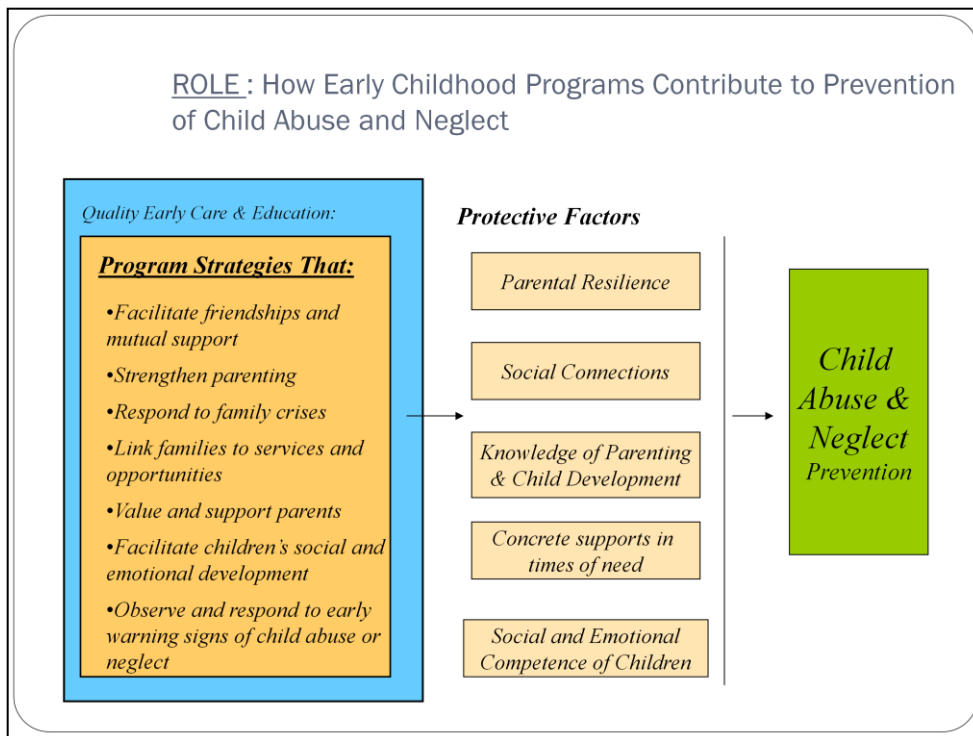
- From the surveys, we found these to be the top 3 protective factor areas that staff are most comfortable with: _____

(There may be particular staff with areas of strength, who can share expertise with others.)

- We found these to be the top 3 areas where there is a lower comfort level, and where we can do some skill-building: _____

Having this information about WHO we are, and our capability to build Circles of Caring, we can move on to the last two modules with a strong basis for picking and choosing hands-on resources from the statewide community that will be most helpful to us as we move past these initial trainings.

In this session - Module 3, we will be reviewing some everyday strategies that will focus on “just in time” parenting tips.



To review from the last session:

The five Protective Factors are the foundation of the Strengthening Families approach. Extensive research supports the common-sense notion that when these Protective Factors are present and robust in a family, the likelihood of child abuse and neglect diminish.

Parental resilience: The ability to cope and bounce back from all types of challenges

Social connections: Friends, family members, neighbors, and other members of a community who provide emotional support and concrete assistance to parents

Knowledge of parenting and child development: Accurate information about raising young children and appropriate expectations for their behavior

Concrete support in times of need: Financial security to cover day-to-day expenses and unexpected costs that come up from time to time, access to formal supports like TANF and Medicaid, and informal support from social networks

Children's social and emotional development: A child's ability to interact positively with others and communicate his or her emotions effectively.



If there is anything more fundamental than a decent start in life, I wonder what it could be.

-- David Hamburg, President, Carnegie Foundation of New York

David Hamburg is President of the Carnegie Foundation, which published an important report on brain development in young children. He observed: *"If there is anything more fundamental than a decent start in life, I wonder what it could be."*

The Carnegie report made four major points about brain development:

First, the brain develops at an **incredible rate before birth and during the first years of life**, faster than at any other time.

Second, how the brain develops hinges in large part on the child's environment. It's not about "**nature versus nurture**," but about "**nature and nurture**." All children are born with certain genetic characteristics, and how these characteristics develop **depends on how children are raised**. For example, some children are born with an aptitude for music, but they won't become musicians unless given the encouragement and opportunity to develop those talents.

Third, the impact of the environment on the young brain is long lasting. **In extreme cases, the effects are irreversible**. Vision and hearing, for example, have a limited "window of opportunity" to develop or else the child can have permanent impairments.

Finally, early traumatic experiences such as **abuse, neglect and other forms of trauma have serious effects on the brain**. For example, children who don't play much or receive little physical contact develop brains that are 20-30% smaller than those of other children their age. **Remind participants that the use of the brain scan is valuable, but point out that the scan is an example of EXTREME neglect, and not common.**

(Sources: *Starting Points: Meeting the Needs of Our Youngest Children*, Carnegie Foundation of New York, 1994; "Fertile Minds," by J. Madeline Nash, TIME Magazine, Feb. 3, 1997)

Brain Under Construction ZoneSM



12 tips for raising a healthy child



Brain
Under Construction Zone



United Way
SUCCESS BY 6

SUCCESS BY 6
United Way of the River Cities

Purpose:

To increase awareness of:

- The impact of the first five years of life
- 12 messages for raising a healthy child
- Everyday activities as opportunities to teach

• It is well-noted that parent education programs can make a critical difference in the long-term intellectual as well as physical and emotional development of children.

• Define Success By 6 – “seeks to ensure that all children will be ready physically, mentally, developmentally, emotionally and socially to begin kindergarten.” SBy6 seeks to build awareness and understanding of the importance of early brain development to the future success of children.

In the early stages of development, the United Way of the River Cities Success By 6 committee met month after month. Members struggled to find a way to systematically saturate the community with the 12 messages for raising a healthy child and make an effort to get the 12 messages of SB6 out to the public in a consistent manner.

• The Brain Under Construction ZoneSM project was designed in an effort to educate the community about the importance of the first years of life as well as to provide families with simple ways that they can help give their children good beginnings.

Review the key elements of the Brain Zone on slide

Resources are from the United Way of the River Cities Success by 6 Brain Under Construction ZoneSM program.

The United Way of Monongalia and Preston Counties has also replicated the program and has given permission to share their Brain Under Construction ZoneSM Lesson Plans (on the resource CD).

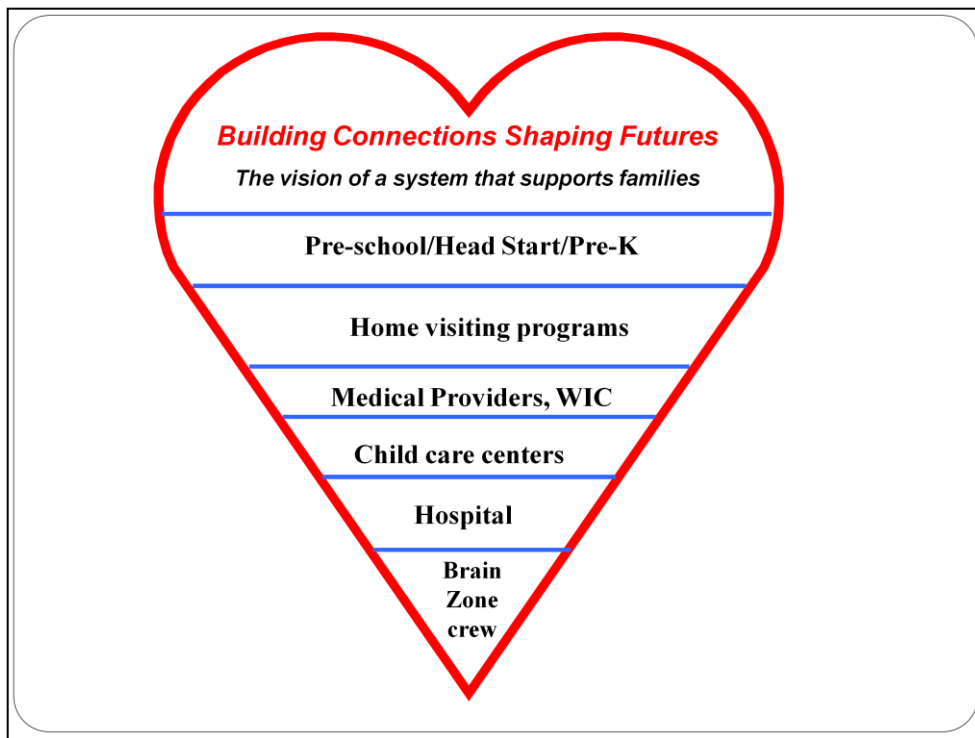
Key Elements of the Brain Zone

A systematic way to educate and increase awareness about the importance of the first years of life.

- A. The Brain Zone Crew – A team that works to plan and implement the project.**
- B. Messages – 12 tips for raising a healthy child**
- C. Materials – display, resource information**
- D. Messengers – Volunteers, Nurses, staff**
- E. Locations:**
 - 1. Medical providers - Hospitals, Pediatricians, Ob/Gyn doctors, WIC, Mental Health providers**
 - 2. Early Education Programs - Child care centers, Pre-K, Head Start and In home family education programs**



Review the key elements of the Brain Zone on slide



The vision is to have multiple organizations **all working together** to reinforce the messages in all disciplines.

The messages of the Brain Zone help to strengthening families, in many different contexts, and across disciplines.

•*Briefly explain the remaining slides about ways the Brain Zone seeks to reinforce messages throughout the community and the benefits .*

Partners to reinforce the 12 messages

In-home :

- Birth to Three
- Right from the Start
- Healthy Families America
- MIHOW (Maternal Infant Health Outreach Workers)

Early Education:

- Family and center based programs, Head Start
- Pre-K, Pre-school
- Starting Points Centers

Medical Providers:

- Pediatric, clinics, Ob/Gyn, Family practice, Health Department
- Mental Health provider

Other:

- WIC
- Community Centers
- Businesses
- Churches
- Libraries

Review points on slide

Explain these key elements briefly and explain that these are the programs that can implement parenting messages.

The vision is to build a comprehensive network to support parents by providing information and resources when they are needed.

When parents have the information needed to build their understanding of child development through simple steps they can do everyday, it helps to get their children off to a good start.

Benefits

- Low cost
- High impact
- Grass roots driven means long term success
- Family centered/ strengths based approach
- Utilizes all three learning styles
- Based on teachable moments - “just in time tips”
- Simplicity-anyone can benefit



Review points on slide

Brain Zone Display

Large sign
with 12
messages

- 1 The First Years Last Forever**
Wiring a brain is like wiring a house – It works better if you start from the beginning.
- 2 Love and Affection Cannot Spoil a Baby**
Be warm, loving and pay attention to your child's sounds, movements and expressions.
- 3 Talk, Read & Sing to Your Child**
You are your child's first teacher.
- 4 Have a Regular Schedule**
Children find comfort in the same routine every day.
- 5 Play is the Work of the Young Child**
Encourage safe exploration and play.
- 6 Pay Attention to Your Child**
Be aware of how, where and with whom your child spends his time. Choose TV, radio and internet carefully.
- 7 Take Care of Yourself**
You cannot take care of your child, if your basic needs are not also being met.
- 8 Discipline to Teach, Not Punish**
Use discipline as an opportunity to teach appropriate behavior. *Never* hit or shake a child.
- 9 Choose Quality Child Care & Stay Involved**
For local information on approved child care sites, call LINK at 1-800-894-9540.
- 10 Children Develop at Different Rates**
Celebrate each child.
- 11 Give Your Child a Childhood**
Children need unstructured time. More is not always better.
- 12 Children Need to Know They Matter**
Show your children they are loved for who they are.

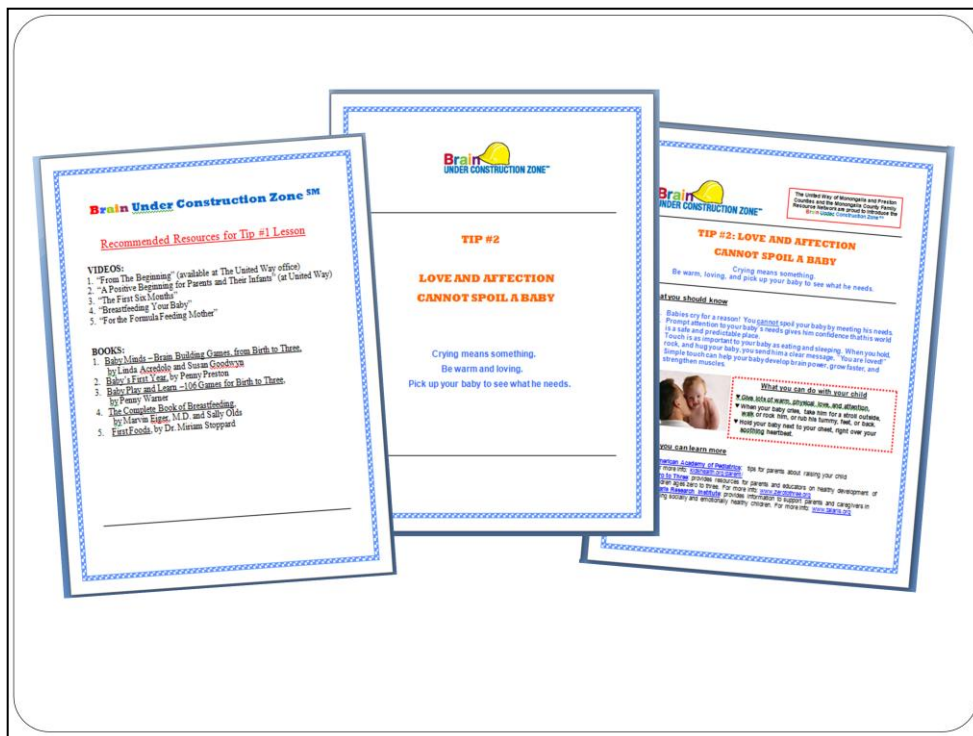
Review points on slide

Brain Zone Components

- Signage includes:
 - 12 Tips for Raising a Healthy Child
 - Success by Six™ Information
 - Focused “Message of the Month” signs
- Resources available to parents that help them with “just in time” parenting tips



Review points on slide



Based on what we've learned about our own strengths, concerns and challenges within our program, what tips, lessons and resources might be most helpful for us to use, either within our classrooms, with parents or general staff training?

(Leader - Take about 10 minutes to review the Brain Under Construction Zone lesson plan sheets from Folder #8 in the CD-ROM, and have staff note items they would like to use either in their own groups/classrooms, or for a program-wide training.)

RELATIONSHIPS: IT'S ALL ABOUT THE PERSONAL CONTACT



SUCCESS BY 6
United Way of the River Cities

- *Emphasize personal contact.*

Explain that just giving families written material isn't as effective as having a conversation about the messages. It's always important to adapt materials to be culturally sensitive to each family. Most families are very happy to talk about their baby and child. That's the best conversation starter.

Strategies that build protective factors have lasting effects. Consider the following:

How you build parent understanding of child development...

- Parents learn best when they are talking about their own child right now.
- Parents with knowledge about parenting have more appropriate expectations and use more developmentally appropriate guidance techniques.
- Early care and education professionals have a wealth of knowledge about child development that they can share with parents, examples - informal conversation, in a class, or by sharing brochures and other written information with parents.

How you enhance children's social emotional development...

- Children who attend high quality early childhood education get support for healthy social emotional development in many ways.
- They learn how to identify their feelings, empathize with the feelings of others, share emotions appropriately, and problem solve with peers and adults.
- The children bring these skills home and affect the ways they interact with their families and how others interact with them.

MESSAGES: 12 tips for raising a healthy child

1- The first years last forever.

Wiring a brain is like wiring a house—it works better if you start from the beginning.

2- Love & affection cannot spoil a baby.

Be warm, loving and pay attention to your child's sounds, movements and expressions.

3 - Talk, read, & sing to your child.

You are your child's first teacher.

4 - Have a regular schedule.

Children find comfort in the same routine every day.

5 - Play is the work of the young child.

Encourage safe exploration & play.

6 - Pay attention to your child.

Be aware of how, where & with whom your child spends time. Choose TV, videos & internet carefully.

7 - Take care of yourself.

You cannot take care of your child if your basic needs are not also being met.

8 - Discipline to teach not punish.

Use discipline as an opportunity to teach appropriate behavior. *Never* hit or shake a child.

9 - Choose child care carefully & stay involved.

For local information on approved childcare s call Child Care Resource & Referral office.

10 - Children develop at different rates.

Celebrate each child.

11 - Give your child a childhood.

Children need unstructured time. More is not always better.

12 - Your children need to know they matter.

Show your children they are loved for who they are.

Review points on slide

*** Point out illustrations in the Monongalia County Lessons booklet*

Table discussion options

- List ways you can incorporate the 12 messages into your daily work.
- In what ways do you currently build “circles of caring” or protective factors with families?
- How could you strengthen the ability to build protective factors in your work?
- What are the outcomes you might expect for the families you work with?



Potential future impact:

"Empathy can't be taught, but it can be caught." - Mary Gordon, founder of Roots of Empathy, a school-based program designed to foster compassion

A child's capacity for empathy can further be encouraged when parents model empathetic behavior themselves. When parents treat other people with compassion, selflessness and a lack of judgment, children copy those behaviors.

Resource: School Bullying Prevention: Teach Empathy at Young Age (Source: TIME Article, By MAIA SZALAITZ Maia Szalavitz) Excerpt.....

Increasingly, neuroscientists, psychologists and educators believe that bullying and other kinds of violence can indeed be reduced by encouraging empathy at an early age. Over the past decade, research in empathy - the ability to put ourselves in another person's shoes - has suggested that it is key, if not *the* key, to all human social interaction and morality.

Without empathy, we would have no cohesive society, no trust and no reason not to murder, cheat, steal or lie. At best, we would act only out of self-interest; at worst, we would be a collection of sociopaths. Although human nature has historically been seen as essentially selfish, recent science suggests that it is not. The capacity for empathy is believed to be innate in most humans, as well as some other species - chimps, for instance, will protest the unfair treatment of others, refusing to accept a treat they have rightfully earned if another chimp doing the same work fails to get the same reward.

The first stirrings of human empathy typically appear in babyhood: newborns cry when hearing another infant's cry, and studies have shown that children as young as 14 months offer unsolicited help to adults who appear to be struggling to reach something. Babies have also shown a distinct preference for adults who help rather than hinder others. (See what can be done about bullying in school.)

But like language, the development of this inherent tendency may be affected by early experience. Childhood - as early as infancy - is now known to be a critical time for the development of empathy. And although children can be astonishingly resilient, surviving and sometimes thriving despite abuse and neglect, studies show that those who experience such early trauma are at much greater risk of becoming aggressive or even psychopathic later on, bullying other children or being victimized by bullies themselves.

RESOURCES

NATIONAL RESOURCES

- Strengthening Families Electronic Library - www.strengtheningfamilies.net
- Center for the Study of Social Policy Program - www.cssp.org
- Prevent Child Abuse America (PCA America) - www.preventchildabuse.org
- Talaris Institute Parenting Counts - <http://parentingcounts.org>

STATE & LOCAL RESOURCES

- Family Resource Network - Check with local FRN for Resource Guide
- Prevent Child Abuse WV www.preventchildabusewv.org - Can view "Circles of Caring" video link and Partners in Prevention projects
- Success by Six® - <http://unitedwayriverscities.org>

Resources:

- Prevent Child Abuse WV – "Circles of Caring" (DVD/YouTube Video)
- Website: naeyc.org – "Strengthening Families: Community Strategies That Work" (Olson, 2007 – pdf article)
- *Why Love Matters* (Gerhardt) – book on the neuroscience of early relationships and infant/child brain development
- Talaris Institute Parenting Counts Educational Resources (<http://parentingcounts.org>):
- Family Resource Network Resource Guide/Quick Guide to agencies with local phone numbers, hotlines and website
- United Way Success By Six – public service campaign - www.unitedwayriverscities.org/sb6.html

For more information

Contact

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Huntington, WV 25701
(304) 523-8929



- Success By 6 initiative is committed to the proposition that it is the simple things that make a difference in building a young child's foundation for future success.
- United Way of the River Cities adopted this national initiative beginning in 1999 and continually seeks to support and/or initiate public and private collaborations that improve and/or expand the current range of services for children and families.
- If you have any questions or want more information on the Brain Under Construction Zone sm project, contact United Way of the River Cities.

Next Session:

- Incorporating Circles of Caring into our daily routine.
- How the staff of a WV Strengthening Families 3-year pilot program finds time to build relationships with families

Prevent Child Abuse West Virginia and its funding partners—the West Virginia Children's Trust Fund, the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation and the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources—provide this opportunity to help children grow up free from abuse & neglect.

This training is also made possible through partnership with Innovation Grant sites in Cabell & Wayne Counties administered by the Cabell County Family Resource Network, with in-kind support from West Virginia Child Care Centers United, River Valley Child Development Services, United Way of the River Cities, United Way of Monongalia and Preston Counties



Review slide