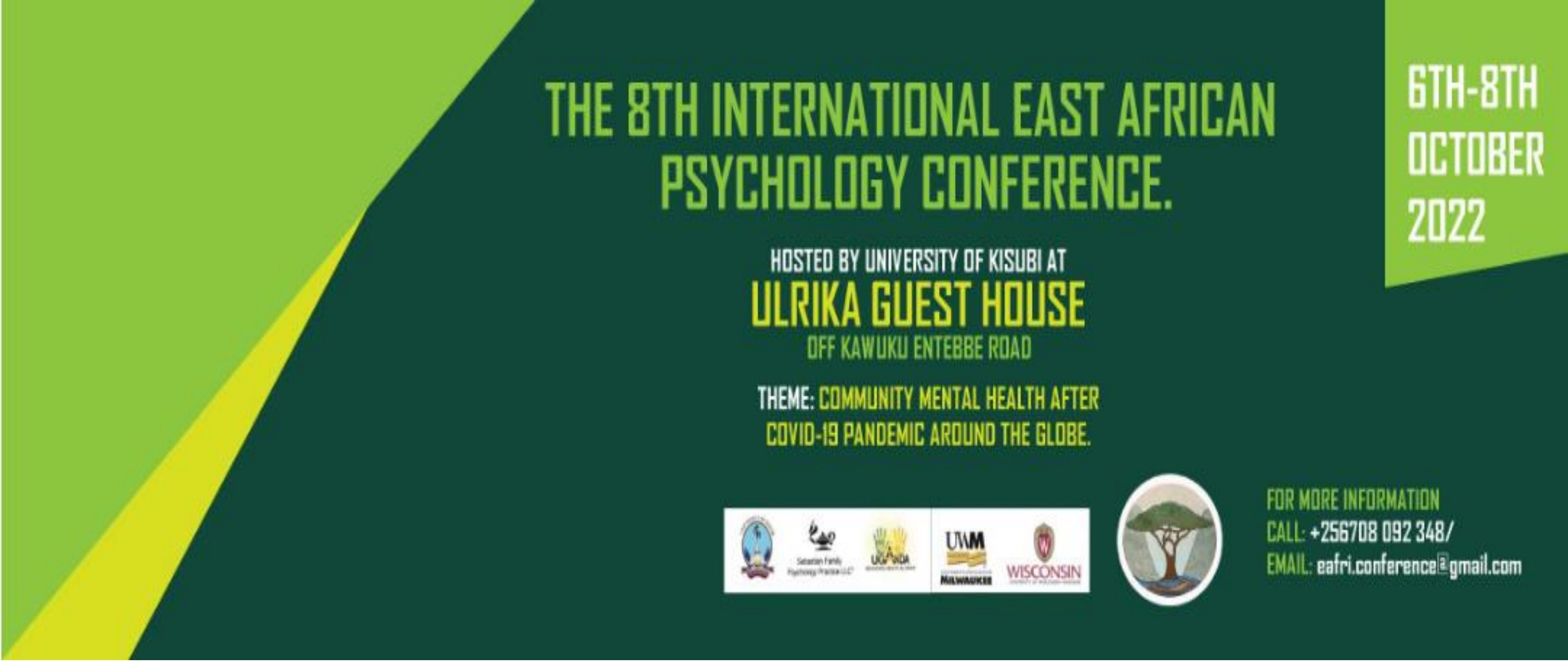

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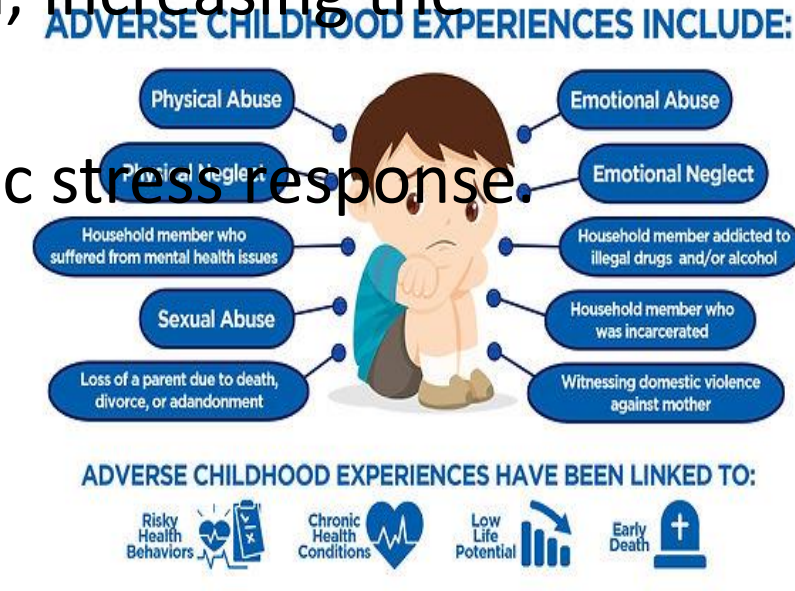
Students Mental Health
Adversity in Childhood a Catalyst for Mental illness among Students.

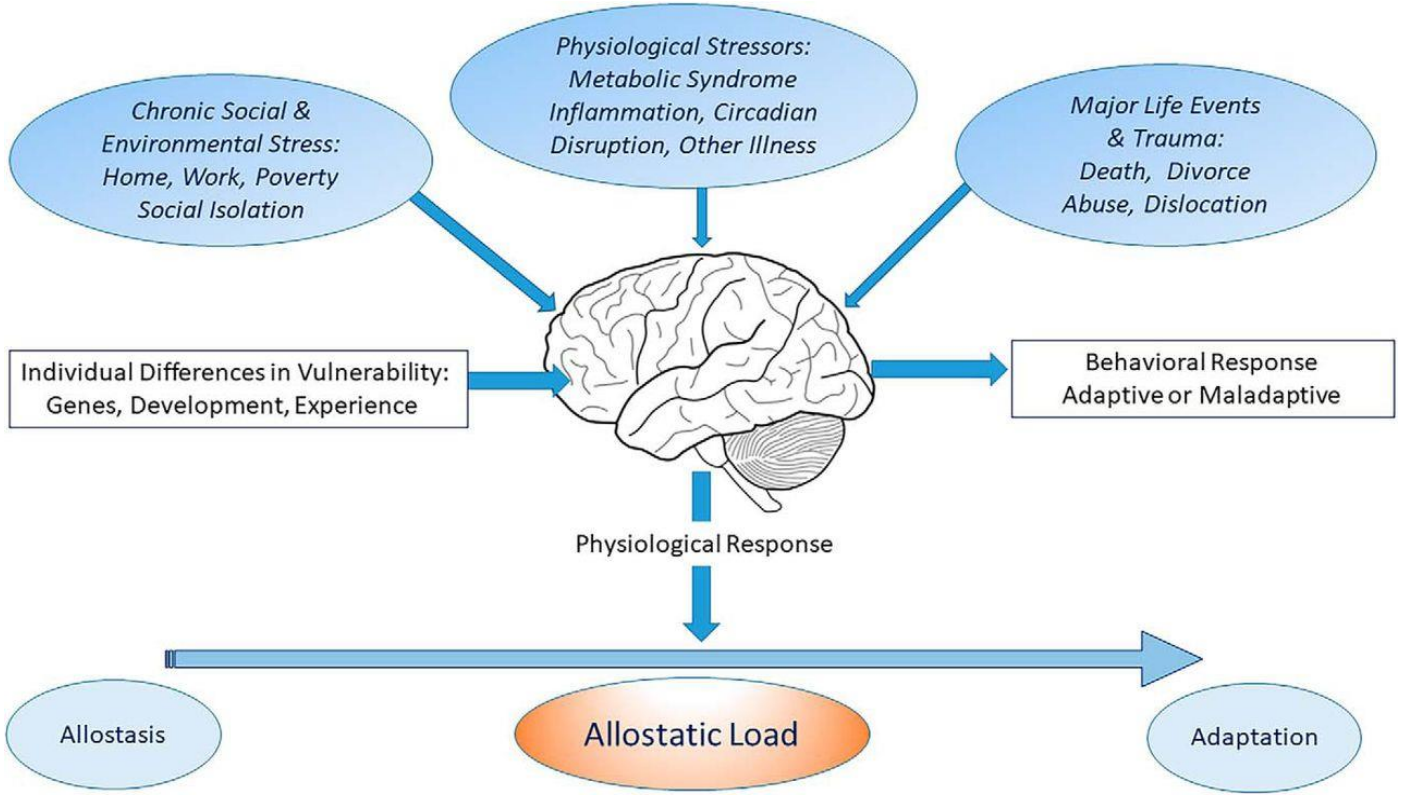
What are ACEs

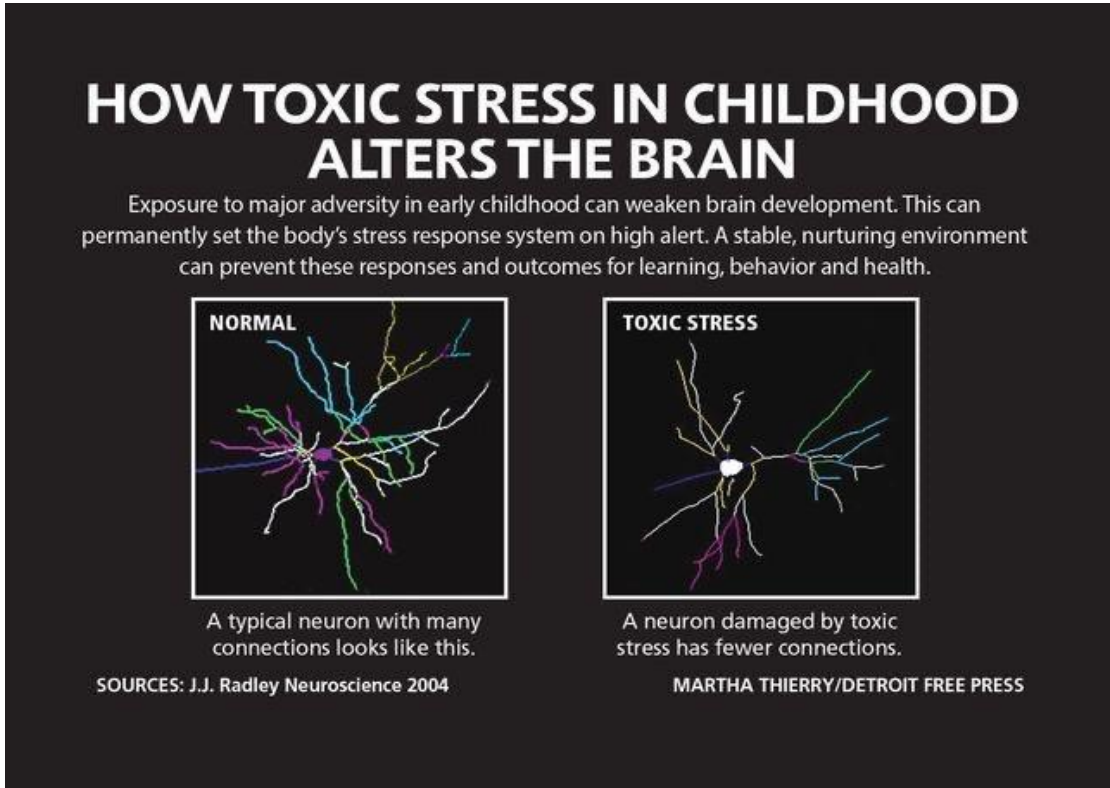
- ACE (Adverse childhood experiences are potentially traumatic events that occur in childhood. ACEs can include:
- Violence, physical abuse, verbal abuse, sexual abuse, physical neglect, emotional neglect, economic hardship, divorce or loss.
- Adversity can affect development in myriad ways, at different points in time, although early exposures that persist over time likely lead to more lasting impacts.
- Moreover, adversity can become biologically embedded, increasing the likelihood of long term change.
- A large number of adverse experiences can trigger a toxic stress response.



Toxic Stress

- Prolonged activation of the stress response systems that can disrupt the development of brain architecture and other organ systems and increase the risk for stress related disease and cognitive impairment, well into the adult years. (US National Academy of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (2019)
- The toxic stress response can occur when a child experiences strong, frequent, and/or prolonged adversity—such as physical or emotional abuse, chronic neglect, caregiver substance abuse or mental illness, exposure to violence, and/or the accumulated burdens of family economic hardship—without adequate adult support.





Effects of ACEs

- The presence of ACEs early in life results in both immediate and lasting consequences on mental health development during one's life course (Hughes et al., 2017).
- In the World Mental Health Surveys conducted in 21 countries, 30% of the adult mental illnesses were attributed to physical abuse in childhood or other ACEs (Kessler et al., 2010).

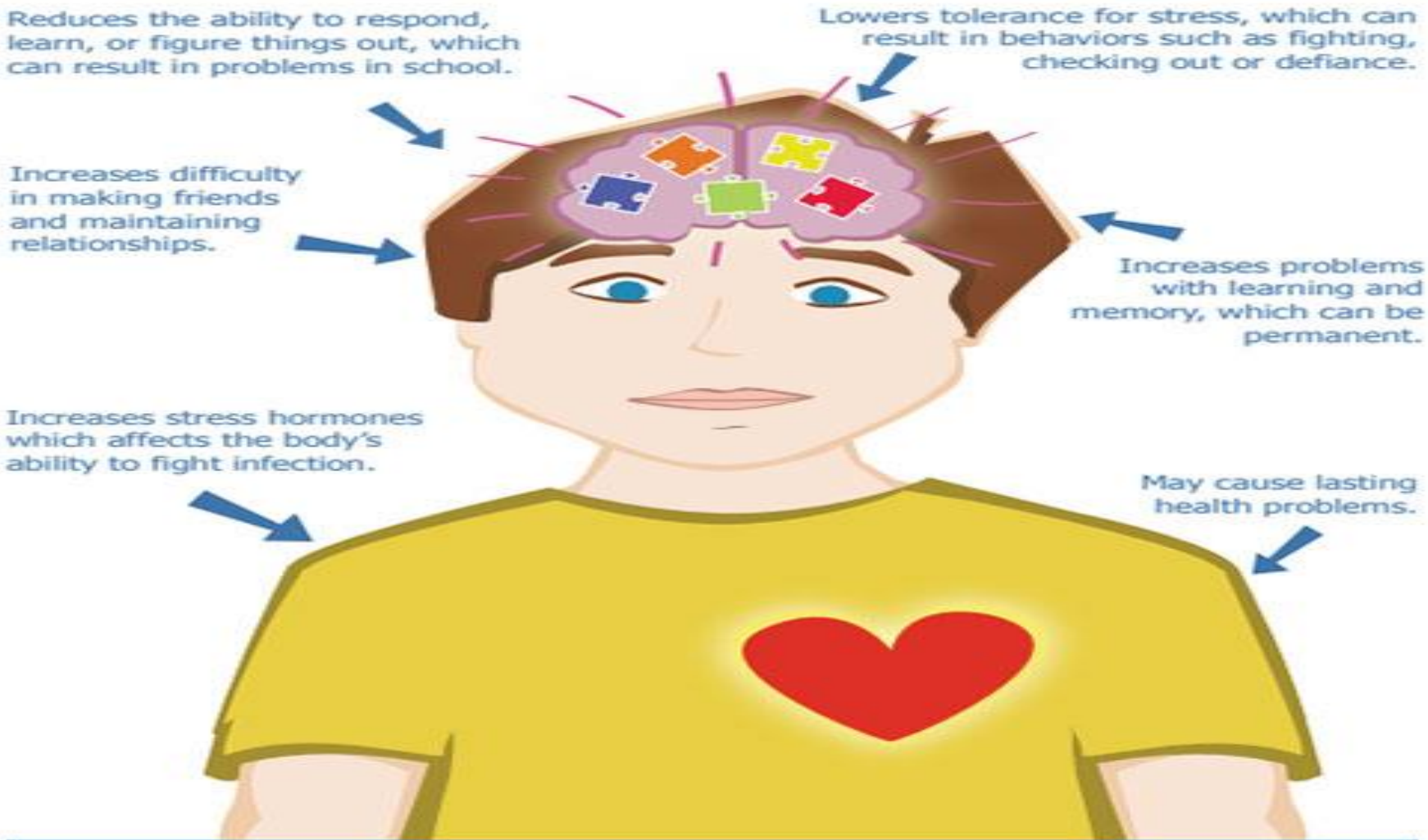
- Many studies have found that ACEs were significantly associated with poor physical and mental health such as anxiety, depressive symptoms, or self-harm in young adults (Herzog and Schmahl, 2018; Schilling et al., 2007; Wan et al., 2019).
- ACEs have also been linked to high-risk health behaviours such as substance use, smoking, unsafe sex and violence in adolescents (Blum et al., 2019; Schilling et al., 2007).

- The more ACEs a child experiences the more likely he or she is to develop chronic health conditions and risky behaviours.
- These often lead to negative outcomes later in life such as reduced educational and occupational achievement, heart disease, obesity , substance abuse, suicide and depression.
- ACEs impair/cripple/freeze, wound the Internal working model of the child

- A study aimed at estimating the associations between ACES and adult depression and suicidal ideation in rural Uganda concluded that a cumulative number of ACEs had statistically significant associations with depression symptom severity, major depressive disorder and suicidal ideation.
- Another study aimed to evaluate the effect of ACEs on depression, psychological distress and suicidal thought among Vietnamese adolescents found that out of 4720 students, more than one-fifth of participants reported being scolded, threatened and physically punished by teachers or other staff.

How do ACEs affect health?

Through stress. Frequent or prolonged exposure to ACEs can create toxic stress which can damage the developing brain of a child and affect overall health.



A Survival Mode Response to toxic stress increases a child's heart rate, blood pressure, breathing and muscle tension. Their thinking brain is knocked off-line. Self-protection is their priority. In other words:
"I can't hear you! I can't respond to you! I am just trying to be safe!"

- **Prevention and Early intervention are crucial for community mental well-being.**

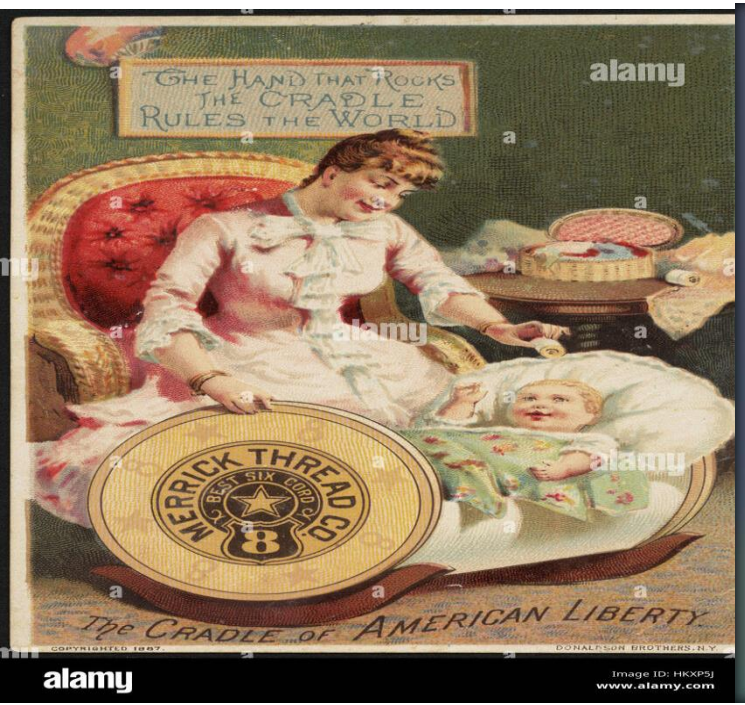
Parents and Teachers as main care givers.

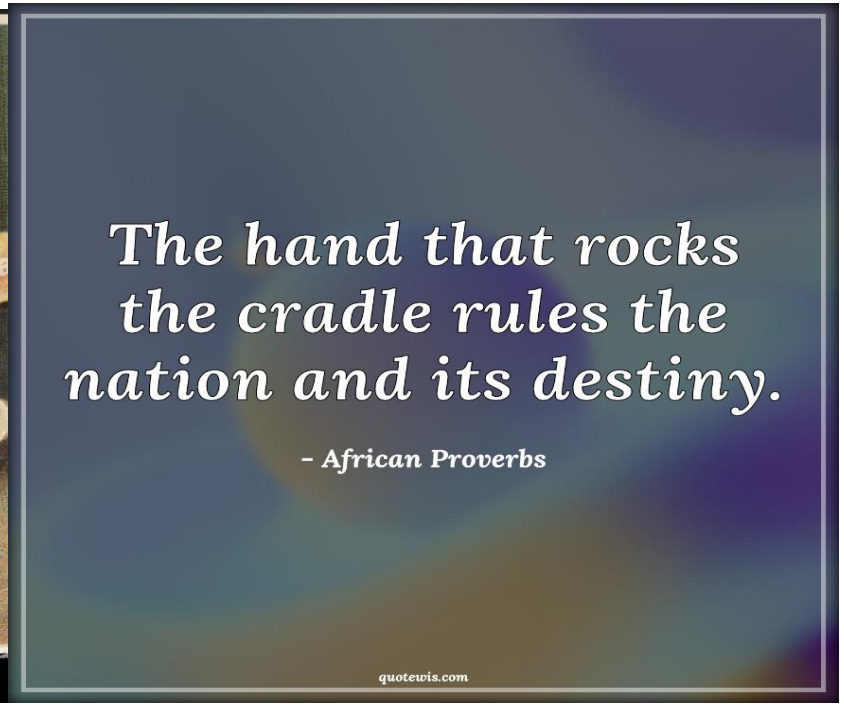
Why Parents and Teachers

- Family is the principal nurturing Unit
- This is because the early years of a child are spent mainly at home with parents and at school with teachers. Approx. 180 days at school
- The effect that these environments have on children's minds is profound and lasting.
- Growing evidence indicates that in the first three years of life, a host of biological (e.g., malnutrition, infectious disease) and psychosocial (e.g., maltreatment, witnessing violence, extreme poverty) hazards can affect a child's developmental trajectory and lead to increased risk of adverse physical and psychological health conditions.
- Such impacts can be observed across multiple systems, affecting cardiovascular, immune, metabolic, and brain health, and may extend far beyond childhood, affecting life course health.

Offer the 3 building blocks i.e.

- Enough love, enough care and Enough touch (Oxytocin, bonding chemical, close relationships, trust, intimacy, empathy)
- Environment shapes personality
- Use discipline not punishment
- Deal with own mental or personality disorders, (genetic Curses) i.e. you cant give what you don't have
- Psycho education to Equip parents with knowledge of child development
- There is a need of developing and implementing policies and programs that safeguard children, promote mental health and prevent trajectories towards psychological disability.



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