



Quality ChildCare

For Registered Home-Based Providers

LEARNING TO GROW ★ WINDWARD COMMUNITY COLLEGE Vol. VII, No. 4

10 Hallmarks of Quality Child Care

- ★ Build trusting relationships
- ★ Provide consistent care
- ★ Support children's health
- ★ Provide a safe environment
- ★ Provide positive guidance
- ★ Provide a language-rich environment
- ★ Foster curiosity and development through play
- ★ Individualize care and learning activities
- ★ Partner with parents
- ★ Pursue personal and professional growth

This Month's Hallmark of Quality Child Care

Build Trusting Relationships

Building Resilience in the Era of COVID-19

Mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel and act. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices. Mental health is important at every stage of life, from early childhood through adulthood.

Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) has disrupted all of our lives at some level, whether physically, financially, or emotionally. As adults, we have coping mechanisms that help us to handle negative situations that arise. Young children need to learn positive coping skills from adults who model and teach these coping strategies in their daily lives.

COVID-19 can affect young children's mental health when their bodies are in an ongoing state of anxiety -- for example, due to loved ones becoming ill and not being able to see them, or a change in a child's living situation. This ongoing stress can affect a child's social, emotional, or mental well-being.

The good news is that over four decades of research on resilience shows that protective factors can buffer children from harm and increase their chances of adapting positively to adversity.

What is Resilience?

Resilience is the ability to bounce back from difficult life events. Studies have found that children need a loving and trusting relationship with one responsive caregiver to build their resilience. You can be that one person that helps a young child during this pandemic bounce back.

In this newsletter we will look at some of the challenges young children might face during this pandemic, define protective factors and describe specific things you can do to provide those protective factors especially during these stressful times.



Challenges for Families

Here are some of the main challenges that families and children may be facing during this pandemic.

- **Loss of security and safety:** Being safe and feeling safe is essential for young children to thrive. According to the Center for Disease Control (CDC), economic insecurity is linked to adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) that can negatively impact children's social-emotional development, learning and health.
- **Change in routines and continuity of care:** Child care closures can cause a disruption in daily caregiving routines and the distancing of close relationships can be traumatic for young children.

We cannot change the challenges that have come with the COVID-19 pandemic, however there are a few things we can do to ensure that young children feel safe and taken care of.

What are Protective Factors?

Protective factors are events, conditions and characteristics of children, families and the broader environments that increase an individual's chances of healthy development and positive life outcomes despite exposure to significant adversity. Three of these protective factors include:

- **Meeting basic needs** – Helping families access agencies that provide support with basic needs, such as food, shelter and



clothing and other fundamental needs is essential for protecting families' well-being in times of stress and trauma. Have a parent resource board or write in each parent's communication log about up-to-date information regarding food distribution events, COVID-19 testing sites, and subsidy and grant programs.

- **Sensitive, responsive caregiving** – The primary factor in helping a child recover from ACEs is a sensitive and caring adult. Knowledge about ACEs can help providers better understand the reason behind a child's behavior. This is critical because responsive intervention can have the most impact on young children. The healthier relationships a child has, the more likely she will be to recover from trauma and thrive.
- **Providing emotional support to young children and parents** – Emotional and behavioral changes are to be expected during times of stress and uncertainty. Young children may show signs of distress like clinginess, sadness or anger. Support the child and parent by providing positive parenting techniques and mindfulness activities (included in this newsletter) to practice in your program and at home.

Here are some additional ways that you can support the children in your care to develop resiliency:

Infants

Building trusting relationships with families is at the core of working with infants.

- **Respond quickly** – When infants cry, it is because there is a need. Responding to crying as quickly as possible and not allowing infants to cry it out helps them know that you will care for them. If you cannot respond quickly, speak in a caring tone and say to the child “I hear you, (say their name) and I will be right there as soon as I put this down.”
- **Maintain consistent routines with infants** – Keeping consistent routines like feeding, diapering, and sleeping help infants to feel safe and secure in their relationships.



- **Choices** – As much as possible, let toddlers make choices, when appropriate. For example, allow them to decide where and what they want to play or during mealtime, have them select how many crackers or fruit they want on their plate.

Preschoolers

Resilience in preschoolers is linked to being able to recognize and express emotions in appropriate ways and developing a growth mindset.

- **Puppets** – Provide puppets for the child to play with. Show her the puppet and act out an emotion using the puppet. Ask her what the puppet might be feeling based on what she sees the puppet doing.
- **Growth mindset** – Praise a child’s effort in tackling challenges rather than the outcome. For example, “You are working so hard on that puzzle. Your brain is growing as you look at the shapes and how they fit together!”

Toddlers

Protective factors that strengthen toddlers’ resilience are closely tied to their social and emotional well-being – the ability to form relationships, get their needs met, regulate strong emotions and explore their world.

- **Identifying feelings** – Create a poster of different emotions and ask the toddler how she is feeling in the morning. Give words to the emotions throughout the day and validate their feelings, letting the child know that emotions are okay, regardless of how strong they are.



Training Opportunity

This online training offers a certificate for training hours.

“Talking to and Supporting Children and Ourselves During the Pandemic.”

NAEYC

<https://www.naeyc.org/events/trainings-webinars/recorded-webinars>

Featured Activity

Calming Sensory Bottle



What You Need:

- Clean, clear plastic bottle (e.g. water bottle)
- Water
- Clear shampoo
- Small lightweight items (small shells, sand, beads, etc.)
- Food coloring (optional)
- Glitter
- Glue or heavy packing tape

What to do:

1. Help the child fill the plastic bottle halfway with warm water.
2. Fill the remainder with shampoo, leaving space at the top for lightweight objects.
3. Add one drop of food coloring, glitter and little objects that will float.
4. Glue or tape the cap shut

When the child is having strong emotions and a hard time calming down, have her shake up the bottle and watch the floating objects of glitter sink back down to the bottom.

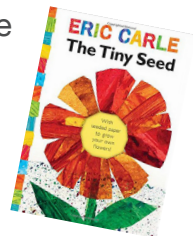
Suggested Books

Discover these books and more at the Hawai'i State Public Library www.librarieshawaii.org

Infants and Toddlers

The Tiny Seed by Eric Carle

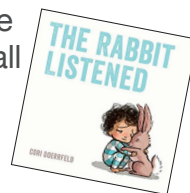
This story follows the life cycle of a tiny little seed. Smaller than any of the other seeds, the tiny seed manages to keep up on their perilous adventures around the world.



Preschoolers

The Rabbit Listened by Cori Doerrfeld

When Taylor is upset because his block building fell down, all the animals think they know what he is feeling. The rabbit just listens...



Whistle for Willie by Ezra Jack Keats

Peter really wants to be able to whistle for his dog Willie, but just can't seem to do it. He sees other boys whistle and how their dogs run to them, so he wants to be able to do the same thing. Again, and again he tries, but nothing happens... until it does.



Citations

COVID-19 Parental Resources Kit – Early Childhood/ Social, Emotional and Mental Well-Being of Young Children during COVID-19” (2020). Retrieved from: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/parental-resource-kit/early-childhood.html>

“Resilience” Center on the Developing Child, Harvard University. <https://developingchild.harvard.edu/science/key-concepts/resilience/>



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Learning to Grow Quality Child Care for Registered Home-Based Providers is a project of University of Hawai'i, Windward Community College with funding from the Hawai'i Department of Human Services ★ 808-462-4700 ★ www.learningtogrowhawaii.org