

# Follow-up Session - Resilience & TBRI Connecting

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## Resilience

## Resilience

- What is resilience?
  - The ability to thrive, adapt and cope despite tough and stressful times.
- How does a child build resilience?
  - The presence of a caring, stable adult and being raised in a safe, stable and nurturing environment are two critical factors to build resilience.
- But learning how to be resilient isn't just for children – adults can learn these skills as well.

## Frameworks Concept: Prosperity

- Healthy child development is important for both community and economic development.
  - According to this view, society's ability to build capacities that are developed during childhood becomes the basis of a prosperous and sustainable society.
- Example from Paper Tigers: Since training all teachers and students about ACEs and toxic stress, youth arrests for violent crime are down 66% in Washington, saving the state more than \$1.4 billion over a ten year period.

## Frameworks Concept: Brain Architecture

- Much like the construction of a home, the architecture of the developing brain begins with laying the foundation, framing the rooms and wiring the electrical system.
  - It continues with the incorporation of distinctive features that reflect increasing individuality over time.
  - As it emerges, the quality of that “brain architecture” establishes either a sturdy or fragile foundation for all of the development and behavior that follows.
- Focus on building resiliency skills at a young age so children have the sturdy brain architecture that leads to healthy development and a prosperous future.

## Frameworks Concept: Skill Begets Skill

- Children’s brains are built “from the bottom up,” with simple circuits and skills providing the scaffolding for more advanced circuits and skills over time.
  - According to this view, the circuits that underlie the ability to put words together to speak phrases forms a foundation for the subsequent mastery of reading a written sentence in a book.
- Example from Resilience: Children are not born fully formed, so we have the opportunity to build their brains through love and stable, nurturing relationships and environments. The presence of a stable, caring adult is one of the keys to building resiliency.

## Frameworks Concept: Serve and Return

- Interactive influences of genes and experiences shape the developing brain. The active ingredient is the “serve and return” relationships with their parents and other caregivers in the community.
  - Like the process of serve and return in games like tennis, young children naturally reach out for interaction through babbling and facial expressions. If adults do not respond by getting in sync and doing the same kind of vocalizing and gesturing back at them, the child’s learning process is incomplete. This has negative implications for later learning.
- Kids learn from people they trust, but more than that, kids learn - and grow - when connections are made between them and adults they can trust. With these connections, ideas and support can be shared back and forth between them.

## Frameworks Concept: Can’t Do One Without the Other

- Paying attention to children’s emotional and social needs, as well as to their mastery of literacy and cognitive skills, has the maximum impact on child development.
  - According to this view, because the brain is a highly integrated organ and its multiple functions operate in a richly coordinated fashion, **you cannot focus on developing just one part of the child without paying equal attention to the other capacities.**
- We need to not only teach the “topic” but also focus on the child’s mental health and development. This two-fold approach allows educators to ensure their lessons about the “topic” are having the biggest impact without being impaired by issues like toxic stress.

## Frameworks Concept: Toxic Stress

- Toxic Stress is the repeated over-exposure of a developing brain to stress hormones in early childhood and is associated with such things as extreme poverty or maltreatment. While positive stress is short-lived and tolerable stress is alleviated by the presence of stable relationships, toxic stress lasts longer.
  - Without consistent, supportive relationships it can lead to lifelong problems with learning, behavior and physical and mental health.

## Frameworks Concept: Pay Now or Pay Later

- Trying to change behavior or build new skills on the foundation of brain circuits that were not formed properly when they were first formed requires more work and is less effective. It is better to focus on forming safe, stable nurturing relationships and environments early and preventing the effects of toxic stress because it is less costly and more effective than late-stage interventions.
- The need to “be where the children are,” instead of waiting until later in life to confront physical and mental health problems. With this view, we can either prevent toxic stress and intervene early, or wait until it is much more costly and less effective to intervene when the children have become adults.

## Small Steps: TBRI

- Mindfulness
  - How do you feel entering the classroom/training?
  - Focus on your breathing, facial expressions, eyes, tone, and cadence
- The way we look at children reflects how we see them. Look in the mirror and pretend to have a conversation with a child. If your face looks glaring or harsh, be mindful of how it appears to the child.
- Not every situation calls for a big smile, but we can still make sure our eyes are gentle and approachable. If you struggle to have an approachable facial expression, try raising your eyebrows to soften your facial expression.

## Small Steps: TBRI

- Evaluate your training/classroom lessons and activities
  - You're teaching nutrition, but what else are you "teaching" through your presentation and interactions.
  - What is embedded in what you are doing?
  - How can you tweak your materials and teaching style to prepare your students for learning?
  - How can you tweak your materials and teaching style to not only teach nutrition but to also teach social-emotional skills?
  - Can you increase playful engagement?
- *View through the lens of "does this support or diminish felt safety?"*

How might you use the  
connecting principles in  
your work?

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## TBRI Videos Links

- Student and classroom
  - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tlvKxrZzKbU&t=12s>
- Classroom
  - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5OujXsWrDtM>
- Sensory
  - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kGuHwXDoX8M>

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## Questions or Comments

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