



Werry Workforce
WHĀRAURAU

Improving mental health and wellbeing for infants, children and young people through service improvement, workforce development and advocacy.

Adverse Childhood Events, Resilience, and Parenting

uniservices



Presentation Outline

- Adversity and Trauma / ACES
- Resilience
- Positive Parenting
- Key Messages

Adverse Childhood Events

- Maltreatment, household adversity (intimate family violence, criminality, prolonged poverty), and environmental dysfunction (neighbourhood/community violence) experienced before the age of 18-years
- Historical and intergeneration trauma are additional adversities experienced by Māori. Historical trauma refers to the injury from group trauma from colonization and its effects passed through generations.
- Strong, frequent, prolonged stress/adversity in the absence of support from caring adults can effect the developing brain and so can be referred to as toxic stress

Types of Stress

- **Positive Stress.** Mild stress response activated briefly. I.e. immunisation.
- **Tolerable stress.** Marked stress response with the potential to be toxic. However, the availability of a caring adult buffers the impact. i.e. serious accident, death of a loved one.

Positive and tolerable stress are differentiated from ACE and toxic stress .

The Developing Brain and Toxic Stress

Stress response is regulated by interrelated brain circuits and hormone systems.

Threat --> brain chemicals and stress hormones ensure body and brain prepared to respond to the threat

Toxic stress (the prolonged activation of the stress response, without the care of adults) can impacts children's developing, malleable brain architecture in unhelpful ways.

Particularly in early brain development neural connections involved in fear and anxiety are strengthened and over produced. The stress response system more easily triggered, more strongly triggered, and a longer time to return to baseline.

There is a cost too, to the neural connections related to learning, memory, reasoning, planning, and behavioural control developing.

The Impact of Toxic Stress

Contributes to stress-related physical and mental illness later in

Four or more ACEs compared to no ACES

- Physical inactivity, weight issues, obesity, and diabetes
- Smoking, heavy alcohol use, poor self-rated health, cancer, heart disease, and respiratory disease
- Sexual risk taking, mental ill health, and problematic alcohol use
- Problematic drug use and interpersonal and self-directed violence

Adverse experiences are common

- 63% of children experience at least one adverse childhood experience (abuse, neglect, domestic violence, household substance use, mental illness, divorce, incarcerated relative) before they are 18 years old
- 20% of children will experience at least three events before 18 years old.

Adverse experiences are common

More common in

1. people who use mental health and addiction services
2. indigenous populations including Māori
3. people in prisons
4. children and young people in contact with child welfare services.

Toxic Stress Childhood Impact

Impacts children's behaviour, emotions, learning, attention, and self regulation

Behaviour and Emotions

- Externalizing behaviours described as intense, sometimes, ‘seemingly’ for no discernable reasons
- Internalising, i.e., seeming withdrawn, depressed, quiet, and ‘overly’ compliant.
- Strong emotions, more easily triggered and lasting longer, or shutting down
- Difficulty calming self or being soothed by others
- Difficulty expressing self
- Hyperactive or irritable
- Seem to act without thinking
- Difficulty with focus
- Hyperarousal (constantly on the look out for threats, easily startled)

Resilience

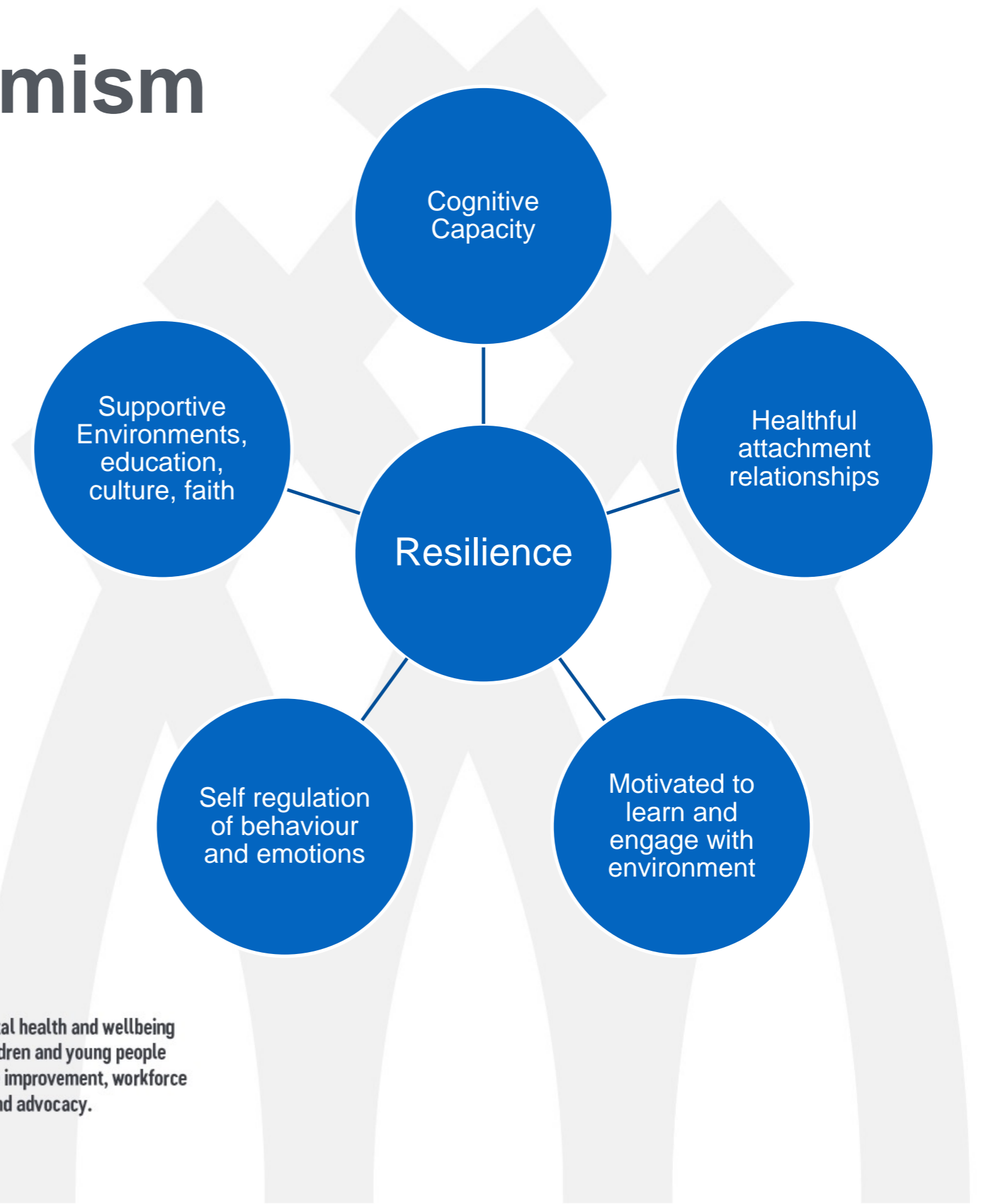
We know or have learnt about people having experienced unimaginable adversity and cope much more than we expect.

This is resilience

Resilience

- Thriving, adapting, coping better than expected despite adversity experienced
- Many internal and external factors contribute to the development of resilience
- Can be learnt, developed over time, **at any time**, including by adults

Hope and Optimism



Two critical factors:

1. The presence of a caring, stable adult
2. Raised in a safe, stable and nurturing environment

"The thing that makes the biggest difference, over and above one's genetic blueprint, is the relationship a child has with a primary caregiver," says Philip Fisher, PhD,.

In fact, it is more important than the absence of
Adverse Childhood Events

- Adverse experiences can be toxic without the support of a caring adult
- Neurobiology helps us understand how ACE in childhood impact health and wellbeing in adulthood.
- ACE are common, some people are more vulnerable
- The long last impact of ACE is dose dependent
- Resilience can be built

Promoting resilience, preventing adversity, healing from toxic stress

- Many programmes supporting the promotion/building of child/family resilience
- Many speakers today who we can learn from regarding the programmes promoting resilience
- “They say” stick to what you know, so I will speak about how positive parenting builds child resilience.

Child and Parent Benefits

Benefits for Child	Benefits for Parents
Safe	Increase competence and confidence*
Nurtured/Bonded/Attachment with parent	Increase self regulation
Brain development	Improved parent functioning*
Self regulation*	Couple cohesiveness*
Learning environment*	Improved parent child relationship
Reduced caregiving disruptions and trauma	

Population Benefits

16% lower out of home placements
17% hospital treated maltreatment injuries
22% substantiated cases of child maltreatment

Reference: Prinz, R. (2009) Prevention Science

Positive Parenting Programmes

- Child parent relationship promoted
- Safe child rearing environments
- Prosocial behaviours encouraged
- Skills and competencies taught
- Calm, consistent discipline
- Parental self care

Positive Parenting Programmes

Exemplars

Safe environment

Spending time with children

Talking to children

Affection

Child led play

Making Connections

Incredible Years, Triple P and PCIT are government funded EBP

National availability of IY (mainly NGOs, some ICAMHS, MOE)

Four pilot regions with Primary Care Triple P

Some ICAMHS and specialist services offer PCIT

Incredible Years



- Mainly group based, although also home coaching protocol
- Parents learn from a pyramid of strategies in weekly group sessions
- Facilitators work collaboratively with parents to draw out their “gems” of learning, linking these to key principles including –
 - Importance of building positive parent child relationship
 - Quality time and having fun
 - Focus on the positive
 - Modelling
 - Calm consistency and following through



Parenting Pyramid®

Triple P

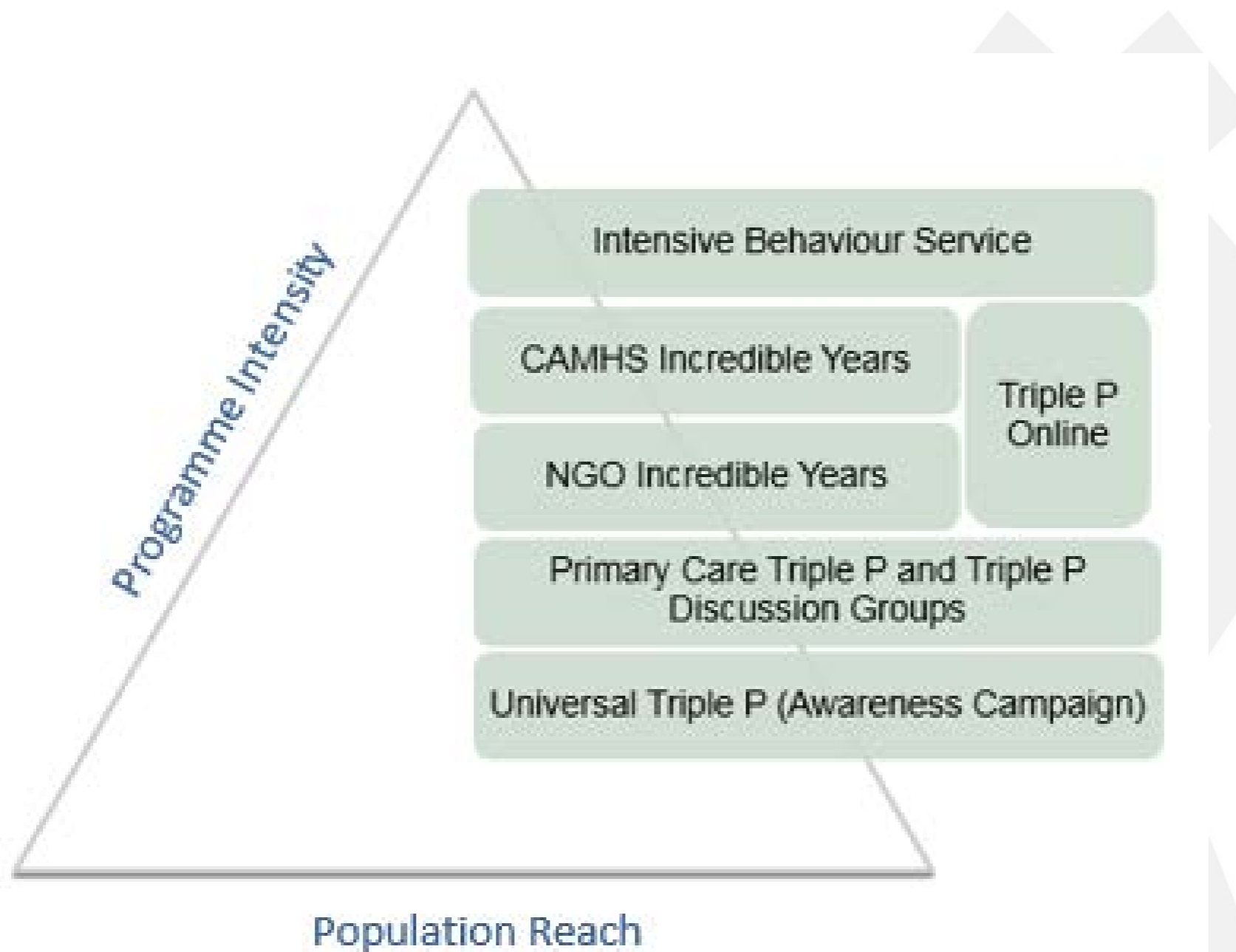


- Multi level system of parenting support, from a awareness campaign, to brief and intensive interventions to support population reach
- A variety of different delivery formats. Individual, small group, large seminar, online.
- Different programmes for different challenges. Delayed development, parenting teenagers, divorce and separation, weight management, maltreatment5 core parenting principles

Parent Child Interaction Therapy



- Live coaching of parents with their child in play room
- Parent is encouraged to see themselves as learning specialised parenting skills so they can be their child's "therapist"
- Support parents to learn child-directed interaction skills
- Develop parent-directed interaction skills later
- Focus on children with most challenging behaviours



In Summary

EB parenting programmes have the potential to support the development of healthy children and adults through:

- Building resilience (positive child-parent relationships, formative brain architecture, and self regulation)
- Preventing ACEs through the promotion of safe, nurturing environments
- Preventing the transmission of intergenerational toxic stress by helping parents with their personal struggles
- Early and universally

- Many speakers today who we can learn from regarding the programmes promoting resilience
- What do you need from here?
- What opportunities can you see?
- What can we do to work together to take the next steps?
- How can we help families feel okay about getting the support they need?

More Resources

Childhood trauma Impact on development & behaviour



Childhood trauma

Other cultures

Many people from different backgrounds and cultures choose to live in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Immigration to a new country can be a stressful time for individuals and families.

It means leaving their home of origin, resettling in a new country and being exposed to a whole new way of life in a totally different environment, often with limited support.

For some children/tamariki and families this process can be traumatic. Following the stress of immigration, secondary trauma can also occur due to discrimination, financial stress, and lack of resources and support.

For refugees, this stress and possible trauma can be compounded. Refugees are likely to have also been exposed to significantly traumatic events such as:



▶ Childhood trauma:
impact on development
& behaviour

- ▶ What is trauma
- ▶ Resilience
- ▶ Māori and trauma
- ▶ Pacific culture
- ▶ Other cultures
- ▶ Spirituality
- ▶ Trauma and biology
- ▶ Quiz

