

The Role of School-Based Health Centers in Supporting Youth Capacity for Adaptability

March 26, 2025

1pm Eastern Standard Time





School-Based Health Alliance

Transforming Health Care for Students

Our **Focus**

The School-Based Health Alliance Works to Support & Grow SBHCs

Policy



Establishes and advocates for national policy priorities

Standards



Promotes high-quality clinical practices and standards, including for telehealth

Data



Supports data collection and reporting, evaluation, and research

Training



Provides training, technical assistance, and consultation

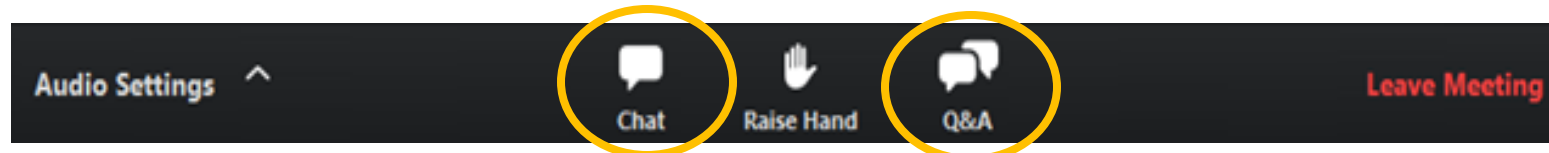
We support the improvement of students' health via school-based health care by supporting and creating community and school partnerships.

www.sbh4all.org

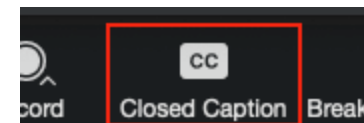
REMINDERS

✂️ **All attendees are in listen-only mode.**

✂️ **To ask a question during the session, use the “Chat” or “Q&A” icon that appears at the bottom of your Zoom control panel.**



✂️ **To turn on closed captioning, click on the “CC” button.**



✂️ **Please complete evaluation poll questions at the end of the presentation.**

✂️ **The recording, slides, and resources will be shared via email.**

Learning objectives

Participants will be able to...

- Explain the relationship between early childhood experiences and long-term health outcomes, such as physical health, mental health, and social outcomes.
- Describe how promotive and protective factors can serve as a buffer against stressful experiences to promote overall well-being.
- Identify at least three healing-centered strategies that can be instituted within your health center.

Today's Speakers



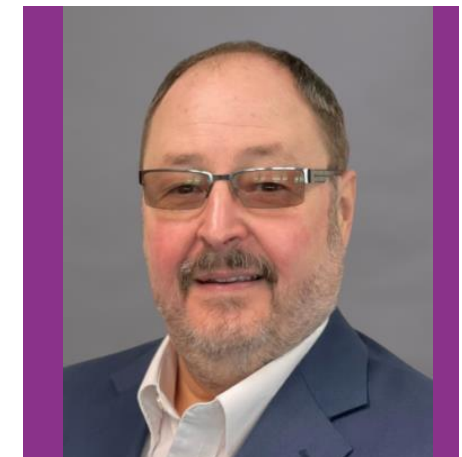
Mandy LeBlanc
Contractor
School-Based
Health Alliance



Donnie Greco
Associate
School-Based
Health Alliance



Jacquelyn Christenson, PhD
Senior Vice President
School-Based Health
Alliance



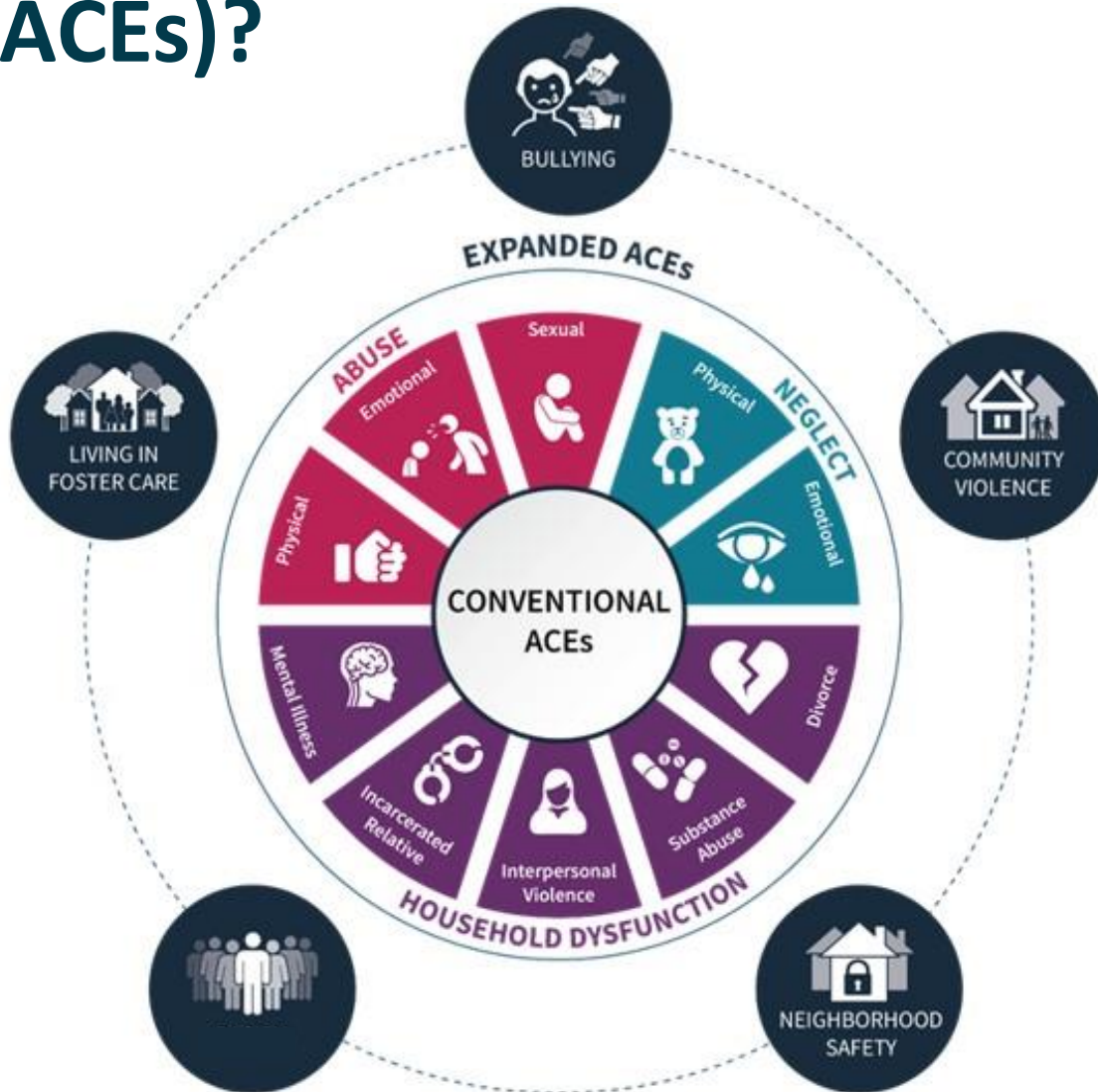
John Kennedy, MA, M. Div
Vice President
School-Based Health
Alliance

Let's Chat

- Please put your name, the city and state where you work and your favorite way to engage students who have multiple challenges or need extra support.

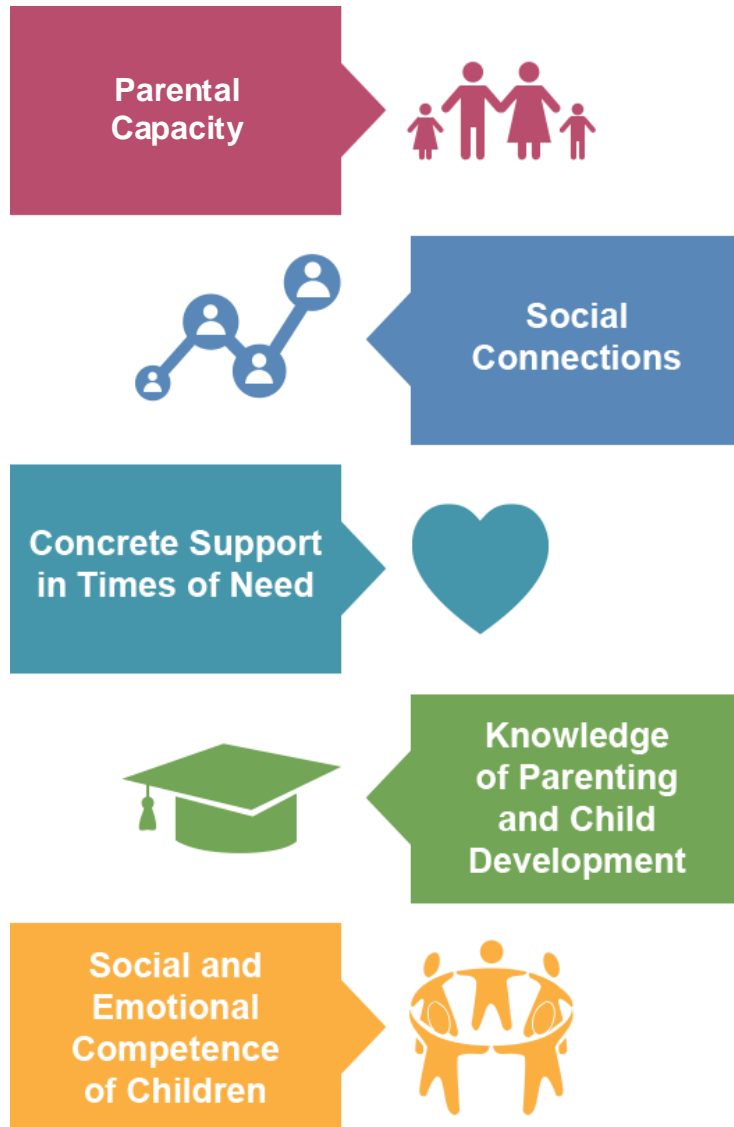


What are Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)?



- ACEs are acute or chronic negative events that occur in childhood, such as abuse, neglect, and household dysfunction, that can result in potentially overwhelming stress leading to certain health, social, and economic risks.
- 30+ years of research

Promotive and Protective Factors

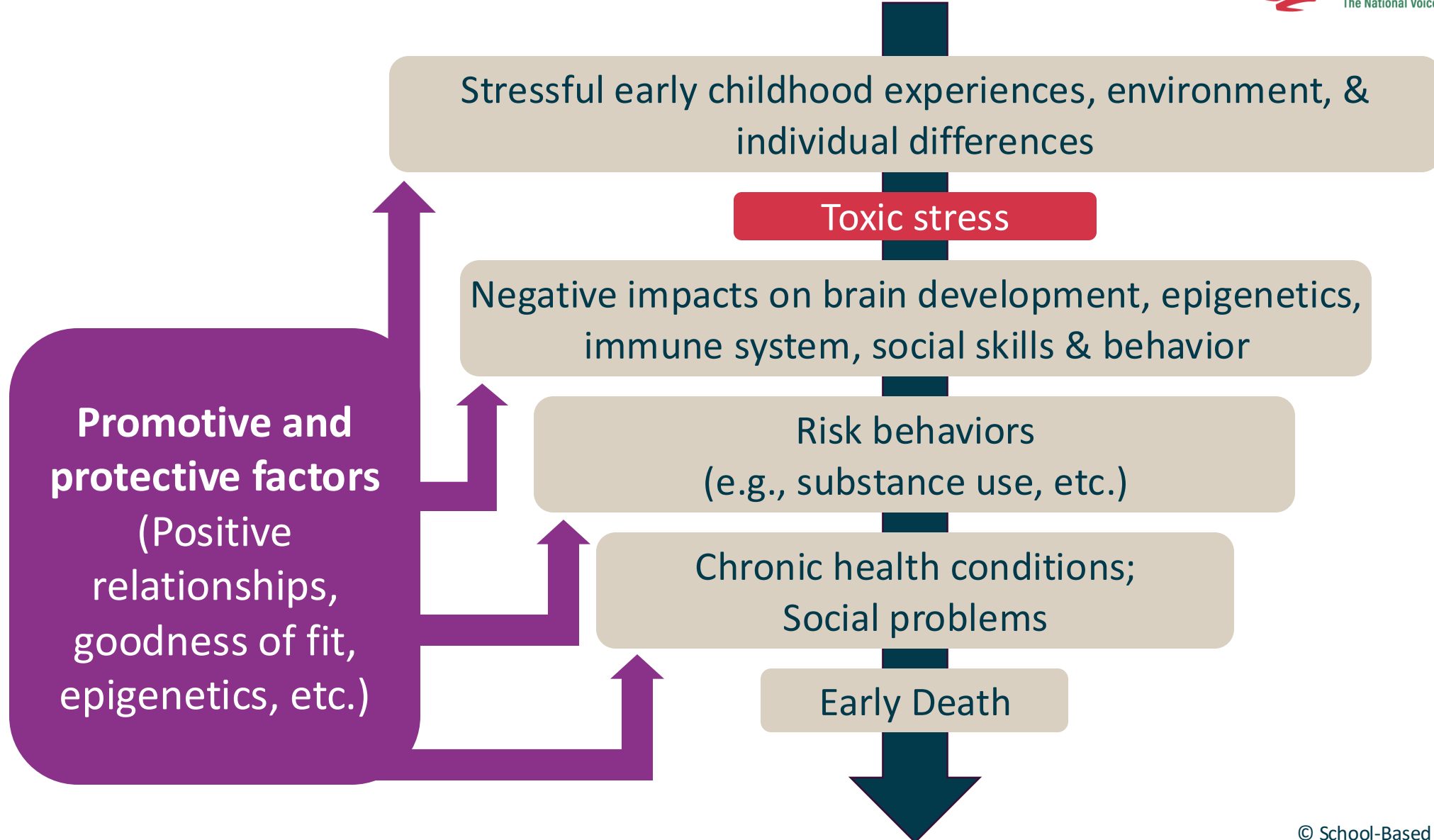


- Protective and Compensatory Experiences (PACEs) are countering events or circumstances that mitigate or buffer against the effects of negative experiences. (SAMHSA, 2018)
- Positive Childhood Experiences (PCEs) “focus on positive interactions and environments that promote healthy development and well-being.”
- Protective Factors Framework (see graphic)

<https://preventioncoe.ohio.gov/learn-and-grow/center-blog/184-aces-paces-pces>

<https://www.chs-ca.org/best-practices-and-outcomes/five-protective-factors>

How Early Experiences Impact Development



What does toxic stress look like?

Signs of toxic stress

Poor sleep

Stress responses that...

- Are too frequent
- Last for too long
- Continue to happen with activity shifts (failure to habituate)
- Are constant (no return to calm alert)

Learning does not occur!
Physical and mental health challenges



Optimal arousal

Good quality sleep

Calm, alert state

Able to experience stress responses, but then return to calm, alert state (**self-regulation!**)

Learning can occur!



Dandelions and orchids...



- “A dynamic **process** that leads to positive adaption, even in the context of adversity” (Luther, 2003)
- [A universal] **capacity** to spring back, rebound, successfully adapt in the face of adversity, and develop social, academic, and vocational competence **despite** exposure to severe stress or simply the stress that is inherent in today’s world. - Nan Henderson

How can we promote the capacity to thrive?

Person-Level Factors

- **Social competence** (empathy, compassion, increase regulatory capacity, communication)
- **Problem-solving & mastery** (self-efficacy, critical thinking, resourcefulness)
- **Autonomy** (internal locus of control, humor, mindfulness)
- **Sense of purpose** (belonging, motivation, altruism, something bigger than oneself)

Environmental-Level Factors

- **Caring relationships** (caregivers, non-relative safe adults, mentors, supportive peers)
- **High expectations** (accountability, boundaries)
- **Opportunities to contribute and participate** (help others, demonstrate worth, community-based involvement)

We do not have to be defined by negative experiences!

So, what can health centers do?

Start with safety

- Engagement begins when there is mutual calm/attention, shared sensory experience, and shared joy.
 - Notice yourself and your own stress responses
 - Be a source of co-regulation
 - Listen actively with empathy and without judgement
-
- Consider their individual difference and antecedents that may result in stress responses
 - How can you make the space or your approach more supportive?



So, what can health center do?

“What’s wrong with you?” → “What happened to you?” → “What’s right with you?”

- Look upstream (what could be underlying the behaviors or health needs?)
- Consider the whole child – including their relationships and environment – during assessment and treatment
- Screening and assessment
 - Social influences on health (e.g., PRAPARE, I-HELP, etc.)
 - Mental health screening (PHQ-2/9, GAD-7, etc.)
 - Risk assessment and history (ACE Questionnaire, PEARLs, Bright Futures, HEADS, etc.)
 - Strengths (SDQ, CYRM-28)
- Care coordination
 - Family voice and choice in care planning
 - Closed-loop referrals

School-Based Health Center Example

- Janice is an 8th grader who is a “frequent flyer” at a SBHC – she comes in weekly. She is sometimes very loud and talkative, and sometimes snappy or does not make eye contact. She struggles to manage her asthma and previously screened positive for depression. Her parents are divorced and her family struggles with housing and food. You notice that you are feeling frustrated by her frequent visits.
 - **What steps would you take to reflect on your own feelings of frustration (and stress response)?**
 - **What else might be helpful to notice or ask to provide better support to her and her family?**

[The capacity to thrive] does not come from rare and special qualities, but from everyday magic of ordinary, normative human resources in the minds, brains, and bodies of children, in their families and relationships, and in their communities” (Masten, 2001)



Questions and Answers



**We look forward to your
feedback.**

Please complete our Zoom poll.



Visit SBHA's Website For More Resources

www.sbh4all.org



Resources



E-Library



BPHC-NTTAP



2025 National School-Based Health Care Conference

**June 29 -
July 1, 2025**

**Westin Washington, DC Downtown
Hotel (formerly the Renaissance
Downtown Hotel) in Washington,
D.C**



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Thank you!