



Happy New Year from the Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation Team

As of the start of 2018 the ECMHC team has consultants embedded in eight programs in Santa Barbara and Goleta and are optimistic that we will continue to grow. We are thankful for our continued partnerships and feel a strong connection to the staff and families we get to interact with each day.

In September 2017 our team participated in our first learning retreat where we had an opportunity for further training and professional development.

A big thank you to **Leslie Voss** for a informative training on Learning Stories, **Keyo Russell** for her presentation on the Nurtured Heart Approach, and **Terri Allison** for providing an chance for group reflective practice.

This opportunity provided consultants time to expand their skills and bring new ideas and strategies to each site.

"I have met with each teacher and talked to them about the value of learning stories, particularly to highlight positive behaviors for children with difficult transitions at home. We have discussed the learning stories at least twice pre month in reflective practice for each pre school teacher at GUSD. This was particularly effective during parent teacher conference week. Modeling Nurtured Heart approach in the classroom environment for teachers and their aids has improved relationships and management of emotional regulation for children as well as the adults in the classroom."

Ella Lauser

"I love this quote from the Nurtured Heart training, "every time a child does something right (or even chooses not to do something wrong) we have an opportunity to build inner wealth by celebrating those moments." I have heard myself saying the words ...Oops I think you forgot that we don't hit, kick etc., lets reset. I think this is a useful way to approach behaviors and have explored this idea with teachers in order to be mindful of the amount of energy and focus we give on undesired behaviors and shift to a focus on all of the other positive moments."

Jaime Bregante

Resources to Learn More

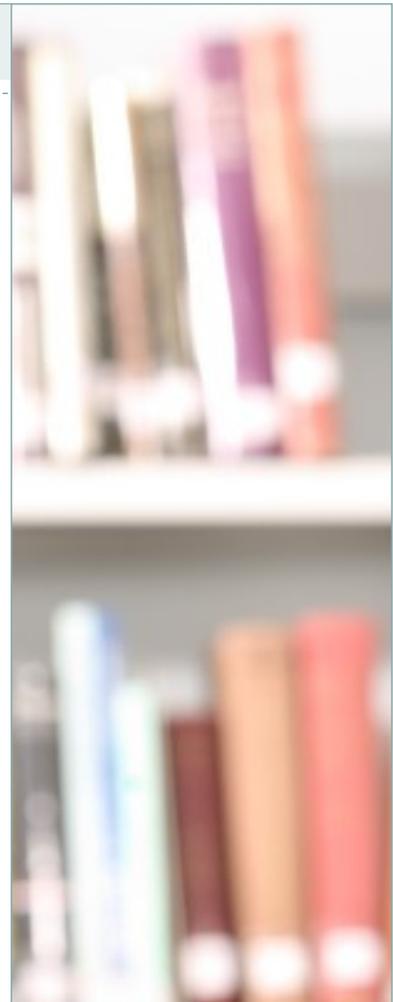
Nurtured Heart Approach

<https://childrensuccessfoundation.com/about-nurtured-heart-approach/>

Learning Stories

<https://www.naeyc.org/resources/pubs/tyc/dec2016/learning-stories>

<https://tomdrummond.com/looking-closely-at-children/writing-learning-stories/>



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CONNECTING WITH KIDS IN PAIN

KIDS IN PAIN CANNOT LEARN!!!

Often your most difficult students are young people living in environments with Toxic Levels of Stress.

These environments change the brain!

The next time you are involved with a student that is escalating and beginning to lose control try some of the following ideas .

BE A THERMOSTAT- NOT A THERMOMETER

Develop with-in your head a pause button.

Slow down.

Everything in your body will be telling you to speed up... remember emotions are very contagious. Consciously begin to focus on your breathing!

Anchor your self in your breathing and slow it down. (As a person that once played a lot of basketball this breathing is like the breathing

done prior to taking an important foul shot. Yoga practices with the breath are another great example of the breathing you will need to do.)

Notice your self talk- and challenge it!

Monitor your self-talk and notice any judgments or thoughts about the young person that are almost automatic.

Watch from some distance your thoughts:

"he is being manipulative again"

"_____ is always trying to take over my class"

"_____ not again he always want attention"

Just label these, notice them, and let them go!

Be curious---not judgmental

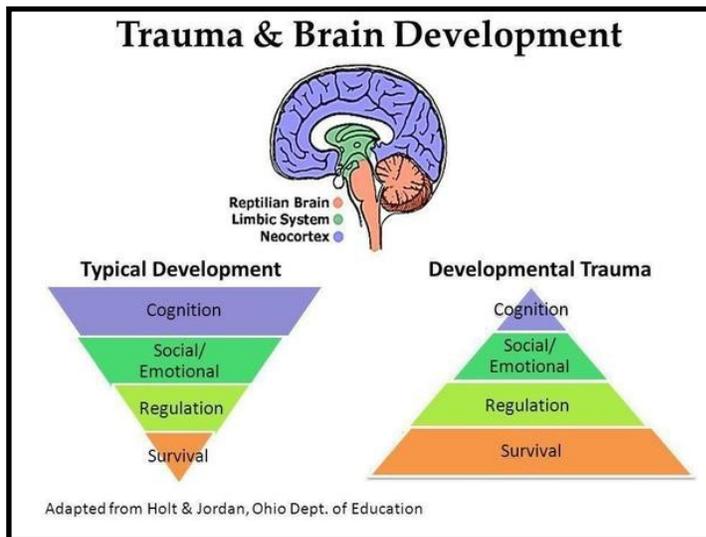


ORIGINAL ARTICLE FROM
ACES IN EDUCATION
BLOG
POST BY
MICHAEL MCKNIGHT

Everything in your body will be telling you to speed up... remember emotions are very contagious.

Consciously begin to focus on your breathing!

Remember- We need to get the student in a brain state that will allow us to problem solve. Both the adult and the young person need to be in the executive part of the brain for a successful outcome!



Ask yourself what may be underneath this young persons behavior?

What might this person need right now?

Always go deeper.

"And what might be underneath that? Where might that come from?"

Keep asking. At the bottom many young people are looking for:

A sense of being treated with kindness, dignity and respect!

Caring when they are not at their best is a great way to make a connection with a student who has learned to be "wary of adults".

Calm your tone of voice and say something helpful.

Whisper that you know somethings are hard and ask.....

How can I help you?

Provide a few choices so that the student has a way out and can save face.

Make it clear that you want to help?

CENTER SPOTLIGHT **STORYTELLER CHILDRENS CENTER**



**DONNA BARRANCO
FISHER**
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

What population of children and families does your program serve?

Storyteller Children's Center provides high-quality, therapeutic early childhood

education for homeless and at-risk children, as well as comprehensive support services for their families.

We serve children, 18 months through 5 years of age, who have experienced early trauma, as well as homelessness.

Storyteller Children's Center helps Santa Barbara's homeless and at-risk toddlers and preschoolers achieve kindergarten readiness by providing therapeutic preschool and support services for their families.

What is one thing you wish people knew about your

Storyteller is not just a literacy program! We are often asked, "Do you read books and tell stories!?"

We provide wrap-around, therapeutic educational and nutritional services for our community's at-risk and homeless children, to provide them with a healthy start in kindergarten.

Please share the benefits of your partnership with CALM highlighting one way you have been able to use consultation services.

Storyteller and CALM share common beliefs in the importance of support, regarding mental health. Eight years ago, we partnered with introducing Reflective Practice, which is widely used throughout our county schools. Storyteller and CALM take pride as organizations, in that we rely on data driven strategies and are usually the first to introduce new approaches in mental health and early education. The Mental Health Consultants provide our children, families and teachers with supportive strategies, allowing us to be even more effective in our daily work.

Finish the sentence, "If I could do one thing to make kids' lives better, I would...."

If I could do one thing to make children's lives better, I would continue to ensure that children have the ability to feel safe and loved.

Program Vision & Philosophy

"Thriving Children - Healthy Families - Vibrant Communities"

In a perfect world, ALL children would start school emotionally and socially ready to learn. They would feel loved and supported by their families and teachers and would be well-rested, fed and healthy. Children would have coping skills, impulse control and be ready to learn. They would become educated, well-adjusted adults and thriving members of our community, helping make Santa Barbara a happier and safer place to live.

Unfortunately, this is often not the case. Many children in our community are struggling with overwhelming obstacles such as inter-generational trauma, stress and poverty; substance abuse and/or domestic violence. Children that grow up with these stressors face many "adverse childhood experiences" (ACEs) that can affect their lifelong health and chances to thrive as adults.

With these strikes against the child, research shows that when he/she does start kindergarten, the child is already at a strong disadvantage. These negative compounding effects often lead to:

poor grades, truancy, dropping out of school, teen pregnancy, crime, poverty, academically delayed, halted social-emotional development

The cycle continues, leading to hardships for the child that often results in financial and social strains within the family and community. This can be attributed to a lack of support for the child academically as well as social-emotional development, which hinders kindergarten readiness. The good news is that Storyteller can change that outcome!

Storyteller reaches out to the underserved and vulnerable children and families in our city. We are able to work with the families and provide each child with the tools needed to start school socially and emotionally ready to learn. With this advantage, the child's chance of academic success dramatically increases, and the likelihood of becoming a healthy, productive member of the community is greatly improved.

A community filled with healthy, happy, productive people becomes a vibrant community with a strong future.



HONORING LUANN MILLER

The Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation Team has had the pleasure of working with LuAnn for the last 6 years. We appreciate her willingness to collaborate with CALM and admire her dedication to the ECE professionals and families she works with. LuAnn has been instrumental in helping CALM's Early Childhood Consultation Program grow. It is because of her dedication to helping young children and their families that we have been able to partner with new programs including Goleta Union School District. Lu has been a tremendous force in the early childhood community and we have had the honor of being able to partner with her. Everyone on the Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation Team wishes her all the best as she embarks on what is sure to be a new amazing adventure. We are so grateful for her dedication to children and families in the community.

EXCERPT FROM THE OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

After almost 33 years of extraordinarily distinguished and consequential service to children and families, LuAnn Miller will be retiring on January 31, 2017, from her position as executive director of the Isla Vista Youth Projects. Lu began her professional career at Children's Home Society, where she taught for 4 years. She joined the staff at the Isla Vista Youth Projects in 1985, working first as the head teacher for the preschool. She was promoted to executive director of the organization the following year, a position she has held since 1986.

In her more than three decades as executive director, Lu has overseen the expansion of the Youth Projects from a two-classroom program to an integrated, multi-site, multi-programmatic agency well respected throughout the greater Santa Barbara community.

CENTER SPOTLIGHT ISLA VISTA YOUTH PROJECT

CHRISTOPHER CALLAWAY, PROGRAM DIRECTOR

What population of children and families does your program serve?

Our children's center serves children ages 3 months through entry into kindergarten. We have 9 classrooms and 30 teachers serving 130 children. Ninety percent of our families are low income, primarily from the Goleta and Santa Barbara area. 71% of our children are Hispanic / Latino, 26% are Caucasian, and 3% are Black / African American.

What is one thing you wish people knew about your program?

I wish people knew that we are an NAEYC accredited program and that we strive to bring the best practices, highest quality educators and natural environments to all of our families. Our teachers are dedicated and recognized professionals, receiving the Legacy Award from Children's Resource and Referral for two years in a row (2016 & 2017).



If I could do one thing to make kids' lives better, I would give their parents / family members an extra hour every day to spend quality time with their children.

Please share the benefits of your partnership with CALM highlighting one way you have been able to use consultation services.

Working with CALM has been an amazing experience for all of our staff. The one-on-one coaching provided to the teachers in the classrooms allows the teachers to try new ideas without the fear of being judged or evaluated. The coaches have been very personable and have worked hard to build relationships with the staff, often helping out in the classrooms and assisting the teachers with a variety of chores and activities.

Finish the sentence, "If I could do one thing to make kids' lives better, I would...."

If I could do one thing to make kids' lives better, I would give their parents / family members an extra hour every day to spend quality time with their children. Our children grow up so fast and we are all so busy everyday it would be so wonderful to have a dedicated hour spent talking, playing, reading with our children.

Please add anything else you think you would like to share about your program, the work you do or the collaboration with CALM.

The reflective practice sessions that both my teachers, and myself as an administrator, have been able to participate in have led to greater connections within the staff, and for the staff members and the administration. As an administrator it is no nice to be able to sit down for reflective practice and be able to talk through areas of difficulty.

CALM has also recently started a Directors Group that is able to meet once a month. This group has been very insightful and helpful for me as an administrator. Being able to hear new ideas, differing points of view and share in the same struggles as others in your position is a wonderful feeling. Thank you for the opportunities you provide us.

SUPPORTING SOCIAL EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

REFLECTION ACTIVITY

A Practice in taking the child's perspective

Observe a child in your setting who is involved in ordinary, self directed play. Use these questions to help you understand the child's perspective.

1. What is the essence of this experience from the child's point of view?

2. What does the child know and know how to do?

3. What is the child exploring, experimenting with, or trying to figure out?

4. What does the child find frustrating?

5. How does the child feel about herself?

*The Art Of Awareness
How Observation Can
Transform Your
Teaching*

Deb Cutis and Margie
Carter



BREATHING WANDS

The simple act of just noticing breath can help us feel calm by bringing our attention to our body. The practice of slowing down and deepening our breathing will continue to relax our body and help us manage intense feelings. Talking to children about breathing is a great way to help children learn self regulation and build their own awareness of their feelings and responses in their body.

Here's a simple breathing lesson

Have the child or children start by noticing their breath.

Have them put their hands up to their mouth and notice how the air is cool when they breathe in and warm when they breathe out their mouth.

Putting a hand on their chest or stomach and noticing the rise and fall of the breath is another way to help them notice this.

You can also use visual cues for noticing breath like pinwheels or a breathing wand.



Breathing Wands

YOU WILL NEED: a toilet paper or paper towel roll, markers or other decorative things, streamers or thin ribbon that is light enough to be moved easily by their breath.

- 1) take a toilet paper or paper towel roll and cut off the top (about an inch thick) and set aside.
- 2) cut a straight line all the way up the remainder of the roll.
- 3) use this cut to tighten the roll to roll it thinner and tape on top and bottom to hold it in place.
- 4) allow child to decorate the roll with paint, markers, stickers, etc.
- 5) tape strands of thin light decorative ribbon or streamers along the inside of the small ring you cut off earlier.
- 6) tape the ring on top of the thinner roll to make the wand.
- 7) BREATHE and notice what you notice.