



# The Science, Impacts, and Indicators of Child Abuse and Neglect

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## Presenters



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## Topics in This Presentation

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- The Impact of Child Abuse and Neglect
- Brain and Emotional & Behavioral Regulation
- Role of Stress and Early Adverse Events in Child Development
- CDC's Developmental Milestones
- Child Abuse and Maltreatment

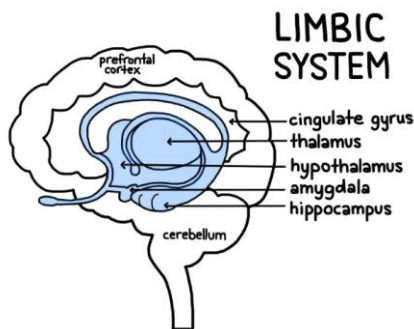
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### The Impact of Child Abuse and Neglect

The case of Romania orphanage

- 100,000 Romania orphans in the 80s and 90s.
- Delayed cognitive, social-emotional, and physical development.
- Lesson
  - Child abuse and neglect result in life-long adverse consequences, some are irreversible.
  - It is important to create a loving, caring environment for young children.

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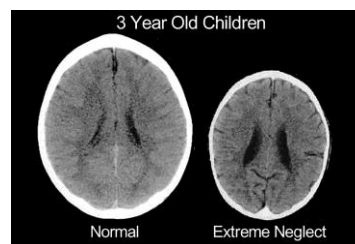
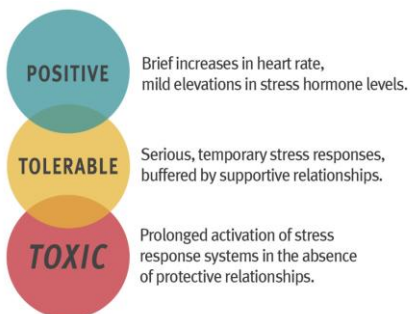
## Brain and Emotional & Behavioral Regulation

- The development of brain structures important for emotional expression and regulation (limbic system) is associated with the quality of **care received in early childhood**.
- Sensitive caregiving the development these structures, ultimately shape the development of emotion and the ability to control emotion and behavior into **adulthood**.

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## Role of Stress and Early Adverse Events in Child Development

- Chronical toxic stress **disrupts brain development**.
  - High cortisol level negatively influence neuron connectivity that underline emotion expression and cognitive functions.
  - Problem **memory, learning, and behavior**.
  - Increased risk of **impulsivity, mental illness, and substance abuse**.
- Examples of toxic stress: neglect, abuse, abandonment, and poverty.



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# CDC's Developmental Milestones

Developmental milestones are behaviors or skills that illustrate a child's growth in a number of areas.

- Milestones were researched and developed by a team of 8 subject matter experts in different fields of child development (e.g., Cognitive, social-emotional, and physical)
- Milestones have been established based on what most children can do at a certain age.
- A missed milestone could be a sign of a problem.
- Developmental milestone tracker (app).



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## CDC's Developmental Milestones - 1 year

### What most babies do by this age:

#### Social/Emotional Milestones

- ☐ Plays games with you, like pat-a-cake

#### Language/Communication Milestones

- ☐ Waves "bye-bye"
- ☐ Calls a parent "mama" or "dada" or another special name
- ☐ Understands "no" (pauses briefly or stops when you say it)

#### Cognitive Milestones (learning, thinking, problem-solving)

- ☐ Puts something in a container, like a block in a cup
- ☐ Looks for things he sees you hide, like a toy under a blanket

#### Movement/Physical Development Milestones

- ☐ Pulls up to stand
- ☐ Walks, holding on to furniture
- ☐ Drinks from a cup without a lid, as you hold it
- ☐ Picks things up between thumb and pointer finger, like small bits of food



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# CDC's Developmental Milestones

## -2 years

### What most children do by this age:

#### Social/Emotional Milestones

- ☐ Notices when others are hurt or upset, like pausing or looking sad when someone is crying
- ☐ Looks at your face to see how to react in a new situation

#### Language/Communication Milestones

- ☐ Points to things in a book when you ask, like "Where is the bear?"
- ☐ Says at least two words together, like "More milk."
- ☐ Points to at least two body parts when you ask him to show you
- ☐ Uses more gestures than just waving and pointing, like blowing a kiss or nodding yes

#### Cognitive Milestones

##### (learning, thinking, problem-solving)

- ☐ Holds something in one hand while using the other hand; for example, holding a container and taking the lid off

- ☐ Tries to use switches, knobs, or buttons on a toy
- ☐ Plays with more than one toy at the same time, like putting toy food on a toy plate

#### Movement/Physical Development Milestones

- ☐ Kicks a ball
- ☐ Runs
- ☐ Walks (not climbs) up a few stairs with or without help
- ☐ Eats with a spoon

#### \* It's time for developmental screening!

At 2 years, your child is due for an autism screening, as recommended for all children by the American Academy of Pediatrics. Ask the doctor about your child's developmental screening.



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# CDC's Developmental Milestones

## - 3 years

### What most children do by this age:

#### Social/Emotional Milestones

- ☐ Calms down within 10 minutes after you leave her, like at a childcare drop off
- ☐ Notices other children and joins them to play

#### Language/Communication Milestones

- ☐ Talks with you in conversation using at least two back-and-forth exchanges
- ☐ Asks "who," "what," "where," or "why" questions, like "Where is mommy/daddy?"
- ☐ Says what action is happening in a picture or book when asked, like "running," "eating," or "playing"
- ☐ Says first name, when asked
- ☐ Talks well enough for others to understand, most of the time

#### Cognitive Milestones

##### (learning, thinking, problem-solving)

- ☐ Draws a circle, when you show him how
- ☐ Avoids touching hot objects, like a stove, when you warn her

#### Movement/Physical Development Milestones

- ☐ Strings items together, like large beads or macaroni
- ☐ Puts on some clothes by himself, like loose pants or a jacket
- ☐ Uses a fork



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# CDC's Developmental Milestones

## - 4 years

### What most children do by this age:

#### Social/Emotional Milestones

- ☐ Pretends to be something else during play (teacher, superhero, dog)
- ☐ Asks to go play with children if none are around, like "Can I play with Alex?"
- ☐ Comforts others who are hurt or sad, like hugging a crying friend
- ☐ Avoids danger, like not jumping from tall heights at the playground
- ☐ Likes to be a "helper"
- ☐ Changes behavior based on where she is (place of worship, library, playground)

#### Language/Communication Milestones

- ☐ Says sentences with four or more words
- ☐ Says some words from a song, story, or nursery rhyme
- ☐ Talks about at least one thing that happened during his day, like "I played soccer."
- ☐ Answers simple questions like "What is a coat for?" or "What is a crayon for?"

#### Cognitive Milestones

##### (learning, thinking, problem-solving)

- ☐ Names a few colors of items
- ☐ Tells what comes next in a well-known story
- ☐ Draws a person with three or more body parts

#### Movement/Physical Development Milestones

- ☐ Catches a large ball most of the time
- ☐ Serves himself food or pours water, with adult supervision
- ☐ Unbuttons some buttons
- ☐ Holds crayon or pencil between fingers and thumb (not a fist)



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# CDC's Developmental Milestones

## - 5 years

### What most children do by this age:

#### Social/Emotional Milestones

- ☐ Follows rules or takes turns when playing games with other children
- ☐ Sings, dances, or acts for you
- ☐ Does simple chores at home, like matching socks or clearing the table after eating

#### Language/Communication Milestones

- ☐ Tells a story she heard or made up with at least two events. For example, a cat was stuck in a tree and a firefighter saved it
- ☐ Answers simple questions about a book or story after you read or tell it to him
- ☐ Keeps a conversation going with more than three back-and-forth exchanges
- ☐ Uses or recognizes simple rhymes (bat-cat, ball-tall)

#### Cognitive Milestones

##### (learning, thinking, problem-solving)

- ☐ Counts to 10
- ☐ Names some numbers between 1 and 5 when you point to them
- ☐ Uses words about time, like "yesterday," "tomorrow," "morning," or "night"
- ☐ Pays attention for 5 to 10 minutes during activities. For example, during story time or making arts and crafts (screen time does not count)
- ☐ Writes some letters in her name
- ☐ Names some letters when you point to them

#### Movement/Physical Development Milestones

- ☐ Buttons some buttons
- ☐ Hops on one foot



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## CDC's Developmental Milestones - Middle Childhood (Elementary age)

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- Begins taking an interest in what other thinks and do.
- Looks forward to school.
- Enjoys vigorous activities.
- Begins to form opinions and moral value and attitudes (either right or wrong).
- Plays and enjoys being with (best) friends.
- Desires adult attention and recognition.
- Express feelings and emotions effectively though words.
- Acts with considerable confidence.



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## Handling disclosures

[childhelp.org](http://childhelp.org)

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- Believe what the child is telling you.
- Reassure the child that he/she did nothing wrong and that you believe him/her.
- Listen more than you talk and avoid advice giving or problem solving.
- Don't ask the child a lot of questions.
- Limit questioning to only the following four questions if the child has not already provided you with the information: (1) *What happened?* (2) *When did it happen?* (3) *Where did it happen?* (4) *Who did it?*
- Don't tell the child that you won't tell anyone what they tell you.
- Be supportive.

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Thank you!  
Questions are welcome.

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