



CALIFORNIA CENTER
for Infant-Family and Early Childhood Mental Health
at WestEd Center for Prevention & Early Intervention



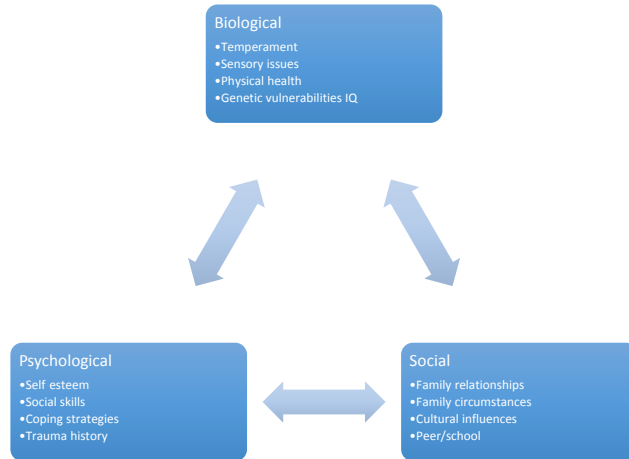
Foundations of Infant-
Family and Early Childhood
Mental Health Training
Course: Biophysical
Perspective on
Temperament Sensory
Integration and Self-
Regulation
Date: January 20, 2018

Presenter: Vivette Catipon, MFT
Transdisciplinary Mental Health Practitioners (TMHP)
Series

What are we doing today?

- Knowledge Area C: Biological and Psychosocial Factors Impacting Outcomes. 5 hours.
- **Objectives:**
 - Participants will consider how a child's temperament and self-regulation are influenced by biological and psychosocial factors, including familial and cultural factors.
 - Participants will consider the sequence of development of self-regulation skills looking at both biological unfolding of capacities and shaping by culture, context and relationships.
 - Participants will practice examining multiple factors, including risk factors, that influence the development of self-regulation.
 - Participants will learn more about sensory integration difficulties in young children and how a child's unique way of experiencing the world can be supported by caregivers.

Biopsychosocial



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Biological, psychological and social factors impact each other and one's ability to self-regulate and interact with the environment. This complex interaction affects a child's social emotional well-being. The way each factor impacts the other may be subtle and ever changing.



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What do we know about temperament?

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www.zerotothree.org/resources/159-temperament-what-makes-your-child-tick

Zero to Three Video: *“What makes a child tick?”*

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Temperament: Key Concepts

- Researchers, mainly Drs. Alexander Thomas and Stella Chess, have identified 9 temperamental traits
- Most US children fit into 1 of 3 combinations of traits or “styles”
- Temperamental traits are a person’s natural tendency to respond
- These traits remain fairly constant throughout life
- Traits begin to appear in the first few months life

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Temperament Traits

Low



High

- Activity Level/Energy
- Biological Rhythms
- Approach/Withdrawal
 - Mood
 - Sensitivity
- Intensity of Reaction
 - Adaptability
 - Distractibility
 - Persistence

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3 Main Temperamental Styles or Combination of Traits

1. “Easy” child or “flexible” child
2. “Slow to warm up” child or “fearful” child
3. “Difficult” child or “feisty” child

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More to consider on temperament...

- Sensitivity: High Reactivity vs. Low Reactivity
- Introversion vs. Extraversion
- Rothbart, M.K., Ellis, L.K., & Posner, M.I. (2004) Temperament and Self-regulation *Handbook of self-regulation: research, theory and applications* (pp. 357-370)

Gallery Walk

1. Reflect on your own temperament or of someone you know.
2. Take a look at the various temperamental traits on the post-its.
3. Write down the behavior that describes this temperamental style using the list of 9 temperamental traits.

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Aim for goodness of fit and becoming more adaptive

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Goodness of Fit vs. Poorness of Fit

- Can determine caregivers' reactions to the child.
- Affects how the child interprets and makes sense of life experiences.
- Shapes the child's choices of activities and environments (which in turn may reinforce the child's temperamental way of being).

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Self-regulation -
“the conscious control of thoughts, feelings and behaviors”

McClelland & Tominey, 2014

- **Table talk:** Discuss the brief case example and come up with at least 5 things you can say to the child to facilitate the development of self-regulation.

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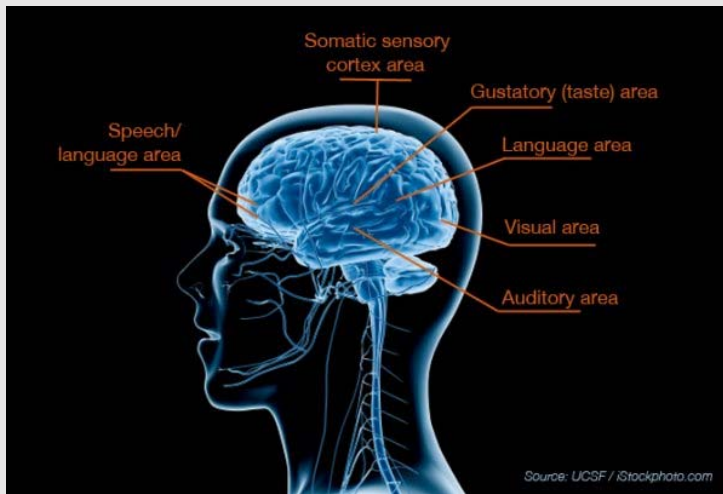
Co-regulation is defined as warm and responsive interactions that provide the support, coaching, and modeling children need to “understand, express, and modulate their thoughts, feelings and behaviors.
(Murray et al. 2015)

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What is Sensory Processing?

- Sensory processing is the ability to take information from our senses (touch, movement, smell, taste, vision and hearing) and put it together with...
 - Prior information
 - Memories
 - Knowledge stored in the brain to make a meaningful response

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Sensory processing takes place in portions of the brain responsible for:

- Coordination
- Muscle Tone
- Attention
- Arousal Levels
- Autonomic Functioning
- Emotions
- Memory
- Cognitive Functions

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Sensory Processing

- Our body takes in information through our senses and it is processed in our brain.
- Our brain helps us take in and make sense of different sensations/sensory information along different sensory channels at the same time.
- The ability to make appropriate responses is dependent on adequate sensory processing.

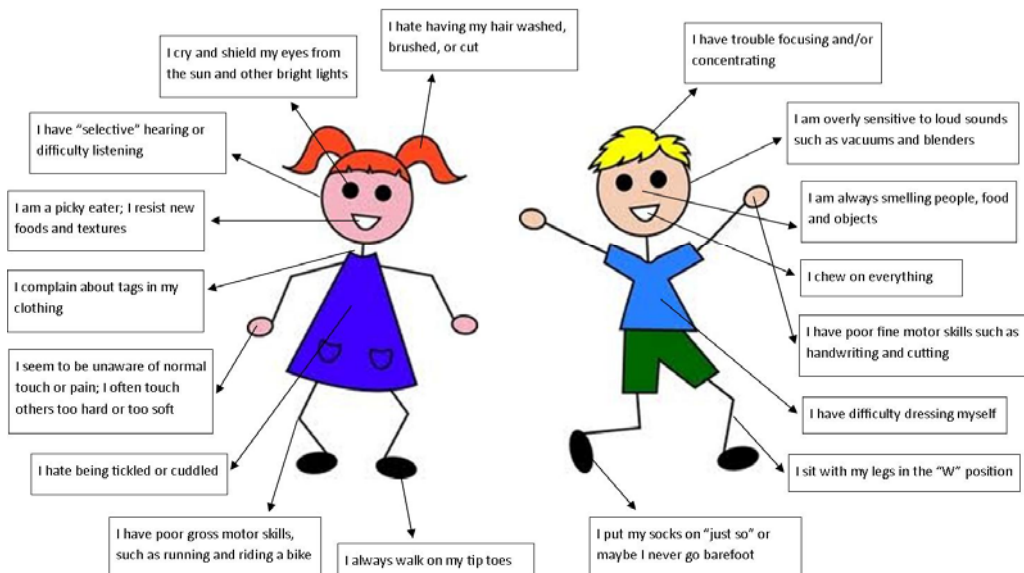
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- The way an individual processes and responds to sensation has an impact on their daily life activities and relationships
- Sensory processing problems occur when our ability to process and make sense of sensory information is impaired. The problems impacts our ability to respond and function in the world.



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Signs of Sensory Processing Disorders:



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Other Biopsychosocial Factors

- “Researchers have linked iron deficiency anemia to lower levels of alertness and increased amounts of negative emotionality in both neonates and older infants.”

Wachs, Pollitt, Cueto, Creed-Kanishiro & Jacoby, 2003 and Lozoff et al., 1998

- “Research has shown that children living in more chaotic homes—that is, homes that are noisy, crowded, and poorly structured, where nothing has a time or a place—are more likely to be easily irritated and have more intense negative moods than children living in less chaotic homes.”

Theodore Wachs, Temperament and Development: The Role of Context in a Biologically Based System, Zero to Three, March 2004

Other Biopsychosocial Factors

- **Parental Behaviors:** Children who were initially highly inhibited became less so over time if their parents set firm age-appropriate limits on their children’s behavior, helped their children practice appropriate coping skills, and responded less frequently, or were less solicitous when their child exhibited stress.

Arcus, 2001; Park, Belsky, Putnam, & Crnic, 1997;

Rubin, Hastings, Steward, Henderson, & Chen, 1997

www.zerotothree.org/early-development/challenging-behaviors

Video: *Challenging Behaviors*

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How does a child learn to regulate the biological, psychological and social factors that he has to deal with?

How do we help him with that?

Each biopsychosocial make-up is unique and every relationship is unique. Every child requires individualized caregiving. Each child will learn to adapt in different ways.

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How do we help a child self-regulate?

- Identify, name and validate feelings. Be with the child and help him control strong emotions.
- Convey empathy and let the child know that you are there to support him.
- Provide “safe and comforting places” for the child. Promote mindfulness.
- Use “positive descriptive acknowledgment” to help the child maintain focus, control attention and cope with changing demands. (refer to handout)
- Routine helps him control bodily functions and physical states.
- Promote positive social skills and provide enjoyable activities.

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