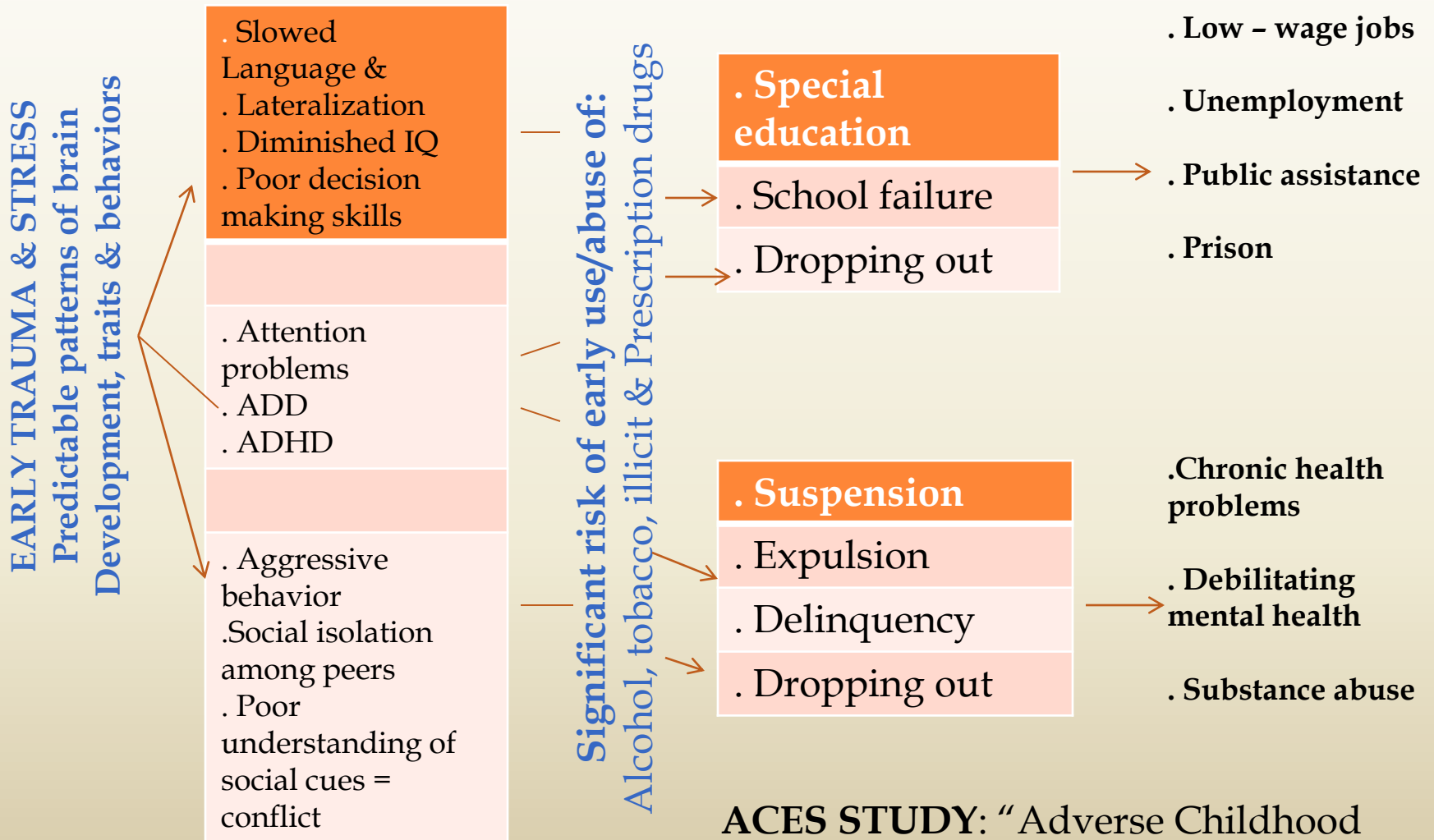


Trauma: “A distressing or disturbing experience that causes physical, emotional or psychological harm”

FAST TRACK POVERTY



ACES STUDY: “Adverse Childhood Experiences”

The Link between Trauma and Students' Academic and Social Skills



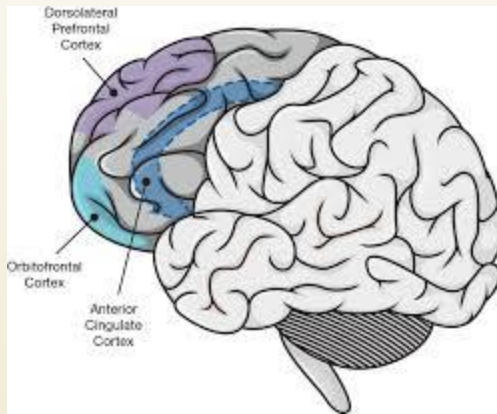


Trauma Limits Students' ability to use higher-order thinking and to regulate subcortical brain activity

Student's who have experienced trauma often have the executive functioning area of the brain compromised.



This area of the brain controls attention, inhibition, working memory and cognitive flexibility including planning, prioritizing tasks initiation and organization.



Because they are often in a constant state of arousal, they have difficulty paying attention, recalling what they have learned, and using a strategy to problem solve.

Traumatized students often avoid direct contact with teachers and may resist compliance with teachers requests.



TRAUMA

Students were screened using the Behavioral and Emotional Screening System. Their behaviors were listed in three different categories; Externalizing, Internalizing and Adaptive Behavior. Teachers rated students behavior as never, sometimes, often or always.

Here are examples of behaviors in each group

EXTERNALIZING:

Has poor self control

Annoys others on
purpose

Frustrated

Defies teacher

Disobeys

Disrupts others



Here are examples of behaviors in each group

INTERNALIZING:

Pays attention

Is sad

Says nobody likes me

Appears tense

Is easily stressed

Changes mood easily



Here are examples of behaviors in each group

ADAPTIVE BEHAVIOR:

Worries

Motivated to succeed

Shares with others

Is good at getting others to work together

Has good study habits

Complains of physical problems

Students who scored in the elevated range were given trauma informed instruction including:

- ❑ **MINDFULNESS (for attention issues)**
- ❑ **SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING - (for students who had externalizing behaviors)**
- ❑ **POSITIVE BEHAVIOR SUPPORTS - (for students who had internalized behaviors)**

MINDFULNESS -

Bringing students attention to experiences occurring in the present moment without judgment. This was sometimes done through meditation exercises.

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING

Teaching students self awareness, social awareness, relationship skills, self management and responsible decision making.

POSITIVE BEHAVIOR SUPPORTS

Classroom management strategies to help teachers understand why challenging behavior occurs, understand the motivation behind it, and provide positive support and encouragement for the desired behavior.

The intervention was for three months and while the students' behaviors did not change significantly, improvements did occur. There was a statistically significant difference from pre to post test.



In the future, dedicating more time to intervention, referring students to the counselor for individual counseling and working with parents could affect more significant changes.

