

## Health Equity and Young Children Initiative

# Improving Family Engagement, Care Coordination and Community Linkages: Lessons Learned

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# Health Equity and Young Children Initiative

## Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Grant:

- Work with national experts to develop, refine and promote financing and accountability structures, particularly within Medicaid, to sustain effective practices.
- Convene programs and practices from around the country with national experts to highlighting and refine best practices across their work, and broadly share findings, lessons learned and resources developed.

# Health Equity and Young Children's Exemplary Programs

## Exemplary Programs:

### National Presence

1. **Child First**, *Connecticut National Office*
2. **Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems**, *NICHQ National Office; Florida site*
3. **Healthy Steps**, *DC National Office; Illinois site*
- ★ 4. **Help Me Grow**, *Connecticut National Office*
5. **Project DULCE**, *Center for the Study of Social Policy National Office; Vermont site*
6. **Medical-Legal Partnerships**, *GWU National Office; Chicago site*
7. **Safe Environment for Every Kid (SEEK)**, *University of Maryland*

### State and Local Presence

8. **Healthy Development Services**, *San Diego, AAP - California Chapter 3*
9. **Maricopa Integrated Health System Medical Home**, *Arizona*
10. **MYCHILD & Project LAUNCH**, *Boston, MA*
11. **Primary Health Care, Inc.**, *Des Moines, Iowa*
12. **The Children's Clinic, Serving Children and Their Families**, *Long Beach, California*

# Health Equity and Young Children's Exemplary Programs

- Programs have a long history of engaging directly with diverse families struggling to address social and economic issues.
- They collaborate with health providers and/or social service organization to connect with families with young children.
- They intentionally work at connecting families to resources and linking community resources.
- All programs share four common elements:
  - **Family Engagement**
  - Care Coordination
  - Community Linkages
  - Use a Health Equity Lens

# Supporting Family Engagement

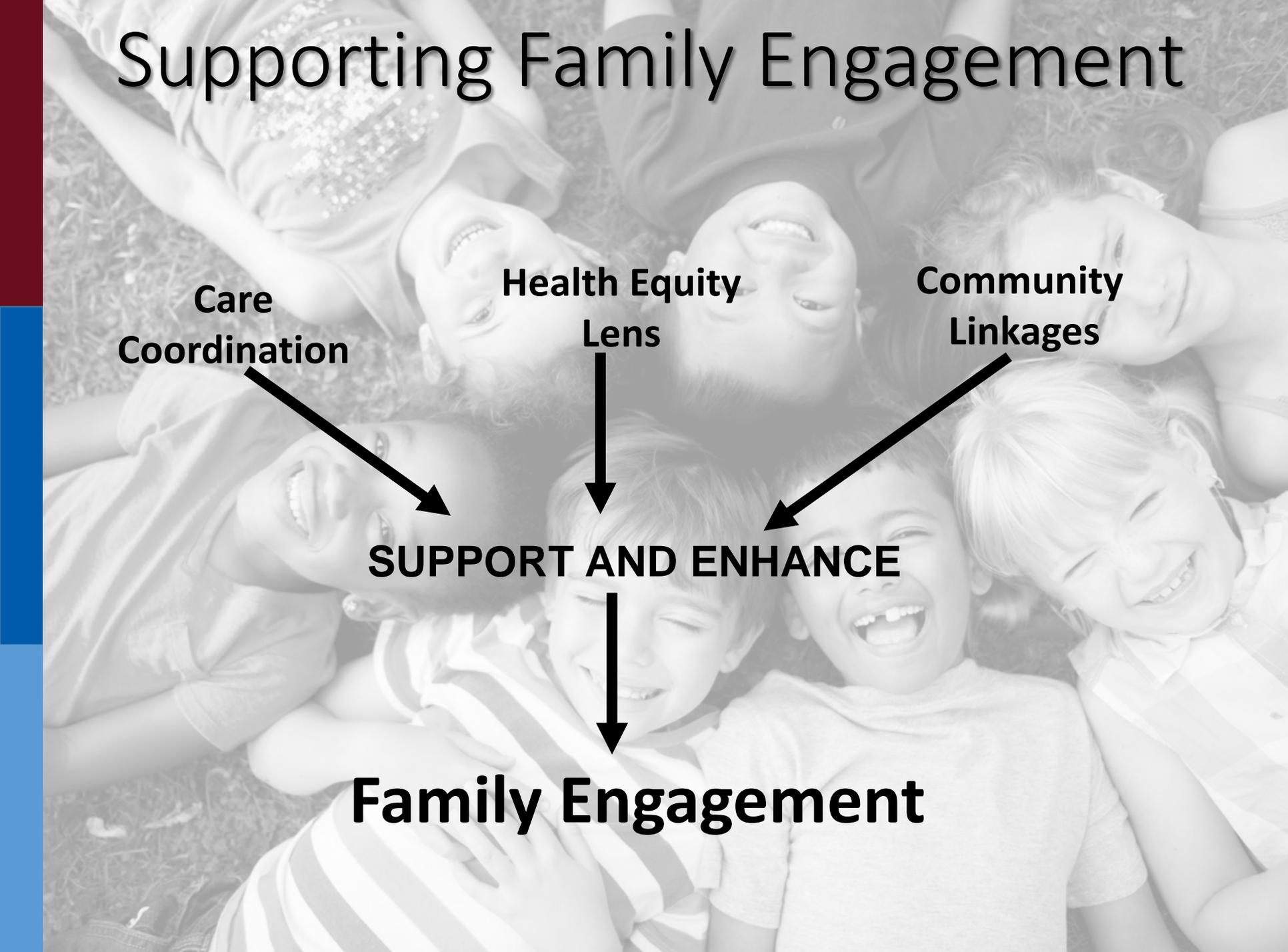
Care  
Coordination

Health Equity  
Lens

Community  
Linkages

SUPPORT AND ENHANCE

Family Engagement



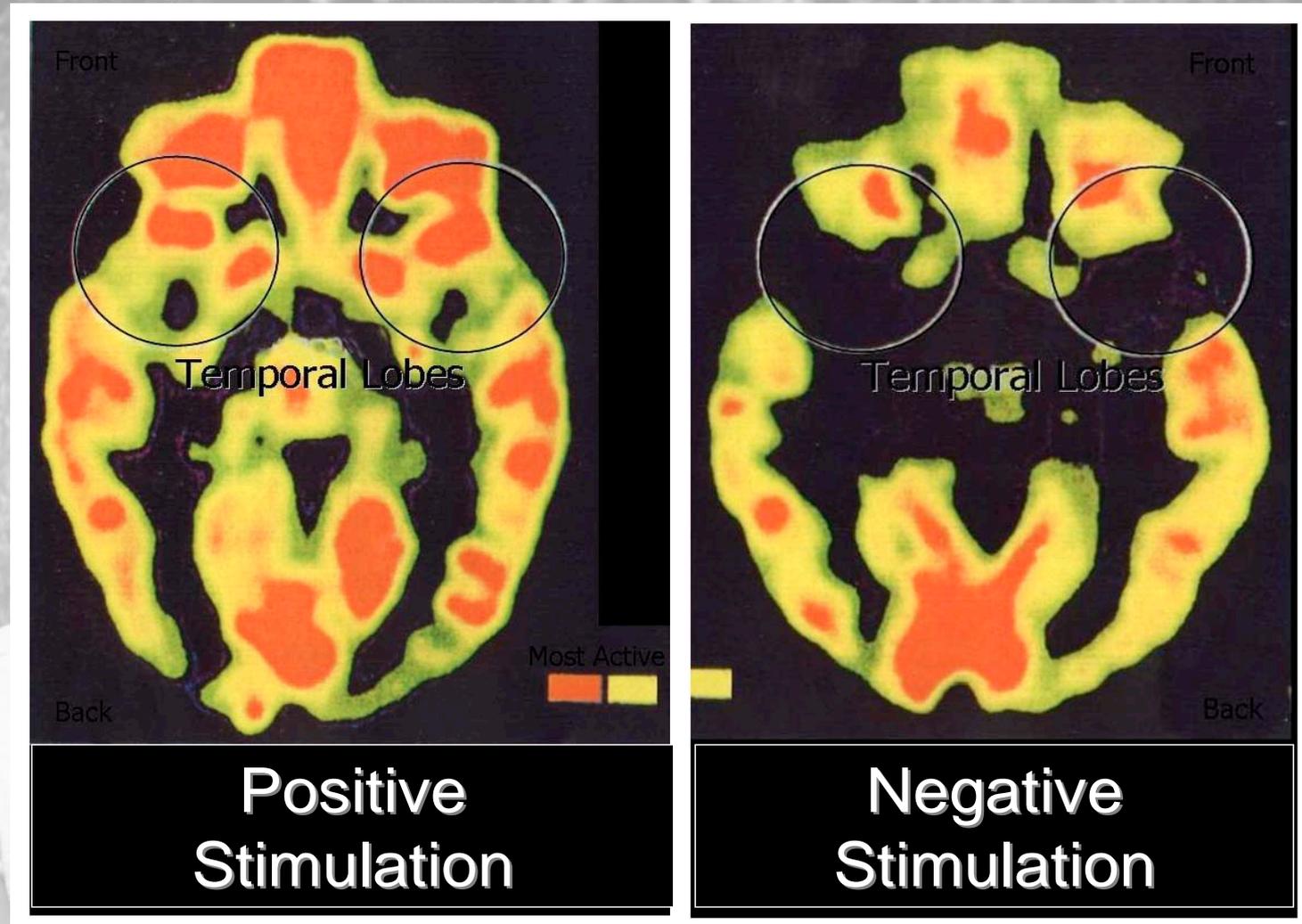
# Health Equity and Young Children's Exemplary Programs

- The purpose is **not** to offer a cookie-cutter approach on how to engage families.
- Many child and family serving system already are familiar with and use many of these strategies.
- As these areas are discussed consider:
  - Are the strategies brought up at the silent mapping and those from the exemplary programs similar? Different?
  - How do the strategies support family engagement?
  - What is needed to improve them or implement them?

# What Research & Experience Tell Us About a Child's Healthy Development

- A child's healthy development begins before birth and is profoundly affected by experiences in the early childhood years.
- Safety, stability, and nurturing in a child's environment is critical to a child's healthy start in life.
- Families living in crisis or struggling with issues such as poverty, depression, unemployment, and domestic violence have a more difficult time addressing or mitigating the effects these experiences have on their child's development.
- These experiences often referred to as **Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)**, can produce toxic stress.
- Toxic stress have long-lasting effects on a child's health and development.
- ACEs play a significant role in shaping a child's health, development, social relationships, education and overall success.

# How Toxic Stress Impacts the Brain



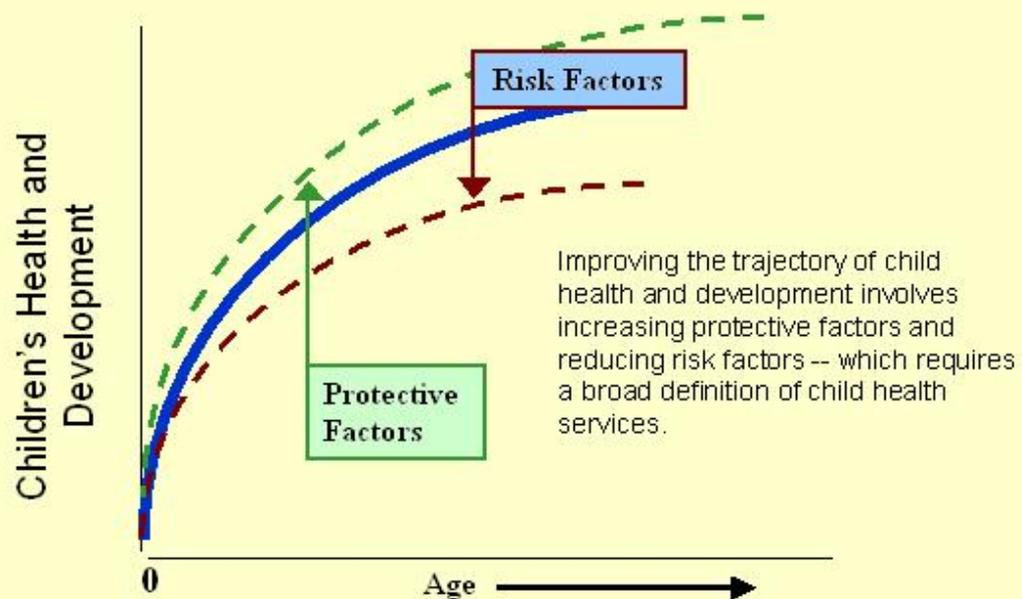
Harry T. Chugani, MD, PET Center Director, Chief of Pediatric Neurology and Developmental Pediatrics, Children's Hospital of Michigan

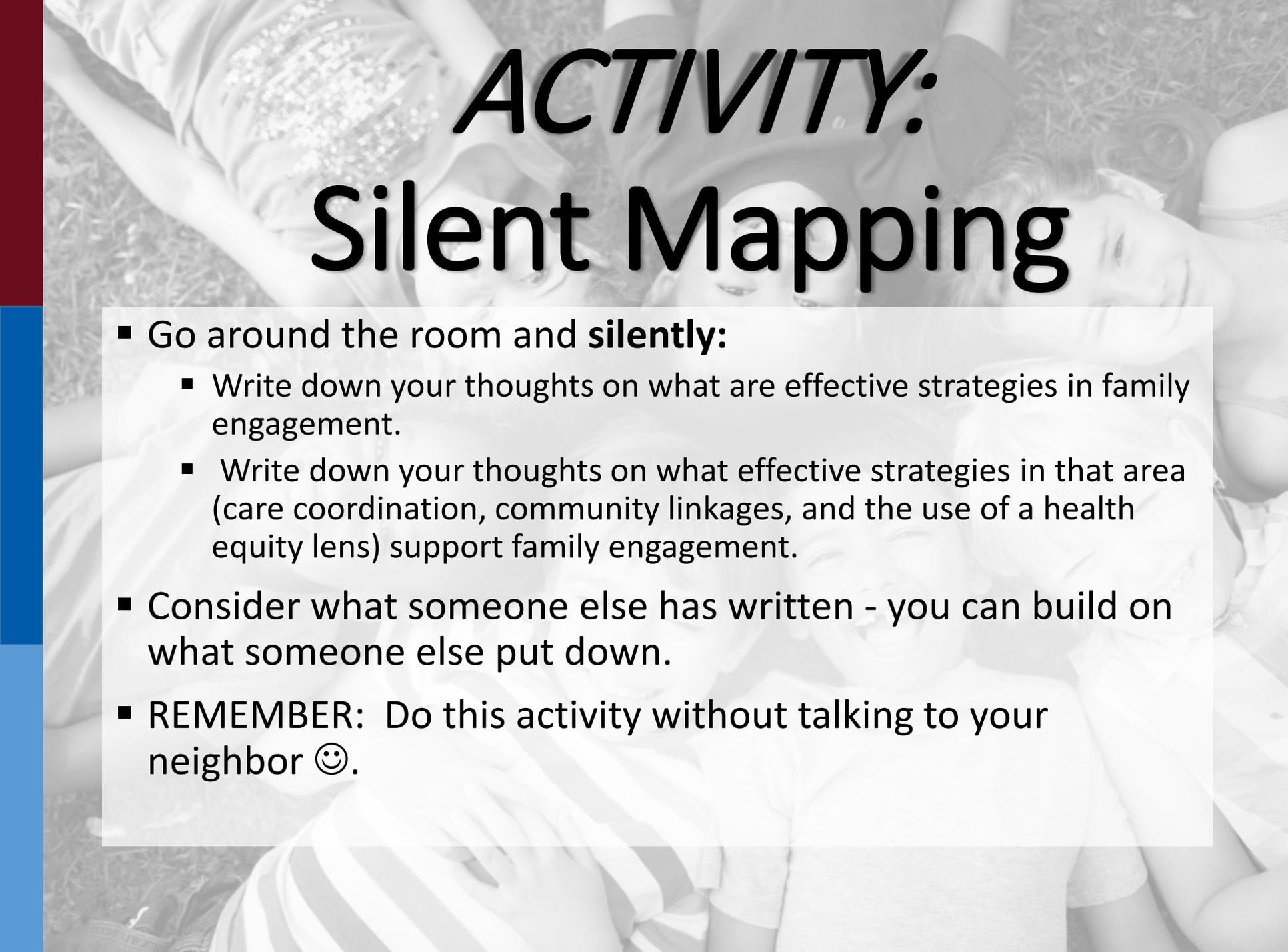
# The Importance of a Comprehensive Approach to Child Health

- Children don't live in a vacuum – they are part of a family and community.
- Experiences they have in their family and environment, whether good or bad affects them.
- A comprehensive approach assesses family needs and provides services to the whole family.
- Providing services to a child without addressing family concerns and stresses will not effectively support the child's development.
  - An example – Research shows that if parents have health insurance, their kids are more likely to be covered.

# How Risk and Protective Factors Impact Development

## Altering Outcomes for Children





# *ACTIVITY:* Silent Mapping

- Go around the room and **silently**:
  - Write down your thoughts on what are effective strategies in family engagement.
  - Write down your thoughts on what effective strategies in that area (care coordination, community linkages, and the use of a health equity lens) support family engagement.
- Consider what someone else has written - you can build on what someone else put down.
- REMEMBER: Do this activity without talking to your neighbor 😊.



# Best Practices in Family Engagement

# Defining Family Engagement

- Family-driven care, with families at the center of the care planning process.
- Commitment to family-centered, strength-based services that respect the diversity and unique needs of children and families.
- Effective family engagement components need to:
  - strengthens families,
  - includes consistent and meaningful, routine two-way communication,
  - supports a reciprocal relationship with a family to enhance family resilience,
  - builds knowledge of parenting and child development,
  - offers support in times of need, and
  - promotes and maintains family dignity and integrity

# Best Practices in Family Engagement

- *Build trusting relationships*
- *Put families at the center of the care planning process*
- *Bring families' perspectives to improve service quality*
- *Offer intentional peer learning opportunities*
- *Engage families in leadership and development*



# Care Coordination: Strategies that Support Family Engagement

# Defining Care Coordination

- The terms “care coordination” and “case management” are often used interchangeably to describe a set of activities in child and family health used to promote optimal access to a range of services and supports.
- Exemplary programs engage in care coordination activities that **well exceed** the traditional meaning of the term of simply identifying families’ needs and connecting them to services and resources.
- The care coordination activities are more **intentional and intensive**:
  - involve concerted efforts to assess and understand the family’s current position
  - focus on building the family’s resiliency
  - build upon the family’s aspirations and strengths
  - support and strengthen the family’s role in nurturing the child

# Care Coordination Strategies that can Support Family Engagement

- *Immediacy and seamlessness of response*
- *Patient/family centered, with concerted and persistent engagement of families*
- *Underlying emphasis on fostering family capacity, strengths and resiliency*
- *Continuous improvement and learning*
- *Flexibility, humor, humility and self-care*

# Additional Care Coordination Strategies

- *Recognize the care coordinator as partner in the care team*
- *Engage with other agencies/partners*



# Community Linkages: Strategies that Support Family Engagement

# Defining Community Linkages

- Community linkages connect services and support coordinated systems to increase continuity, collaboration, and cross-sector sharing in all aspects of service delivery while ensuring the privacy and rights of families.
- Effective community linkages:
  - ensure that any referral aligns with the family's desires, values, experiences, and goals.
  - complement the strategies of other services and supports the family accesses, including those provided through the primary care practice
- Community partnerships are based on strong, ongoing, and evolving relationships.
- Community linkages components:
  - grounded in formal, structured, and extensive partnerships among a variety of key stakeholders
  - build upon the services, strengths, resources, referral processes, and strategies of the partners
  - rely upon relationships between the care coordination team and community organizations/providers offering resources, services, support, and aid to families
- Community linkages are also informed by ongoing community needs assessments and advocacy for additional services to fill identified gaps.



# Community Linkages: Strategies that can Support Family Engagement

- *Identifying resources and resource gaps*
- *Building and sustaining partnerships with other organizations*

# Strategies in Community Linkages to Build Strong Relationships

- *engage other agencies in community initiatives*
- *build and support systems of care, including protocols, agreements, care pathways*
- *measure referrals, linkages and systems processes*



# Health Equity Lens: Strategies that Support Family Engagement

# Defining Health Equity Lens

- Achieving the highest level of health for all people Health equity entails focused societal efforts to address avoidable inequalities by equalizing the conditions for health for all groups, especially for those who have experienced socioeconomic disadvantage or historical injustices. (Healthy People 2020)
- Health disparities are defined as differences that are systematic and plausibly avoidable. They may reflect socioeconomic, racial-ethnic, or other social disadvantages and discriminations.



# Health Equity Strategies that Support Family Engagement

- *Hire staff from diverse backgrounds*
- *Staff training on cultural competency*
- *Engage parents in peer support*
- *Data collection*



**QUESTIONS/COMMENTS**



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