



9 Things All Young People Need

Presented by
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About the Huron-Perth Centre – an accredited children’s mental health centre in Huron & Perth serving children, youth and their families from birth – 18. We provide assessment and treatment for a broad range of child and youth mental health concerns. HPC is the Lead Agency for Child & Youth Mental Health in our two county service area.



Huron Perth Child & Youth Mental Health Network SEA PROJECT – Building Resilient Communities

Huron-Perth Centre is the leader for the Child & Youth Mental Health Network.

The network is comprised of professionals and others concerned about children and youth who struggle with mental health issues.

We have been a part of a project called “Building Resilient Communities” The project is based on the work of Dr. Michael Ungar.

SEA – the Social Ecological Approach

Background to the Project

- Several years ago HPC did some training with Dr. Ungar as a strategy to strengthen skills in helping children with complex mental health problems.
- Dr. Ungar's work has led him to test out his theories in Canada, US and a number of other countries with a range of social, economic and political challenges to understand why some children flourish despite adverse living conditions.

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- Acknowledging Adverse Childhood Experience
- ACE (Anda et al., 2006)
 - Verbal abuse
 - Physical abuse
 - Sexual abuse
 - Emotional abuse
 - Neglect
 - Witnessing IPV
 - Divorce or separation
 - A caregiver w/mental illness
 - A caregiver w/addiction
 - A caregiver who was incarcerated.

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- Acknowledging Benevolent Childhood Experience
- BCE (Narayan et al., 2017)
 - Felt safe with a caregiver
 - One good friend
 - Beliefs that gave comfort
 - Liked school
 - A teacher who cared
 - Good neighbors
 - Adult who gave support (other than caregiver)
 - Opportunities for good times
 - Comfortable with self
 - Home routines

SEA – the Social Ecological Approach

Dr. Ungar would say that a practical definition of **psychological resilience** is

- “In the context of exposure to significant adversity
- resilience is the capacity of individuals to ***navigate*** their way to the psychological, social, cultural, and physical resources that sustain their well being, and...
- their capacity individually and in groups to ***negotiate*** for these resources to be provided in culturally meaningful ways”.

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- HPC staff began to embrace the SEA framework into clinical services.
- Staff received training to help them understand the 9 things children need from their parents and the skills needed to help them get what they need.
- Dr. Ungar would say that it is our job as adults to work together to help kids get what they need.

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- HPC staff received training in 20 different skills that involve collaborating with others to help kids learn to navigate and negotiate to get what they need to succeed.
- These skills have proven to increase resilience and clinical outcomes.
- This internal training led HPC to encourage community partners within the CYMH Network to enter into a project that would cultivate a common approach among organizations in Huron and Perth that is effective in responding to children and youth with complex mental health needs who face the highest risks.

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HPC collaborated with these partners in this project:

- Avon Maitland District School Board and Huron Perth Catholic District School Board
- Perth District Health Unit and Huron County Health Unit
- Huron Perth Helpline & Crisis Response Team
- Choices for Change
- Mental Health & Addiction Nursing Program
- Huron Respite Network

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Those children and youth with the highest complexity/ risk tend to be involved with, or could benefit from the involvement of multiple services. Children and youth with the highest complexity are also children who will benefit most from interventions to boost resilience (Ungar, 2015). “Resilience is not a fixed trait; it can and must be cultivated through relationships and environmental supports” (Ungar, 2015).

- Ungar says:
- “Kids can come through even the worst of situations and still do fine if we do our part as responsible caregivers.”
- Ungar (2015) I Still Love You – Nine Things Troubled Kids Need from their Parents

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This approach does NOT replace other forms of therapeutic and/or social interventions.

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The framework of SEA shifts
from a problem focus and approaches
that attempt to “fix the child”
to
an approach that works to bring caring
adults around the child.

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**Through positive relationships
the focus is on helping the child/youth
to navigate and negotiate
to get their needs met.**

An SEA approach requires the involvement of key people as identified by the child/youth and family (including natural/informal supports).

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There have been 3 phases to the project.

- **Phase 1 – October 2017** – Senior Leader Engagement
- **Phase 2 – September 2018** – Community partners training
- **Phase 3** – sustaining SEA across sectors

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So how is this relevant to the community – schools, churches, and service clubs like Kiwanis?

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The job of raising resilient kids rests
with all of us!

When children feel they belong and
are loved they can do their best.

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**When schools, churches, service clubs
understand the 9 things
that children need to succeed,
they play a role in them to thrive.**

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Lets start with understanding the nine things:

- 1. STRUCTURE**
- 2. CONSEQUENCES**
- 3. PARENT-CHILD CONNECTIONS**
- 4. LOT AND LOTS OF STRONG RELATIONSHIPS**
- 5. A POWERFUL IDENTITY**
- 6. A SENSE OF CONTROL**
- 7. A SENSE OF BELONGING/CULTURE/SPIRITUALITY/LIFE PURPOSE**
- 8. RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**
- 9. SAFETY AND SUPPORT**

These things are not difficult to understand but Dr. Ungar has provided a bit of detail to expand on each item. His added comments are provided in the Appendix at the back of your handout.



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Regardless of where your community is, there are always opportunities to contribute in ways that help children and youth get these nine things.

Kiwanis empowers communities to improve the world by making lasting differences in the lives of children.

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Consider one or two of the initiatives your club is involved in related to children and youth. How does your initiative contribute in some way to one or more of the nine things?

- This is a shout out to the  **Kiwanis**® CLUB OF STRATFORD ! For Years this club has found ways to nurture the mission of the HPC – through offering governance leaders, through periodic donations to help with minor capital projects.
- Phase 2 of this project received a donation from  **Kiwanis**® CLUB OF STRATFORD toward the costs and this resulted in ..

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What if you used the list of nine things as a bit of a checklist to help you decide what projects you take on? Does the initiative/organization help provide or support one or more of the 9 things?

- ✓ STRUCTURE
- ✓ CONSEQUENCES
- ✓ PARENT-CHILD CONNECTIONS
- ✓ LOT AND LOTS OF STRONG RELATIONSHIPS
- ✓ A POWERFUL IDENTITY
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Discussion

- 1) What are you already doing that is consistent with SEA and supporting the 9 Things All Kids Need?
- 2) What could you be doing in the community in which you live?

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Questions?

THANK YOU for listening

Huron Perth Child & Youth Mental Health Network

SEA PROJECT – Building Resilient Communities – guided by the research and wisdom of:

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