

- If you are viewing this course as a recorded course after the live webinar, you can use the scroll bar at the bottom of the player window to pause and navigate the course.
- This handout is for reference only. Non-essential images have been removed for your convenience. Any links included in the handout are current at the time of the live webinar, but are subject to change and may not be current at a later date.

© 2019 continued® No part of the materials available through the continued.com site may be copied, photocopied, reproduced, translated or reduced to any electronic medium or machine-readable form, in whole or in part, without prior written consent of continued.com, LLC. Any other reproduction in any form without such written permission is prohibited. All materials contained on this site are protected by United States copyright law and may not be reproduced, distributed, transmitted, displayed, published or broadcast without the prior written permission of continued.com, LLC. Users must not access or use for any commercial purposes any part of the site or any services or materials available through the site.

Technical issues with the Recording?

- Clear browser cache using [these instructions](#)
- Switch to another browser
- Use a hardwired Internet connection
- Restart your computer/device

Still having issues?

- Call 800-242-5183 (M-F, 8 AM-8 PM ET)
- Email customerservice@SpeechPathology.com



online continuing education for the life of your career

The Role of Relationships in Early Development: The Connection Between Experiences and Language Capacity

Alison D. Peak, LCSW, IMH-E

Moderated by:
Amy Hansen, MA, CCC-SLP, Managing Editor, SpeechPathology.com



Need assistance or technical support?

- Call 800-242-5183
- Email customerservice@SpeechPathology.com
- Use the Q&A pod



How to earn CEUs

- Must be logged in for full time requirement
- Log in to your account and go to Pending Courses
- Must pass 10-question multiple-choice exam with a score of **80%** or higher
 - Within **7 days** for live webinar; within **30 days** of registration for recorded/text/podcast formats
- Two opportunities to pass the exam

The Role of Relationships in Early Development: The Connection Between Experiences and Language Capacity

Alison D. Peak LCSW, IMH-E®

property of Alison D. Peak

Disclosures

- Alison D. Peak LCSW (Allied Behavioral Health Solutions, Nashville, TN) received her Master's in Social Work from the University of Michigan with an emphasis in Interpersonal Practice with Children and Youth and Infant Mental Health. Alison is the Co-chair of the AIMHiTN Endorsement Committee and a member of AIMHiTN's Leadership Cohort. Alison also has two post-graduate degrees, Integrated Behavioral Health in Primary Care and Pediatric Integrated Health Services. Alison is passionate about working with children with histories of early trauma, families with adopted children, and youth in DCS custody. Alison seeks to meet these children and families where they most often present for assistance, their physician's office, and to assist in collaborating with primary care providers to optimize services for children and families.

property of Alison D. Peak

Learning Outcomes

After this course:

- Describe the role of early exposure to violence, poverty, and minimal parenting interactions on language development.
- Identify the role of ACEs in language development.
- List 2-3 ways to engage parents in scaffolding interactions as a way to promote positive experiences around language.

property of Alison D. Peak

Where It All Begins

- Children are created for relationships
- In the behavioral health world we hold that “change comes through relationships.”
- Relationships are essential to our survival as infants and young children.
- These relationships are also the place where we learn safety vs. danger, appropriate vs. inappropriate, what feels good vs. what feels wrong and most importantly, the capacity to rely on adults as people who have a child’s best interest at heart

property of Alison D. Peak

Relationships

- For most children, their primary relationship is with their parents
 - Many children have the great fortune of having adults in their lives that are responsive and attentive.
 - However, many children experience in utero exposure to substances, physical abuse, neglect, or emotional neglect
 - Even in situations that are subpar, the primary template for relationships is formed with these parents

property of Alison D. Peak

The Role of Early Experiences

- The experiences of infants and very young children have considerable impact on their early development and long-term academic capacity and contributions to society at large.
- The correlation between early experiences of trauma and neglect to early development are so strong that the last version of IDEA included a mandate that all children involved with the state foster care system be evaluated by the state early intervention system

property of Alison D. Peak

The Role of Early Experiences

- This connection between early experience and early development is also imperative as we know that early responsivity to speech and language delays reduces the long-term impact of these delays
- The same holds true for relationships. The faster that children are able to build a predictable relationship with a caring adult, the more quickly that there are able to begin mirroring the developmental skills appropriate for their age.

property of Alison D. Peak

ACEs

- ACEs refers to Adverse Childhood Experiences
- This reference and the associated data are a result of a study completed by Kaiser-Permanente in the 1990s
 - Began as a study to identify the high cost of healthcare
 - 100s of potential variables to later health outcomes were considered
 - A list of 10 factors were identified that raised the likelihood of long-term health difficulties if they occur before the age of 18

property of Alison D. Peak

ACEs Health Impact

- Research found that individuals who experience ACEs are at increased health risk
 - 4 ACEs are considered to be a threshold for increased risk of negative health outcomes such as cardiovascular disease, COPD, depression, anxiety, obesity, high blood pressure, stroke, etc.
 - Individuals with more than 4 ACEs are at greater risk for difficulties in school, divorce, and to require behavioral health services
 - Individuals with 6 or more ACEs have a life expectancy **20 years shorter**, on average, than individuals with fewer than 4 ACEs
 - Individuals with 10 ACEs statistically always presented as profoundly developmentally delayed

property of Alison D. Peak

continued

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

ABUSE	NEGLECT	HOUSEHOLD DYSFUNCTION	
Physical	Physical	Mental Illness	Incarcerated Relative
Emotional	Emotional	Mother treated violently	Substance Abuse
Sexual		Divorce	

property of Alison D. Peak

continued

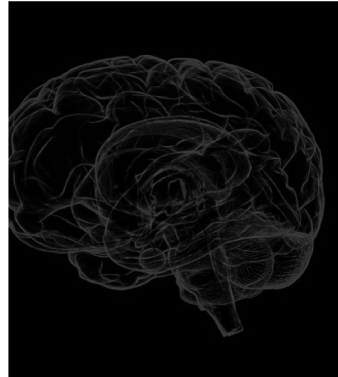
ACEs and the brain

- ACEs are directly linked to brain architecture
- When a young child is in a traumatic situation their brain reacts with
 - Fight
 - Flight
 - Freeze
- These survival reactions result in production of Cortisol
- Consistent high stress environments create chronic stress which results in considerable levels of cortisol production

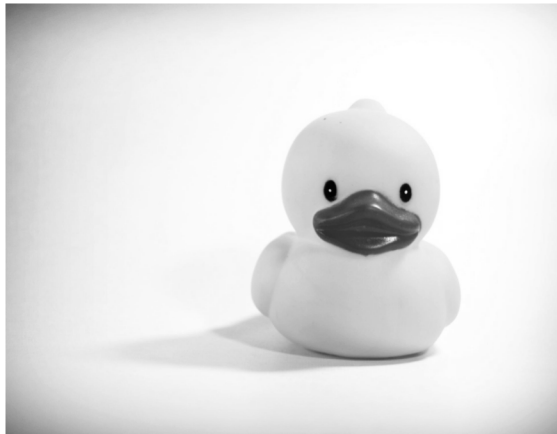
property of Alison D. Peak

Let's talk about the brain

- Emotional Brain has 4 primary areas
 - Frontal cortex
 - Controls impulse, analytical thinking, cause and effect
 - Limbic System
 - Controls access to words and most memories
 - Brain Stem
 - Controls heart rate, blood pressure, body temperature
 - Amygdala
 - Controls fear reactions



property of Alison D. Peak



Cortisol and the Brain

- Cortisol acts as a safety valve for brain
- When cortisol is released it **BATHES** the brain to signal that threat is coming
- Cortisol systematically shuts down sections of the brain to reserve energy and fuel for the brain stem-the most essential to survival
- Thus stress results in decreased
 - Impulse Control
 - Access to words
 - Memory
 - Ability to problem solve
- This is a survival mechanism

property of Alison D. Peak



Executive Functioning

- The Executive Functions of the brain often act as an air traffic control system.
- They direct emotions, information, and reactions to “land safely.”
- Children with numerous ACEs, and subsequent high chronic stress, often behave as if there is no one in their control tower.
- Chronic stress results in the brain's inability to navigate emotions and communicate effectively

property of Alison D. Peak

continued

Chronic Stress and Cortisol

- When young children are exposed to consistent threat and unpredictable environments they produce constant amounts of cortisol
- This cortisol does long term damage an individuals ability to access their frontal lobe
- In young children these negative early experiences manifest as behaviors.
- The frequently co-occurring language delays only fuels difficulties in behavior and difficulties in regulations further fuel struggles with articulation and language acquisition

property of Alison D. Peak

continued

The Word Gap

- The “30 million word gap” was initially cited by Hart and Risley in a 1992 publication, highlighting that low-income children were likely to have heard 30 million less words by their 3rd birthday than children from higher socio-economic classes.
- Since the publication of the study, there have been concerns with the methodology
 - The original study did not hold for the influence of a stranger in these homes
 - The study size was quite small
 - There were difficulties in the cultural competence of the study
- More recent replications of the study have found that “word gap” is closer to 4 million by the time that a child is 4. However, there is still substantial difference between the early language capacities of these two cohorts of children

property of Alison D. Peak

The Word Gap

- Further research has also found that this word gap is less associated with socio-economic status and mostly associated with parents’ understanding of early language development and their role in their child’s language
- Parents often felt that because children couldn’t talk that they also weren’t listening.
- Many cultures believe strongly in the idea of children being “seen and not heard.” This and other cultural beliefs often reduce a parents intentional inclusion of children in reciprocal conversation

property of Alison D. Peak



Serve and Return Relationships

- From birth, engaging in serve and return language builds a child's understanding of the role of conversation.
- Emotionally, it also teaches children that:
 - People will wait for me
 - People will listen to me
 - What I have to say is important
- Serve and Return interactions bolster emotional connection, language acquisition, and predictable caregiving relationships

property of Alison D. Peak



Parents as Partners

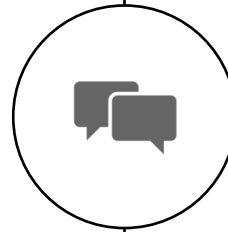
- Parents (and primary caregivers) have the capacity to make substantial impact on their child's language capacity
- Engaging parents in speech and language intervention enables greater generalization of skills, increased language acquisition, and increased treatment buy-in
- We all parent as we were parented or in direct opposition to the way we parented.
 - This holds true for language acquisition as well

property of Alison D. Peak



Increasing Parent Involvement

- Discussing a parent's role in treatment as essential
- Empathize that they may not have had adults talk to them often as a child
- Describe the differences between command and conversational language
- Discuss alternatives to reading books
- Engage parents in demonstrating the meaning of a word to children
- Discuss the idea of serve-and-return relationships
- Help parents wait for their child's cues/responses



property of Alison D. Peak

Summary

- Early relationships and experiences are essential components of language development
- Early relationships and experiences are also incredible vehicles for addressing delays in development
- Parents are not always aware of the impact they have on the milestones of their children
- Supporting serve and return interactions and providing education can have a considerable impact on parents' involvement in services.

property of Alison D. Peak



References

- Allen, Rebecca, Oliver J.M. (1982) The Effects of child Maltreatment on Language Development *Child Abuse & Neglect* Vol 6(3)
- Building Strong Brains (2017) Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth
<https://www.tn.gov/tccy/ace/tccy-ace-building-strong-brains.html>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2016), The ACE Study Survey Data. Kaiser Permanente. Atlanta, Georgia: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- Davies, Douglas (2011) Child Development: A Practitioner's Guide. Guilford Press
- Felitti, Vincent J et al (1998) Relationship of Childhood Abuse and Household Dysfunction to Many of the Leading Causes of Death in Adults. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, Volume 14 , Issue 4 , 245 – 258
- Hart, Betty, Risley, Todd (1995) The Early Catastrophe: The 30 Million Word Gap by Age 3. *American federation of Teachers*
- Kamenetz, Anya (2018, June 1) Let's Stop Talking about the "30 Million Word Gap" Retrieved from: <https://www.npr.org/sections/ed/2018/06/01/615188051/lets-stop-talking-about-the-30-million-word-gap>
- Manuel Moreno Manso, Juan; Garcia-Baamonde, Maria Elena et al. (2010) Pragmatic Language Development and Educational Style in Neglected Children *children and Youth Services Review* Vol 32(7)
- Shonkoff, JP et all (2000) From Neurons to Neighborhoods: The science of Early Childhood Development. National Research Council Institute of Medicine
- Wasik, Barbara, Hindman, Annemarie (2015) Talk Alone Won't Close the 30-Million Word Gap *Phi Delta Kappan* Vol 96(6)

property of Alison D. Peak



Alison D. Peak LCSW IMH-E®
alliedbehavioral@hushmail.com
(615) 292-3661

property of Alison D. Peak

