Talking about Early Brain Development and Early Intervention Services

Framing and Delivering the Message

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Framing Recap
Culture Mediates Communication
DEVELOPMENT = INVISIBLE PROCESS

FAMILY BUBBLE

INDIVIDUALISM

KIDS ARE SPONGES/LITTLE ADULTS

CHILDREN ARE THE FUTURE

FATALISM

DEVELOPMENT = INVISIBLE PROCESS
Avoid Communications Traps
Tell A Well-Framed Story
A WELL-FRAMED STORY

‣ VALUES

‣ METAPHORS
‣ EXAMPLES
‣ EXPLANATION

What is this about?
How does this work?
If it’s not working, why not?

‣ VALUES
‣ EFFICACY
‣ SOLUTIONS

What can we do?
Who has responsibility?

Why does this matter?
A WELL-FRAMED STORY OF EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

Why does this matter to society?
Our shared prosperity is at stake

What’s this about?
Brains get built like houses: foundations matter

How does this work?
Supportive interactions build brains

If it isn’t working, why not?
Toxic stress disrupts brain construction

What can we do about it?
Resilience is like a dynamic scale

Your program/policy solution here
Framing with Values
Values

A broad category of cherished cultural ideals: enduring beliefs that orient individuals’ attitudes and behaviors.

Values help to establish why an issue matters and what is at stake.

As a frame element, values do the work of:

• Priming people to take a collective approach
• Tapping emotions that work for policy thinking: curiosity, concern, and can-do
Prosperity

Your issue matters because:
This will contribute to collective, shared good fortune, both economic and social.

Redirect public perceptions away from:
• Family bubble
• Individualism

Move public thinking towards:
• Community supports promote prosperity
• A strong and stable society depends on the wellbeing of children
• Prosperity is social and economic
• Capacities and skills developed in childhood become the basis of a prosperous society
Which of these best applies the tested Value *Prosperity*?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>“I believe the children are our future. Teach them well and let them lead us all the way to the bank.”</th>
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Framing with Metaphors
METAPHORS OF BRAIN DEVELOPMENT

- BRAIN ARCHITECTURE
- TOXIC STRESS
- SERVE AND RETURN
- RESILIENCE SCALE
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- BRAIN ARCHITECTURE
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Serve and Return

The story you are telling:
Brains are built through back-and-forth interaction, much like a game of tennis, ping-pong, or volleyball. Healthy development occurs when young children “serve” through babbling, gestures, or words, and adults “return” by getting in sync with the child.

Redirect public perceptions away from:
• Black box model of development
• Children are containers/sponges
• Family bubble
• Good environment = safety
• Self-makingness

Move public thinking towards:
• How neural connections are formed through reciprocal interactions
• Even preverbal children need these interactions
• How adults can “get in sync” with kids
Toxic Stress

The story you are telling:
Chronic, severe stressors can cause a response that is toxic to the developing brain and has long-term effects on health and wellness.

Redirect public perceptions away from:
- Stress is just emotions
- What doesn’t kill you makes you stronger
- What children can’t remember won’t hurt them
- Willpower determines outcomes

Move public thinking towards:
- Social conditions <> health outcomes
- Poverty and violence affect development
- Lack of serve-and-return relationships affects development
- Disparities <> health and behavioral outcomes.
Resilience Scale
Dr Phil Fisher, Harvard Center for the Developing Child
Resilience Scale

The story you are telling:
A positive child outcome is like a scale that is tipped toward one side. It can be influenced by counterbalancing and by adjusting the fulcrum point.

Redirect public perceptions away from:
• Willpower
• Family Bubble
• What doesn’t kill you makes you stronger
• Determinism
• Most kids turn out fine no matter what

Move public thinking towards:
• There are limits to resilience: no child is invincible
• Offloading risk factors increases chances for positive outcomes
• Protective factors can counterbalance risk factors
A WELL-FRAMED STORY OF EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

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Case Study

The “Children See, Children Do” campaign
NAPCAN (Australia)
Cultural models of child development?
Children
See,
Children Do

NAPCAN
2013
Cultural models of child development?
Children are Sponges
Children are Little Adults
Fatalism
Black Box of Brain Development
Morals & Manners
Family Bubble
Threat of Modernity
Individualism
How can we change the narrative?
1. Group work
2. Showcase
3. Discussion
1. Group work

2. Showcase

3. Discussion
Brainstorm at your table
Brainstorm at your table

Framing Memo
Values

Cultural models?

Explanation?

Solutions?
Values

? Cultural Explanation?

? Solutions?

AVOID ADVANCE
1. Group work
2. Showcase
3. Discussion
1. Group work
2. Showcase
3. Discussion
1. What worked well in these groups memos?
1. What worked well in these groups memos?
2. What was challenging in coming up with recommendations?
Thank you!

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Thinking about Stress: After
Policy support relative to control

Effective parenting
Child development

* = P < .01
The story you are telling:
The basic architecture of the brain is constructed through an ongoing process that begins before birth and continues into adulthood.

Redirect public perceptions away from:
- *Children are sponges/containers*
- *Black box model of development*
- *Early learning doesn’t matter*
- *Naturalism: Kids just develop*
- *Self-makingness*

Move public thinking towards:
- Development starts early and requires quality resources
- This is an active process that happens in phases
- What happens early on has long-lasting consequences
The Brain Architecture Game