

Stress in Childhood

Stress is a natural & inevitable part of childhood, but the **TYPE** of stress can make a difference in the impact on a child's brain & body.

“ **STRESS** is a mental, physical or biochemical response to a perceived threat or demand ”

Positive Stress

Mild stress in the context of good attachment

Tolerable Stress

Serious, temporary stress, buffeted by supportive relationships

Toxic Stress

Prolonged activation of stress response system without protection



Temporary, mild elevation in stress hormones & brief increase in heart rate



More severe, continuing cardiovascular and hormonal response

Prolonged activation of stress response system & disrupted development of brain and immune system



No buffering  support necessary

Presence of  buffering caring adult

No adult  buffers

Increased **RESILIENCE** and confidence
Development of coping skills



Adaption and recovery with some possibility for physical/emotional damage



Lifelong consequences:

- Heart disease
- Alcoholism
- Memory & learning difficulties
- Anxiety/depression
- Cancer

