

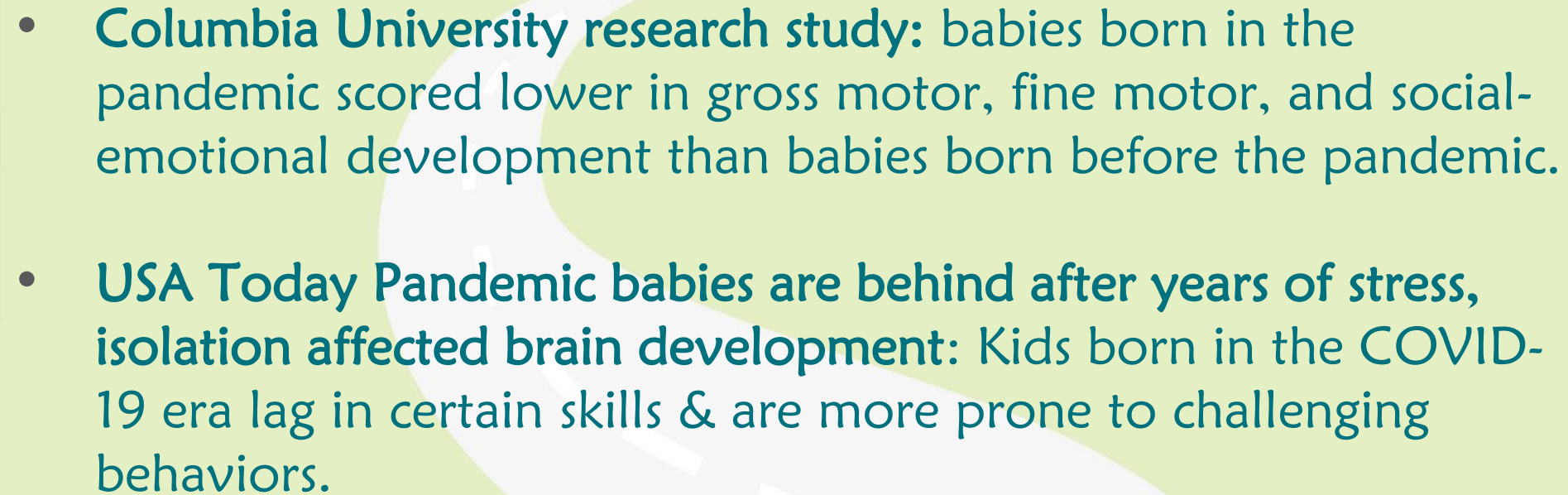


# RECONNECTING CHILDREN TO THEIR HUMAN-NESS

Janet Humphries, M.A.

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- **Pandemic Babies Are Facing Speech & Social Development Delays:** Children born during the pandemic are at nearly twice the risk for developmental delays.
- **Global Fund for Children:** Pandemic has created a children's mental health crisis, leading to high rates of anxiety & depression among young people, as well as loneliness & isolation.

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- **Columbia University research study:** babies born in the pandemic scored lower in gross motor, fine motor, and social-emotional development than babies born before the pandemic.
  - **USA Today Pandemic babies are behind after years of stress, isolation affected brain development:** Kids born in the COVID-19 era lag in certain skills & are more prone to challenging behaviors.

# UNICEF: Managing the long-term effects of the pandemic on your child's mental health

- Children have missed out on normal developmental opportunities throughout the pandemic.
- Their social skills are out of practice, and parents may need to provide children with more coaching and explicit instruction than they have had to in the past.
- Their delays in speech and language acquisition, and a lack of confidence in group activities abound.
- Two key outcomes of the pandemic to watch for are children who become overly cautious and children who have missed important academic steps.

# Teachers Experiencing Children as ‘Beyond Challenging’ with ‘Extreme Behaviors’

- *“I’ve had 20 years of experience in the classroom and used every trick up my sleeve; nothing is working.”*
- A 47-year EC veteran teacher/mental health support and an assistant teacher one semester away from getting her M.A. in therapy, physically struggle holding a violent 44 pound 4-year-old who was hurting children tearing the classroom apart.
- *“We are finding an alternative setting for a 4-year-old who attached another child with a scissors.”*



<https://psychcentral.com/lib/how-do-smartphones-affect-childhood-psychology>



<https://www.todayparent.com/family/parenting/yes-your-smartphone-habit-is-affecting-your-kid-heres-how/>

**CAUSES:**  
**‘Technoference’**  
“any negative effect imposed on an interpersonal relationship by the intrusive use of technology”



<https://kiindred.co/parenthood/support/how-to-talk-to-your-child-without-yelling/>



<https://nypost.com/2019/06/14/kids-eyesight-ruined-after-parents-let-her-play-on-phone-every-day-for-a-year/>

# Relational Poverty Due to Broken Attachment

—Bruce Perry, M.D. PhD.

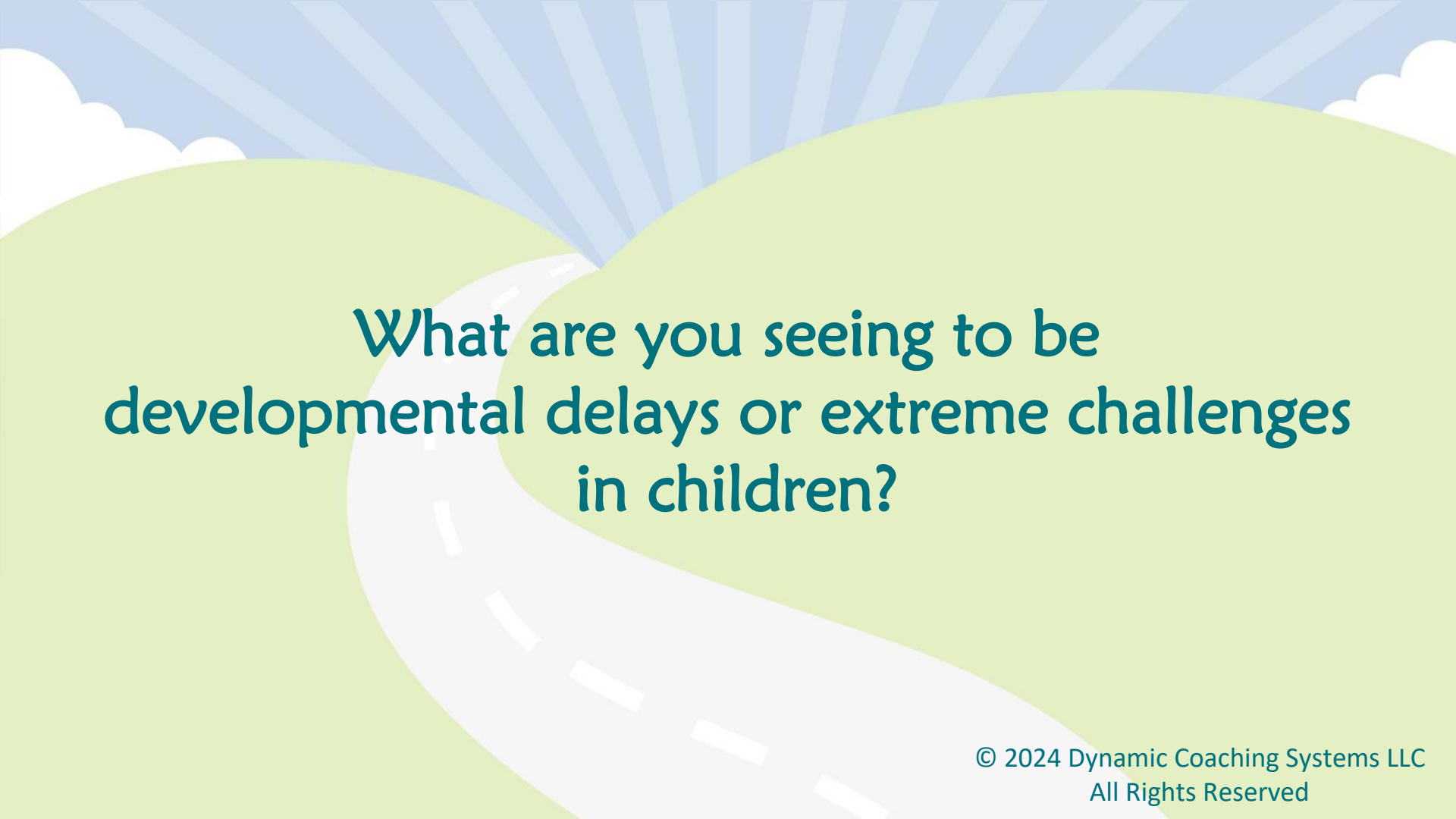
- *“The compartmentalization of our culture has resulted in material wealth yet poverty of social and emotional opportunity.”*
- *“Your history of connectedness is a better predictor of your health than your history of adversity.”*

# Rendition of Dr. Bruce Perry's Developmental Grid

**DEVELOPMENTAL DOMAIN:** \_\_\_\_\_

Blue	White	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	White	Blue	Blue	White
Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	White	Blue	Blue	White	Blue
Blue	Blue	White	White	Blue	Blue	Blue	White	Blue	Blue
White	Blue	Blue	Blue	White	Blue	White	Blue	Blue	Blue
Blue	Blue	White	Blue	Blue	White	White	Blue	Blue	Blue
Blue	White	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	White	Blue	Blue
Blue	Blue	White	Blue	White	Blue	White	Blue	Blue	White
White	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	White	Blue	Blue	White	Blue





**What are you seeing to be  
developmental delays or extreme challenges  
in children?**

# On Becoming Humane – Bruce Perry, M.D., PhD.

- Being born a human being does not ensure a child will become humane.
- Humans become humane. The capacity to care, to share, to listen, value and be empathetic – to be compassionate – develops from being cared for, shared with, listened to, valued and nurtured.
- Humane caregiving expresses our capacity to be humane. Inhumane caregiving can decrease or even destroy this capacity<sup>4</sup>

# How are the children?



The Maasai Tribe of Africa

# So how can we support children to engage in human behaviors in such challenging times?

- Our human purpose is not to consume, to collect or to conquer; our true purpose in life is to create & to connect.
- Bring in the Spiritual Domains of creativity, curiosity, empathy, and wonder, and how these domains nurture connections between Spirits.

<b>Drawing</b>	<b>Painting</b>	<b>Beading/Stitching</b>	<b>Climbing</b>
<b>Playing</b>	<b>Creating</b>	<b>Flower Design</b>	<b>Being</b>
<b>Music</b>	<b>Dancing</b>	<b>Exploring Nature</b>	<b>Cooking</b>
<b>Learning</b>	<b>Balancing</b>	<b>Meditation/Yoga</b>	<b>Crafting</b>

# Provide Children with More “FLOW” States

*“In the present,  
when we allow ourselves to fully live there,  
we are restored, made wiser, made deeper & happier.”*

— Marianne Williamson

- The more time children spend in flow, the more their physiological needs for development are being met, the calmer and happier they are, and the less likely disciplinary actions are needed.

Imagine the lack of challenges  
an educator may experience  
if all the children were not the same age  
needing the same kinds of attention...

- What if we did age groupings of:
  - 8 weeks to 18 months
  - 18 months to 3 years
  - 3-5/6 years



# TAKING RISKS

*“In the end,  
we only regret  
the chances we  
didn’t take.”*

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*“The love, attention, security only adults can offer,  
liberates children*

*from the need to make themselves invulnerable  
and restores to them that potential for life and adventure.*


*Without that safety our children are forced to sacrifice  
their capacity to grow and mature psychologically,  
to enter meaningful relationships,*

*And to pursue their deepest most powerful urges  
for self-expression.*

*If we do not hold our children close to us, the ultimate cost  
is the loss of their ability to hold on to their truest selves.”*

*--Gabor Mate*





**Make a commitment  
to bringing more human-ness/humane-ness  
to our children, our programs, our communities,  
and our world!**

**STOP THE INCESSANT MADNESS  
disguised in the words 'quality' and 'fidelity' to  
anything but children themselves!**

THANK YOU FOR ALL OF YOUR EFFORTS ON  
BEHALF OF CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND STAFF!

PLEASE TAKE CARE OF YOURSELVES!



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**DYNAMIC COACHING SYSTEMS<sub>LLC</sub>**

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## RECONNECTING CHILDREN TO THEIR HUMAN-NESS

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*“Being born a human being does not ensure a child will become humane.*

*Humans become humane. The capacity to care, to share, to listen, value and be empathetic – to be compassionate – develops from being cared for, shared with, listened to, valued and nurtured.*

*Humane caregiving expresses our capacity to be humane.*

*Inhumane caregiving can decrease or even destroy this capacity. -- Dr. Bruce Perry*

Provide an enriched environment from which children can choose their partners & their activities & totally immerse themselves in a state of flow; true play is deep and uninterrupted engagement in the activity of one’s own choice. It is most frequently characterized by observable experiences of risk, joy and deep engagement. Play is the deepest manifestation of learning, growth & development. What gets in the way of this is our misconception that school readiness has to look the same way regardless of curricula used.

*“We need to understand the limitations and the unintended negative consequences of such assessment and curricula systems. Teachers and children are being assessed to death, and joy, connectivity, and love are sucked out of classrooms when we summarize “quality” as numbers on a scale.” --Eliana Elias, as co-author, with Olga Lacayo, of The Art of Troublemaking*

Isn’t true quality for children about how responsive we can be to all their developing needs and support their learning of how to be compassionately human? Why wouldn’t we instead, commit to fidelity to each child’s growth, learning and ultimate potential rather than to a publisher’s curriculum or assessment? Wouldn’t then Educators be able to engage in flow & really observe and support children’s development!

**REFLECTION & DISCUSSION:** How might that work in your program?

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### MULTI-AGED GROUPINGS

- Present a more ‘family’ centered approach, which is more in tune with natural law, offering the younger children various levels of models to imitate, and offering the older ones an opportunity to reinforce their own knowledge and increase their self-esteem by helping the younger ones.
- Allows the younger children to see the developmental progressions of what comes next as the older children engage in activities the younger ones are yet developing the skills to do. Each child grows as his or her interests lead him or her from one level of complexity to another, and in this way, children naturally develop and establish goal setting for learning.
- Offers the opportunity for peer teaching, which enhances children’s sense of mastery and self-worth and facilitates cooperation and appreciation of others.
- Provides older children with the opportunity to help manage younger children and thus learn how to set a model, as well as develop patience and understanding of others’ needs and abilities. In multi-aged classrooms, children do a good deal of the teaching.
- Enable children to be with the same group of children for longer periods of time, which offers more consistency with both staff and peers, & thus deeper attachments leading to healthy SE development.
- Enhances the opportunity to truly offer children an individualized program, as it allows children to advance at their own pace & follow his/her interest, & it allows for children’s uneven development.
- Heightens exposure to differences in abilities so children develop a broad appreciation for diversity.

### HOW CAN I SUPPORT MORE JOY HAPPENING IN AND FOR THE CHILDREN?

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