



## Light at the End of a Tunnel

Our once-in-a-hundred-years global pandemic is ending. *“If it feels difficult, that’s appropriate ... We are in the greatest crisis of stress, isolation, adversity, and trauma that most of us have known across multiple generations... However, **now we have the right tools** to prevent harm by*

- *Connecting: Trusting enough to be able to be vulnerable and asking for help.*
- *Using strategies that combat our stress hormones—exercise, meditation or talking to a therapist.*
- *Finding gratitude for what’s good and how we survived.”* (Remember PPI’s February quote, *“How did you handle the challenges?”*)

*“Now a very traumatic shift is ahead of us -*

*‘returning to normal’ cloaking how stressful it really is. We also have **an extraordinary opportunity to calibrate what exactly feels good”.***

*“As a parent, sit down and ask your kids ‘How are you?’ Try checking in about the things that they really care about.”* Read her whole interview—it’s inspiring! <https://www.voque.com/article/nadine-burke-harris-interview>

**How can parents help children?** *Praise children and adolescents for their flexibility, resilience and ability to change and become smarter about how we communicate.”*

- Help them connect to at least one good friend
- Address underlying vulnerabilities, like depression or anxiety
- Discuss adversities they face daily
- Find safe adults, available to help.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/11/health/pandemic-middle-school-mental-health.html?smid=em-share>



Nadine Burke Harris, MD  
California Surgeon General

Working on the new **Celebrating Families!™ Adolescent Curriculum** we learned much about adolescent brain development, which researchers say is more impactful on future health than early childhood (0-3) years! The good news – “*this ‘critical period’ of heightened brain flexibility, instability and plasticity, means they are extra-primed for adaptability and resilience*” (L. Steinberg, Temple University). The **strongest predictors of depression and anxiety in teenagers** is their perception that their parents are dissatisfied with them and their parents’ poor moods.



①  
Ability to talk  
with family  
about feelings



**Positive childhood experiences** are now recognized as important as negative ones.

"...even among adults with multiple ACEs in childhood, those with positive experiences—such as caring, warm, and nurturing relationships with friends and a sense of belonging in school and the community—fared much better...." Christina Bethell, Ph.D., Lead Author.

<https://www.contemporarypediatrics.com/view/positive-childhood-experiences-may-have-greater-impact-bad>

Tufts Medical Center, as part of their research on Positive Experiences, developed the “Language of HOPE – Healthy Outcomes from Positive Experiences”. **Remind anyone of Celebrating Families!™?**

## 4 Building Blocks of HOPE

<p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">1</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">Relationships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ...with other children</li> <li>• ...with other adults</li> <li>• ...through interactive activities</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">2</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">Environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safe, equitable, &amp; stable</li> <li>• Living, playing, &amp; learning</li> <li>• Positive school &amp; home environments</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">3</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">Engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a sense of connectedness</li> <li>• Social/civic activities</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">4</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">Social Emotional Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Playing &amp; learning with peers</li> <li>• Collaboration in art, drama, &amp; music</li> </ul>

*Celebrating Families!™ and ¡Celebrando Familias!* are programs of NACoA (National Association for Children of Addiction) offering curriculum materials, technical assistance, and training services ([nacoa.org](http://nacoa.org)).

In California contact Melissa Santos, Program Director *Celebrating Families!* of California:  
[Melissa.Santos@communitysolutions.org](mailto:Melissa.Santos@communitysolutions.org)

[www.preventionpartnership.us](http://www.preventionpartnership.us)  
[www.celebratingfamilies.net](http://www.celebratingfamilies.net)  
 Rosemary Tisch, PPI Director  
 Program Developer    [rstisch@gmail.com](mailto:rstisch@gmail.com)