

Mindful Continuing Education

The Effects of Child Maltreatment on Brain Development

1. Scientific evidence of altered brain functioning as a result of early abuse and neglect has many implications for the prevention and treatment of child abuse and neglect.

- A. True
 - B. False
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How the Brain Develops

2. Each of the following is an accurate statement about brain development through early adolescence EXCEPT:

- A. Research now shows that many capacities thought to be fixed at birth are actually dependent on a sequence of experiences combined with heredity, and that both factors are essential for optimum development of the human brain
 - B. Brain regions involved in regulating emotions, language, and abstract thought grow rapidly from ages 3 to 6
 - C. Young children process information slowly because their brain cells lack the myelin necessary for fast, clear nerve impulse transmission
 - D. During adolescence, the limbic system grows and transforms, and teenagers may rely on their more primitive limbic system in interpreting emotions and reacting since they lack the more mature cortex that can override the limbic response
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Sensitive Periods

3. While children and adults may be able to make up for sensitive missed experiences as they get older, it may be more difficult if a young child was deprived of certain stimulation, which resulted in the pruning of synapses relevant to that stimulation and the loss of neuronal pathways.

- A. True
 - B. False
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4. The organizing framework for children's development is based on:

- A. Growth in specific brain regions
- B. The extent of the brain's plasticity

- C. The development and elimination of synapses
 - D. The creation of memories
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Effects of Maltreatment on Brain Development

5. Children who are exposed to maltreatment may experience weakened neuronal pathways that impact social interactions and the ability to appropriately get their needs met, largely because they have not had reliable, suitable child-caregiver interactions, which is referred to as "comfort and reciprocate."

- A. True
 - B. False
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Effects of Maltreatment on Behavioral, Social, and Emotional Functioning

6. The changes in brain structure and chemical activity caused by child maltreatment can have a wide variety of effects on children's behavioral, social, and emotional functioning, including:

- A. Persistent fear response and hyperarousal
 - B. Diminished executive functioning and delayed developmental milestones
 - C. Weakened response to positive feedback and complicated social interactions
 - D. All of the above
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Impact of Maltreatment on Adolescents

7. For teens who have been maltreated, impulsive behavior may be even more apparent than normal, largely because they have developed brains that have been unable to focus on advanced thinking that occurs in the brain's hippocampus and cerebellum.

- A. True
 - B. False
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8. Which of the following are NOT examples of the growing trends in child welfare that may help provide a more caring view of the world to an abused or neglected child?

- A. Trauma-informed care and family-centered practice and case planning, including parent-child interaction therapy
- B. The growth of child advocacy centers, where children can be interviewed and assessed and receive services in a child-friendly environment
- C. Universal services for children and families and the promotion of systems-based interventions

D. The use of differential response to ensure children's safety while providing nonadversarial support to families in low-risk cases

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