

History Worksheet for the Four Brain Systems

Parental Risk Factors

That Can Compromise Parents' Ability to Offer Their Child Support

- Significant prenatal stressors
- No or poor prenatal care
- History of, or current substance abuse, smoking
- Teenage pregnancy
- Poor nutrition
- Premature labor
- Multiple births
- Genetic disorder(s)
- Chronic medical condition(s)
- Chronic allergies
- Sleep difficulties
- Rigid or chaotic pattern of arousal energy that is entrenched (hypoalert, hyperalert, flooded)
- Low maternal education
- Few familial financial resources
- Inadequate food, shelter, or clothing
- Unhygienic environment
- Limited community resources

- Loss of hearing or vision
- Inaccurate processing of information
- Slow processing of information
- Speech abnormality
- Learning disorder(s)
- Overreactive, underreactive, or both to sensory information
- Over or understimulating living environment

- A domestic violence participant
- Personal history of abuse and/or neglect
- History of children removed from home; abuse/neglect of other children
- Multiple children to care for
- Weak commitment to child
- Familial history of mental illness
- Chronically depressed or anxious
- Rapid swings into high-intensity emotions; low frustration tolerance
- Lack of empathy for self and others
- Difficulty making eye contact and lacking warmth
- Negative appraisal of child as willfully disobeying or as not loving parent
- Parent unable to set boundaries and over-accommodates child
- Discrepancies exist among words, actions, or non-verbal communication
- Learning disruptions
- Inability to ask for help when necessary

- Motorically clumsy, awkward, or lethargic
- High distractibility
- High impulsivity
- Unable to delay gratification
- Lacks stable routines
- Adheres to rigid routines and habits, avoiding novelty
- Lack of knowledge concerning normative child development
- Difficulty anticipating the need to sequence and implement agreed-on clinical input
- Lacks a willingness to incorporate a new way to understand a child's behavior (e.g., mental rigidity)
- Is unaware of, or inaccurately judges, own strengths and weaknesses
- Difficulty using hindsight, insight, and foresight for self-reflection and problem solving
- Lacks cause-effect reasoning
- Unable to hold self and others in mind at the same time
- Unable to consider the part in relation to the whole

Global Questions

REGULATION

- Are stress responses adaptive? That is, does a person show adequate recovery?
- Is the person's use of energy efficient and flexible or rigid or chaotic?
- How does the person conserve energy?

SENSORY

- How quickly and efficiently does the child/adult process sensory information?
- How reactive is the child/adult to sensory information from relationships?
- Is the child/adult leaning toward types of sensory information that are considered safe as opposed to those that are threatening?

RELEVANCE

- Is the individual able to express a range of positive and negative emotions flexibly?
- How do experiences influence memories and appraisals?
- Are emotionally loving, significant, and long-term relationships present?
- Does the individual tend to attribute positive or negative meanings to experiences?

EXECUTIVE

- Does child/adult show purposeful movement that is both adaptive and flexible?
- Can child/adult see the big picture?
- Can the child/adult stay on track in expressing a thought, emotion, or narrative?
- Can the child/adult complete tasks in a relatively smooth fashion?

Child Risk Factors

That Increase Children's Need for Adult Support

- Prenatal maternal stress
- No or poor prenatal care
- Intrauterine growth retardation or fetal malnutrition
- Toxins in utero
- Premature birth
- Genetic disorder(s)
- Infant medical condition(s)
- Chronic allergies
- Feeding problems
- Poor suck, swallow, and breathe coordination
- Poor nutrition
- Sleep difficulties
- Rigid or chaotic pattern of arousal energy that is entrenched (hypoalert, hyperalert, flooded)

- Loss of hearing / vision
- Inaccurate processing of information
- Slow processing of information
- Speech delay
- Learning disorder(s)
- Overreactive, underreactive, or both to sensory information
- Institutional care or neglect without adequate sensory information

- Male preterm infant
- Exposure to domestic violence
- Abuse and/or neglect
- Traumatic memories
- Lack of emotional care due to foster care or orphanage placement
- Chronically depressed or anxious
- Rapid swings into high-intensity emotions; no frustration tolerance
- Lack of empathy for self and others
- Lack of eye contact absence of interest in others and/or lack of social referencing (overly detached)
- Highly demanding of others
- Over accommodating to others
- Lacks one person in the family who is strongly committed to child and who provides loving care
- Discrepancies exist between words, actions, or non-verbal communication
- Learning disruptions
- Inability to ask for help when necessary

- Motorically clumsy, awkward, or lethargic
- Lacks developmentally appropriate use of gestures to communicate needs and wants
- Lacks developmentally appropriate use of words to problem solve
- High distractibility
- High impulsivity
- Unable to delay gratification
- Lacks developmentally appropriate abilities to sequence activities of daily living
- Adheres to rigid routines and habits, avoiding novelty
- Lacks a willingness to incorporate a new way to understand own or other's behavior (e.g., mental rigidity)
- Is unaware of, or inaccurately judges, own strengths and weaknesses
- Difficulty using hindsight, insight, and foresight for self-reflection and problem solving
- Lacks cause-effect reasoning
- Unable to hold self and others in mind at the same time
- Unable to consider the part in relation to the whole