

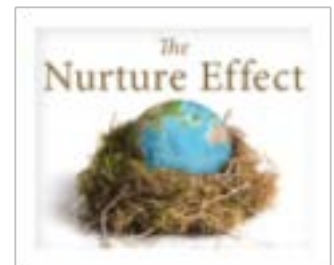
# What Have We Learned About Child and Adolescent Development That Could Help Us Improve Work Organizations?

Tony Biglan

Senior Scientist

Oregon Research Institute

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The Basic Requirements

# **AN EMERGING CONSENSUS ABOUT HUMAN WELLBEING**



Preventing Mental, Emotional,  
and Behavioral Disorders  
Among Young People

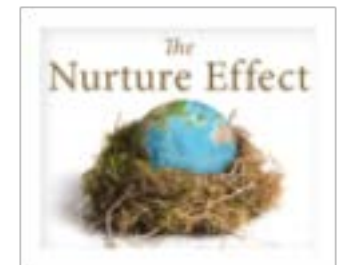
Progress and Possibilities



“The scientific foundation has been created for the nation to begin to create a society in which young people arrive at adulthood with the skills, interests, assets, and health habits needed to live healthy, happy, and productive lives in caring relationships with others.”



# CONVERGING EVIDENCE ABOUT PROBLEM DEVELOPMENT



# Youth Problems Are Inter-related

A Representative Sample of 8th Graders

	Substance Use	Antisocial Behavior	Risky Sexual behavior	Depression	Eating Disorders
Substance use		5.52	8.54	3.66	2.29
Antisocial Behavior	5.42		7.80	3.74	2.62
Risky Sexual Behavior	6.86	7.11		4.46	3.08
Depression	3.93	3.85	5.79		3.64
Eating disorder	2.45	2.89	3.59	4.00	



# Annual Inflation-Adjusted Health Care and Total Costs of Youth Problem Behaviors

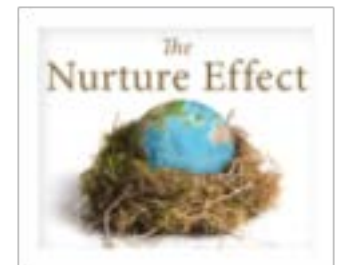
	Health Care	Total Costs
The Nation	\$26.75 Billion	\$726 Billion
Oregon	\$332.9 Million	\$8.71 Billion
Yamhill County	\$8.3 Million	\$220 Million

Source: Miller, T. The Social Costs of Adolescent Problem Behavior, in A. Biglan, P. Brennan, S. Foster, & H. Holder (2004) *Helping Adolescents at Risk*, New York: Guilford Press



# Toxic Social Conditions Have a Huge Impact on Health

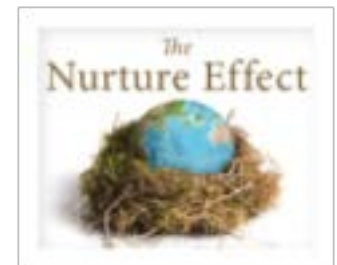
- Maltreatment and Health
  - Meta-analysis of 24 studies
  - Adults with a history of maltreatment were 2.77 times more likely to have stroke or myocardial infarction.
- Poverty in childhood Affects Health in Adulthood
  - A 20%–40% Increased risk of all-cause mortality:
  - Excess risk of 30-60% for CVD across studies
  - Effects even among those who have increased their SES as adults; 20-40% range for CVD
  - Maternal nurturance prevents these effects!



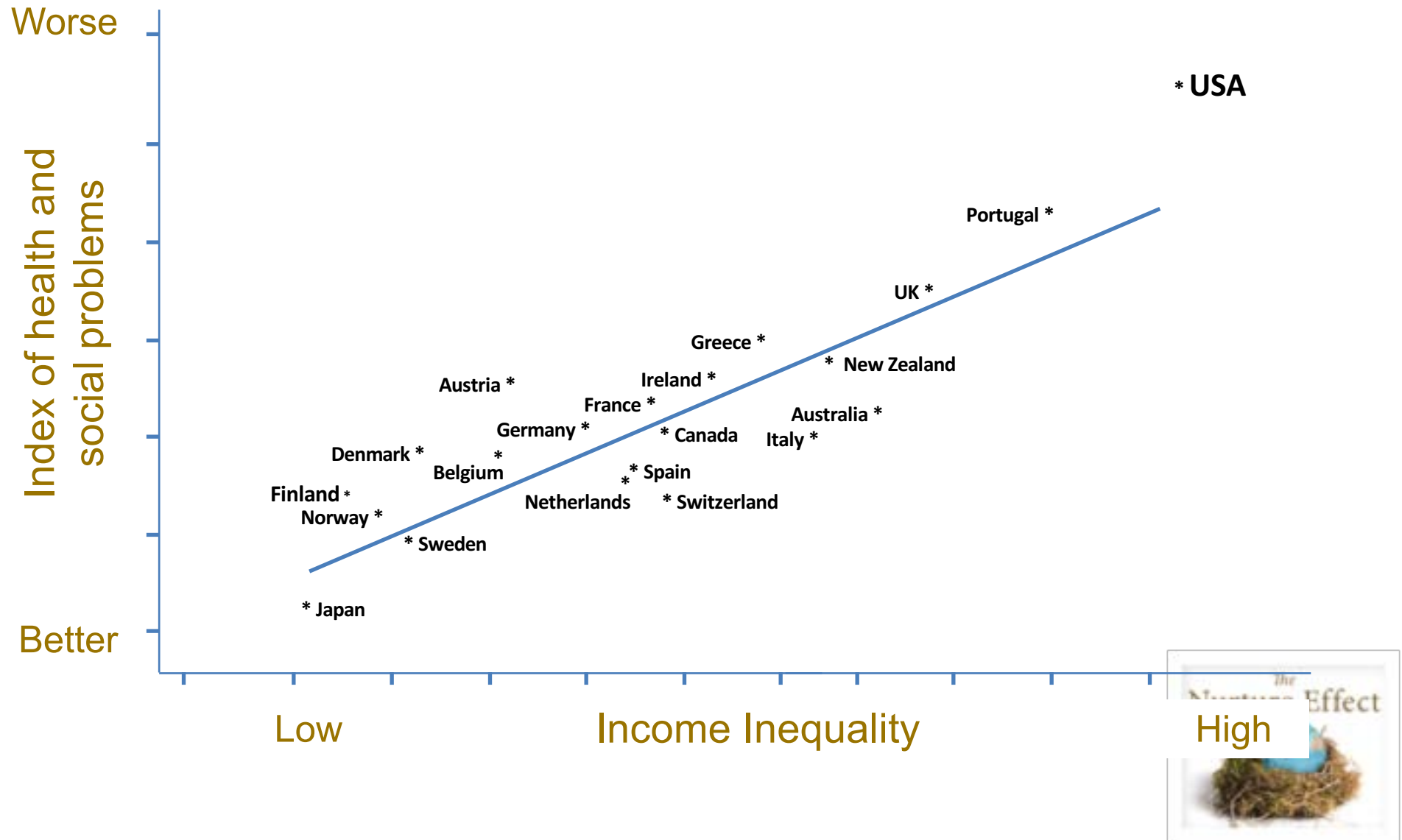
# Discrimination Affects Health

- People who report experiencing discrimination have:
  - Higher rates of self-reported stress.
  - Higher rates of physiological reactions to stress (e.g. blood pressure)
  - Higher rates of health compromising behaviors (e.g., smoking, substance abuse) and lower rates of health promoting behaviors.
  - Higher rates of psychological disorders

Pascoe, E. A., & Richman, L. S. (2009). Perceived discrimination and Health: A Meta-Analytic Review. *Psychological Bulletin*, 135(4), 531–554. <http://doi.org/10.1037/a0016059p>

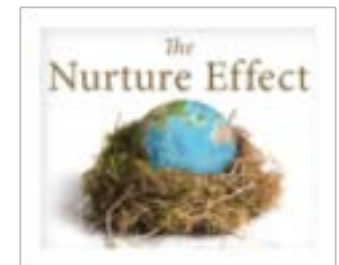


# Health and social problems are closely related to inequality in rich countries<sup>38</sup>



# Robert Putnam's *Our Kids*

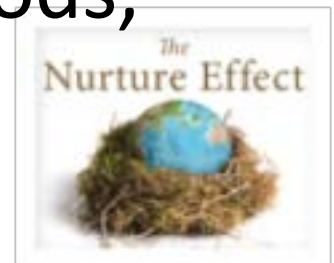
- Over the past fifty years, America has become far less nurturing of those who are poorer.
- Economic inequality and poverty have increased greatly
- Social Mobility—the chance that a poor child will move out of poverty—has virtually disappeared.





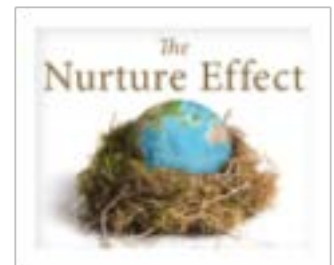
Many more families, schools, and neighborhoods lack basic conditions that nurture young people's development:

- Two parent families
- Adequate income, time, and nurturing parenting skills
- Social capital: mentors, connections
- Schools with guidance, extra-curricular activities
- Safe, economically integrated neighborhoods, supportive social interactions

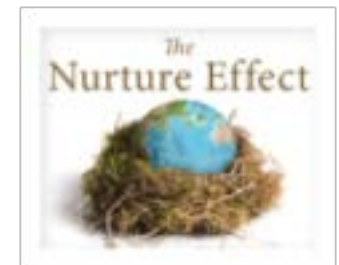
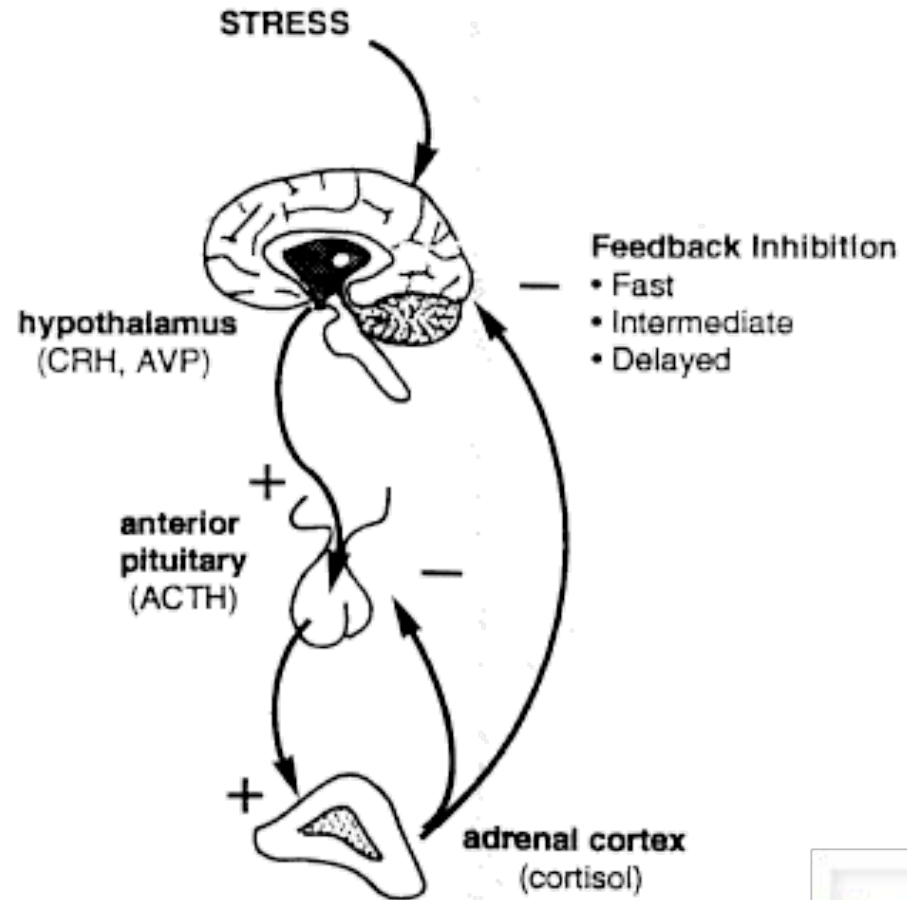


# Coercion: The fundamental process underpinning human conflict

- Negative reinforcement of aversive behavior
- Involved in the development of aggressive social behavior
- Involved in marital discord
- Involved in the interactions of depressed people and their families.
- Intergroup conflict



# The physiological stress response







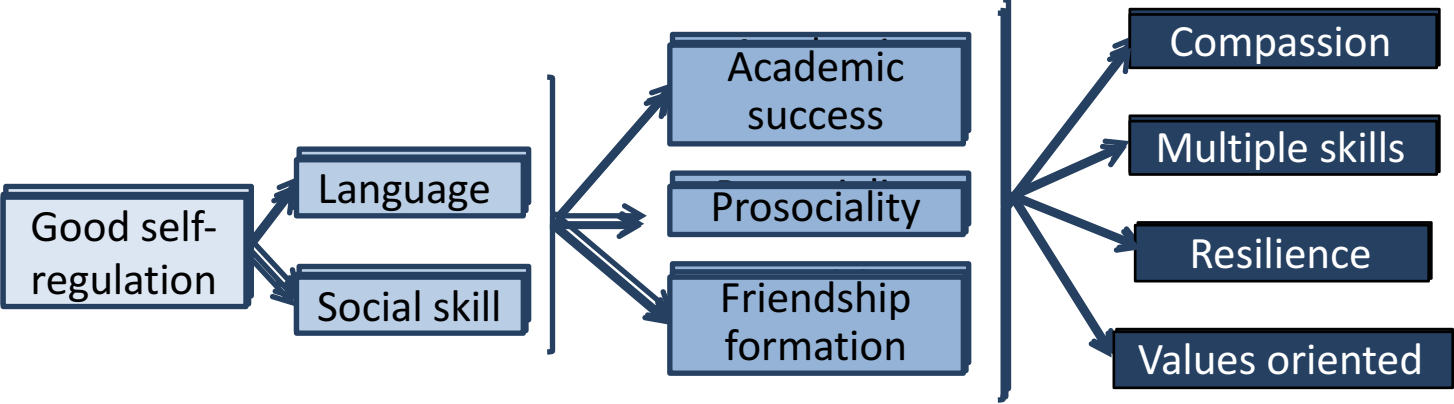




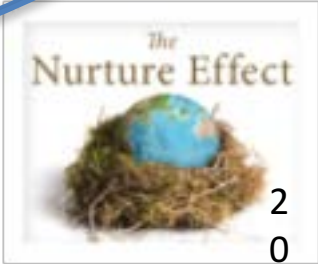
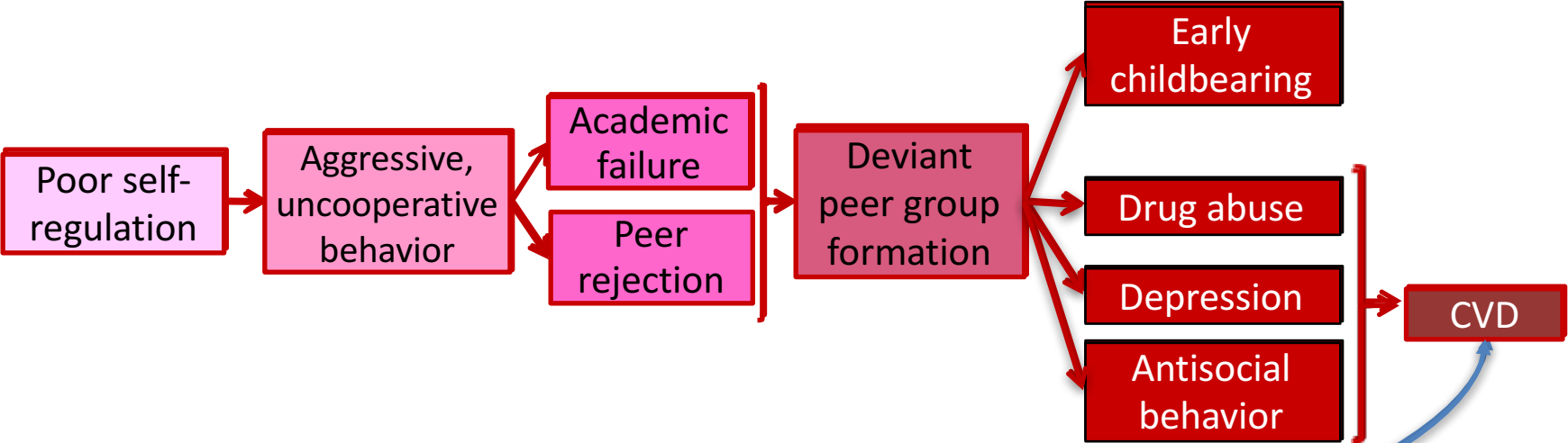


# Two Developmental Pathways

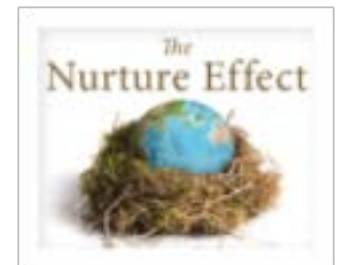
Nurturing Environments



Non-nurturing Environments

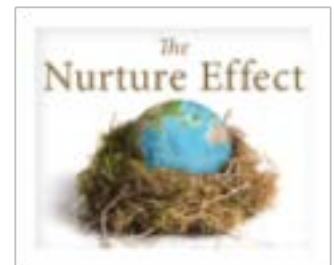


**SO WHAT DOES ALL THIS HAVE TO  
DO WITH WORK ORGANIZATIONS?**



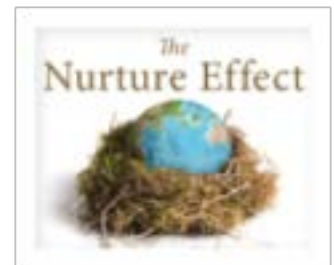
# What happens in a workplace...

- When people with a history of these experiences go to work there?



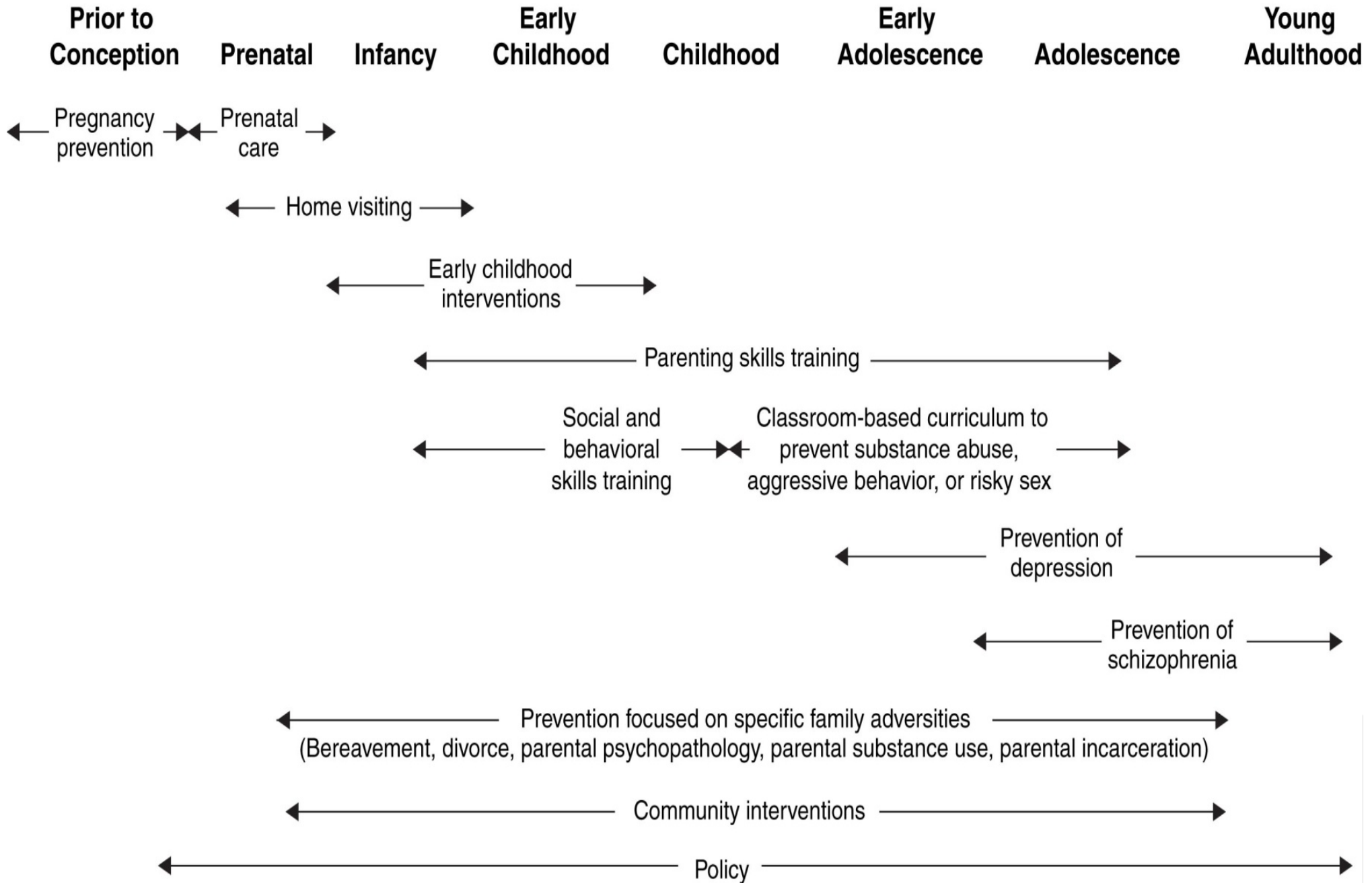
What prevention science teaches us

**DEVELOPING SOCIALLY SKILLED  
PEOPLE AND PRODUCTIVE GROUPS**



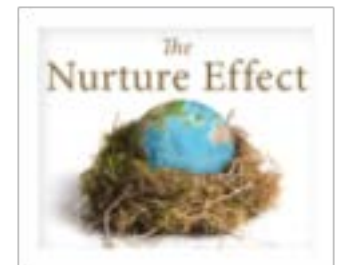


# Interventions by Developmental Phase



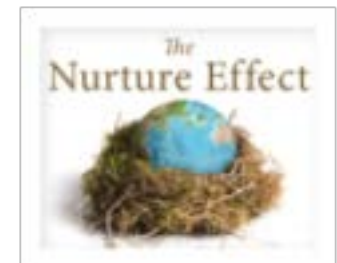
# Environments that Produce Productive and Socially Skilled People

- Minimize toxic social and biological conditions
- Teach, promote and richly reinforce diverse forms of prosocial behavior
- Limit influences and opportunities for problem behavior
- Promote psychological flexibility—a mindful approach to pursuing one's values
  - More than 100 randomized trials showing the value of psychological flexibility for a wide variety of psychological, behavioral, and health problems.



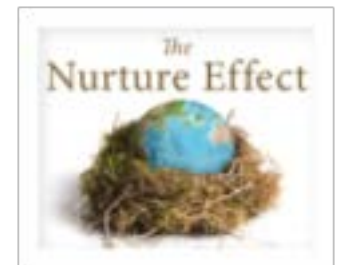
# Nurse-Family Partnership

- Pregnancy through infancy
- Focus on
  - Prenatal care
  - Maternal smoking
  - Mothering
  - Contraception
  - Work life

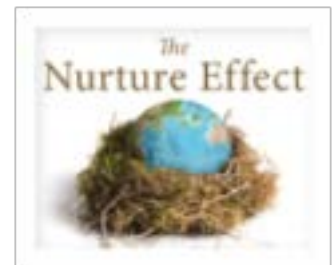
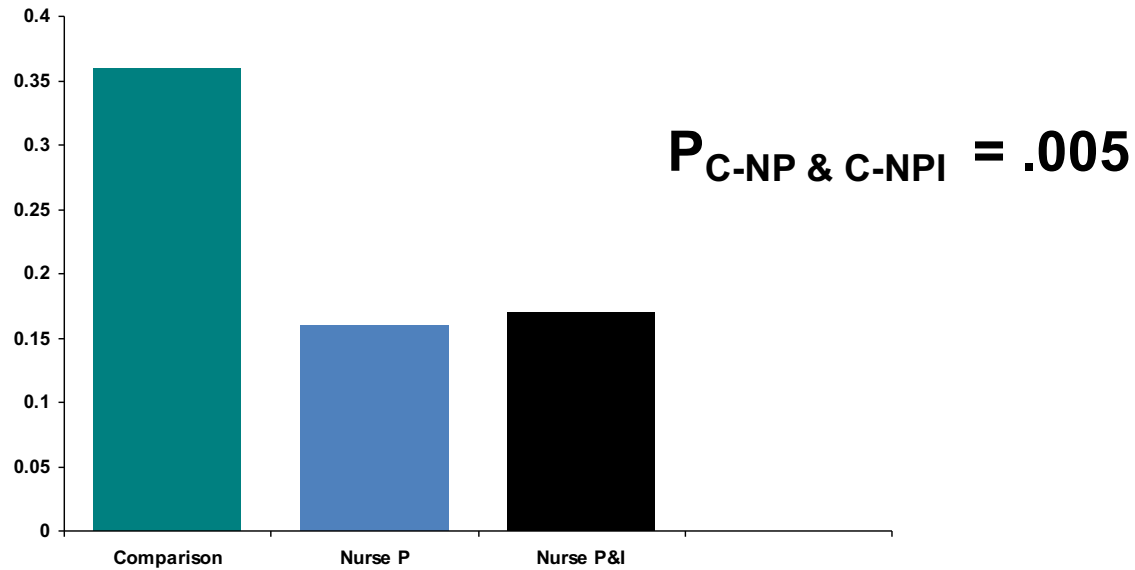


# Nurse-Family Partnership

- Evaluated in three randomized trials for poor, teenage, single mothers
- Significant effects on
  - Abuse and neglect
  - Children’s behavioral development
  - Mother’s economic wellbeing
  - Time to next baby
  - Children’s arrests as adolescents

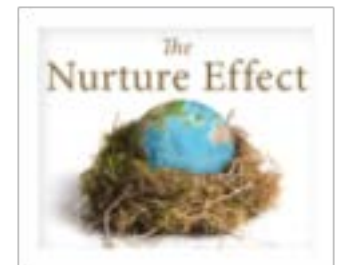


# Adjusted rates of arrests, 15-year olds, Elmira



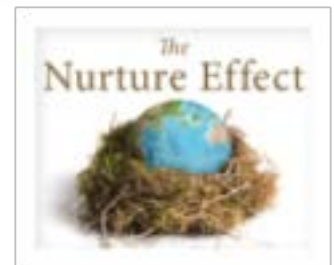


# SCHOOL INTERVENTIONS



# The Good Behavior Game

- Classroom teams in elementary school earn small rewards for being on-task and cooperative



# Timeline of benefits

## First Month

More time for teaching and learning

Less stress for staff and students

## First Year

Better attendance

Fewer referrals

Fewer service needs

Less illness

Happier families

Less vandalism

Better academics

## Two-three years

ADHD averted

Oppositional Defiance averted

Special education averted

## 5-15 years

No tobacco

Less alcohol

Fewer conduct disorders

Less depression

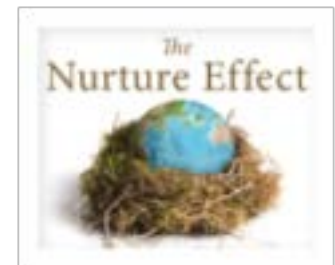
Less crime, violence, suicide

High school graduation & university



# Evidence-Based Kernels

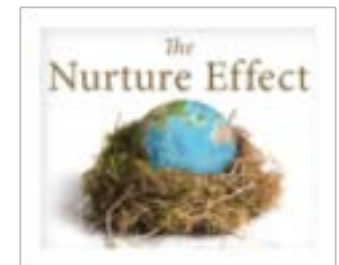
- Smallest unit of behavioral influence
- Indivisible—removing any part makes it inactive
- Produces quick, easily measured change
- Can be used alone or with other kernels
- Active ingredients of evidence based programs



Thanks to Jason Fruth of Wright State University for kernels slides

# Kernels in the PAX Good Behavior Game System

- PAX Vision
- I'm a PAX Leader
- PAX Quiet
- Granny's Wacky Prizes
- Beat the Timer
- PAX Stix
- PAX Tootle Notes
- PAX Voices
- PAX Hands and Feet
- OK/Not Ok



# Tootle Notes

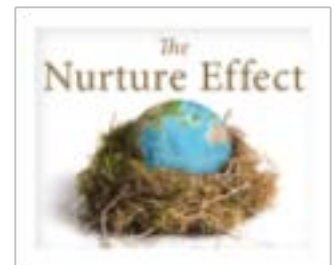


- 🌱 Tootles are peer-to-peer notes praising positive, pro-social behaviors
- 🌱 Tootle notes are the opposite of bullying, gossiping, or tattling
- 🌱 Tootles allow us to identify positive behaviors in others (giving) and in ourselves (receiving)

A sample "Tootles" note form. At the top left, it says "Tootles® for positive PAX actions" with a star icon. To the right, it says "Name of recipient and specific praise below...". The form has several horizontal lines for writing. At the bottom, there are fields for "Tootler's Signature" and "date". A small note at the bottom left says "Tootles are the opposite of tattles. Tootle shout the good (PAX) people do for others and themselves." There is also a small copyright notice on the left edge.

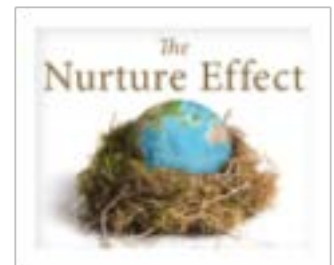


# CONCRETE STEPS TO MAKING THE WORKPLACE MORE NURTURING



# Kernels for Workplaces

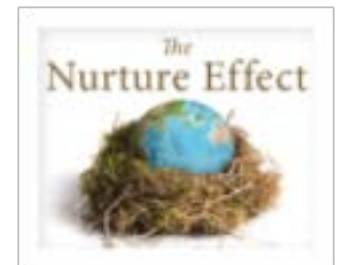
- Visioning
- Increasing participation
- Dealing with conflict
- Predict, Monitor, and Adjust
- A LOT More Positive Reinforcement
- Measure the things you want to change



# Visioning: See, Hear, Feel, and Do

## Using the Answer Garden

- Bringing people together around a set of shared values is a powerful way to enlist social influence in the service of making the workplace more nurturing.
  - The value of participation was one of the first things that social psychologists learned about.



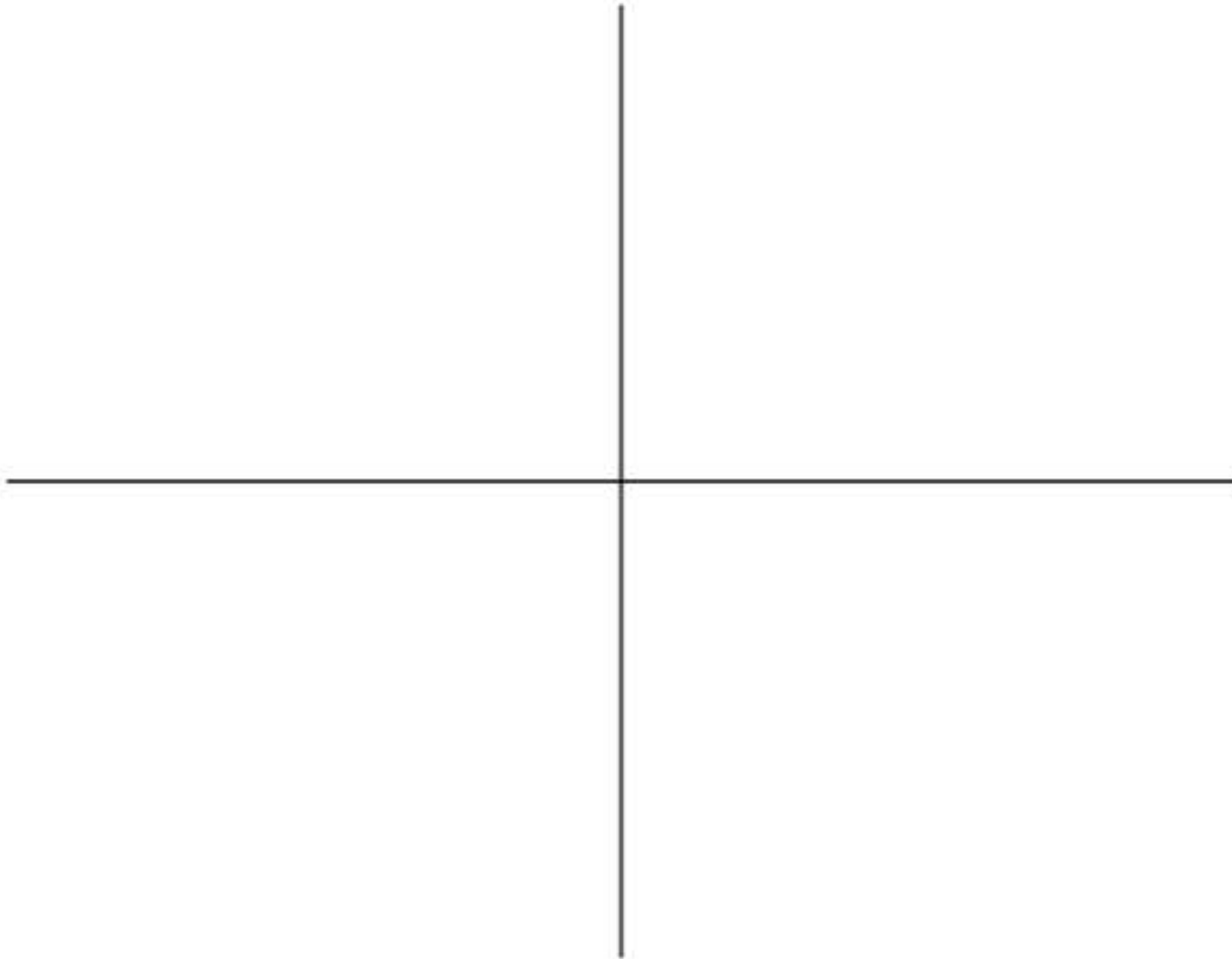
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**Less**

**More**

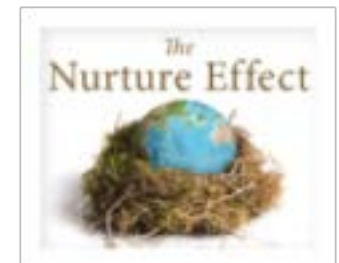
Do

Traits  
Feelings  
Values



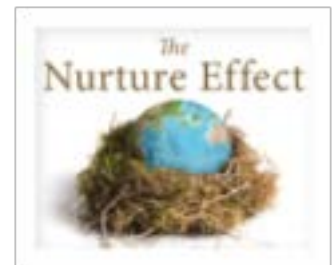
# Making the Vision a Living Process

- Predict, Monitor, and Adjust
- Process Check
- Praise, thanks, recognition (See below)



# Increase Participation

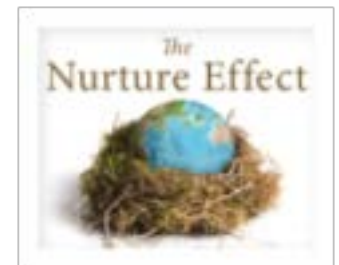
- The Pajama Game
- Pax Stix
- Take a minute...





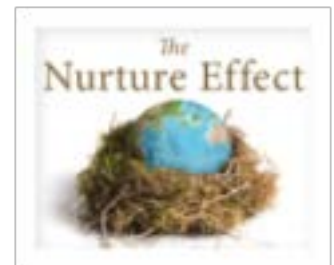
<http://www.theglasers.com/>

# TURNING CONFLICT INTO NURTURANCE



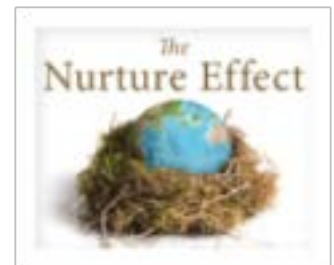
# Responding to Criticism

- Get More Information
  - Active Listening
    - Nonverbal attention—A posture of curiosity
    - Paraphrasing—Listening to the message; Reflecting it back; Discovering the speaker's intent
  - Ask for Details—Requesting clarifying information
  - Guess—When the other person can't think of a specific example, you come up with one.
- Agreement—Seek it out wherever it exists
  - Agree with facts—Be explicit in your agreement
  - Agree with critic's perception—acknowledge the critics perception is reasonable.



# Raising Delicate Issues

- Ask for the opportunity to discuss your concern.
  - Indicate that you have a concern, while making clear that your intention is not to hurt the other person.
  - Edit out accusative language and red flag terms
- Pinpoint Details
  - Describe exactly what the other person said or did, when they said or did it
- Acknowledge your part
  - Search for and communicate what you may have done that contributed to the problem
- Agree on a solution
  - Develop a solution that you both create and both implement



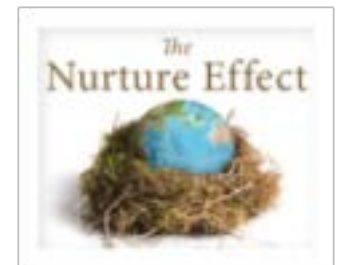
# A LOT More Positive Reinforcement

- Granny's wacky prizes
- Tootle Notes



# Try This

- Think of a person who sometimes does things that trouble you. (Don't pick the most difficult person in your life.)
- See if you can visualize them doing some specific thing that troubles you.
- See if you can get a sense of the thoughts and feelings that they may be having.
- See if you can accept the thoughts and feelings that come up for you as you think about a behavior of theirs that troubles you.
- Now write a Tootle Note to them that affirms something they have done that you would like to encourage.



# *A Tootle Note to a Person I Appreciate*

Dear \_\_\_\_\_

I want to tell you about something I appreciate:

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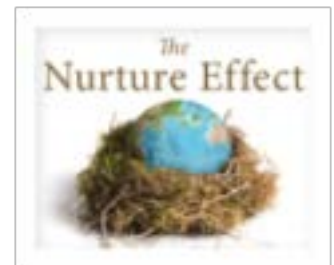
Sincerely \_\_\_\_\_



*The Nurture Network by Tony Biglan*

# Measure What You Want to Change

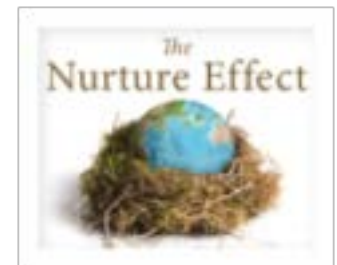
- Random one item surveys on cell phones about the things you are trying to increase.





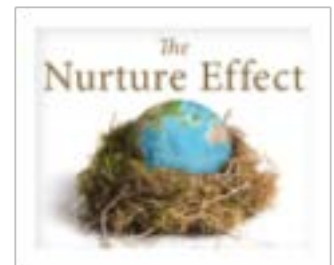
# Discussion

- Relevance to the organization you work in?
- Relevance to organizations you are trying to influence?



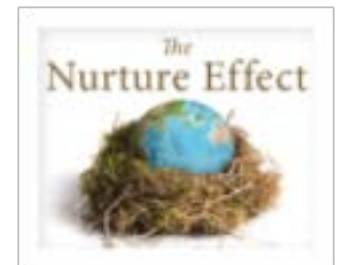
# For More Information

- Email me at [Tony@ori.org](mailto:Tony@ori.org)
- Copy of this talk
- Things you can do to make organizations more nurturing.



# Reading

- Biglan, A. (2015). *The Nurture Effect: How the Science of Human Behavior Can improve Our Lives and Our World*. Oakland, CA: New Harbinger.
- Biglan, A., Flay, B. R., Embry, D. D., & Sandler, I. (2012). Nurturing environments and the next generation of prevention research and practice. *American Psychologist*, 67, 257-271.
- Biglan, A., & Hayes, S. C. (1996). Should the behavioral sciences become more pragmatic? The case for functional contextualism in research on human behavior. *Applied and Preventive Psychology*, 5, 47-57.
- Biglan, A. (2003). Selection by consequences: One unifying principle for a transdisciplinary science of prevention. *Prevention Science*, 4, 213-232..
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- Embry, D. D. & Biglan, A. (2008). Evidence-based kernels: Fundamental units of behavioral influence. *Clinical Child and Family Psychology Review*, 11, 75-113.
- Putnam, R. (2015) *Our Kids*. New York: Simon and Schuster.



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