

# Fostering resilience in military families: Cascading effects of positive parenting

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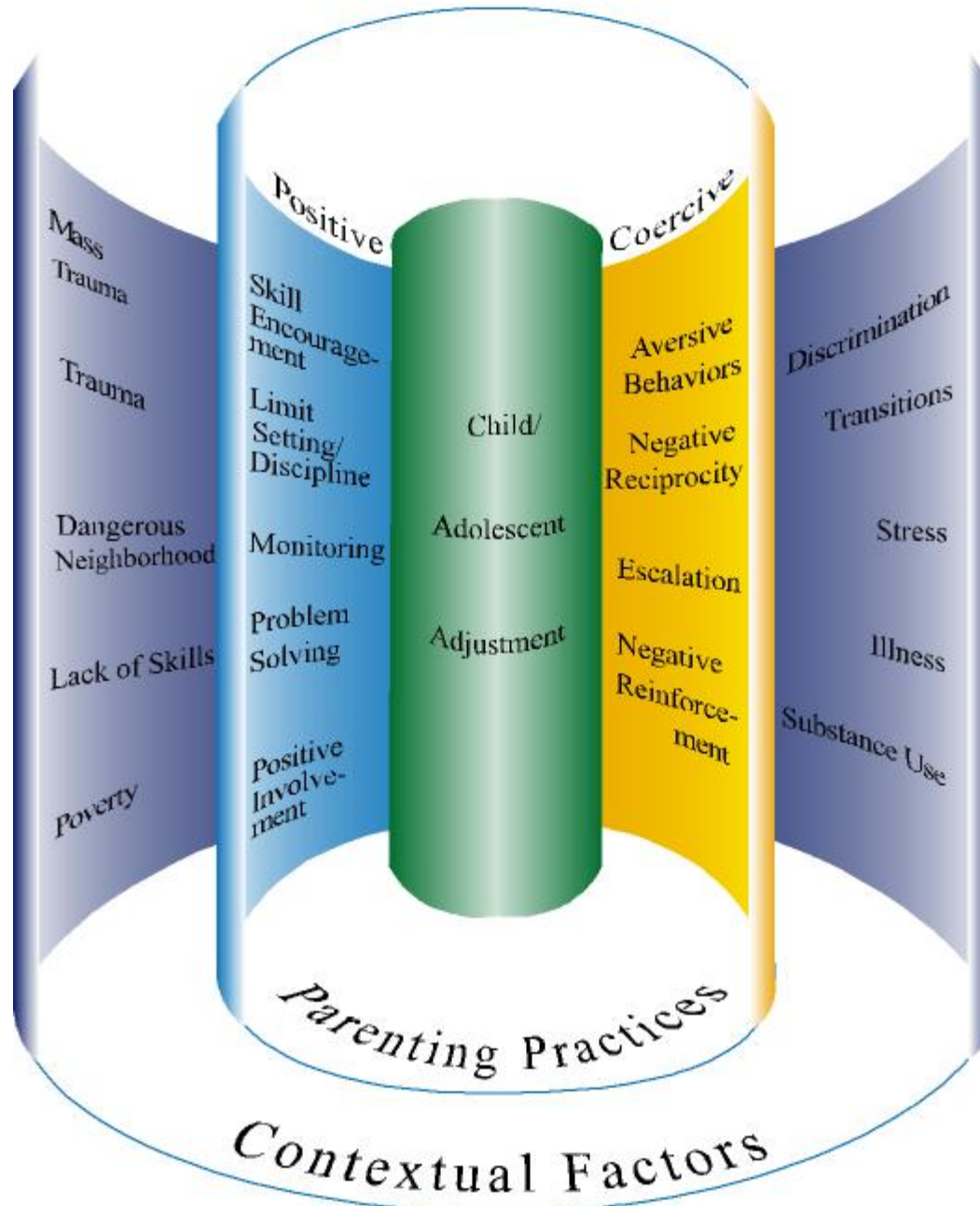
**ADAPT**

After Deployment: Adaptive Parenting Tools

# Overview

- Military families: Why focus on parenting?
- Parenting mediates associations between family stressors and children's resilience - i.e. effective parenting as buffer
- Promoting positive parenting has cascading effects throughout the family system, so adults and children alike benefit
- Few empirically-supported parenting programs for military families

# A Social Interactional Learning Model



Effective parenting protects children from family stressors

Patterson, Forgatch, & Gewirtz, in press

# Deployment is a military family stressor

- Deployment is a family stressor
  - Separations from family and children (MacDermid, 2006)
  - Combat related stressors (Cozza et al., 2005)
- Reintegration is a key transition point
  - Transitions offer special prevention opportunities
- Parenting practices mediate the impact of deployment stress on child outcomes
  - robust association in range of populations between family stressors (risks including parental substance use, PTSD, other psychiatric illness, interpersonal conflict, as well as family transitions, socioeconomic stress) and parenting difficulties, and subsequent child maladjustment (e.g., Beardslee et al., 1983; Patterson, 1982, 1986; Belsky, 1984; Capaldi, 1991; Conger et al., 2002; Palmer, 2008)

# Effective parenting practices are...

- Teaching through encouragement
- Contingent (non-coercive) discipline
- Family problem-solving
- Positive involvement with children
- Monitoring and supervision
- Regulating parent emotions and coaching children's emotions

# Validated parenting programs (e.g. parent management training-Oregon model)

- Improve parenting, and, as a result
- Improve children's resilience:
  - School performance
  - Social functioning
  - Social and emotional adjustment
    - Reduce behavior problems
    - Reduce depression
    - Reduce substance use
    - Reduced truancy and school problems

# But, improving parenting also has been demonstrated to...

- Improve parents' self-efficacy
- Reduce maternal depression & substance use
- Improve marital satisfaction and co-parenting
- In a sample of mothers, an evidence-based parenting program resulted in improved education, occupation, and income of those in the program group over 9 years later!
- Good news. Bad news is that there are few empirically supported parenting programs for military families

# After Deployment Adaptive Parenting Tools



**ADAPT**

After Deployment: Adaptive Parenting Tools



# Modifications to parent training model for military families: ADAPT

- ADAPT is a 14-week long, web-enhanced, group-based program for troops returning from deployment who have at least one child aged 5-12yrs
  - Weekly, provided in the community, 2hrs long
  - Online ADAPT is available to participants for 12 months
- Modifications include: attention to emotion regulation in family communication (emotion socialization)
  - Mindfulness training (to address experiential avoidance associated with combat stress symptoms)
  - Emotion coaching (esp. responding to children's anxiety)
- Attention to military culture and values (in group process, in tailored video material, role plays, etc)
- Emphasis on united parenting front
- Addressing common barriers to participation
  - Web-component to increase involvement in group program by other caregivers, spouses, etc.
  - Stand alone online ADAPT is also being tested (Marquez, Gewirtz, & DeGarmo, 2013-2015)
- ADAPT is currently undergoing a large-scale randomized controlled trial with 400 mainly NG/R families. Preliminary six and 12-month follow up data show positive outcomes – improved couple adjustment, discipline, emotion regulation.

