

The Social Ecology of Resilience: Families, Schools, Communities and Service Providers

*Ontario Summit for Children and Youth Mental Health
April, 2014*

Michael Ungar, Ph.D.

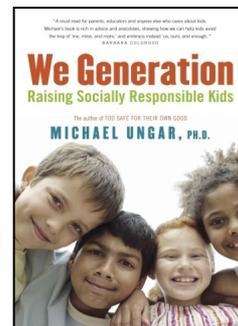
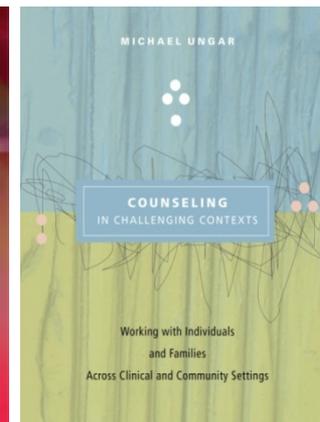
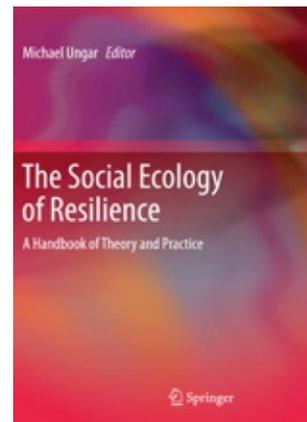
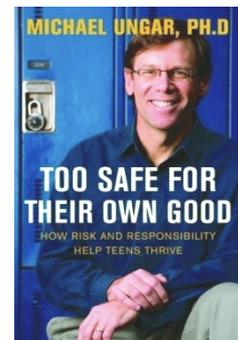
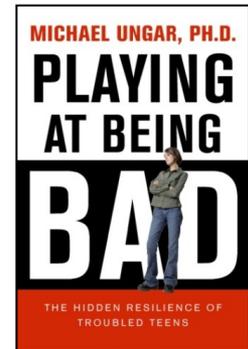
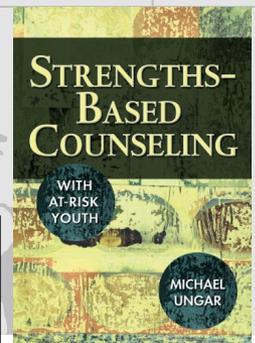
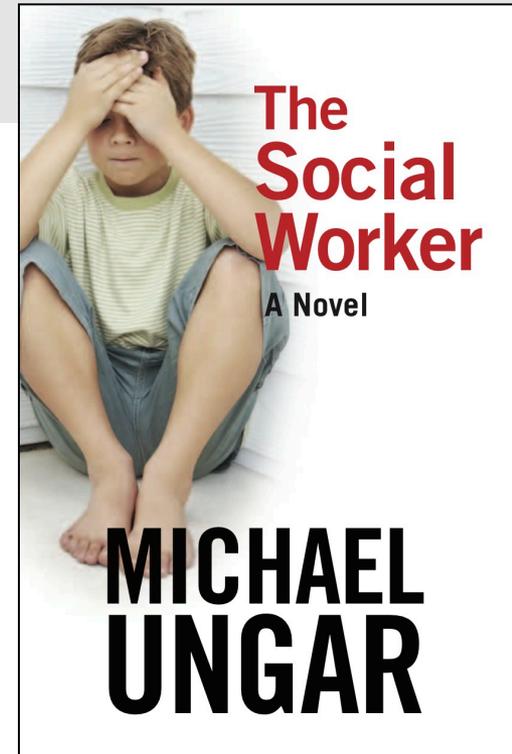
Killam Professor,

School of Social Work, Dalhousie University

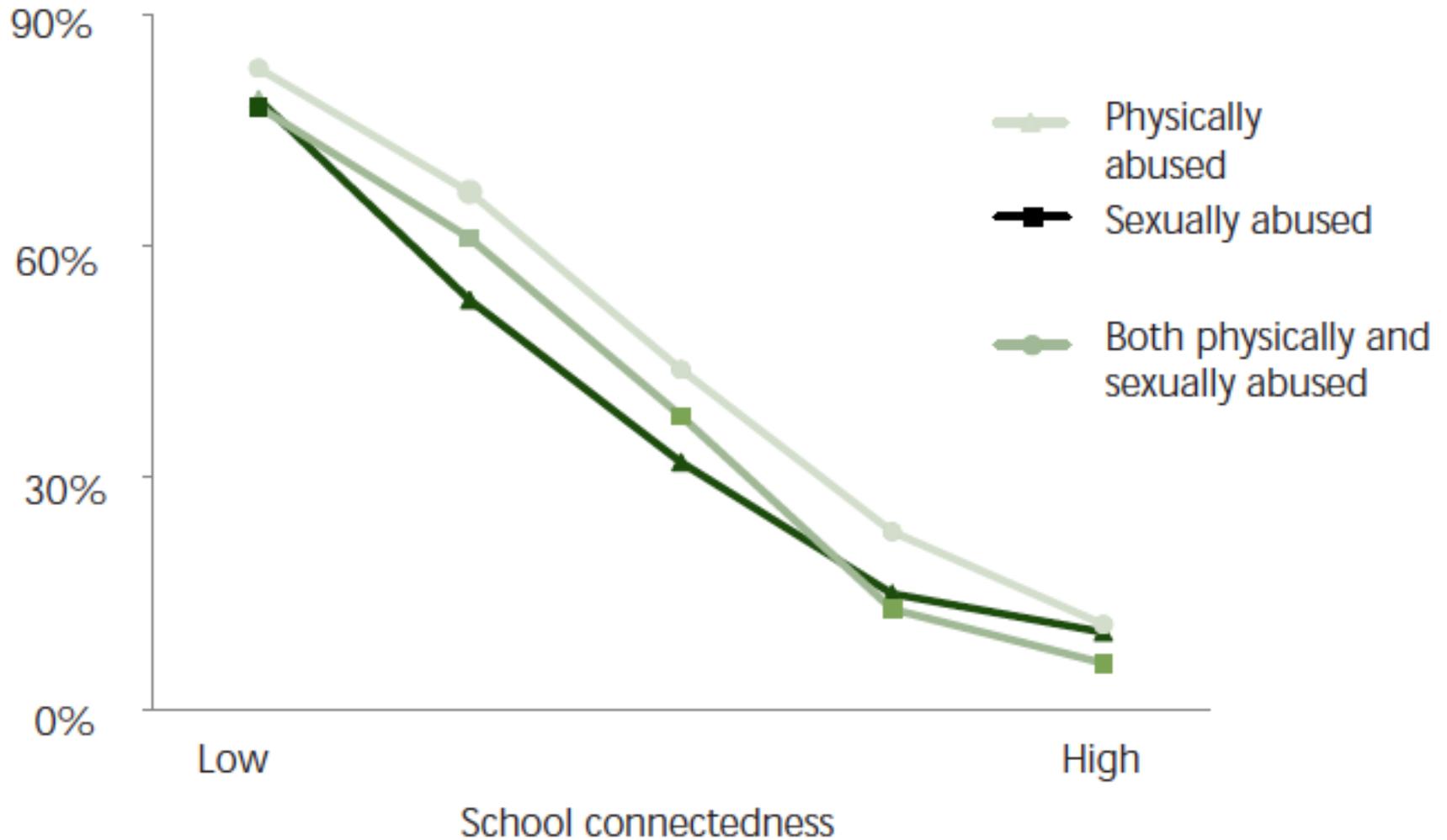
Twitter @MichaelUngarPhD

www.michaelungar.com

www.resilienceresearch.org



Suicidal ideation and school connectedness among abused students





5 things we know about resilience

#1. When we shape a child's social ecology, we influence resilience

- 'Nurture trumps nature'
- 'Grit' and 'Perseverance' can be taught



5 things we know about resilience

#2. The more troubled an individual, the more our efforts to help count

- Resources have a differential impact on resilience depending on the level of exposure to adversity



5 things we know about resilience

#3. It takes a family, a community, and a school to nurture resilience

- Resources are cumulative
- Ecologically complex, multi-level interventions are often most helpful when exposure to adversity is high



5 things we know about resilience

#4. Context and culture influence which protective processes have the most impact on outcomes



5 things we know about resilience

#5. Long-term, not all adaptations are advantageous to sustaining resilience

- ▣ Resilience is responsive to sociohistorical and developmental factors
- ▣ Adaptive and maladaptive behaviours can both be successful coping strategies depending on the context in which they are used



Psychological Resilience is...

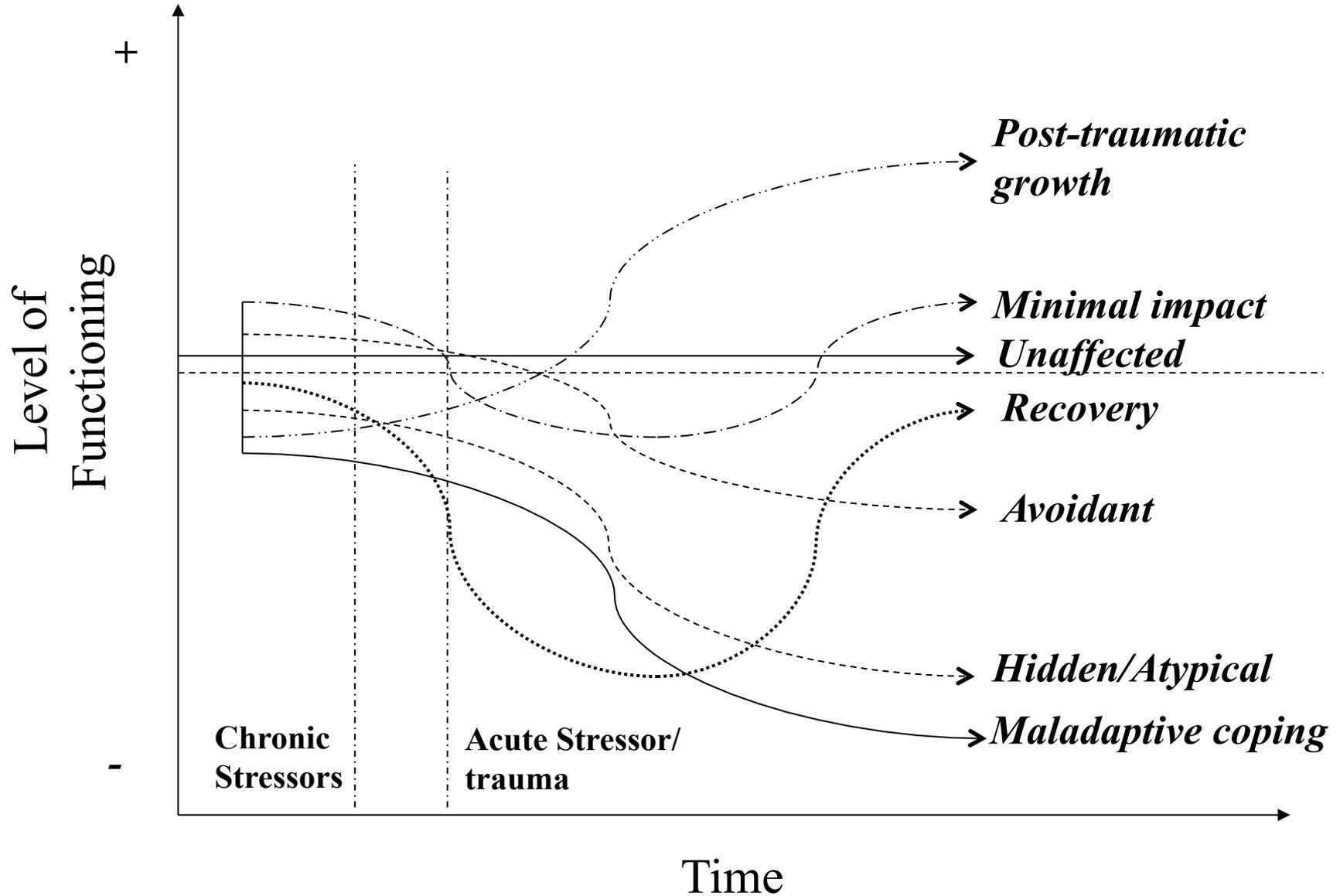
- ✦ In the context of exposure to significant adversity
- ✦ resilience is the capacity of individuals to *navigate* their way to the psychological, social, cultural, and physical resources that sustain their well being, and...
- ✦ their capacity individually and in groups to *negotiate* for these resources to be provided...
- ✦ in culturally meaningful ways.



Nine Things All Children Need

1. Structure
2. Consequences
3. Parent-child connections
4. Lots and lots of nurturing relationships
5. A powerful identity
6. A sense of control
7. A sense of belonging/cultural roots/spirituality/life purpose
8. Fair and just treatment
9. Physical and psychological safety

Patterns of Resilience





**When a resource is unavailable,
inaccessible, or potentially
harmful,**

***Better to Substitute than
Suppress***

Thank you!



Resilience
Research
Centre

Michael Ungar, Ph.D.

Killam Professor,

School of Social Work, Dalhousie University

Twitter @MichaelUngarPhD

www.michaelungar.com

www.resilienceresearch.org

