

# “From Cradle to College and Career”

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# For decades, we have been living in a culture of punishment...

- School suspensions are commonplace
- Children as young as 12 sentenced to life in prison without parole
- Prisons overflowing due to harsh and automatic sentencing
- One in three American youth arrested by age 23

# **... that condemns people for symptoms of their health problems...**

- Trauma is the top predictor of school suspensions
- 90% of youth in juvenile custody have experienced trauma
- Half of all incarcerated people have mental illness
- 65% of people behind bars are substance abusers or addicts

**... using punishment-first approaches that have compounded the effects of racism and implicit bias.**

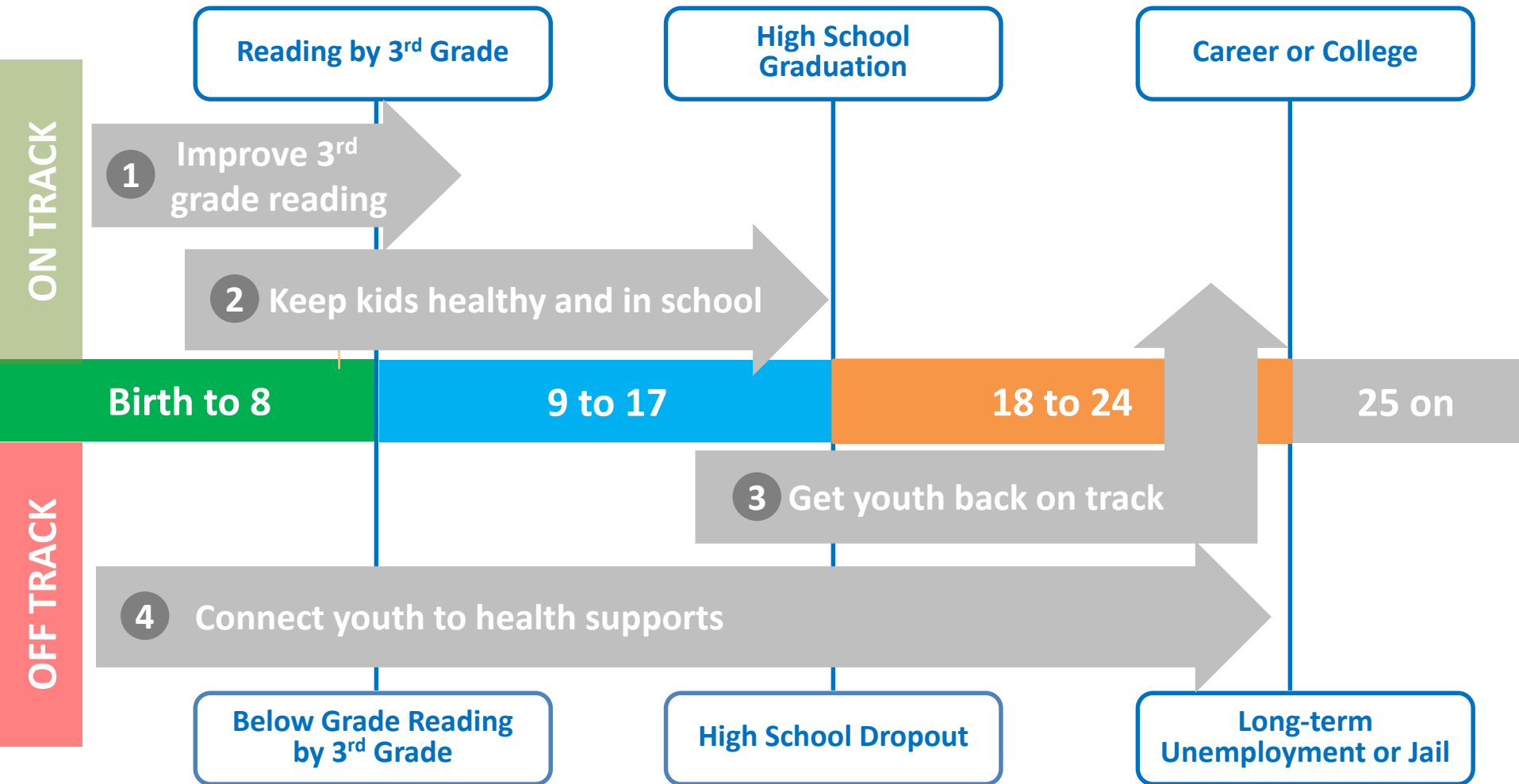
- Racial disparities in school suspensions start in preschool and build from there
- 70% of Californians in prison are people of color
- 1 in 3 black men in prison
- 1 in 6 Latino men in prison
- Half of all incarcerated people are parents

**Now, after decades of these failed approaches, a growing number of people understand:**

- You can't suspend your way to school success
- You can't sentence your way to safer communities
- We need schools, not prisons
- We need prevention, not punishment



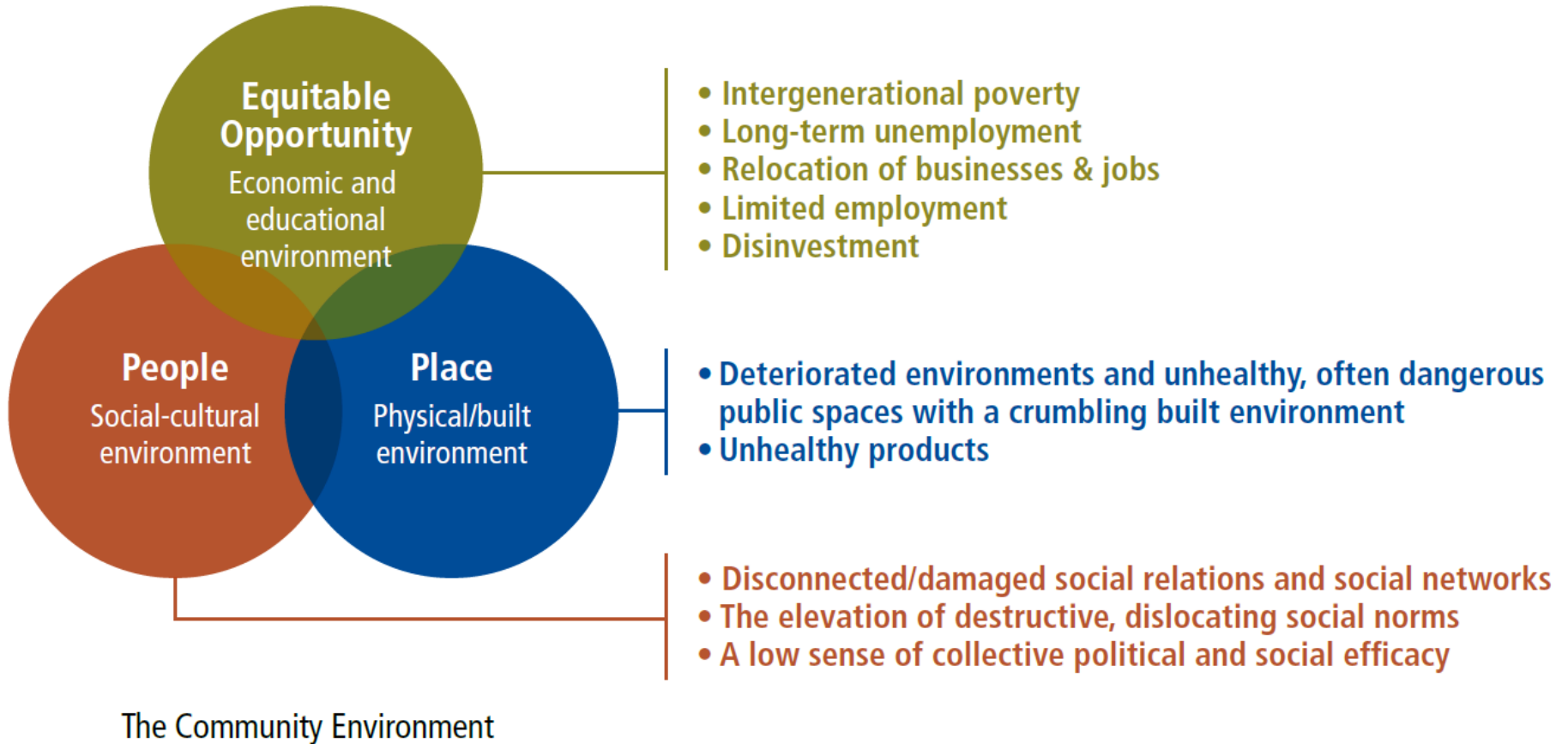
# Boys on Track: An Early Warning System



# **School-based Restorative Justice Programs**

Are increasingly being recognized as alternatives to suspensions that are effective in repairing harm or conflict, reducing student risk behaviors and violence, and building community.

# Symptoms of Community Trauma

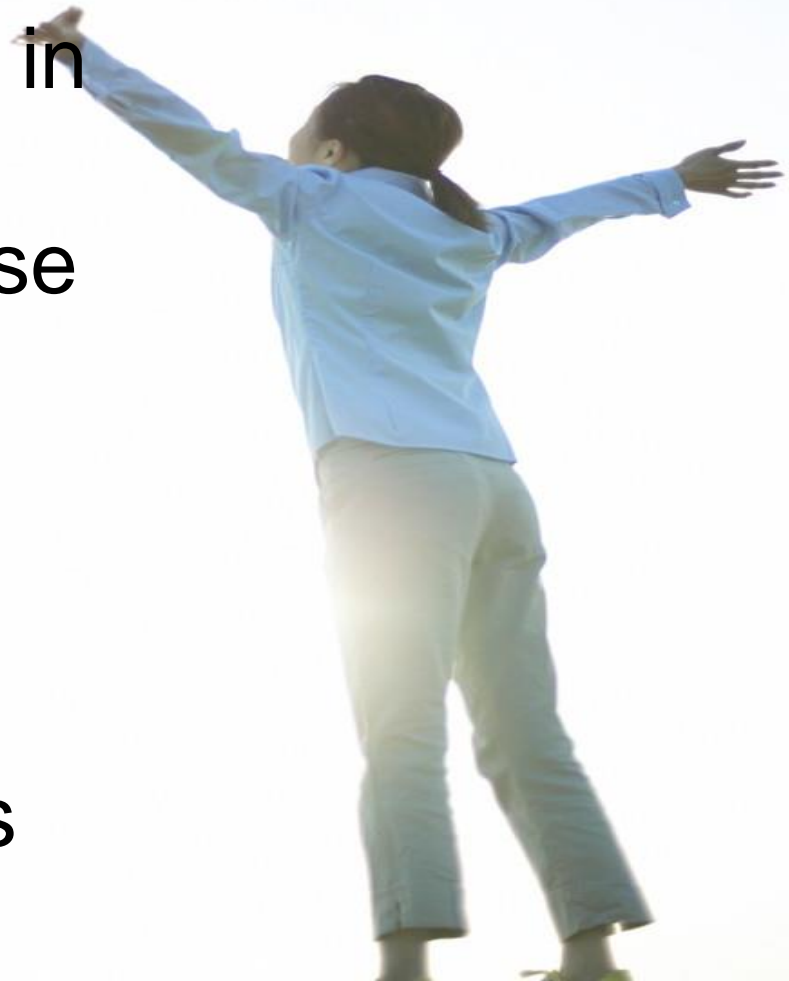




# Trauma is More Common Than We'd Like to Admit

One in seven of all California babies born in 2006 and 2007 had been reported for abuse or neglect by age five.

25% of Californians report 2-3 adverse childhood experiences (ACEs)



# What are ACEs?

ACEs, or Adverse Childhood Experiences, are traumatic experiences that can have a profound impact on a child's developing brain and body with lasting impacts on a person's health and livelihood throughout her lifetime.

# Why Does This Matter?



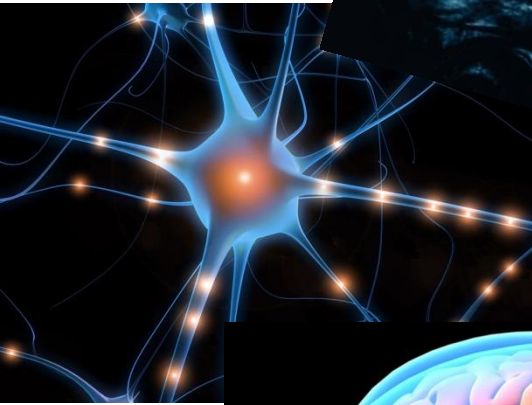
Dozens of studies have confirmed that childhood trauma accurately predicts serious health problems later in life.

Time does not heal all wounds.

# For kids, the stakes are high

- Trauma is the No. 1 predictor of school suspension and No. 2 predictor of academic failure (after being in special education)
- Kids with 2+ adverse childhood experiences are 3x more likely to repeat a grade
- 90% of kids in juvenile justice system have a history of trauma

# Brain Science Helps Explain Why



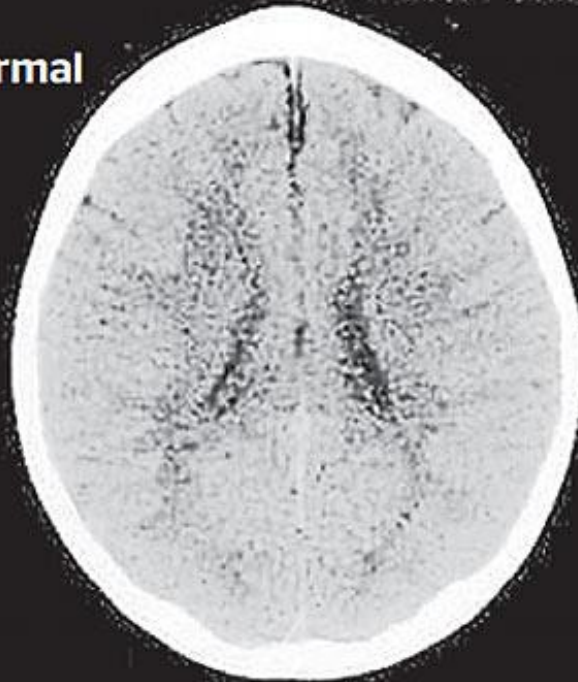
- Nurturing, responsive, and individualized interactions from birth build healthy brain structure.
- Healthy brain architecture is the foundation required for future learning, behavior and health.



# HOW STRESS CHANGES A CHILD'S BRAIN

## 3-YEAR-OLD CHILDREN

Normal



Extreme neglect



- Prolonged exposure to trauma triggers physiological changes in the brain.

- Neural circuits are disrupted, causing changes in the hippocampus, the brain's memory and emotional centre.

- This can cause brain shrinkage, problems with memory, learning and behaviour.

- A child does not learn to regulate emotions when living in state of constant stress.

- Associated with greater risk of chronic disease and mental health problems in adulthood.

# To prevent trauma, we must start early

- Pre-natal and early childhood:
  - Screen moms-to-be
  - Awareness building among pediatricians
  - Parent education
  - Home visitation
  - Quality child care and pre-school



# Trauma-Informed Schools

- Training educators and school staff about trauma and brain development
- Teach “self regulation” – what to do when you are anxious and angry
- Replace suspensions and expulsions with peaceful conflict resolution
- School based health services
- Guard against over medication of children



health  
happens  
here



with Resilience