

# Families and COVID-19: Building Resilience through the Lens of the Neurorelational Framework

## DEBRA T. KESSLER, PsyD, MSN, RN

COVID-19 has tested many families and their ability to cope with challenges faced in the pandemic. The stressors can become toxic and overwhelming, and some may undermine health and interpersonal relationships. With the right foundation, these stressors have the ability to become a springboard in building resiliency.

This presentation will provide concrete strategies to support families in building resilience based on the Neurorelational Framework. Dr. Kessler will identify specific challenges posed by COVID-19 and explore ways to respond to those challenges to mitigate the buildup of toxic stress and to foster resilience.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

1. Describe specific ways the COVID-19 pandemic can impact development and allostatic load.
2. Recognize priorities that support the shift from increased vulnerability to increased resilience.
3. Identify interventions based on brain networks and the neurodevelopmental hierarchy.

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DEBRA KESSLER, PsyD, MSN, RN, started her career as an RN in a Pediatric Intensive Care Unit. After earning her master's degree in Pediatric Nursing from UCLA, she worked in several clinical and administrative nursing roles. In 2003, after earning her doctorate from the California School of Professional Psychology, she became a licensed clinical psychologist. Her clinical focus has been on challenges with autism spectrum disorder, neurodevelopment, sensory processing, attachment and parenting. She has trained in both bottom-up treatment approaches (EEG neurofeedback, DIRFloortime) and top-down interventions (collaborative problem-solving, DBT, DBT-C). Her clinical priorities are guided by the Neurorelational Framework, which brings together principles of neurodevelopment and the role of parenting to provide a comprehensive treatment approach. In addition to her clinical work, she has written blogs for PsychAlive.

MARCH 2021

Santa Barbara Cottage Hospital  
Psychiatry and Addiction Medicine  
Department invites you to virtually  
attend its March 2021 presentation.

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**TUESDAY, MARCH 23, 2021**

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Noon to 1:30 p.m.  
No meals or breaks provided.

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This event has gone virtual.  
Join us via GoToTraining at:

[attendee.gototraining.com/r/2094596452407115522](https://attendee.gototraining.com/r/2094596452407115522)

Training ID: 598-599-548

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**Cottage**  
Psychiatry and  
Addiction Medicine

## CONTINUING EDUCATION

**PHYSICIANS:** Please note that Psychiatric Grand Rounds is no longer able to offer CMEs because of changes to the CME requirements.

- Course meets the qualifications for 1 hour of continuing education (CE) credit for LMFTs, LCSWs, LPCCs, and LEPs as required by the California Board of Behavioral Sciences.
- Santa Barbara Cottage Hospital is approved by the California Association of Marriage and Family Therapists to sponsor continuing education for LMFTs, LCSWs, LPCCs, and LEPs (provider # 57341) and Santa Barbara Cottage Hospital maintains responsibility for the program/course and its content.
- Course approved by the California Board of Registered Nursing, Provider #00252 for 1 contact hour.
- Continuing Education: Attendance for the full hour is required to receive credit. CE credit is not offered for meals or breaks.

**COTTAGE HEALTH EMPLOYEES:** send name, email and employee number to: cmanigau@sbch.org

**FEES:** There is no charge to Cottage Health employees. There is a \$15 fee to Non-Cottage attendees who wish to receive continuing education credit.

**CERTIFICATES:** Cottage Health employees will complete evaluations in Compass Learning. Non-Cottage attendees will receive certificates within 10 business days of returning the evaluation and paying the \$15 fee. Detailed instructions will be provided at registration.

- Grievances may be addressed directly to the Education Department.
- If you are in need of special accommodation, please contact the Education Department at (805) 569-7325.

### PROGRAM COORDINATORS

Cynthia Manigault, BSN, RN  
Carole Reynolds Ingraham, LMFT

### EDUCATION CONSULTANT

Christine Block, MSN, RN, SCRNP

### TARGET AUDIENCE

Addiction Counselors  
Clinical Nurse Specialists  
Counselors  
Marriage & Family Therapists  
Nurse Practitioners  
Nurses  
Occupational Therapists  
Occupational Therapy Assistants  
Other Mental Health Professionals  
Pharmacists  
Psychologists  
Psychotherapists  
Social Workers

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After registering you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the training.