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### Poverty & ACEs Reflection

There is a certain responsibility bestowed upon nurses to treat a patient's physical ailments utilizing various prescriptions of medications. While there is much importance in addressing a patient's physical health, it is equally important to treat their mental health. After watching the selected videos online about poverty and adverse childhood experiences, it is revealed that early negative effects on mental health may increase the negative impacts on physical health.

Children living in poverty or have experienced trauma early in life may have their brains altered that increase the risk of illnesses later on in life. These alterations affect the pleasure/reward center of the brain as well as impulse control, executive function and overall stress responses. The repeated stress activation is especially damaging for children because of their continually developing brain function and other body systems. The increased tendency to engage in high-risk behaviors is obviously also very damaging to overall health. Many different types of healthcare professionals may work together as a team in the hospital setting to treat illnesses and diseases to no end, but the earlier the primary prevention occurs the better the outcomes. As healthcare workers treat diseases, there must also be interventions in the community that promote a more stress-free environment for children and reduce the prolonged activations of stress hormones.

As a registered nurse I will not only prioritize treatments and medications, but I will put more importance to how I interact with patients with their mental health in mind. I will put in the effort to create a safe environment and provide opportunities for each patient to receive support. This would also include making myself more knowledgeable to various programs that may best help addressing emotional, social or financial needs. I will also pay more attention to patient background as it is especially important for safety and security continue into home life. Overall,

this has opened my eyes to how far the roots of poor health are sown and the importance of creating an environment where children can find the support they need.