The reading in Grief and loss through the lifespan this week demonstrated a theme that had me triggered as I was reading. The theme I found was that even though we know how crucial development is at these early stages, so little is done to educate or support parents through this difficult time in parenting. Parent's can't afford childcare so they are forces with the choice of taking higher paying jobs or leaving their children in less than ideal environments. For example, In point 1- "nuances found that toddlers of lower SEC parents have lower cognitive abilities" the text discusses some of the nuances but doesn't go on to fully describe what they are other than citing more stimulating environments and later bedtimes. The nuance is so much deeper than that. There are later bedtimes because the parents are often working late, therefore get a late start (if at all) on dinner, bedtimes etc. The environments are more stimulating because either, there are more people living in the household (due to the cost of housing) and/or cultural differences place less value on quiet downtime and more value on active family time. Anyone coming from a "loud Latino household" like myself can attest to this. My main issue with this was that without a full understanding of such nuances it's easy to dismiss children from lower SEC homes as just having lower cognitive ability. Or it becomes easy to blame the parenting skills (or lack thereof) in those homes without understanding what parents endure. It's important to note that the challenges for families of low SEC span all racial lines.

The second point about "Challenging social environments and the associated ACEs affect neurological, endocrine, immune and epigenetic aspects of children's growth leaving them at risk for health and mental health problems in their future." Shows that the problems associated with lower SECs are cyclical. Low SECs result in higher ACEs which result in higher issues later in

life. The third point about “In the United States the Trump administration has been systematically undoing regulations critical to minimizing pollutants, creating increased risk for every child, particularly those in lower SES.” Showed how not only is this cyclical but it’s systemic. Adults from higher SECs often try to deny or erase the evidence of these systemic issues because it doesn’t serve them. I think it’s important point to note is that while families from lower SECs are typically families of color, the common factor here is low SECs and not race. It seems that whenever race is mentioned in this country the divisions become even larger, when race is only a portion of the issue. Perhaps if we focus on the broader issue of the wealth gap, we would get further along in our discussions.

I had a boss one time tell me that she didn’t believe in the need for social services because her husband was an immigrant and was able to be very successful without any social services. She argued with me emphatically refusing to see that there was nuance to her husband’s story and that she couldn’t make such a blanket comparison. Although she was generally kind to me, she went on to treat me differently than other employees who held similar conservative views. The problem I saw then and was reminded of during this reading is that the broken system that has created the socioeconomic wealth gap seems to be one of the biggest threats to children in this country regardless of race.