

The Impact of Trauma on a Child's Brain and Body

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Objectives

Part 2:

Discuss mechanisms to reset the Stress Response Dysregulation Concrete examples for everyday issues Recommendations for treatment, books, activities

Real-life trauma survivors



Put on Your Trauma Lens





Stress Response Dysregulation

Emotional coaching

Consistency and predictability

Alter the environment

Grounding techniques

Nutrition, sleep, exercise

Hormone regulation

Trauma therapy



Emotional Coaching





Emotional Coaching







List of Feelings









Happy



Angry



Other feelings









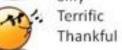
















Annoyed Bugged

Destructive Disgusted Frustrated **Fuming**

Furious Grumpy

Irritated Mad

Mean Violent



Ashamed Bored

Confused

Curious

Embarrassed

Jealous

Moody

Responsible

Scared Shy

Uncomfortable Worried



















Unloved

Withdrawn





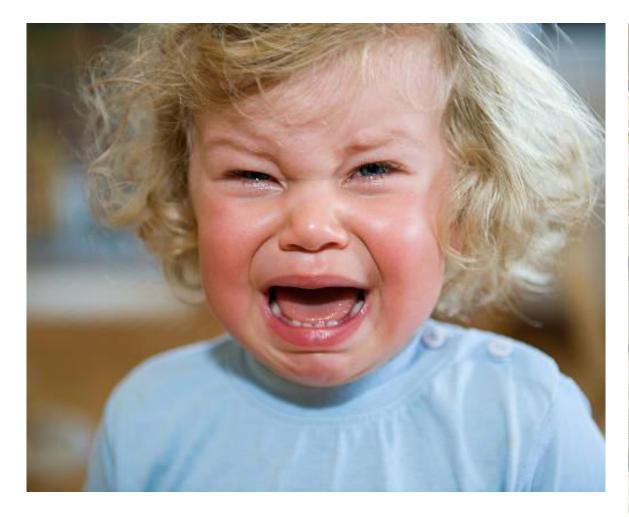








Emotional Coaching







Consistency and Predictability

- Increases a sense of safety as the world becomes less scary and more predictable
- Over time allows the child to relax their vigilance and control
- They have less energy devoted to fight/flight/or freeze
- It opens the door for reshaping their development
- Aids the child in their ability to organize their world
- This is not to be confused with rigidity—consistency still allows for flexibility



Consistency and Predictability

- Set a schedule: mealtimes, naps, bedtime
 - Mealtimes--sit at table, adjust table sitting to each child, utensils
 - Naps—sleep in same place
 - Bedtime routines—bath/book/teeth/stories
 - Find time to play every day
- Consistency allows child to be less vigilant, relax in the environment, and able to emotionally regulate
- Transfer these skills to school setting
 - Sit in same spot every day
 - Let child know the plan for the day
 - Consider the non-scheduled times (recess, lunch) and how to support

Alter the Environment

Placement in the room, small vs large environment, busy or quiet

Introduce objects/tools slowly with added time for adjustment

Frequent breaks, anticipate and plan for transitions

Monitor response to transitions, meals, change

When you start to see emotional dysregulation, slow down, regroup

Safe place for emotional reset

Demonstrate how to take an emotional break and regroup





Alter the Environment

- Areas that cause fear/discomfort:
 - Bathrooms, bed, closets, basements
 - Lights, sounds, touch, heat/cold
 - Playgrounds, museums, restaurants, relatives

- Consider altering silverware, cups, food containers for ease of use and fewer accidents.
- Child may not be able to fold laundry, hang clothing on hangars, clean up room, put away toys. Alter environment to accommodate their abilities.



Grounding Skills

Grounding skills are useful for traumatized kids when:

The child is experiencing a flashback

The child is triggered

The child is dissociating/tuning out/shut down

The child needs to reconnect to the present

The child needs help to feel safe

The child needs help to modulate arousal



Grounding Tools

Sight--visual cards, look out the window

Smell—lotions on hand/wrist, teabags

Taste—cinnamon gum, hard candy

Touch—squishy ball, playdough

Hearing—music, singing, noise reducing headphones



Nutrition, Sleep, Exercise

Nutrition: Teach parent and child healthy choices, small changes frequently

Sleep: Address first and continually readdress

Exercise: Must be natural and fun, 60 minutes of increased heart rate every day









Transition Objects

Help a child change from one situation or environment to another

No age limit on having a transition object No sex restriction on type of object

Blankets, necklace, rocks, stuffed animal, picture, anything with special meaning to the child





Bruce Perry

"The only way to move from a super-high anxiety state, to a more calm cognitive state, is rhythm. Patterned, repetitive rhythmic activity: walking, running, dancing, singing, repetitive meditative breathing, you use brainstem related somatosensory networks which make your brain accessible to relational reward and cortical thinking."



Examples of Rhythmic Physical Movement

- Yoga
- Swimming
- Singing
- Drumming
- Roller/ice skating
- Crocheting/knitting
- Walking/running
- Biking
- Skateboarding
- Deep breathing



















Take Home Points

- Trauma to children causes brain damage, changes their epigenetics and immune system, and alters their development
- Children are resilient: every one of us is a part of their resiliency. Hope can be built.
- Recognizing trauma related behaviors in children is important so the reaction to the behavior does not further traumatize the child
- Traumatized children can be repaired
- Treating, teaching, and parenting traumatized children is exhausting but very rewarding



Resources

National Child Traumatic Stress Network

Act of Congress 2005, in response to 9/11 and the national trauma experienced by children affected by this act of terrorism

Center for Youth Wellness, Dr. Nadine Burke Harris, TED talk

Washington State Department of Social and Health Services

- 1-866-END HARM (1-866-363-4276)
- Mandatory Reporters

Education: Darkness to Light

Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Trainings and resources

http://www.edutopia.org

http://massadvocates.org/tlpi/

http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/childmaltreatment/index.html

Paper Tigers Documentary



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