



INDIANA
DEPARTMENT OF
CHILD
SERVICES

Trauma-Informed Response to Behavior

Education Services
Permanency and Practice Support

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Let's Take a Mindful Minute

Mindfulness means "being aware of what is happening right now and how you feel about it."

Close Your Eyes. Sit Quietly, and...

Breathe

Take deep breaths, and let them out slowly. Think about how the air goes in and out of your lungs.

Listen

Listen to the sounds around you, and think about how many sounds you can name.

See

Look at one item around you; and think about its shape, color, texture, and how it is made.

Touch

Use your fingertips to feel an item or the area around you. Think about how it feels and the words you would use to describe it.

Smile

Open your eyes, and enjoy the world around you.

Learning Objectives

- Learn about the Adverse Childhood Experiences Study (ACES)
- Define Trauma
- Understand trauma and stress-response behaviors
- Define trauma-informed care
- Identifying strategies for how adults respond to behaviors in a trauma-informed and nurturing way



Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES) Primer



What is Trauma?

- A traumatic or adverse experience is an event that threatens someone's life, safety, or well-being.
- Trauma overwhelms one's capacity to cope.
- A child does not have to be the direct victim to be traumatized by the occurrence – witnessing the event(s) can be traumatizing.
- Trauma should be recognized as part of the daily experience of many children.



Clinical Approaches

- Clinicians provide therapy, but trauma-informed youth workers also directly support how successfully these treatments are implemented at home and in the community.
- Evidence Based Practices:
 - Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT)
 - Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR)
 - Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT)



Shaping of Beliefs

- Trauma shapes the survivor's basic beliefs about identity, world view, and spirituality
 - Why did this happen? (Abuse is inevitable)
 - Why to me? (It was my fault)
 - What does this mean? (Nothing I do will make any difference)
- “We suffer (in our minds, hearts, bodies, and relationships) from every critical and negative thought. We BENEFIT (in our minds, bodies, hearts, and spirits) from every positive, grateful, and compassionate one.” Center for Thriving Relationships

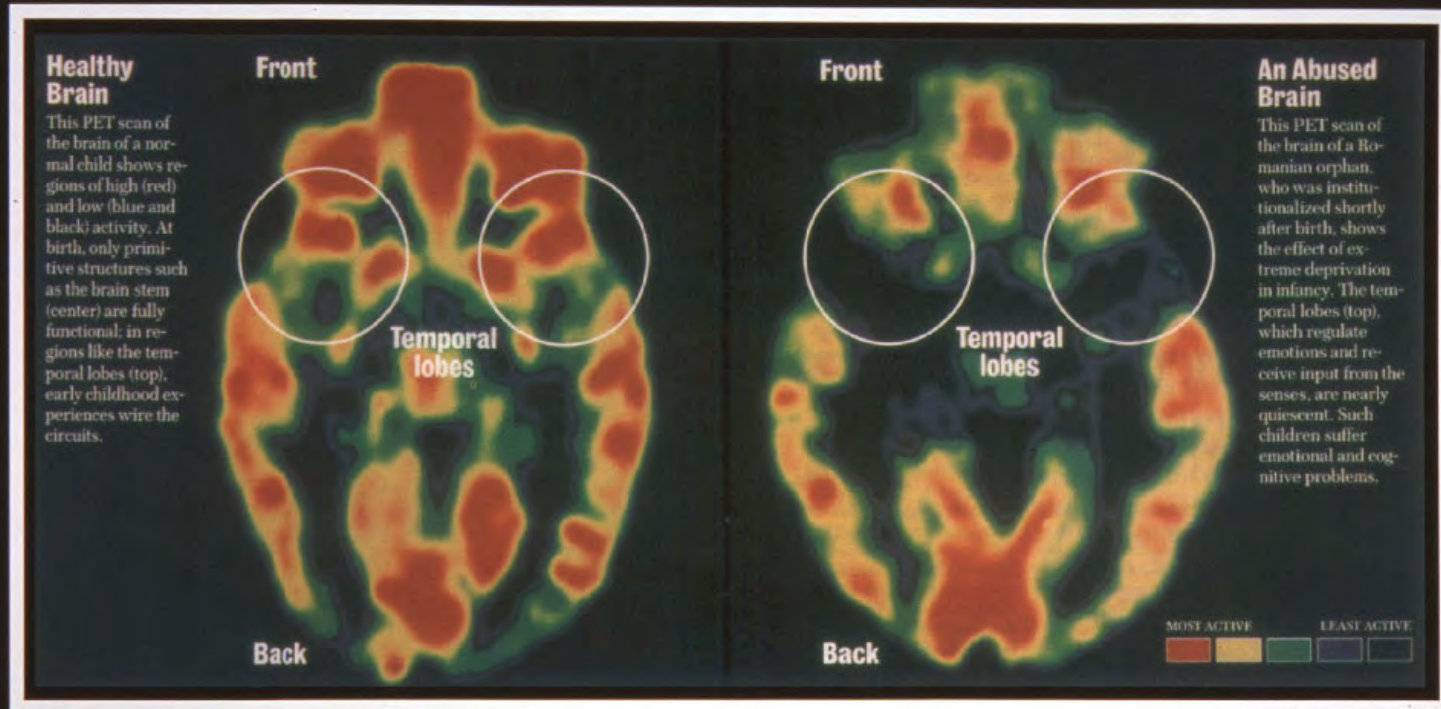


Past Exposure to Trauma

- The effects of trauma are cumulative. The child who has had prior, or chronic, trauma exposure is at the greatest risk of developing symptoms.



Brain Development

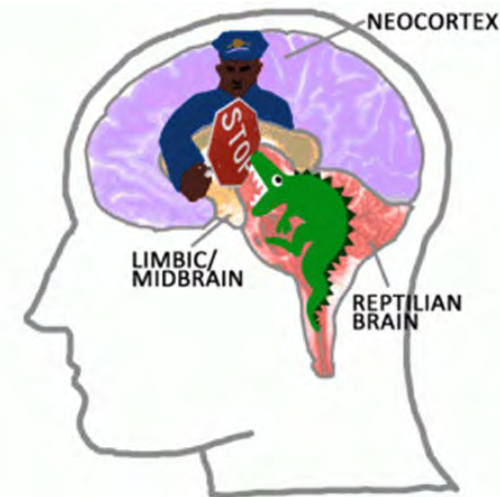


CDC
CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL
AND PREVENTION



Effects of Trauma on Brain Development and Learning

- Difficulty with
 - learning and processing verbal information
 - using language to communicate
 - organizing and retrieving information
 - understanding cause and effect
 - focusing on and completing tasks
 - planning and anticipating
- Disrupted orientation in time and space
- Poor problem-solving skills



Signs of Trauma

- Self imposed isolation
- Aggression
- Lack of focus/attention
- Unexplained severe mood changes
- Extreme reaction to physical touch
- Low ability to make and keep friends



Biology affects behavior

5 biological considerations that direct behavior

- Sleep
- Nutrition and eating habits
- Movement and exercise
- Body awareness
- Health status or special considerations



Strengths of Traumatized Children

- They are very aware of how they are treated
- Typically responsive to respectful adults
- Recognize sincerity, easily distinguish insincerity
- Concerned about fairness and justice
- Capable of great loyalty
- Actively seek personal control and mastery
- Possess strong survival skills
- Open to change, so long as they are offered an option that does not threaten their safety or subject them to humiliation



Trauma-Informed Care

*Trauma-informed care shifts the focus from:
‘What’s wrong with you?’ to
‘What happened to you?’*



Is Punishment the Answer?

- By definition, to punish is to deliberately make someone suffer — either because a primitive version of justice seems to demand it (If you do something bad, then something bad must be done to you) or because it's assumed that punishment will teach you a lesson. The premise here is that when we make you unhappy by forcing you to do something you find aversive, or by preventing you from doing something you enjoy, you'll become a better person. (Kohn, 2013, par. 3)



Trauma-Informed Care

Trauma and adversity can undermine children's ability to learn, form relationships, and function appropriately, and adults can struggle to know how to best support them.

- A trauma-informed environment creates a better experience for everyone involved
- Trauma-sensitive environments benefit ALL CHILDREN



NON TRAUMA INFORMED

- POWER OVER
- YOU CAN'T CHANGE
- JUDGING
- PEOPLE NEED FIXING FIRST
- OPERATE FROM THE DOMINANT CULTURE
- PEOPLE ARE OUT TO GET YOU
- RIGHT/WRONG
- HELPING
- "YOU'RE CRAZY!"
- COMPLIANCE/OBEDIENCE
- NEED-TO-KNOW BASIS FOR INFO
- PRESENTING ISSUE
- "US AND THEM"
- LABELS, PATHOLOGY
- FEAR-BASED
- I'M HERE TO FIX YOU
- DIDACTIC
- PEOPLE MAKE BAD CHOICES
- BEHAVIOR VIEWED AS PROBLEM
- WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU?
- BLAME/SHAME
- GOAL IS TO DO THINGS THE 'RIGHT' WAY
- PRESCRIPTIVE
- PEOPLE ARE BAD
- CONSIDER ONLY RESERCH AND EVIDENCE

- POWER WITH
- YOUR BRAIN IS 'PLASTIC'
- OBSERVING
- PEOPLE NEED SAFETY FIRST
- CULTURAL HUMILITY
- PEOPLE CAN LIVE UP TO THE TRUST YOU GIVE THEM
- MULTIPLE VIEWPOINTS
- LEARNING
- "IT MAKES SENSE"
- EMPOWERMENT/COLLABORATION
- TRANSPARENCY AND PREDICTABILITY
- WHOLE PERSON AND HISTORY
- WE'RE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER
- BEHAVIOR AS COMMUNICATION
- EMPATHY-BASED
- SUPPORT HEALING
- PARTICIPATORY
- PEOPLE WHO FEEL UNSAFE DO UNSAFE THINGS
- BEHAVIOR VIEWED AS SOLUTION
- WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU?
- RESPECT
- GOAL IS TO CONNECT
- CHOICE
- PEOPLE ARE DOING THE BEST THEY CAN
- CONSIDER ALSO LIVED EXPERIENCE

TRAUMA INFORMED CARE



SPACE Principles of Trauma-Informed Practice

- Research into the neurobiology of trauma suggests that when children are experiencing a trauma-response, the most complex functions of the brain are switched off.
- Acronym SPACE represents 5 key dimensions that can be incorporated into strategies to respond to the needs of children who have experienced trauma.

(Australian Childhood Foundation, 2010)



SPACE

Staged
Predictable
Adaptive
Connected
Enabled



The Nurtured Heart Approach

- A relationship-focused methodology founded on “The 3 Stands” for helping children build their inner wealth and use their intensity in successful ways. Core methodologies originally developed for working with the most difficult children but has a proven impact on every child, including those challenged behaviorally, socially and academically (Glasser, 2008).



The Nurtured Heart Approach: Core Methodologies

The 3 Stands

- **Stand One: Absolutely No!**
I refuse to energize negative behavior.
- **Stand Two: Absolutely Yes!**
I will relentlessly energize the positive.
- **Stand Three: Absolute Clarity!**
I will maintain total clarity about rules that demonstrate fair and consistent boundaries



Empowering Responses to Behaviors

It is the response that decides whether a situation will be escalated or de-escalated and a child humanized or dehumanized.

(Children's Success Foundation)



Supporting Emotional Regulation

Avoid

- Time Out
- Distraction techniques
- Punishment
- Banning a behavior

Try

- Time in
- Simple, direct language
- Restorative Consequences
- Offer replacement behavior



Helpful Strategies to Use Initial

Initial signs of escalation

- When you notice a change in behavior - a child is agitated, frustrated, stressed...

Offer Help

- Stay calm
- Give them attention
- Ask, “Is everything alright?”
- Listen
- Validate their feelings
- Help them to relax
- Give choices



Helpful Strategies to Use in the Heat of the Moment

Child is in an escalated state

- When the child is shut down or verbally or physically aggressive...

Stay Calm

- Ensure safety
- Speak softly
- Give them space
- Acknowledge their feelings



Helpful Strategies to Use Post

Post-escalation

- Child is remorseful or sad, tired, seeking out support...

Support the child

- Support and reassure
- Help to save-face
- Offer options
- Begin problem solving
- Talk about how to regulate emotions in the future
- Remind the child they can try again



Relationship Building

- Take time to bond with children
- Value the child—in a way that they recognize their self-worth
- Engage in the child's world of interests, experiences and thoughts
- Provide opportunities for child-driven conversation
- Focus on what the child is doing right
- Build trust



Resources

- National Child Traumatic Stress Network www.nctsnet.org
- The Adverse Childhood Experiences Study (ACE) www.acestudy.org
- *ACES Primer, Paper Tigers, Resilience* by KPJR Films. kpjrfilms.co
- *SELF-REG: How to Help Your Child (and You) Break the Stress Cycle and Successfully Engage with Life* by Dr. Stuart Shanker with Teresa Barker
- *Transforming the Difficult Child: The Nurtured Heart Approach* by Howard Glasser and Jennifer Easley www.difficultchild.com
- *Making Space for Learning: Trauma Informed Practice in Schools* by the Australian Childhood Foundation
- *Helping Traumatized Children Learn* (Massachusetts Advocates for Children)
- *Effects of Traumatic Events on Children* from the Child Trauma Academy www.childtrauma.org
- *Why Do We Punish Children?* <https://www.alfiekohn.org/blogs/whypunish/>



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