

The Impact of Trauma in Childhood

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- Define childhood trauma
- Recognize behavior that is indicative of stress related to trauma
- Identify symptoms and behaviors of trauma
- Understand how childhood trauma affects academic achievement and the social-emotional well-being of students
- Describe the qualities of a trusting child/adult relationship
- Discuss ways of providing support
- Provide resources & self-care tools to parents & educators

DEFINING TRAUMA

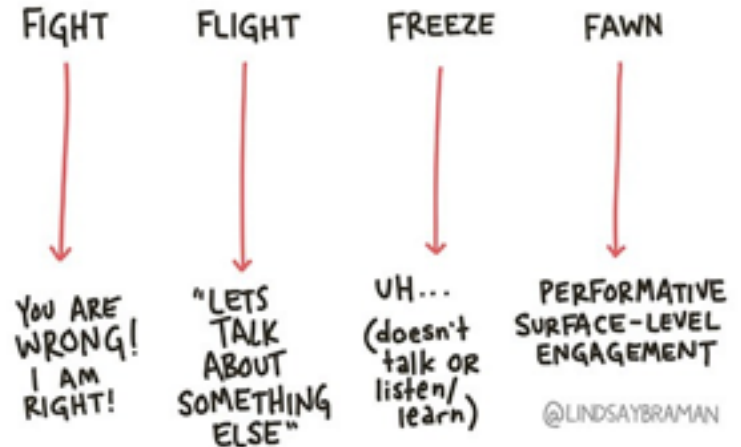
Trauma is a pervasive problem. It results from exposure to an incident or series of events that are emotionally disturbing or life-threatening with lasting adverse effects on the individual's functioning and mental, physical, social, emotional, and/or spiritual well-being.

- ❖ According to the National Child Traumatic Stress Network (2003), about one out of every four children has been exposed to a traumatic event that could affect their learning and academic success before the age of 16

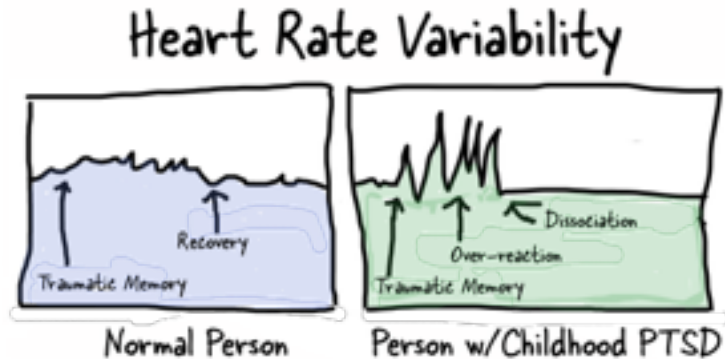
- Physical, sexual, and emotional abuse
- Childhood neglect, witnessing domestic violence
- Living with a family member with mental health or substance use disorders
- Sudden, unexplained separation from a loved one
- Poverty, homelessness
- Racism, discrimination, and oppression
- Violence in the community, war, or terrorism

- Can affect the ability to learn, function in social environments, and manage emotions and behaviors.
- A child's brain changes when they witness violence in the home or community
- It adapts and alters the structure

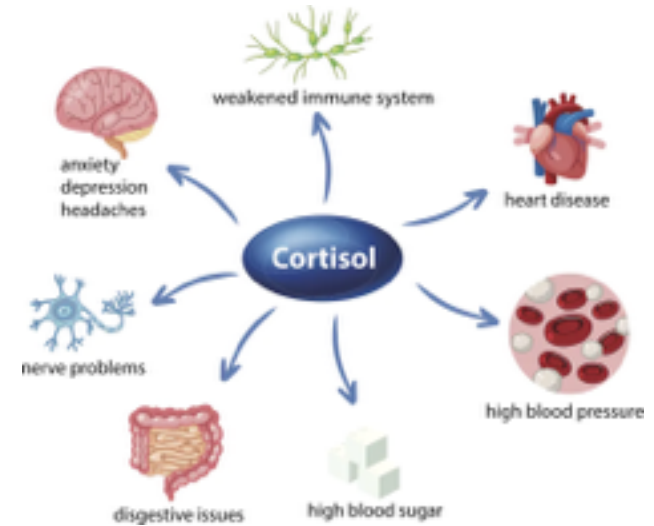
THREAT-BASED MINDSET RESPONSE TO CHALLENGING INFORMATION



- Impair development of the brain & nervous system
- Immune system & body's stress response system may not develop normally
 - **Body Dysregulation:** the over-respond or under-respond to sensory stimuli



- Develop chronic or recurrent physical complaints
- Adults with trauma history have been shown to have more chronic physical conditions/problems

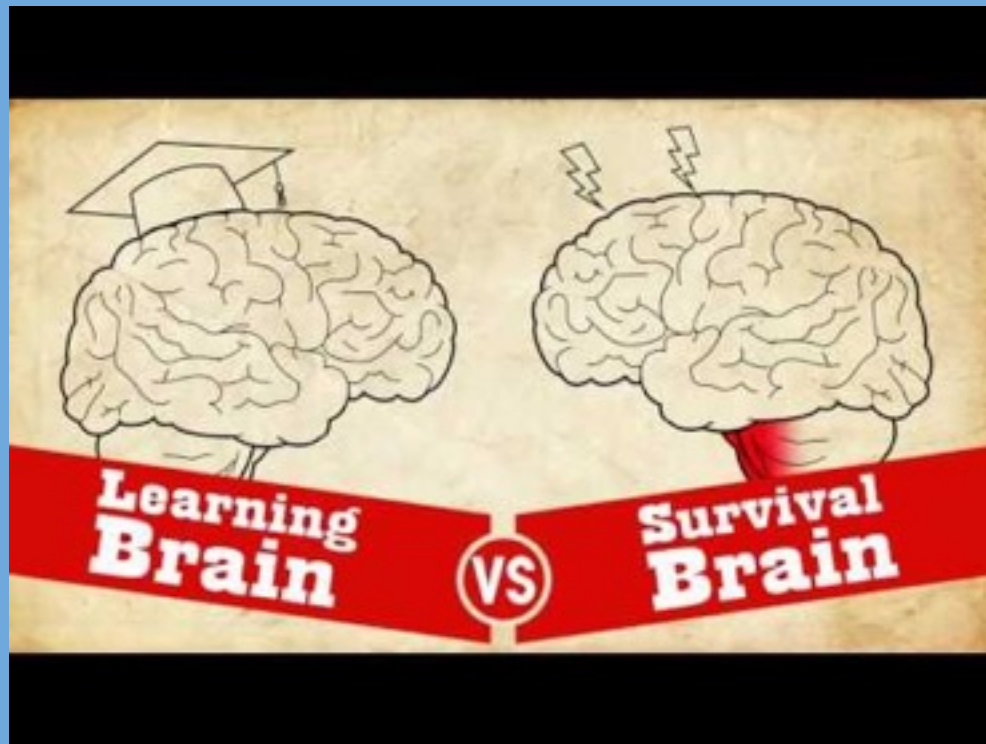


- Difficulty identifying, expressing & managing emotions
- Depression, anxiety and/or anger
- Emotional responses are unpredictable and explosive
- Often vigilant & guarded in their interactions & perceive situations as dangerous or stressful
- “Tune out” (emotional numbing)

- **Dissociation-** Mentally separating themselves from a the experience
- Can affect a child’s ability to be fully present in daily life/ activities
- It can look like:
 - “spacing out,” daydreaming, or not paying attention

In what ways can trauma affect a child's academic success and social-emotional well-being?





Understanding Trauma: Learning
Brain vs. Survival Brain

Parents & Educators might observe:

- Anxiety, fear and worry about safety of self and others
- Worry about recurrence or consequences of violence
- Increased distressed or irritability
- Decreased attention and/or concentration
- Changes in behavior such as: withdrawal from others or activities, angry outbursts and/or aggression, change in academic performance, absenteeism, increase in impulsivity, risk taking behavior
- Difficulty with authority, redirection or criticism
- Re-experiencing the trauma (e.g., nightmares or disturbing memories during the day)
- Emotional numbing (seem to have no feeling about the event)

FIGURE 2.1

What Flight, Fight, or Freeze Looks Like in the Classroom

Flight	Fight	Freeze
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Withdrawing• Fleeing the classroom• Skipping class• Daydreaming• Seeming to sleep• Avoiding others• Hiding or wandering• Becoming disengaged	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Acting out• Behaving aggressively• Acting silly• Exhibiting defiance• Being hyperactive• Arguing• Screaming/yelling	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Exhibiting numbness• Refusing to answer• Refusing to get needs met• Giving a blank look• Feeling unable to move or act

The Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, ASCD. A global nonprofit that helps educators at every step.

- Understanding what the child/student has experienced
- Building a relationship with that child/student
- Creating predictability everyday
- Reading body language
- Giving time and space to self-regulate
- Incorporating social emotional learning to develop empathy
- Giving positive recognition and reinforcement
- Children/Students who feel they are being heard respond well to the adults who are listening

What consists of a
trusting relationship?
Why is it important for
children who have
experienced trauma?





Childhood Trauma and the Brain

- **Consistency:** Students can be assured that their teacher, counselor, or other adult will be predictable and consistent in the way they apply rules and standards in every situation.
- **Compassion:** Trusting relationships are characterized by care and empathy. Students feel they can share their personal lives and emotional states with their teachers, parents & caregivers.
- **Communication:** In a trusting relationship, the expectations are clear, and feedback is constructive and constant.
- **Competency:** Finally, students' trust is built from an adult's competency, that is, the adult's ability to carry out his or her role. Statements about open communication and clear expectations are helpful; yet it is in the appropriate execution of those values that those statements become believable.

Getting physiological needs met, as well as those for safety, belonging, trust, and love, maximizes the child's development as a learner.

- **Environment:** environment where the child can begin to succeed and recognize that they are capable and valued.
- **Honor personal space** into which others do not intrude without permission
- **Help set healthy boundaries** and to know that they will be respected.
- **Offer support:** approachable, actively listen, and positive body language

In what ways can we
provide support to
children who have
experienced abuse?



1. honor the strength and courage of these children by having high expectations for them. Set reasonable goals and provide the support needed for the child to feel confident in their abilities
2. Abused children may feel powerless to control much in their environment. Help the child feel a sense of control in a positive manner, give accurate information and build trust.
3. help abused children gain a sense of personal identity by asking questions that help them formulate a position on issues, administering interest inventories, and teaching decision-making and problem-solving skills.
4. help them learn that they are valued, accepted, and capable by fostering an environment that honors each child's uniqueness.

5. To facilitate a sense of belonging, the teacher may provide designated places for possessions, display work in the classroom, and make a conscious attempt to include these children in classroom activities.

6. create a climate that fosters caring, appreciation for differences, consistent rules and boundaries, and recognition for small successes will nurture a child who has been discounted at home.

7. each child will respond in a unique way to abuse and behaviors may vary. Consultation with a school psychologist, social worker, counselor, or nurse may also help adults to understand unexplainable behaviors and emotions of their students.

What strategies & tools can we implement to help children cope with the effects of trauma?



1. Recognize that a child is going into survival mode and respond in a kind, compassionate way.
2. Create calm, predictable transitions.
3. Praise publicly and criticize privately.
4. Adapt your home & classroom's mindfulness practices.
5. Take care of yourself.



"It's **not our job** to toughen our children up to face a cruel and heartless world. It's our job to **raise children** who will make the world **a little less** cruel and heartless."

- l. r. knost -

- **Grounding techniques** can help with symptoms of trauma, by focusing our attention on the present moment and what is going on around us.
- **Mindfulness** is focusing on the present moment & bringing awareness to our own thoughts, feelings & bodily sensations/ senses.

<https://www.therapistaid.com/therapy-article/grounding-techniques-article>

5-4-3-2-1 Technique

Using the 5-4-3-2-1 technique, you will purposefully take in the details of your surroundings using each of your senses. Strive to notice small details that your mind would usually tune out, such as distant sounds, or the texture of an ordinary object.



What are 5 things you can see? Look for small details such as a pattern on the ceiling, the way light reflects off a surface, or an object you never noticed.



What are 4 things you can feel? Notice the sensation of clothing on your body, the sun on your skin, or the feeling of the chair you are sitting in. Pick up an object and examine its weight, texture, and other physical qualities.



What are 3 things you can hear? Pay special attention to the sounds your mind has tuned out, such as a ticking clock, distant traffic, or trees blowing in the wind.



What are 2 things you can smell? Try to notice smells in the air around you, like an air freshener or freshly mowed grass. You may also look around for something that has a scent, such as a flower or an unlit candle.



What is 1 thing you can taste? Carry gum, candy, or small snacks for this step. Pop one in your mouth and focus your attention closely on the flavors.

Family Mindfulness Schedule

Mindfulness, simply put, is being focused on the present moment. This skill improves emotional awareness and reduces stress. A parent can help their child achieve mindfulness by modeling mindfulness themselves, or by teaching their child to focus on the present moment.

Below you will find mindfulness techniques you can practice with your child during a busy daily routine. Focus on doing one technique very well each day, rather than trying to do many.

Waking Up

Five Senses. With your child, take a few moments to explore the morning through your senses. Take turns naming things you see, hear, feel, taste, and smell. Try to notice things you would normally tune out, like the distant buzz of a neighbor's lawnmower, or the softness of a pillow.

Body Scan. Starting with your toes and working your way up to the top of your head, notice the sensations in each part of your body. For example, notice the feeling of clothing resting on your legs, tension in your muscles, or cool air on your face.

Meals

Mindful Check-In. Start a conversation about the here-and-now by asking your child to share one thing they are feeling physically, one thing they are thinking about, and one thing they are feeling emotionally. If your child has difficulty putting their emotions into words, try giving them options to choose from.

Mindful Eating. Rather than rushing through a meal, eat slowly and mindfully. Notice how the food looks, and how it smells. What does it taste like? What does the food feel like on your tongue? Take turns sharing different things you notice about the food, no matter how minor the observations might seem.

Travel

I Spy. In this game, your child will "spy" a color they see and ask you to guess what the object is. Playing this game will allow your child to take in their surroundings and notice things they might otherwise miss.

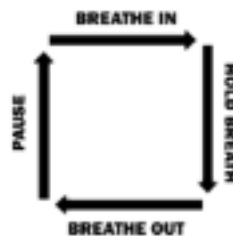
The Alphabet Game. While driving, ask your child to look for words in their environment beginning with each letter of the alphabet, in order. For example, a billboard with the word "Advertise" would start the game.

School

Mindfulness Bracelet. With your child, spend an afternoon making bracelets that are fun, and comfortable to wear. Every time you notice the bracelet on your wrist, take a moment to note one thing you see, hear, smell, and feel. Practice at home to get your child in the habit of using this skill even when they are not with you.

Family Mindfulness Schedule

Square Breathing. Teach your child this breathing technique to help them be in the present moment at any time. Draw a square on paper, or in the air with your finger. Perform one step of the technique while drawing each line of the square. Time each step to last about four seconds.



Free Time

Mindfulness Box. With your child, decorate a box large enough to hold several small objects. Fill the box with interesting items found around your home and yard (e.g. feathers, rocks, flowers). Encourage your child to explore their surroundings with more than just sight. For example, notice the texture, weight, and smell of each item.

Keep adding to your mindfulness box, and review it from time to time for further practice. Try to notice something new about each of the objects inside.

Bedtime

Progressive Muscle Relaxation. This activity will help your child become aware of the sensations throughout their body, and it's a great way to begin relaxing the body for sleep. Read the following script slowly, allowing time for practice.

Close your eyes, and pretend that you're holding two juicy oranges—one in each hand. Start to squeeze the oranges by making fists. Squeeze hard to get all the juice out. Notice what your fists feel like when you squeeze hard. Now let go of the oranges, and let your hands rest. Notice how good it feels to relax your hands.

Next, pretend like you're sitting on the beach. Squeeze your toes as if you are trying to pick up sand between them. Hold onto the sand by squeezing even tighter. Now, let go of the sand, and relax your feet. Notice how your feet feel different when you let them rest.

Finally, pretend like a fly landed on your nose. You want to get it off, without touching it with your hands. Scrunch up your face, wiggle your nose, just go crazy! Keep moving your face so the bug will fly away. Now, stop, and let your whole face relax. Pay attention to how it feels.

Stress Management Group

STRESSED OUT?



TAKE CONTROL!

JOIN RICHSTONE FAMILY CENTER'S
STRESS MANAGEMENT GROUP

A therapy group for adults aged 18 and over who want to:

- Learn relaxation techniques
- Balance work, life, and family
- Gain coping skills
- Prevent and reduce stress

Thursdays 6:00-7:00pm
online using Zoom
Free of charge

To register: 310-970-1921

Baby and Me Support Group

Baby & Me Support Group
Bebe y Yo Grupo de Apoya



Free Virtual Support Group for Caregivers and Babies
Grupo de Apoya Virtual Gratuito Para Cuidadores y Bebés
For/Para: Parents, Grandparents or Sitters/
Padres, Abuelos o Cuidadores

Age/Edad: Newborns to Walkers/Recién nacidos a caminantes

Date/Fecha: Every Friday/Cada Viernes
Time/Horario: 11:00am- 12:00pm
Group will begin 4/9/ El grupo comenzará 4/9




Richstone Family Center Virtual
www.richstonefamily.org
30.156N LP CALL PARA REGISTRO LLAMAR AL Tel: (310) 970-1921
Chandra M. Waldron, AMFT #125069 - Ext.217
Supervised by Julianna Stodd, LMFT
Rebecca Holm, MS, LMFT #126193 - Ext.220
Supervised by Julia G. Serrano, LMFT, PPSC

***Baby is not required to be present to attend the group / *No es necesario que el bebé esté presente para asistir al grupo**

Zumba

RICHSTONE FAMILY CENTER

ZUMBA!
VIRTUAL CLASS



FREE
EVERY FRIDAY
5:00-6:00 PM

Starts March 12th, 2021

Facilitated by certified Zumba instructor and therapist Christine Gutierrez, AMFT

For enrollment, call Oscar at 310-970-1921

Websites for more info on Trauma and Child Abuse Prevention:

[NCTSN Resources | The National Child Traumatic Stress Network](#)

[PACEs Movement Resources | AboutPACEsConnection](#)

[Adverse Childhood Experiences \(ACEs\) \(cdc.gov\)](#)

Instagram Accounts focused on Maternal Mental Health & Child Abuse Prevention:

- @momandmind
- @wellnessparalamama
- @postpartumsupportinternational
- @movementforfamilypower

Parents in Partnership

Torrance office (310) 972-3133.

- Client has to first figure out what DCFS office they are assigned to.
- 2 hour orientation every 3rd Friday from 4:00 PM to 6:00 PM in English; 9:00 to 11:00 AM in Spanish

Child Abuse Education & Prevention Resources

<https://www.childhelp.org/resources-parents/>



LOOK

for physical
or behavioral
signs



ASK

open-ended
questions
and listen



CALL

a child abuse
hotline
1-800-4ACHILD

Moment of Silence

Sit in a comfortable position. We invite you to take a moment to listen to this guided meditation to calm your mind and body.



Teaching Through Trauma

<https://californiaeducator.org/2019/08/19/teaching-through-trauma/>

The National Child Traumatic Stress Network

<https://www.nctsn.org/>

Trauma and Learning Policy Initiative

<https://traumasensitiveschools.org/>

Supporting Victims of Child Abuse

<http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/dec92/vol50/num04/Supporting-Victims-of-Child-Abuse.aspx>