

# TRAUMA IN CHILDREN



## What causes traumatic stress?

- Exposure to violence (domestic, sexual, community)
- Neglect or abandonment
- Serious/life threatening illnesses and accidents
- Acts of physical or sexual abuse
- Natural disasters
- Military family-related stress
- Stressors that overwhelm a person ability to cope (sudden death, loss of job, etc)

## SIGNS OF TRAUMA

- Quick to anger
- Feelings of guilt or shame
- Dissociation
- Anxious/high alert
- Reckless, destructive behavior
- Physical symptoms (aches and pains)
- Highly controlling of environment

## SIGNS OF ADHD/ADD

- Difficulty staying attentive
- Struggling to follow instructions
- Difficulty with organization
- Fidgeting or squirming
- Difficulty waiting or taking turns
- Excessive talking /blurting
- Interrupting or intruding upon others

## OVERLAPPING SIGNS

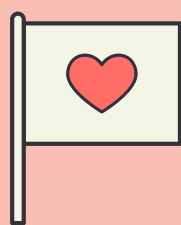


- Difficulty concentrating and learning in school
- Easily distracted
- Difficulties in self regulation and impulse control
- Disorganized
- Hyperactive/restless
- Avoidance behaviors
- Difficulty with eating and sleeping

A CHILD WHO HAS EXPERIENCED TRAUMA MAY BE MISDIAGNOSED WITH ADHD, ADD, AND VARIOUS OTHER DIAGNOSIS' WITHOUT A DIAGNOSIS IN TRAUMA AND/OR PTSD

KIDS WHO HAVE ENDURED FOUR OR MORE ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EVENTS ARE 3X MORE LIKELY TO BE PRESCRIBED ADHD MEDICATION

# POSITIVE PARENTING TIPS



## Helping Kids Understand Feelings

Show your kids how to express and handle emotions, parents modeling their own emotions, work on regulating emotions and behavioral reactions. Example: teach to share, encourage to express emotions, listen when they express emotion.



## Parenting as Children Grow

Learn skills to support your child's growth, promote safety and build routines. Examples: try different strategies for managing behavior, look for parenting information and tools, nurture kids as they grow



## Building Inner Strength

Stay flexible and calm during times of stress. Teach stress management and relaxation skills. Increase self care. Examples: count to 10 before reacting, take time to recharge, stay flexible when things don't go right.



## Knowing How to Find Help

Seek support and accept help in times of need, open and safe communication between child and protective parent. Examples: taking help when offered, search for resources you need, advocate for your family.



## Connecting with Others

Build a network of people who care about you and your family, build social connections, use positive play with others, ask when you need help. Examples: try something new to make new friends, surround kids with safe and supportive adults, turn off devices when it's time to connect and give attention.

## Tips to Support Difficult Behaviors

Recognize the emotion, understand the source, label the emotion, express the emotion - even when negative, teach a specific coping skill

## Positive Phrases for a Struggling Child

*I am here for you. It is okay to feel \_\_\_\_. Would you like to talk about what's happening? It's okay to express your feelings. Do you want a hug? I feel \_\_\_\_ sometimes too.*