



Welcome!

Special Programs Parent
Learning Opportunity



ROCKWALL
Special Programs



2022-2023

**Special Programs
Parent Learning Opportunities**



**Tuesday
September 20th**

5:30 pm - 6:30 pm
Central Admin.
Room 600

Topic: Trauma &
Behavior

**Thursday
October 13th**

6:00 pm - 7:30 pm
GBCCA

**ANNUAL
DYSLEXIA NIGHT**

**Monday
November 14th**

12:00 pm - 1:00 pm
Central Admin.
Room 600

Topic: Post-Secondary
Planning

**Tuesday
March 14th**

12:00 pm - 1:00 pm
Central Admin.
Room 600

Topic: Special Education
101

Presenters



Melanie Acker
Director of 504 & Intervention
Services



Jill Baird
Director of Special Education



Today's Goal:

- To increase your knowledge of trauma informed strategies
- Understand that an event does not have to be catastrophic in order to be “traumatic” and that symptoms of trauma can manifest following any highly stressful experience that causes lasting emotional or physical effects.
- Gain strategies to support your child

Why are check ins important?

Check In's are important for ADULTS and KIDS!

It allows people to feel valued and to communicate feelings without having to verbalize emotions . This is a beneficial tool to use with your child in the morning before school and also after school. It helps you know where they are emotionally. This can help you set the stage for a good day at school and also know if they may need some downtime after school. (by picking your battles, having conversations, supporting before they escalate).



What is Trauma?

Trauma is any experience that leaves a person feeling hopeless, helpless, and fearing for their life/survival or safety. This experience can be REAL or PERCEIVED.

We can experience trauma in many ways. The causes of trauma are less important than how trauma manifests in a child's life but it is important to understand that we can experience trauma in many ways.



Trauma is anything that changes the brain's development.

Examples of trauma include (but are not limited to):

- Abuse, assault, natural disaster, death of loved one.
- Victim (abuse, neglect, car accident, natural disaster)
- Life uncertainties
- Witness (personal witness - domestic violence, police, fire)
- Related to (peer, siblings - of chronically ill siblings, sibling that completed suicide)
- Listening to details of trauma (media exposure, video games, etc.)



Types of Trauma

- Type 1: Single exposure (ex: car accident)
- Type 2: One type of exposure that is repeated OR exposure to one or two different events
- Type 3: Toxic Stress and Developmental Trauma Disorder



Facts About Trauma

- Over 50% of the nation's children have experienced at least one or more types of serious childhood trauma (34,835,978 children nationwide)
- 33% of children have experienced two or more types of childhood adversity
- 60% of students 17 years or younger have been exposed to crime, violence, and/or abuse



How common is it?

Childhood trauma is more prevalent than many people realize and often has long-lasting effects.

26% of children in the U.S. witness or experience a traumatic event before they turn four years old.²

60% of adults say they experienced abuse or other traumatic family events in their own childhoods.²

11% of girls ages 14 to 17 reported experiencing sexual assault or abuse during the past year.³

41% of youth under 18 reported experiencing a physical assault in the last year.³

14% of children have experienced abuse by a caregiver.³

70% of children living in poor inner-city neighborhoods are exposed to trauma.⁴

Developmental Trauma Disorder

The symptoms and reactions children experience when they have grown and developed in a constant state of stress and trauma.



View Trauma as an Experience

Re-experiencing (INTRUSION – 1)	Avoidance (NUMBING - 1)	Negative Cognitions and Mood (2)	Arousal (2)
Flashbacks	Detachment	Distorted sense of self	Aggression
Intrusive thoughts -images	Numbing	Estrangement to others	Reckless behavior
Traumatic dreams	OCD like behavior Phobic like behavior	Markedly diminished interest	Self-destructive and rule-breaking behaviors
Sleep problems	Self harm	Depression	Hypervigilance
Physical complaints	Substance abuse	Blames self or others	Irritability
	Eating disorders		Inattention
	Not wanting to talk about it		Cognitive/learning problems



What do you think are
the top 10 fears for
children?

Top Ten Fears of Children

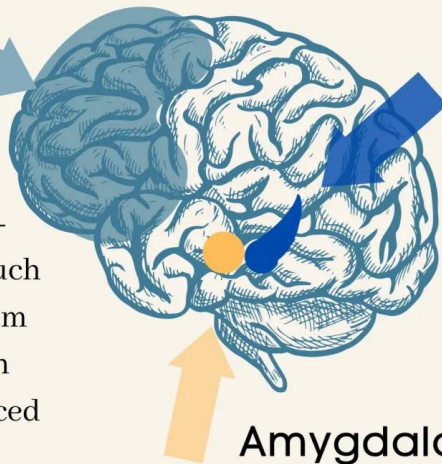
1. Parent death
2. Parent divorce
3. Storms or natural disasters
4. Being alone (at home, at school in the hallway or bathroom)
5. Teachers who are angry or use a mad voice
6. Scary news, TV or movie
7. Violence
8. Injury or Illness
9. Dying
10. Rejection



HOW TRAUMA AFFECTS THE BRAIN

Prefrontal Cortex

Rational thinking -
regulates emotions such
as fear responses from
the amygdala - with
PTSD this has a reduced
volume



Hippocampus

Responsible for
memory and
differentiating
between past and
present – works to
remember and make
sense of the trauma.

With consistent
exposure to trauma, it
shrinks.

Amygdala

Wired for survival, when active it is
hard to think rationally. The more
hyperactive the amygdala is, the more
signs of PTSD are present.

Trauma may affect children's.....	In the following ways
Bodies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Inability to control physical responses to stress● Chronic illness, even into adulthood (heart disease, obesity)
Brains (thinking)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Difficulty thinking, learning and concentrating● Impaired memory● Difficulty switching from one thought or activity to another
Emotions (feeling)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Low self-esteem● Feeling unsafe● Inability to regulate emotions● Difficulty forming attachments to caregivers● Trouble with friendships● Trust issues● Depression, anxiety
Behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Lack of impulse control● Fighting, aggression, running away● Substance abuse● Suicide

Strategies for Helping Your Child

Identify triggers

- Some things that you or your child may be doing that one or both of you are unaware could be triggering behaviors. Look for patterns and reactions that don't seem to fit the situation.

Be emotionally and physically available

- Provide attention, comfort and encouragement in ways your child will accept. Follow their lead and be patient.

Respond, don't react

- When your child is upset, do what you can to remain calm: lower your voice, acknowledge your child's feelings and be reassuring and honest.

Don't take behavior personally

- Allow your child to feel feelings without judgment. Help your child to find words or other acceptable ways of expressing feelings and offer praise when these these are used.

Listen

- Don't avoid difficult topics or uncomfortable conversations. Take reactions seriously and reassure them that what happened was not their fault.

Strategies for Helping Your Child

Help your child learn to relax

- Encourage your child to practice slow breathing, listening to calm music or saying positive things (" I am safe now ")

Be consistent and predictable

- Develop regular routines for meals, playtime and bedtime. Prepare your child in advance for changes and new experiences.

Be patient

- Everyone heals differently from trauma, and trust does not develop overnight.

Allow some control

- Reasonable, age-appropriate choices encourage your child's sense of having control of his or her own life.

Encourage self-esteem

- Positive experiences help with recovery and increase resiliency.

Secondary Trauma is a common form of trauma.

Secondary traumatic stress is the emotional duress that results when an individual hears about the first hand trauma experiences of another.

Examples of this for our children:

- Exposure to difficult news stories
- Social Media
- Close friend or family member experiences trauma





TRAUMA TRIGGERS = FLARE OF SYMPTOMS

visiting places

memories

clothing

sights and smells

experiences

change

seeing violence

thoughts

tone of voice

thoughts

physical pain

conflict with another

triggers are reminders of trauma, or unprocessed emotion

Time In vs. Time Out

Time In	Time Out
Kids act out because they NEED attention	Kids act out because they WANT attention
Time together	Time apart
Give attention, connection	Withdraw attention, disconnect
Opportunity to learn	No opportunity to learn
Adult is there to help child regain a regulated state	Child is left to regain regulated state on their own
Growth, empowerment, acceptance	Punitive, shame, rejection

How to do a TIME IN

- Invite your child to sit with you, go for a walk with you, go run an errand with you
- Make eye contact
- Remain calm
- Be firm but kind (these are not mutually exclusive)
- Tell your child you would like to help
- Acknowledge and validate your child's feelings; tell them it is okay to be angry, upset, etc. but it is not okay to hurt themselves or others.
- Address the misbehavior after your child is calm but refrain from lecturing
- Assist your child in identifying one or two strategies for self-regulation and move on
- Revisit and practice strategies



De-Escalation Strategies

- Be Empathic and Non Judgemental
- Respect Personal Space
- Use Non Threatening Nonverbals
- Avoid Overreacting
- Focus on Feelings
- Ignore challenging Questions
- Set Limits
- Choose Wisely what you insist upon
- Allow Silence for Reflection
- Allow Time for Decisions

Resources

*Trauma-Informed Resilience-Focused Schools
Guidebook*, 2019 STARR Commonwealth, STARR.org

Crisis Prevention Institute,
<https://www.crisisprevention.com/>

