HELPING OUR KIDS THROUGH TOUGH TIMES
TRAUMA INFORMED CARE & RESTORATIVE PRACTICES

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We never know the love of a parent till we become parents ourselves.

Henry Ward Beecher
What are the challenges our children are facing?

It’s 2018 and times are still hard.
UNDERSTANDING THE CHALLENGES...

Trauma defined: an event, set of events, or circumstances that result in intense physical or psychological distress that exceeds one’s ability to cope and has lasting adverse effects on one’s wellbeing.

Types of trauma are varied – think about the major events that YOU experienced as stressful...
UNDERSTANDING THE CHALLENGES...

Common stressors our children face:

- Family stressors
- Peer & social stressors
- Self esteem & sexual stressors
- Trauma/violence stressors
- Psychiatric stressors
- Medical illness
- Substance use
- Grief / loss
- Depression / suicide
Who is affected by trauma?

- Trauma can affect people of every ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, gender, psychosocial background, and geographic region.
- “Trauma affects the individual, families, and communities by disrupting healthy development, adversely affecting relationships, and contributing to mental health issues including substance abuse, domestic violence, and child abuse. Everyone pays the price when a community produces multi-generations of people with untreated trauma by an increase in crime, loss of wages, and threat to the stability of the family.” – Iowa TIC Project
- Traumatic experience ≠ Trauma response

Impact of trauma

- **Individual Level:** Elevated risk for substance use disorders, mental health problems, impairment in relational/social and other major life areas, physical disorders and conditions, health decline.
- **Systemic Level:** Intergenerational impact, community impact, perpetuation of systemic oppression, perpetuation of trauma
- Trauma often begets trauma
SPECTRUM OF TRAUMA: CONTEXT

GLOBALIZED WORLD
- Political Violence
- Natural Disasters
- Forced Displacement

COMMUNITY SOCIAL CLASS
- Community Violence
- Poverty
- Commercial Sexual Exploitation

PEERS SCHOOL EXTENDED FAMILY
- Intimate Partner Violence
- School Violence
- Bullying

PARENTS CAREGIVERS
- Incarceration
- Drug/Alcohol Addiction

INDIVIDUAL
- Emotional, Physical, And Sexual Abuse
- Neglect
- Illness & Injury

From the individual to the globalized world, the impacts of trauma may be experienced by all people.

From a single acute traumatic event to wide spread insidious trauma, few people are left unaffected.

In order to change the trajectory of trauma, all levels of the spectrum must be addressed.
HOW DO WE ADD TO THE STRESSORS OUR CHILDREN FACE?

THE WAY YOUR MOM LOOKS AT YOU IN A PARENT CONFERENCE.
WHAT ARE WE ASKING OF THEM?

The pressures children and adolescents face depend on the family, the culture, the school, the peers, DNA, and on and on and on....

The pressures push against the natural tasks that children are trying to address

Name 4 developmental tasks of school-aged youth:

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____
I thought raising a child was THE hardest thing I've ever had to do in my life. Until I had two of them.
NAME THE STRESSORS GAME!

PARENT/CAREGIVER STRESSORS

[brain of adult CJ]

Too many to name.

No, seriously...my brain is overflowing with the tasks I should be taking care of around the house as I type this...

Most revolve around caring for others though...laundry, spouse, child, pets, home, work

YOUTH STRESSORS

[brain of child CJ]

How do I become what I want to be?

What do I want to be?

What are ‘real’ friends?

I already know that, duh.
**TRAUMAS, FAMILY CHALLENGES, DEPRESSION, ANXIETY, MAKE US ACT IN WAYS WE TYPICALLY WOULDN’T...**

Things to pay attention to:

- Is your child / family sticking to a consistent routine?
  - Any changes to sleep/eating/hygiene?
  - Any changes in behaviors / way they’re talking?

- Is your child’s mood relatively consistent?
  - How would you describe your child’s mood overall? Get the temperature of the water first!
  - Changes are NORMAL! But **what are the changes** in their mood & attitude?
  - Does your family talk about mood in constructive ways?
THE HELP...WHERE IS IT?

“We’re encouraging people to become involved in their own rescue.”
LET’S ATTEMPT SOME SOLUTIONS!

Some of the best ways to help kids through tough times are:

- Playing it out (for the younger kiddos)
- Talking about it (for all ages!)
- Naming the emotions you believe people have about the stressor(s)
- Helping them by asking what they need (within reason!)
- Have faith in your child – listen to their words; not just the attitude/mood
- Help them identify their support system and encourage them to reach out!
- Normalize (not minimize) what they’re going through
Welcome to being a parent of a teenager. Prepare for a large amount of eye rolling, emotional outbursts, and thoughts of running away. And that's just the parents.
When we get triggered we wear our protective equipment!

- Anger Cynicism
- Fear
- Checking-Out
- Minimizing
- Diminished Creativity
- Gossip
- Grandiosity
- Reduced Participation in Activities
- Sarcasm
- Chronic Fatigue & Exhaustion, Physically & Mentally
- Helplessness
- Poor Concentration
- Numbing
- Addictions
“It’s a new anti-depressant—instead of swallowing it, you throw it at anyone who appears to be having a good time.”
This is an example of Social Emotional Learning models used in schools.
LIST YOUR SUPPORTS!
Take care of YOU FIRST!
OUR YOUTH DESERVE UNDERSTANDING AND SUPPORT AND GUIDANCE

If you can’t do it – find someone who can!
Things to ask a potential child therapist:

✓ Do they specialize in working with kids? How many years experience?
✓ Are they an intern? If so, when is the internship ending?
✓ What are the hours they are available for sessions?
✓ Do they accept your child’s insurance?

The above answers may be yeses – that’s OK - Information is power!

Local Child Mental Health Agencies:

- **Sea Mar Child & Family**
  - 425-460-7125
  - [www.SeaMar.org](http://www.SeaMar.org)

- **Sound**
  - 425-653-5000

- **Y.E.S. (Youth Eastside Services)**
  - 425-747-4937
  - [www.YouthEastsideServices.org](http://www.YouthEastsideServices.org)
RESTORATIVE QUESTIONS TO ASK

To respond to challenging behavior…

What happened?
What were you thinking at the time?
What have you thought about it since?
Who has been affected by what you have done? In what way?
What do you think you need to do to make things right?

To help those harmed by others’ actions…

What did you think when you realized what had happened?
What impact has this incident had on you and others?
What has been the hardest thing for you?
What do you think needs to happen to make things right?
BUILDING RESILIENCE IN US & THEM

supporting ourselves to support them
Parents are the ultimate role models for children. Every word, movement and action has an effect. No other person or outside force has a greater influence on a child than the parent.

- Bob Keeshan