

The History of Trauma in Image and Thought

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The History of Trauma in Image and Thought Rocky Mountain Institute

BASIC FACTS ABOUT CHILD TRAUMA

Child trauma is more common than you think.

1. More than 25% of American youth experience a serious traumatic event by their 16th birthday, and many children suffer multiple and repeated traumas.
2. Common sources of trauma include abuse and neglect; serious accidental injury; disasters and terrorism; experiencing or witnessing violence in neighborhoods, schools and homes; and treatment for life-threatening illness.
3. A child exposed to a traumatic event is at risk of developing traumatic stress.
4. Children are more vulnerable to trauma because of their size, age, and dependence.
5. Prior trauma, past mental health problems, or a familial history of such problems may increase a child's risk.

Child traumatic stress can be identified.

1. Children experience a wide range of reactions following traumatic events, and children of different ages react to trauma differently.
2. Signs of traumatic stress include fear, anger, withdrawal, trouble concentrating, digestive problems, and nightmares.
3. A child's distress may not be obvious or visible; by talking with them you might find out what is going on inside. A child may feel ashamed, guilty, betrayed, or weak. They may seem numb because they are trying to avoid feeling their own feelings.
4. Serious, ongoing traumatic stress reactions that include intrusive thoughts and

images, strong emotional and physical reactions to reminders of the trauma, avoidance, and a sense of “being on alert” are hallmarks of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder.

Child traumatic stress is serious.

1. Traumatic stress can interfere with children’s ability to concentrate and learn, and seriously delay development of their brains and bodies.
2. It can lead to depression, substance abuse, other mental health problems, educational impairment, acting out, and future employment problems.
3. It can change how children view the world and their own futures, and it can change their behavior, interests and relationships with family and friends.
4. It can take a toll on a family.

Caring adults can help.

1. Not all children exposed to traumatic events develop a traumatic stress reaction. Many children, especially those supported by caring adults, can be very resilient.
2. Parents who take care of themselves are able to take better care of their children.
3. If you think you or your child may have symptoms of a traumatic stress reaction, seek help from a qualified mental health professional.

Treatments work.

1. Treatment from a mental health professional who has training and experience working with traumatized children can reduce child traumatic stress and minimize physical, emotional, and social problems.
2. Trauma treatments for children may include psychotherapy and medications, and

may involve families and schools.

A national network is here to help.

The National Child Traumatic Stress Network has been established by the federal government to improve the quality, effectiveness, and availability of therapeutic services to traumatized children and adolescents.

The web resource on child trauma for parents, healthcare workers, and other professionals is www.nctsnet.org.

For more information, please contact:

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- President's Freedom
Common MH. 3 pts
1. Bring science to services
 2. Build knowledge base for tx of trauma
 3. Expand & enhance school-based MH programs

