



CORE
TEEN

Critical On-going Resource Family Education

Classroom Trainer Guide

CORE TEEN CURRICULUM

In Acknowledgement

On behalf of the CORE Teen Partners, we would like to acknowledge and thank the many content experts, families, foster youth alumni and professionals who provided guidance on what content to include, the sites (Florida, Tennessee, Pennsylvania and the Eastern Band of Cherokee Tribe in North Carolina) who piloted this curriculum and provided candid feedback on how it could be edited, and the multitudes of families and foster youth alumni who participated in the piloting of the curriculum; providing critical feedback on how it could be improved.



This project was funded by the Children's Bureau, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, under grant #90CO1132. The contents of this material are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Children's Bureau.

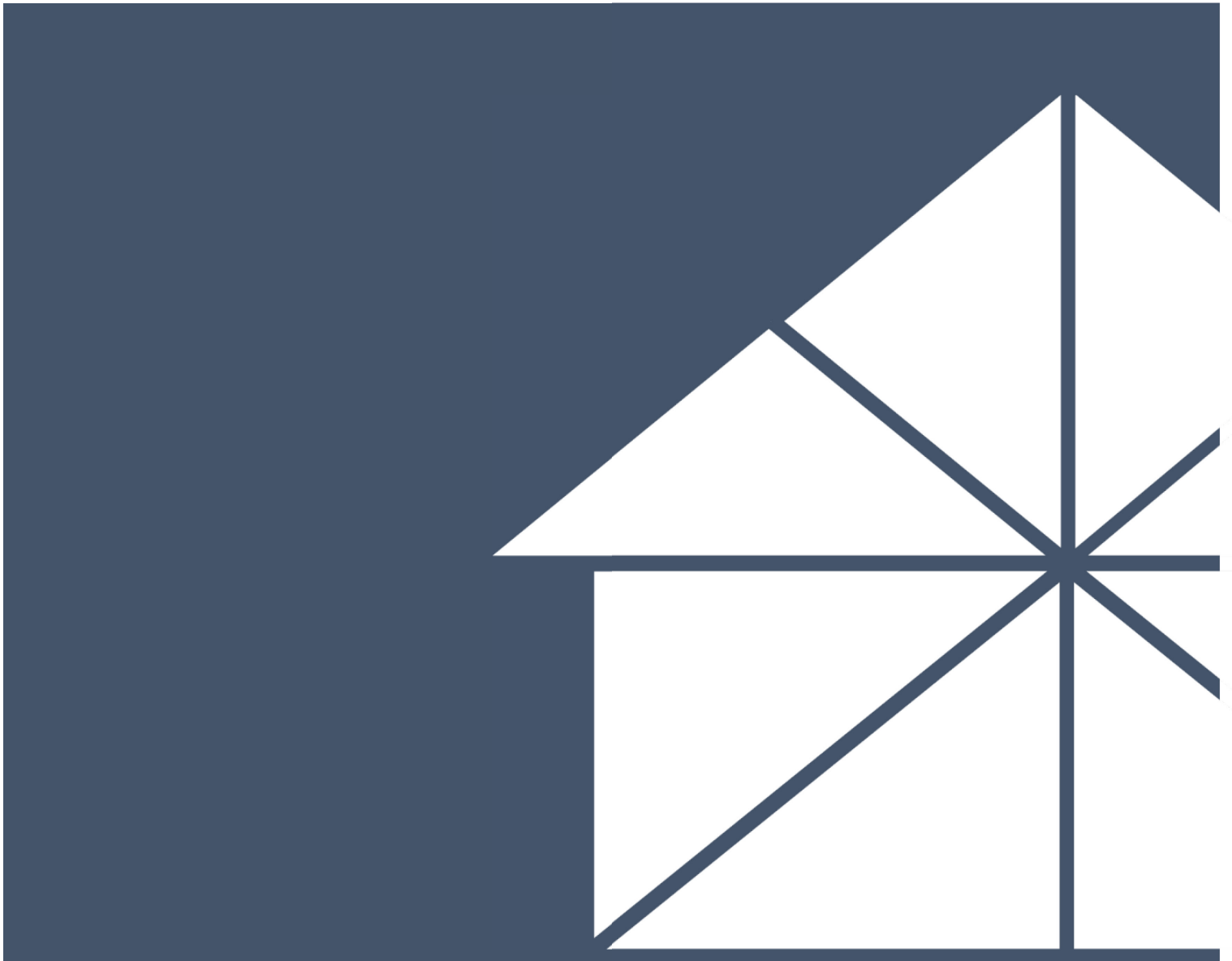
CORE TEEN CLASSROOM CURRICULUM: TRAINER GUIDE

The CORE Teen Curriculum is comprised of three components: 1) Self-Assessment; 2) Classroom Training, and 3) Right Time Training. It was developed through a 3 year Foster/Adoptive Parent Preparation, Training and Development Initiative cooperative agreement with the Children’s Bureau, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, under grant #90CO1132. Project partners included Spaulding for Children; the ChildTrauma Academy; The Center for Adoption Support and Education; the North American Council on Adoptable Children; and the University of Washington.

The intent of the project was to develop a state-of-the-art training program to equip resource parents to meet the needs of older youth who have moderate to serious emotional and behavior health challenges who require intensive and coordinated services and may be at risk for more restrictive congregative care.



CORE TEEN CURRICULUM



INTRODUCTION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The goal of the CORE Teen curriculum was to enhance existing methods used to prepare and support new and seasoned resource parents. By providing multiple opportunities to increase resource parent’s knowledge and skills, and by maximizing the application of new knowledge and skills, families would be more accepting of older youth into their homes; maintain these placements and increase permanent resources for youth. The curriculum provides parents with information they need to develop safe relationships with the youth, while also focusing on how they can adapt their parenting styles to support the youth’s needs, rather than just focusing on the behaviors. Core principles reflected in the curriculum are: 1) children should be placed in the least restrictive setting as possible, with family being the most preferable; 2) children should not experience multiple moves; and 3) children should achieve permanence as expeditiously as possible.

Content from the CORE Teen curriculum can also be used to support staff education and retention, family recruitment efforts, the licensing and home study process, support services, adoption preparation and post adoption services.

THE CORE TEEN CURRICULUM:

- Helps caregivers understand how trauma has impacted the cognitive and emotional development of the youth and how the youth may respond to those who are in parental role;
- Builds the self-awareness of the resource family, (foster, guardianship, kinship, or adoptive), to their strengths and challenge areas related to characteristics and competencies needed when working with older youth;
- Encourages self-reflection and open discussion among caregivers and their support systems;
- Trusts the resource parents to use provided resources to enhance their skills;
- Supports resource parents in adapting their parenting strategies to meet the needs of the youth, rather than “fix” the youth;
- Highlights the root causes of behaviors rather than the behaviors themselves; and
- Provides resources that are available to the family when they need them.

FLOW OF THE CURRICULUM

The CORE Teen curriculum is comprised of three components: 1) Self-Assessment; 2) Classroom Training, and 3) Right Time Training. Each of these three components work together to provide a multi-faceted approach to resource parent training

SELF-ASSESSMENT

A self-assessment is not a test. It is a way to learn about your strengths, the areas that may require some additional strengthening and those areas that may cause you the most challenge. The CORE Teen curriculum self-assessment is based on characteristics and competencies that have been identified as important when parenting older youth who have experienced traumatic events within the child welfare system.

Although the self-assessment is not identified specifically within this Guide, it is a vital part of the curriculum; supporting families in identifying their individualized strengths and areas of challenge. The hope is that parents will complete the self-assessment individually and then discuss the results with their parenting partners and support system. The self-assessment helps families to:

- ▶ Determine if they have the characteristics that are effective in working with this target population.
- ▶ Assess their current capacity and household functioning.
- ▶ Assess their need for ongoing training and likelihood of becoming a permanent resource.
- ▶ Provide a hint of what is to come in the classroom and right time training sessions.
- ▶ Pique their interest and curiosity about the curriculum content.
- ▶ Explore realistic expectations for themselves and reflect on what effect unrealistic expectations have on them.

Characteristics included in the self-assessment survey are: attunement, acceptance, adaptability / flexibility, appreciation, compassion, committed, honoring relationships / attachment, patience / perseverance, predictable / consistent, resiliency, realistic, security / self-acceptance, self-awareness / self-regulation, sense of humor, spirituality, supportive and trustworthiness.

Competencies included in the self-assessment survey are: trauma informed resource parenting, continued connections, relationship development, regulation, parental adaptation, parental resiliency, culture, transitions, behavioral management and sexual orientation / gender identity and expression.

CLASSROOM TRAINING

The second component is comprised of seven classroom-based training sessions. Each session will take about 2.5 hours to complete. The seven training sessions cover core skills, knowledge, and competencies families need to understand. A range of teaching strategies will be used during the training sessions; these include lecture, small and large group activities, resource review and videos. A pre and posttest is available and will allow you to measure growth during the classroom sessions.

Classroom content:

- ▶ Provides content that is specific to teens with both behavioral and emotional needs
- ▶ Provides opportunities to learn from each other in a classroom environment
- ▶ Stimulates conversations among parenting partners and/or support networks
- ▶ Develops best parenting strategies
- ▶ Builds knowledge and skills

RIGHT TIME TRAINING

The third and last component is Right Time training. There are 8 Right Time training kits available to you. Each kit contains a 20 – 30 minute video which includes the voices of content experts, families and foster youth alumni. A discussion guide accompanies the video which families can do independently or with a worker.

What did parents have to say after participating in the pilot CORE Teen Curriculum?

“
IT HELPED ME TO
TAKE A STEP BACK.
”

“
This training is the
BEST TRAINING
on teens.
”

“
I learned that
I NEEDED TO BE CALM
before I could even begin to
work with my teen.
”

“
If I had this training before, I
might not have had to disrupt
my previous teen, I might have
had the skills to work through it.
”

CLASSROOM TRAINING PRODUCTS

“

Finding resource parents willing and prepared to care for older youth with moderate to serious behavior health challenges can be difficult. For families to be willing and able to parent these children, they must receive training to help them understand the reasons behind behaviors and be provided with skills and tools to effectively manage behaviors.

”

~Addie Williams, Past President
CEO Spaulding for Children

As a trainer, you will have access to the following:

TRAINER GUIDE – This Guide will provide you with all of the content you will need to successfully facilitate the seven CORE Teen classroom sessions. It includes trainer preparation tips, the content that you will deliver with accompanying PowerPoint slides, the handouts you will need to support either discussion or activities throughout the training, and a pre/posttest for each session that includes correct responses. A final section within the Trainer Guide contains optional activities for American Indian and Alaskan Native populations. These activities were created to provide the trainer with options to ensure cultural relevance to those who may be participating in the training.

PARTICIPANT GUIDE – This Guide is for those who are attending the training as participants. Each session includes PowerPoint slides and handouts that will be used throughout the training. The Participant Guide also includes copies of the pre and posttest for their completion. Only the Trainer Guide has copies that contain the correct responses.

RESOURCE NOTEBOOK – This Guide provides resource articles and publications that will be beneficial for the participants to have for future reference. Although the resources will be mentioned within the classroom content, there is no time allotted within the classroom session to review the resources. It is anticipated participants will review them outside of the classroom sessions.

“CORE Teen should be required for all parents.”

“My older kids that are out of the house are like, why didn't you do this with us? We didn't know there was a better way”



WHAT IS THE BENEFIT OF THIS CURRICULUM?

“

Never underestimate how much you can love someone and how it can change their life. Never forget that the hardest ones to love are the ones that need it most.

Anonymous

”

Research has consistently shown the short and long-term benefits of placing children and youth in a family setting. Behaviors resulting from moderate to serious emotional health challenges, combined with trauma, make it more likely older youth will be placed in restrictive settings and age out of the child welfare system without achieving permanency. In an effort to maintain older youth in family settings and to ensure they are engaged productively in their communities, resource parents must have advanced knowledge and skills. The development of effective trauma-informed and culturally responsive training will not only help maintain permanency and reduce the risk of disruption, but also assist in the recruitment of new resource parents.

Navigating through the challenges of adolescence is not easy for any parent, especially those who support youth who have suffered abuse and/or neglect and have experienced significant loss and trauma.

Adolescents who have experienced trauma are more likely to join in high-risk behaviors, have problems with their peers, and struggle academically. Finding foster and adoptive families who feel prepared to care for these youth can be difficult. Often, parents feel they don't know what to do or may not have confidence in their abilities to manage the emotional and behavioral needs of the teen.

We believe you will find this curriculum helpful in addressing the learning needs of families who support older youth.

CORE COMPETENCIES AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES

CORE COMPETENCIES AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES BY SESSION

Session	CORE Competency	Learning Objectives
1 – Introduction and Understanding the Impact of Trauma on Youth in Foster Care	Parents nurture and promote the well-being of their youth through trauma informed parenting	<p>Define trauma</p> <p>Describe ways that traumatic stress and adversity impact a youth’s development</p> <p>Describe the importance of responding to the underlying cause of a youth’s behaviors</p>
2 – Parenting Youth Who Have Experienced Trauma	Parents nurture and promote the well-being of their youth through trauma informed parenting	<p>Describe the two major adaptive responses to threats</p> <p>Describe how fear changes the way youth think, feel and act</p> <p>Describe three trauma-informed techniques to effectively parent youth, based on their emotional age and developmental state</p>
3 – Developing and Sustaining Healthy and Supportive Relationships with Your Youth	Parents develop and sustain a healthy and supportive relationship with the youth	<p>Describe the impact of loss and grief on teens</p> <p>Describe two actions that parents can take to enhance attachment and strengthen their relationship with youth</p> <p>Describe two ways that parents can deepen attunement with their youth or a youth they will parent</p>
4 – Nurturing Youth’s Cultural / Racial / Ethnic Needs and Sexual Orientation / Gender Identity and Expression	Parents honor their child’s cultural, racial and ethnic needs and sexual orientation / gender identity and expression with acceptance, nurturing and support	<p>Identify ways to incorporate the youth’s race, culture and ethnicity into family life</p> <p>Demonstrate two skills in communicating acceptance and support for youth who are questioning their sexuality or gender identify and/or identify as LGBTQ2S</p>

CORE COMPETENCY AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES BY SESSION (CONTINUED)

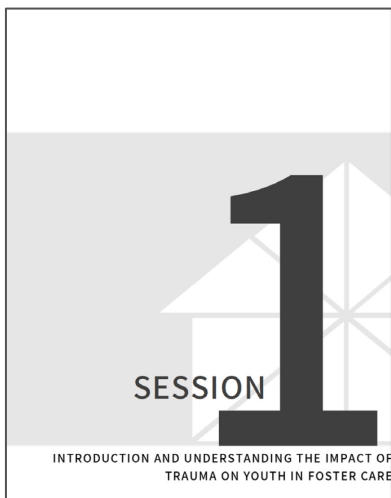
Session	CORE Competency	Learning Objectives
<p>5 – Understanding and Managing Youth’s Challenging Behaviors – Part 1</p>	<p>Parents understand their youth’s challenging behaviors and are able to safely and effectively manage them</p>	<p>Demonstrate two skills parents use in coping and managing their own emotions in the face of their youth’s challenging behaviors</p> <p>Demonstrate two ways that parents can effectively respond to their youth’s rejecting, testing and maladaptive behaviors</p> <p>Describe at least two signs that their relationship with the youth is under stress</p>
<p>6 - Understanding and Managing Youth’s Challenging Behaviors – Part 2</p>	<p>Parents understand their youth’s challenging behaviors and are able to safely and effectively manage them</p>	<p>Demonstrate at least two skills in addressing crisis / severe behavior challenges</p> <p>Demonstrate two skills in teaching your youth how to remain safe</p> <p>Recognize vulnerabilities of youth with challenging behaviors who have experienced trauma</p> <p>Describe how to access and be actively involved in professional supports that your youth may need to access</p>
<p>7 – A New Suitcase of Parenting Knowledge and Skills</p>	<p>Parents nurture and promote the well-being of their youth through trauma informed parenting</p> <p>Parents develop and sustain a healthy and supportive relationship with their youth</p> <p>Parents safely and effectively manage their youth’s challenging behaviors</p>	<p>Describe two ways that parents can support youth’s important connections and a sense of connectedness</p> <p>Demonstrate the impact of secondary trauma on parenting</p> <p>Identify the important elements to developing a self-care plan</p>

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This training guide will assist you in supporting families through the classroom instruction to build the understanding of trauma, grief and loss and other issues that may face youth who have been engaged with the child welfare system. It is designed to provide foster, adoptive, guardianship and kinship parents with the knowledge, skills, and beliefs that are needed to successfully parent older youth. Using this approach, we expect to see more families welcoming these youth into their families, maintaining placement stability, and committing to permanence; all of which will enhance the youth's well-being.

STRUCTURE AND LAYOUT

SESSION COVER PAGE



Each session begins with a cover page that identifies which session you are training and the title.

SESSION PRETEST WITH ANSWER KEY

Please put the state abbreviation, followed by your first name initial, your last name initial, and last four digits of your social security number as your participant ID (example: RI-LJ-2345).

Participant ID: _____ Training Start Date: _____ Location: _____

SESSION 1: PRETEST ANSWER KEY

What is your race/ethnic background: _____

What is your age: _____

- Angel is a 15-year-old girl who was in her home during a drive-by shooting. Her brother was playing with his toy trucks in the living room when the shooting occurred. He was injured in the home. Angel looked out the window and saw a young person lying on the street. Angel's parents went into cardiac arrest shortly after the events and was rushed to the hospital.
Which of the following would **NOT** be considered a traumatic event?
a. The drive-by shooting
b. Parent being rushed to the hospital
c. Seeing the young person on the street
d. **Angel's brother was in the home playing with his toy trucks**
- What determines if an event is traumatic to the teen is how the teen perceives the event and the long-term effects. (Circle one) **True** False
- Past traumatic events can affect a teen's ability to build relationships, regulate emotions, and communicate effectively. (Circle one) **True** False
- Shabana was prenatally exposed to drugs because of her mother's opioid use during pregnancy. Her mother was 18 when Shabana was born. When Shabana was five years old, her mother died. She went to live with her grandmother, who was a member of her tribe. Which of the following could have disrupted the regulatory networks in Shabana's brain?
a. **Prenatal drug exposure**
b. Being of Native American heritage
c. The death of her mother
d. The age of her mother at the time of her birth
- The effects of maltreatment...
a. **Continue to influence brain development and activity into adolescence and adulthood.**
b. End once the child/adolescent is no longer experiencing maltreatment.
c. Can never be treated.
d. Have no impact on adolescent development.

Each session contains a set of questions that can be used as a pre/posttest for participants. In the Trainer Guide, the pre/posttest, including correct responses, appears prior to the session content. In the Participant Guide, the pre/posttest questions appear twice, first prior to the PowerPoint slides and again following the handouts for each session.

TITLE OF SESSION AND CORE COMPETENCY

The next page again identifies the session being trained and the title.

The session name is followed by the CORE Competency being addressed in the session. Additionally, each session is broken down into segments, and a list segments for each session is presented after the CORE Competency in that session.

SESSION TIMING

The total length of the session is circled and placed next to the Core Competency (as shown in the figure to the left).

The approximate time expected to complete a segment is listed in parentheses immediately following the name of that segment in order to help you prepare and facilitate each session.

MATERIALS NEEDED

For each session, the following equipment and materials will be needed:

- ▶ Computer;
- ▶ Projector and Screen;
- ▶ Speakers;
- ▶ Flip Chart Paper;
- ▶ Markers; and
- ▶ Tape (to hang paper on the wall).

Any **ADDITIONAL MATERIALS** that are needed will be listed under “Additional Materials” following the list of segments included in the session.

PREPARATION

The PREPARE text box (as shown in Figure to the left) is used at the beginning of each session to alert the trainer about important steps that will be needed to prior to the session to help the trainer be ready to deliver the content.

SESSION 1: INTRODUCTION AND UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACT OF TRAUMA ON YOUTH IN FOSTER CARE

2
hr

Core Competency 1: Parents nurture and promote the well-being of their youth through trauma-informed parenting.

SEGMENTS

- I. Welcome and Introductions **(30 MINUTES)**
- II. Who Are the Youth We Are Parenting or Will Parent? **(15 MINUTES)**
- III. Understanding Trauma and the Impact of Trauma on Older Youth **(50 MINUTES)**
- IV. Parenting Your Youth **(20 MINUTES)**
- V. Review and Closing **(5 MINUTES)**

Length of each segment

Length of session

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

One index card for each participant.

13-15 inflated balloons

Small ball or other light object that can be tossed for closing activity

PREPARE

SELECT two vignettes for discussion from **HANDOUT #1.1: 5 Vignettes**: Frank, Lisa, Antonio, Darren, and/or April. Make the selection by considering the issues that each vignette highlights and ensuring that the selected vignettes are a good fit for class participants in terms of culture and relevancy.

PREPARE the following images or collect and bring the following items that will be used during the Our Parenting Journey activity on Slide 4:

Swimsuits	Visor
Swimsuit Cover-up	Sun hat
Shorts	Sunglasses
Flip flops	Beach towel
T-shirt	Mask and snorkel
Sunscreen	

PREPARE a sheet of flip chart paper with the heading “FOR THE BEACH”

Consider **REVIEWING** the Right Time materials on Trauma Informed Parenting 1 and Trauma Informed Parenting 2.

The content for each session is broken up into segments. The beginning of each segment is labeled and formatted in the following way to allow the trainer to quickly identify when a new segment has started, what slides will be covered, and the expected amount of time that should be spent on that segment. (See figure below).



SEGMENT I: WELCOME AND DEBRIEF

SLIDES 1-4

10 MINUTES



The information presented in the example above indicates to the trainer that the first segment of the session focuses on welcoming and debriefing participants. This content will be covered on the first four PowerPoint (PPT) slides and should take roughly ten minutes to deliver.

After introducing each segment, the content and script for that segment are provided. The title of each slide is shaded and right aligned. Underneath the slide title, an image of the PPT slide is shown on the left while the script and training notes are provided on the right. The script for the trainer will clearly be marked by “**STATE**” while training notes and instructions for the trainer will clearly be labeled “**NOTE**”. Lastly, the phrase “**FACILITATE A DISCUSSION**” will be used to indicate to the trainer that they will have to facilitate a discussion around the content being covered. See the example below:

NOTE: Further instructions or comments for the trainer that will not be read aloud

STATE: Script covering content that will be read aloud by the trainer

[PPT #1]: WELCOME AND BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO CORE TEEN

<div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 10px; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">WELCOME TO CORE TEEN!</p>  </div> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="background-color: #008080; color: white; padding: 5px; font-weight: bold; font-size: 2em; margin-right: 5px;">1</div>  </div>	<p>NOTE: Display this slide as participants are getting seated. When it is time to begin, welcome everyone and provide a brief explanation of the CORE Teen Training.</p> <p>STATE:</p> <p>CORE Teen is developed especially for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Foster, kinship, guardianship and adoptive parents of youth who are experiencing significant emotional and behavioral challenges <p>CORE Teen was developed...</p>
--	--

USE OF ICONS

Throughout the Trainer Guide, icons are used to assist the trainer in facilitating the delivery of content by providing visual cues that are easily recognized. The following Icons will be used to identify activities, videos and handouts.



ACTIVITIES

When the ACTIVITY icon is used, the trainer will be facilitating an activity or group discussion. Instructions for setting up and debriefing activities are provided in the gray box. When group discussions are used, the guide provides a statement, or series of questions to begin the discussion.

When relevant, the optional activities that are included at the end of the Trainer Guide may be used by Tribal Communities when existing activities within the session do not adequately address cultural needs interests.



VIDEOS

When the VIDEO icon is used (shown to left), the trainer will show video content to participants. Trainers should test video and audio equipment prior to each session and cue video content so that it can be shown with limited interruption of the flow of content delivery.



HANDOUTS

The HANDOUT icon indicates when the trainer will refer participants to a handout.

Handouts are used throughout the modules to support activities or to provide more information for participants. Where a handout is used, the Trainer Guide will include a copy of that handout for the trainer's reference. The Participant Guide also includes a copy of each handout.

CORE TEEN TRAINER CHARACTERISTICS

Use of co-trainers is recommended for CORE Teen. This allows for more effective management of group dynamics and enhances the learning environment by allowing for a variety of personal experience and knowledge to be brought into the classroom. Having a parent co-trainer for the CORE Teen curriculum is also recommended. The parent co-trainer offers families a “real-life” interpretation of the content and reinforces that parents are the experts in their children. The following are best practice expectations for the trainers of the classroom curriculum.

TRAINER EXPERIENCE

- ▶ Trainers should have experience parenting or working with adoptive and guardianship families with children who have moderate to severe emotional and behavioral challenges.
- ▶ One trainer should be a child welfare/adoption professional with 3–5-years’ experience and credibility providing services and training to adoptive and guardianship families.
- ▶ One trainer should be a foster, adoptive or guardianship parent with 3–5-years’ experience parenting the youth population, preferably experience giving or receiving supports or training in a group setting. Parent trainers should have a recommendation or reference from a child welfare or adoption agency.

TRAINER SKILLS

- ▶ Ability to establish a safe learning environment
- ▶ Ability to communicate effectively and respectfully with people of diverse backgrounds
- ▶ Ability to manage group dynamics and emotions, re-directing participants, as needed
- ▶ Ability to think on their feet and be responsive to parents in the moment
- ▶ Ability to maintain boundaries and share appropriately about their own experience
- ▶ Ability to elicit input and participation from parents
- ▶ Ability to follow the curriculum and script, but to make adjustments, as necessary, in activities or discussion to accommodate the participant’s needs

CORE BELIEFS OF THE CURRICULUM

Trainers should support the core beliefs of the curriculum, which include:

- ▶ Every child deserves a family
- ▶ Children heal best in the context of nurturing, committed, stable families and with trauma-informed parenting
- ▶ Parents need to adapt their parenting and discipline to meet the unique needs and developmental age of each child
- ▶ Keeping children connected to their past connections and culture helps to facilitate healing and deepen current attachments

Each module contains two to two hours and fifteen minutes of content. Sessions should be scheduled for two and half hours, to provide time for pre and posttest activities and to allow for flexibility should activities or delivery of content take longer than indicated in the guide. A scheduled break is not incorporated in the guide. Trainers should provide participants with a break based on their judgement with regard to flow of content delivery, participant attention levels, and other needs of the group.

In addition to trainer presentations, this training uses a variety of participatory methodologies including large and small group discussions, examination of case studies, open discussion and role plays. These activities are designed to elicit and build on participants' experiences and knowledge, promote discussion and reflection on key issues, provide hands-on practice of content learned, and help participants learn from each other. Participatory methodologies promote higher retention of content and create an open, engaging, and supporting learning environment. Remember, adult students typically remember 20% of what they hear, 40% of what they hear and see, and 80% of what they hear, see, and do. Effective training involves participants in hearing, seeing, and doing. If participants only hear trainer lectures all day, they will not learn or retain information effectively.

TRAINER PRESENTATION

The trainer presents information by speaking to the whole group, sometimes using visuals such as slides, posters, pictures, or a flip chart. Presentations work well for introducing new information, but they should be short and accompanied by visuals and discussion.

TO DO A TRAINER PRESENTATION, WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?

- ▶ Prepare and organize your presentation ahead of time so that it is clear and easy to follow.
- ▶ Check any equipment (slide projector, flip chart) ahead of time to make sure it is working properly.
- ▶ Keep the presentation short, between 5 and 15 minutes if possible.
- ▶ Use simple, clear language that participants will understand.
- ▶ Use questions during the presentation to engage participants in the material you are presenting.
- ▶ Use open body language and a friendly, clear tone of voice.
- ▶ Watch participants during the presentation; if they look confused or bored, ask questions or move along more quickly.
- ▶ Move around the room as you present (if possible).
- ▶ Face participants when you are explaining a visual (do not face the visual).
- ▶ To wrap up your presentation, summarize and repeat the main points.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF USING TRAINER PRESENTATIONS?

- ▶ Presentations work well for introducing new information quickly and succinctly.
- ▶ Sometimes participants need to have new information presented before they can use or practice it.
- ▶ Most participants who went to school are familiar and comfortable with presentations.

WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES OF USING TRAINER PRESENTATIONS?

- ▶ Presentations are not as active or engaging as small groups, role plays, or other more participatory activities.
- ▶ Sometimes participants stop paying attention.
- ▶ If the trainer is not well-organized, participants will not learn the information effectively.

SMALL GROUP ACTIVITY

The trainer divides participants into small groups to do an activity. Examples of small group activities include small group discussions, case studies, planning role plays, solving problems, and looking at picture stories. Small groups allow each person to participate more than they would in a large group activity. Small group activities also help participants get to know each other and experience working with different people.

TO FACILITATE A SMALL GROUP ACTIVITY, WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?

- ▶ Explain the small group activity clearly.
- ▶ Tell small groups how they will share their small group work with the large group. For example, will they write information on chart paper to share with the group, report information orally, or perform a role play?
- ▶ Divide participants into small groups. Small groups of 4–6 participants work best, but some activities may require groups of 3, or larger groups of 10–12.
- ▶ Divide participants into small groups according to the task to be completed. For example, for activities that require reflection on parenting strategies, divide participants in a way that ensures each group contains parents with varying levels of experience.
- ▶ If the topic does not require any particular kind of grouping, you can divide participants by asking them to count off, “1, 2, 3, 4, etc.” Then group 1’s together, 2’s together, etc.
- ▶ Group participants so that they are not always working with people they know well. Counting off is a good way to do this.
- ▶ If the small group activity requires reading or writing, make sure that at least one participant in each group has sufficient literacy skills.
- ▶ Tell groups how much time they will have to work. Then help groups manage time by giving periodic time warnings, for example, a half-time warning, 5-minute warning, and 1-minute warning. If you see that time is almost up and groups are not finished yet, you can allow groups more time to work if the schedule permits.
- ▶ While small groups are working, circulate around the room, observe the work to make sure that groups understand the task and are making progress, help, and answer questions as needed.
- ▶ Manage time during small group reports or presentations. For example, give each small group 5 minutes to present and a few minutes to respond to questions or comments.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF USING SMALL GROUPS?

- ▶ Small groups allow everyone to participate more than in a large group.
- ▶ Many people feel more comfortable speaking in small groups.
- ▶ Small groups often enable more in-depth learning and discussion because everyone is engaged.

WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES OF USING SMALL GROUPS?

- ▶ Small group work takes more time than some other methods.
- ▶ Some small groups find it hard to work together or stay on task. If you observe a small group having difficulty, help them refocus, give examples, explain the task again, etc.

LARGE GROUP ACTIVITY

The trainer leads the whole group in an activity together. Examples of large group activities include voting, sorting pictures, learning songs, etc. Large group activities often work best for groups of 10–25 participants, but with good planning and organization, trainers can successfully lead large group activities with much larger groups.

TO FACILITATE A LARGE GROUP ACTIVITY, WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?

- ▶ Set a time limit and keep track of time.
- ▶ If participants need to move around the room during the activity, make sure that chairs and tables are moved away.
- ▶ Explain the activity clearly.
- ▶ Keep the activity moving along.
- ▶ Encourage everyone to participate.
- ▶ Highlight key points throughout the activity if appropriate.
- ▶ Wrap up the activity by repeating and summarizing main points.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF USING LARGE GROUP ACTIVITIES?

- ▶ Large group activities involve everyone and can be energizing.
- ▶ Large group activities require less intense participation than small group activities, and can be alternated with small group activities so that participants do not grow too tired.

WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES OF LARGE GROUP ACTIVITIES?

- ▶ Some participants may not participate as actively as they would in a smaller group.
- ▶ Large group activities require lots of energy from the trainer.
- ▶ Large group activities can be challenging to manage if the group is very large.

CASE STUDY

A case study is a brief story or scenario that presents a realistic situation for participants to discuss and analyze. Case studies give participants the opportunity to use newly acquired knowledge to discuss, analyze, and solve problems related to the training topic. For example, a case study might describe a sick person's symptoms, and then ask participants to identify the symptoms and discuss what they would do for the sick person. Depending on the size of the group, case studies can be discussed and analyzed in pairs, small groups, or a large group. The goal of using case studies is to help participants generate possible solutions to issues that may arise in the course of their work.

TO FACILITATE A CASE STUDY, WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?

- ▶ Read the case study aloud (or ask a volunteer to read aloud) so that even participants with limited literacy skills will understand the details.
- ▶ Explain clearly what participants should do with the case study (discuss the case study questions, solve a problem represented in the case study, etc.).
- ▶ Provide questions to guide participants in analyzing the case study.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF USING CASE STUDIES?

- ▶ Case studies give participants the opportunity to use information that they have learned in a realistic way.
- ▶ Case studies give participants the opportunity to practice handling problems that they might encounter during their work.

WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES OF USING CASE STUDIES?

- ▶ Case studies require problem-solving, which can be challenging and require more time than traditional presentations or simple discussions.
- ▶ Participants with limited literacy skills may be intimidated by case studies.

OPEN DISCUSSION

An open discussion is a dialogue between the trainer and the whole group of participants, with participants responding to questions the trainer has prepared ahead of time. During discussions, new questions may also surface. To start the discussion, the trainer must give clear instructions. During the discussion, the trainer must manage the discussion by keeping participants focused, eliciting participants' responses, and limiting participants who like to talk a lot.

TO FACILITATE A LARGE GROUP DISCUSSION, WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?

- ▶ Set a time limit and keep track of time.
- ▶ Explain that participants who want to speak should raise their hands.
- ▶ Keep the discussion on target.
- ▶ Keep the discussion moving and flowing.
- ▶ Encourage everyone to participate.
- ▶ Look around the room and make sure you call on everyone who raises her/his hand.
- ▶ Limit participants who like to talk a lot.
- ▶ Manage the flow of the discussion.
- ▶ If participants do not respond to a question, try asking the question a different way.
- ▶ Ask questions to encourage more responses to a question, for example: "What else?" "What other ideas do you have?"
- ▶ Wrap up the discussion; repeat and summarize main points.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF USING LARGE GROUP DISCUSSIONS?

- ▶ Everyone has the chance to participate.
- ▶ Everyone hears everyone else's ideas.
- ▶ Hearing many ideas can stimulate further discussion.
- ▶ Participants who do not feel comfortable speaking in a large group can participate by listening.

WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES OF USING LARGE GROUP DISCUSSIONS?

- ▶ More talkative or assertive participants tend to dominate large group discussions.
- ▶ Shy or less-experienced participants may not feel comfortable speaking in a large group.
- ▶ Large group discussions can get off track if there are many competing ideas.

ROLE PLAY

A role play is a brief, informal performance where participants act roles in order to show a particular situation and feel what it is like to be in those roles and situation. Role playing is informal – participants do not need to memorize “lines” or perform perfectly. The point is to illustrate a problem, situation, or idea with acting. Role plays give participants the opportunity to act a real-life situation and practice handling it. Participants can use role plays to illustrate ideas and information for patients and community members. Role plays also help participants learn and practice communication and counseling skills, empathetic behavior, and proper ways to approach community members. Role plays can be improvised and informal, or more formal, and can be done in small or large groups.

TO FACILITATE A ROLE PLAY, WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?

- ▶ Plan enough time for participants to prepare and perform role plays.
- ▶ Explain clearly what the role play is, how participants will prepare, and what the role play should show.
- ▶ If participants are not familiar with role plays, model the role play to show how it is done.
- ▶ Set a time limit for role play performances and manage time well.
- ▶ Remind participants that role plays are not perfect performances, but rather an opportunity to practice handling situations that participants encounter in reality. It is okay to make mistakes during a role play.
- ▶ After a role play performance, lead a discussion about the ideas shown in the role play. Focus the discussion on the important issues raised by the role play, not participants’ acting skills.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF USING ROLE PLAYS?

- ▶ Role plays engage participants and give them the opportunity to think, feel, and act.
- ▶ Role plays give participants a chance to practice skills in a safe setting and get feedback.
- ▶ You can use 2 short role plays to show 1) the wrong way to handle a situation; and 2) the right way to handle a situation.
- ▶ Role plays can raise many issues and lead to useful discussions.

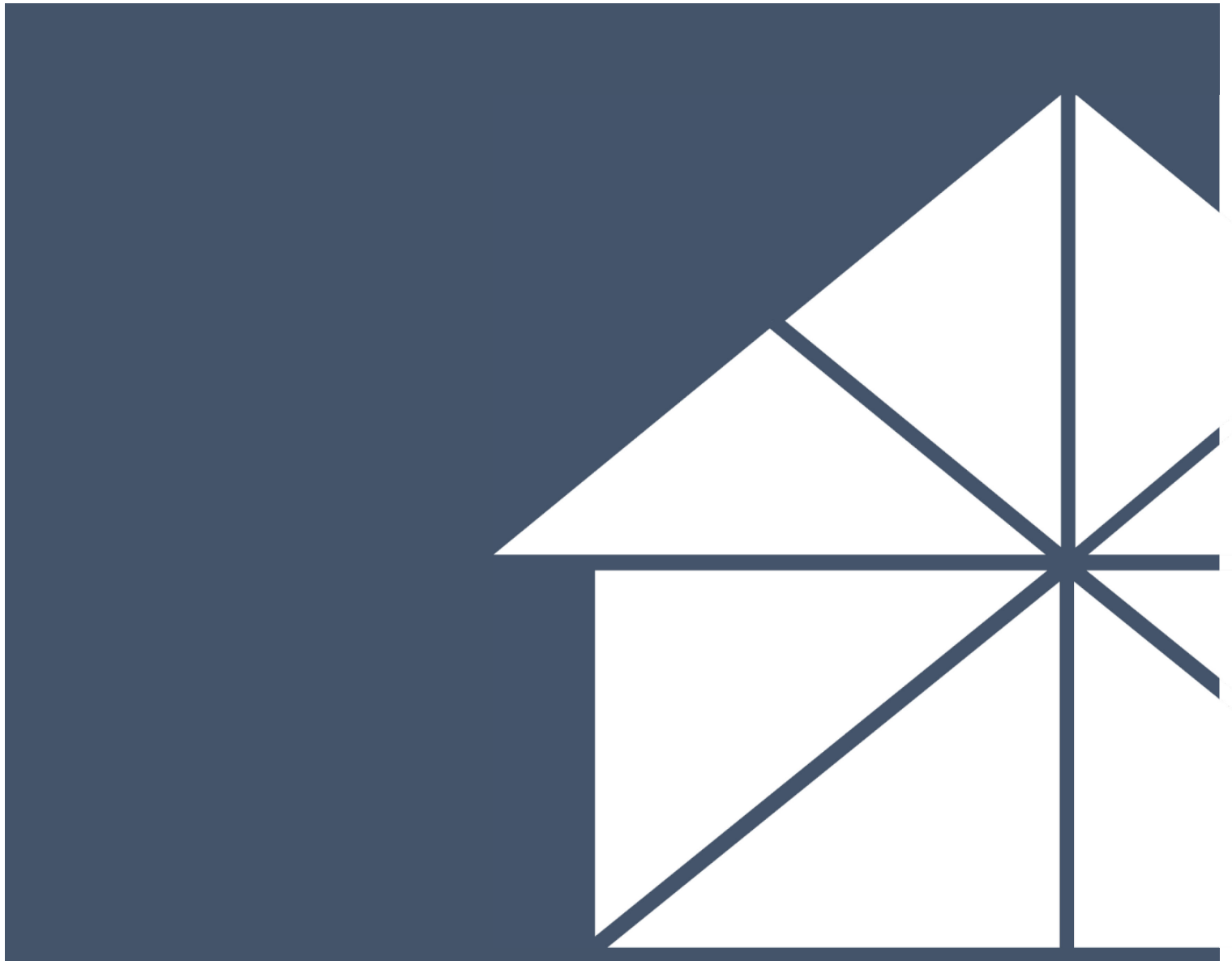
WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES OF USING ROLE PLAYS?

- ▶ Role plays take a lot of time.
- ▶ Some participants may be uncomfortable performing in front of the group.
- ▶ Participants may not be familiar with doing role plays.

SESSIONS AT A GLANCE

Session	Method	Additional Session Materials
1 – Introduction and Understanding the Impact of Trauma on Youth in Foster Care	Lecture Activities Video Presentation	Beach related pictures or items 3 x 5 index cards (one per participant) 10 inflated balloons Small ball or other light object that can be tossed
2 – Parenting Youth Who Have Experienced Trauma	Lecture Activities Video Presentation	Blue, red and green flip chart markers (3 of each)
3 – Developing and Sustaining Healthy and Supportive Relationships with Your Youth	Lecture Activities Video Presentation	No additional materials needed
4 – Nurturing Youth’s Cultural / Racial / Ethnic Needs and Sexual Orientation / Gender Identity and Expression	Lecture Activities Video Presentation	No additional materials needed
5 – Understanding and Managing Youth’s Challenging Behaviors – Part 1	Lecture Activities Video Presentation	2 – 12 oz. bottles of soda with a twist cap
6 - Understanding and Managing Youth’s Challenging Behaviors – Part 2	Lecture Activities Video Presentation	No additional materials needed
7 – A New Suitcase of Parenting Knowledge and Skills	Lecture Activities Video Presentation	No additional materials needed

CORE TEEN CURRICULUM



TRAINER GUIDE

CORE TEEN CURRICULUM



SESSION

INTRODUCTION AND UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACT OF TRAUMA
ON YOUTH IN FOSTER CARE

SESSION I: PRE AND POSTTEST ANSWER KEY

1. Angel is a 15-year-old girl who was in her home during a drive-by shooting. Her brother was playing with his toy trucks in the living room when the shooting occurred. No one was injured in the home. Angel looked out the window and saw a young person lying in the street. Angel's parent went into cardiac arrest shortly after the events and was rushed to the hospital.

Which of the following would **NOT** be considered a traumatic event?

- a. The drive-by shooting
 - b. Parent being rushed to the hospital
 - c. Seeing the young person in the street
 - d. Angel's brother was in the home playing with his toy trucks**
2. What determines if an event is traumatic to the teen is how the teen perceives the event and the long-term effects. (circle one) **True** False
3. Past traumatic events can affect a teen's ability to build relationships, regulate emotions, and communicate effectively. (circle one) **True** False
4. Shishona was prenatally exposed to drugs because of her mother's opioid use during pregnancy. Her mother was 18 when Shishona was born. When Shishona was five years old, her mother died. She went to live with her grandmother, who was a member of her tribe. Which of the following could have disrupted the regulatory networks in Shishona's brain?
- a. Prenatal drug exposure**
 - b. Being of Native American heritage
 - c. The death of her mother
 - d. The age of her mother at the time of her birth
5. The effects of maltreatment
- a. Continue to influence brain development and activity into adolescence and adulthood**
 - b. End once the child/adolescent is no longer experiencing maltreatment
 - c. Can never be treated
 - d. Have no impact on adolescent development

6. For teens to think critically, they must first
 - a. Regulate their emotions**
 - b. Use problem-solving skills
 - c. Access the fight/flight response
 - d. Be perceptive

7. As a parent, what are some ways you can build attachment with your teen?
 - a. Discontinue past relationships
 - b. Be consistent and reliable**
 - c. Stick with your rules no matter what
 - d. Focus only on positive past experiences

8. Teens who have experienced trauma may react without thinking because the part of the brain responsible for problem-solving and judgment is not fully developed. (circle one) **True** False

9. As a parent, I do not need to consider my teen's trauma history when setting expectations. (circle one) True **False**

10. Teens may experience trauma as a direct result of their foster care or adoption experience. (circle one) **True** False

11. Songs, smells, or images can trigger a traumatic response that may prompt challenging behaviors from the teen. (circle one) **True** False

12. An adolescent's physical reactions to stress may include heart pounding, shutting down, headaches, and/or stomachaches. (circle one) **True** False

13. To parent effectively, adults must
 - a. Discipline teens when they make mistakes
 - b. Regulate their own emotions and reactions**
 - c. Show teens that the parent is always in charge
 - d. None of the above

14. Trauma is defined by the nature and timing of the event, the experience of the teen, and
 - a. Fear felt by the teen
 - b. Anger the teen feels after the event
 - c. The long-term effects on the teen**
 - d. Mental health of the teen before the event

SESSION 1: INTRODUCTION AND UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACT OF TRAUMA ON YOUTH IN FOSTER CARE



Core Competency: Parents nurture and promote the well-being of their youth through trauma-informed parenting.

SEGMENTS

- I. Welcome and Introductions **(30 MINUTES)**
- II. Who Are the Youth We Are Parenting or Will Parent? **(15 MINUTES)**
- III. Understanding Trauma and the Impact of Trauma on Older Youth **(50 MINUTES)**
- IV. Parenting Your Youth **(20 MINUTES)**
- V. Review and Closing **(5 MINUTES)**

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

One index card for each participant

10 inflated balloons

Small ball or other light object that can be tossed for closing activity

PREPARE

SELECT two vignettes for discussion from **HANDOUT #1.1: 5 Vignettes:** Frank, Lisa, Antonio, Darren, and/or April. Make the selection by considering the issues that each vignette highlights and ensuring that the selected vignettes are a good fit for class participants in terms of culture and relevancy.

PREPARE the following images or collect and bring the following items that will be used during the Our Parenting Journey activity on Slide 4:

Swimsuits	Visor
Swimsuit Cover-up	Sun hat
Shorts	Sunglasses
Flip flops	Beach towel
T-shirt	Mask and snorkel
Sunscreen	

PREPARE a sheet of flip chart paper with the heading “FOR THE BEACH”.

REVIEW the Right Time materials on Trauma Informed Parenting 1 and Trauma Informed Parenting 2.

SEGMENT I. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

SLIDES 1-8

30 MINUTES

[PPT #1]: WELCOME AND BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO CORE TEEN

WELCOME TO CORE TEEN!



1

NOTE: Display this slide as participants are getting seated. When it is time to begin, welcome everyone and provide a brief explanation of the CORE Teen Training.

STATE:

CORE Teen is developed especially for:

- ▶ Foster, kinship, guardianship and adoptive parents of youth who are experiencing significant emotional and behavioral challenges
- ▶ Individuals who are interested in becoming resource parents for these youth

CORE Teen was developed to help you better parent youth who have been in foster care and have had other difficult life experiences and youth who have experienced traumatic events, separation and loss.

There are seven CORE Teen sessions, each approximately two and a half hours long. During each session, we will learn together and from one another.

[PPT # 2]: OVERVIEW OF SESSION ONE

Session #1:
Introduction and Understanding the
Impact of Trauma on Youth in Foster
Care

2

STATE:

Today's session will be about Understanding the Impact of Trauma on Youth in Foster Care.

This training may trigger painful emotions or memories. Please be aware of how you are responding and take good care of yourself. Know that you will be invited to share, but you are not required to.

Feel free to step out if you need to and feel free to talk with us, your trainers, about your reactions. It is critical that resource parents take good care of themselves. Practice self-care in this training. We are here to support you. We will talk more about self-care as we move through the sessions.

[PPT # 3]: INTRODUCTIONS

Let's Get to Know One Another!

Name:

What is your experience parenting or caring for children?

What do you hope to learn from this training?

**STATE:**

Let's get to know one another!

NOTE:

Start by having each trainer introduce themselves, providing their names, their backgrounds with respect to foster care, adoption and/or kinship (professional and/or personal), and why they believe that this training is important.

Next, conduct the Participant Introduction activity.

ACTIVITY



INSTRUCTIONS: Provide each participant with an index card. Have them pair off with someone they do not know. Instruct participants that they will gather their partner's responses to the questions on the slide and write them down on the index card. Explain that each person will have about one minute to interview their partner, at which time an announcement will be made that it is time to switch. The second person will have the same amount of time to ask their partner the questions. Explain that each person will then introduce their partner by sharing the information they gathered.

After introductions are complete, thank everyone for participating and sharing information about themselves. Highlight what was shared about participants' learning interests.

[PPT # 4]: OUR PARENTING JOURNEY

Our Parenting Journey

Imagine that we are going to a beautiful beach for a long-anticipated vacation.



What do we need to pack?



Using the next several slides, **FACILITATE A DISCUSSION** that illustrates how the "tools" in our parenting tool box may need to change.

STATE:

As we think about the journey of parenting young people with foster care and trauma histories, let's think about preparing for a journey.

Imagine that we are going on a long-anticipated vacation to a beautiful beach, such as the one pictured on the slide.

Let's pack our bags. What do we need to pack?

SESSION 1

Introduction and Understanding the Impact of Trauma on Youth in Foster Care

FACILITATE A DISCUSSION about what needs to go into the suitcase. As participants mention each beach item, place the item in a visible location or post an image of the item on the flip chart page entitled: FOR THE BEACH. If you don't have an item that someone mentions, make a drawing of the item on the flip chart paper that you prepared. Having the items available or using the pictures of items is recommended because it helps the participant make a visual connection and investment to the items and creates a stronger reaction when it is revealed to participants that they are not arriving at the beach.

STATE:



So, we are all set to go to the beach. After a long flight, we finally arrive, and this is what we see.

NOTE: Reveal the next slide.

[PPT # 5]: OUR PARENTING JOURNEY (CONTINUED)

Our Parenting Journey

We walk off the plane and see . . .




NOTE: Allow for participants to have some initial reaction to the photo before moving to the next slide where more discussion will take place about their reactions.

[PPT # 6]: OUR PARENTING JOURNEY (CONTINUED)

Our Parenting Journey

- How do you react?
- What did you pack in your suitcase that will be helpful at this location? What don't you need? What are you missing?
- How does it feel to have things in your suitcase that you don't need, while missing other essentials?



NOTE: Using the questions on the slide, gather participant reactions and allow time for participants to share some of their ideas about useful or missing items. Help participants reflect on the way that they are feeling about not having all of what they may need.

[PPT # 7]: REPACKING OUR SUITCASE

Repacking Our Suitcase

**STATE:**

This discussion helps us think about parenting youth with foster care and trauma histories. We each have a suitcase of techniques and responses that we learned from our parents or have worked as we parented or cared for children and youth who HAVE NOT experienced trauma and loss. It is likely that some of these parenting strategies WILL NOT work with youth WHO HAVE experienced traumatic events, separation and loss.

In each session we will begin to re-pack our suitcases with new skills, techniques and understanding that will prepare us to parent youth who have experienced trauma and loss.

In this session, we will talk about the impact of trauma and adversity on youth who have experienced abuse or neglect.

This work will prepare us to learn to better parent older youth who are having moderate to significant emotional and behavioral challenges.

[PPT # 8]: LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Our Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, we will be able to:

- Define trauma.
- Describe ways that traumatic stress and adversity impact a youth's development.
- Describe the importance of responding to the underlying cause of a youth's behavior.

**STATE:**

Our learning objectives are that by the end of the session, you will be able to:

1. Define trauma.
2. Describe ways that traumatic stress and adversity impact a youth's development.
3. Describe the importance of responding to the underlying cause of a youth's behavior.

SEGMENT II. WHO ARE THE YOUTH WE ARE PARENTING OR WILL PARENT?

SLIDES 9-10

15 MINUTES

[PPT # 9]: WHO ARE THE YOUTH WE ARE PARENTING OR WILL PARENT?

Who Are the Youth We Are Parenting or Will Parent? Handout #1.1

- Hearing from two youth and their parents/caregivers
- Think about whether the situations:
 - Are similar to what you are experiencing in parenting youth?
 - Are similar to what you anticipate experiencing with youth in your care in the future?



STATE:

Let's now learn more about the backgrounds of the youth you are currently parenting or will parent in the future by considering the stories of youth and their resource parents.

ACTIVITY

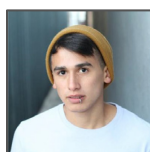


INSTRUCTIONS: Refer participants to **HANDOUT #1.1: 5 Vignettes** where they will find five vignettes. Explain that each vignette is a composite drawn from different cases. Inform participants that each vignette is a composite drawn from different cases. Inform participants that each vignette will be used during the session. Ask for volunteers to read aloud scripts for the youth and the youth's parents (each volunteer reads one of the scripts). Ask participants to think about whether any of the situations (1) are similar to what they are experiencing in parenting their youth, or (2) are similar to what they anticipate experiencing with youth in their care in the future.



HANDOUT #1.1: 5 VIGNETTES

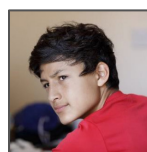
Frank



Lisa



Antonio



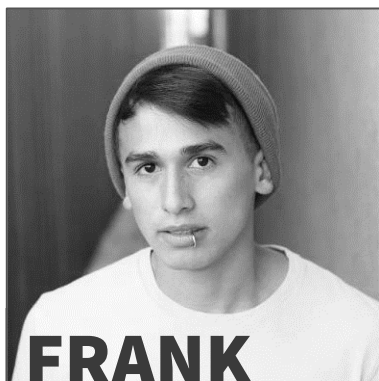
Darren



April



Introduction and Understanding the Impact of Trauma on Youth in Foster Care



FRANK, A 16-YEAR-OLD WHITE MALE: Life has been really hard for me. My dad was mean and liked to hurt me. When I was just a school kid, he would punch me with his fists. I would go to school with bruises and I knew that I had to lie and say that I fell or bumped into something. My mom did nothing. I think she was afraid of him – he hit her too. Things got worse as I got older. When I was 14, he really got mad at me. I told my mom that I knew I was gay. She told my dad.

He wouldn't stop hitting me with his fists. He broke bones in my arms and legs and my mom took me to the hospital. The child protection people got involved then. They ended up putting me in foster care. I had mixed feelings – I was really happy to be away from my dad, but I didn't like living with people I didn't know and who didn't seem to like me very much.

I got moved around in foster care for a few years and ended up in five different foster homes. I just got tired of trying to make things work and I started to get pretty angry at the people who were supposed to be taking care of me. I let them know that I didn't like them. They had no idea what they were doing or even who I was. I would sometimes just skip school and stay out all night to let them know that I didn't care about them. Funny thing is, I really liked school and especially science. I had friends who were smart and liked science too. I liked fiddling around with new inventions that would make us all famous.

Last year, I was in a church program that my then foster parents enrolled me in. They made me go. But I met Tony at the program – a cool guy who I liked talking to. He loves science too. After a while, we started talking about my future and what I wanted. We moved pretty slowly but with my caseworker, we eventually decided that it would be good for Tony to adopt me.

I am not so sure that Tony is right for me now that he is my dad. I think he is just like everyone else – he is a short termer. And then where will I be? That's right – back in foster care.

TONY (ADOPTIVE FATHER): I love this kid. He is funny, smart and can be single-minded when he wants something. He dreams of being a scientist and I am excited to help him on his journey. It all started out so good. But now, Frank is really angry. He gets mad about almost everything and ends up yelling at me almost every day. What really bugs me is that he is starting to skip school more and more and his grades are going down. He is too smart for this! I am not liking the people who are starting to drop by the house. I try to talk to him, but he just shrugs me off. I feel like he is turning against me.

Introduction and Understanding the Impact of Trauma on Youth in Foster Care



LISA, A 15-YEAR-OLD AFRICAN AMERICAN FEMALE: I live with my adoptive moms. I was happy with my real mom until I was about 3 years old. No one has ever explained why it happened, but I moved in with my grandmother about that time. My mom just disappeared, and my grandma would say that she had problems she needed to work out by herself. She never came back for me. My grandma died when I was 11 years old and this time, I was sent to live with my aunt and uncle. It was okay at first but then my uncle started to put his hands all over me. I didn't know what to do.

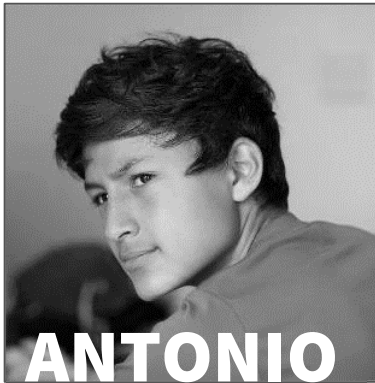
I stayed quiet for a while but then he began to take off his clothes and make me do things I didn't want to do. When that happened, I didn't know what to do. I felt frozen. I was afraid but couldn't move or say anything. When I finally told my aunt, she went crazy. She accused me of lying and told me to never say anything like that again. I ran away, not knowing where to go. The police caught me and brought me back to my aunt and uncle. The sexual stuff continued, and I kept running away, only to be dragged back to them. Finally, when I was 12, he had sex with me. I told my teacher at school. Child protection came in and I went into foster care. It was rough. The only time I felt safe was when I was writing my rhymes and drawing or reading. I went through four foster homes and ran away from every one of them.

After two years, I met Mandy and Evelyn who wanted to adopt me. I couldn't understand why but they were really interested in me. They gave me lots of time and space but were always there to talk to when I felt like it. They saw me as a strong person who had gone through a lot and they showed me real respect. I liked them, and I liked having two strong African American women in my life. I liked that they liked me. They adopted me last year.

Things are not going so well with them now. They have changed. It's like they want to control everything in my life. They make a big deal out of the way I dress and how I talk with guys. They are pushing me to the edge. Last week, they were after me for my outfit and began criticizing me for being friendly with a man who lives in an apartment on our floor. I had had it! I broke some of the dishes that they make a big deal about and then slammed my bedroom door and refused to talk with them. I hate it when they are trying to have a "serious" talk with me. I just stand there, and they talk and talk. I just zone out.

MANDY (ADOPTIVE MOTHER): Lisa is a strong and focused young woman. What she has been through is too terrible. Evelyn and I want so much to support her in having a good life and a wonderful future. We want her to have self-esteem, particularly because, as we know so well, there is lots of discrimination out there. We want to protect her after everything she has been through. It scares us that she dresses in a way that will just invite guys' attention to her sexually. She is too friendly with males – teens and adults alike. We have to stop this even if she doesn't like it! We want to talk with her but she either gets really nasty or sits there and just nods at everything we say; and then she does something that is exactly what she has agreed not to do. It is just so disrespectful and plain irritating. I just hate it when she starts to mimic my voice and my words when I am talking to her. It gets me going. Evelyn was really upset when Lisa marched herself into the kitchen and deliberately broke three dishes that Evelyn loves. I hate that kind of thing too. We want to help Lisa, but she is really pushing us away.

Introduction and Understanding the Impact of Trauma on Youth in Foster Care



ANTONIO, A 17-YEAR-OLD LATINO MALE: I am from Guatemala and was in an orphanage there starting when I was 4 years old. My three brothers and sisters were with me. My mom just couldn't get it together. She would go out drinking and drugging and leave us alone. Finally, our neighbor took us to the police when mom didn't come home, and we were placed in the orphanage together.

When I was 8, me and my brother Juan were adopted by an American couple. No one knew that our adoptive mom was hitting us with a belt when she got mad at us. Finally, our teachers figured it out. Our dad said at first that he would keep us because he was divorcing mom but that didn't last long. He pretty quickly decided he was not up to it. He talked with some friends who said that they would take me in as a foster child. They didn't want Juan. The state sent him to an aunt of ours who I don't know and who lives a couple of hundred miles away. I don't know where my sisters are. As for my mom, I haven't heard from her in years.

When I was 15, I went to an adoption party and I met Patty and Hank. They had two little boys – Evan was 2 and Terry was 8. I liked them well enough and went along with moving in with them and later went along with the plan for them to adopt me. I just wanted to get out of the foster home I was in.

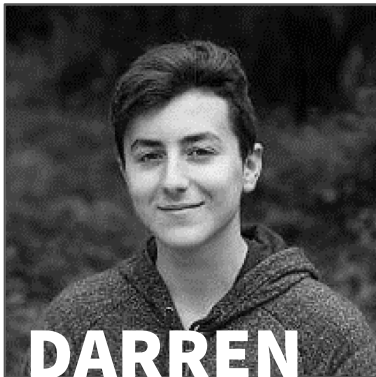
I am not a problem at home. I just mind my own business and don't get involved with Patty or Hank and don't have much to do with Terry, who is a pain. I like Evan – he likes being outside like I do. We go fishing together and he likes to watch me working with wood. Sometimes, I just take a break from “the parents” for a week or so. I stay in my room and when I have to come out for meals, I just sit there and eat.

I am turning 18 in less than a year. I have already enlisted in the Navy and I can't wait. I am a hard worker – I worked after school since I was 14 and I have lots of skills that will be good for the Navy. I know that I have a great future – away from foster care and adoption.

PATTY (ADOPTIVE MOTHER): We love Antonio. We are really sad that he has been so unhappy in our family. The bright spot is that he has connected with Evan and they love spending time together. He is a smart kid and is determined to succeed – he pre-enlisted in the Navy and is determined to be a successful Navy man.

Antonio is hard to understand. He sometimes goes a week or more without speaking to us. He is doing things that upset us a lot and we are having lots of problems handling these situations. We have seen him push and hit Terry, who is now 10, when he gets irritated. A month ago, he hit me when I was angry with him for hitting Terry. Last week, Hank found Antonio in bed with his girlfriend when they both should have been in school. Hank demanded that they get up, get dressed and go to school. They complied but with stony looks. When I got home from work later that day, I saw that Antonio had set on fire a table that he had made for the family. He left the charred remains on the front porch.

Introduction and Understanding the Impact of Trauma on Youth in Foster Care



DARREN, A 17-YEAR-OLD WHITE MALE: I've been in foster care since I was 10. My dad disappeared when I was a baby. My mom did the best she could but there were always problems. She went to a counselor and she told me that he said she had mental health issues, but I never understood exactly what was wrong. She did lots of drugs. We lived with a bunch of different guys – some were okay, but some hit my mom a lot. The last one was really violent, and we left and lived in my mom's car for a while. I didn't go to school because we were always on the move. I guess someone saw us and called the state. That was when I came into foster care. My mom has faded away. She came to visit me at first, but I haven't seen her in more than a year now.

I don't like being in foster care but at least I have a place to stay – for a while. I am on my sixth foster family now. I have been here about 8 months and I guess these people are okay. Maybe this one will be better. I just try to keep my head down; I want to stay under the radar. I am going to school and I am doing okay. But it is hard. I am trying to keep up and I feel really alone at school. My only friends are the ones I play online games with. I really want to be a part of what is going on at school but that never works out for me. I am not sure what will happen to me when I turn 18. I feel really scared about it. I want to have a future with a girlfriend and a good job. But I don't know how to make this happen.

EVAN (FOSTER FATHER): Joan and I have been foster parents for 12 years and have had lots of teenagers in our home. Darren is an especially quiet boy and we are working hard to get to know him. We know he is bright and he has a good sense of humor, which we have seen only a few times, but we know it is there. He seems to want to keep to himself all the time; he would play video games all day if he could. He stays in his room as much as he can and has little to say. We try to coax him out of his room and sometimes we succeed – if only for a half an hour or so. We are struggling to figure out how to engage with him – he is such a loner. We would love to get him into sports or afterschool activities, but he just shrugs his shoulders when we talk about these with him. We want Darren to succeed but are not sure how to approach him and help him get on a good track.

Introduction and Understanding the Impact of Trauma on Youth in Foster Care



APRIL, A 12-YEAR-OLD NATIVE AMERICAN FEMALE: I am a member of the Navajo Tribe. I was told that I was very tiny when I was born, and I still have problems breathing. I use an inhaler and it helps. My mom, whose name is Spring, thought it would be cute to name me April because it was a spring day when I was born. My mother is Native American, and my dad, who left us when I was 8 years old, was not certain about his background but was sure that he was not Native American. When he left us, he said, “I wanted a strong boy, not a sickly little girl.” We never saw him again.

My mother took care of me the best she could, but she had lots of problems. We didn’t have much money, she was sad a lot of the time, and she would go out drinking. She sometimes stayed away for a long time. One night, she ordered a pizza for me and told me to stay home, keep the doors locked, and not to open the door for anyone. When she didn’t come home, I began crying, and our neighbor heard me and called the police. They arrived with a woman who told me that they were there to take care of me. I was scared of what they were going to do. I ended up in foster care.

Mom tried to get me back, but she kept going out drinking and partying. I’m not sure how hard she was trying. My Aunt Linda, Mom’s sister, started visiting with me. She lived nearby, but I didn’t really know her because my mom hadn’t talked with her in years. We got to know one another, and we started talking about my moving in with her. I have been living with her for six months and she is okay. She helps me with schoolwork and finds stuff for me to do in the neighborhood. The problem is that she has no patience with my mom and wants her to stay out of our lives. She doesn’t understand how much I love my mom and still want her to be around. Last week, we had a big argument about my mom, and I left the house and took the bus to my mom’s. She didn’t live there anymore! So now it looks like I have lost my mom too – first, my dad and now, my mom. It is all my aunt’s fault.

LINDA (RELATIVE CAREGIVER): I am so happy that the tribe placed April with me as her guardian. My sister is a mess. A few years ago, she stole money from me and wrecked my car. I was furious, and we have not spoken since. I want April to have a good life with good influences around her. She is smart and is doing well in school and is a great kid. I want her to be healthy and happy – and that is just not going to be possible with Spring hanging around. Spring drinks and probably uses drugs too. I want to protect April and she just gets mad at me. Now, she is barely speaking to me. She blames me that she cannot find her mom. Who knows where Spring is now?

[PPT # 10]: WHO ARE THE YOUTH WE ARE PARENTING OR WILL PARENT? (CONTINUE)

Who Are the Youth We Are Parenting or Will Parent?

- Have you had similar experiences as these resource parents?
- What behaviors have been difficult (or do you anticipate will be difficult) for you to manage?
- What have been your parenting responses to these behaviors? How have they worked?

10

Using the questions on the slide, **FACILITATE A DISCUSSION** with the group.

STATE:

You may have noticed that during our discussion issues related cultural considerations were raised. You will find in your Resource Notebook **RESOURCE #1.1: Cultural Considerations in Parenting Youth Who Are Adopted, in Guardianship, or in Foster Care**. This resource contains web-based links, books, movies and other training opportunities where you can find more information on cultural considerations in parenting.

SUMMARIZE any final points on this topic before moving to the next section.

SEGMENT III. UNDERSTANDING TRAUMA & THE IMPACT OF TRAUMA ON OLDER YOUTH

SLIDES 11-27

50 MINUTES

[PPT # 11]: UNDERSTANDING TRAUMA

Understanding Trauma



VIDEO: The Three E's

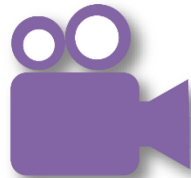


- Dr. Bruce Perry
- Child and adolescent
 - Senior Fellow of the ChildTrauma Academy

11

STATE:


We will be seeing several videos featuring Dr. Bruce Perry during our session today. Dr. Perry is a child and adolescent psychiatrist with more than 40 years of experience working with children in foster care. He is the Senior Fellow of the ChildTrauma Academy, a non-profit organization with international experience developing practice innovations and programs for children, youth and adults impacted by various forms of trauma, including neglect and maltreatment. In this video Dr. Perry will introduce “The Three E’s”.



1:57 MINUTES

SHOW participants the video “**Dr. Bruce Perry: Three E’s.**”

[PPT # 12]: THE THREE E FRAMEWORK

WHAT IS TRAUMA? 

The same event can be experienced, adapted to, and carried forward in different ways by different children. So, it is the response (the ‘experience’) of the individual to the event that alters the stress response systems and makes something “traumatic” – not simply the event itself. SAMSHA suggests thinking about the 3 E’s...

Three E Framework

- “Traumatic” Event (the nature, timing and pattern)
- “Traumatic” Experience (individual’s response & perception)
- Effects of “Trauma” (the long-term impact on the individual)



STATE:

Different children experience, adapt to, and carry forward the same event in different ways. How a child EXPERIENCES the event determines if it is TRAUMATIC – not the event itself.

Even siblings who are exposed to the same event can be impacted very differently, based on how they experience that event. For example, a toddler who is completely dependent on their parents may be terrified and freeze in place after finding their parent unconscious and would likely have long-term effects of trauma. An older sibling who did not feel powerless and called for help may not have long-term effects of trauma from this event.

[PPT # 13]: UNDERSTANDING TRAUMA—THE THREE E’S EXERCISE

Understanding Trauma

- The Three E Exercise:
 - **Event**
 - Identify the **experience** (thoughts and feelings), and
 - The **effects** (long term impact on a youth’s cognitive, emotional, and social development)
- **Handout #1.2: The Three E’s**



STATE:

Next, we will do an empathy-building activity. The goal is to begin to shift the thinking from “What is wrong with my child?” to “What happened to my child?” and to explore the cause or reason behind challenging behaviors.

This activity is intended to help you begin to think about the potential events, experiences and effects of trauma for youth.

While you will likely never know the full extent or nature of the youth’s history, it is very helpful when beginning to reframe and understand their behaviors (especially their troubling behaviors).

Introduction and Understanding the Impact of Trauma on Youth in Foster Care



INSTRUCTIONS: Refer participants to **HANDOUT #1.2: The Three E’s**. This activity can be done as a large group or by having participants form small groups. Ask participants to complete the exercise for the youth whose vignettes were chosen for the earlier exercise. The detail is provided following the handout that contains some possible responses to the questions on the handout. After allowing time for participants to complete the handout, review their responses as a large group.

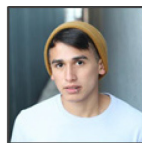


HANDOUT #1.2: THE THREE E’S

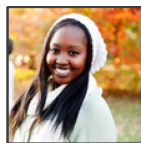
Complete for two youth.

1. Name of Youth #1: _____

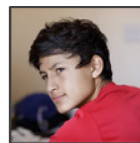
Frank



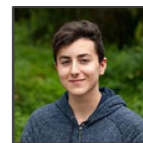
Lisa



Antonio



Darren



April



2. What are some of the possible “traumatic” events that the youth has experienced?

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

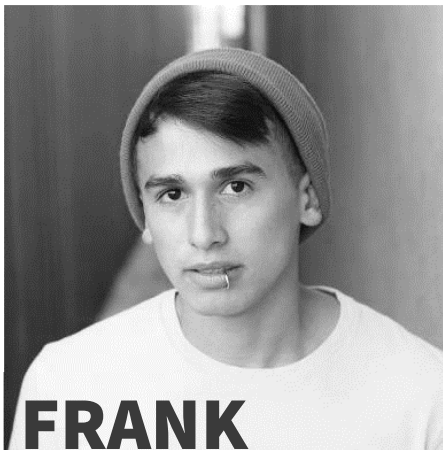
3. How do you think the youth experienced these events? What feelings? Thoughts?

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

4. What do you think some of the long-term effects of this have been? Do you see any evidence of these effects in the youth’s current behavior?

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

Introduction and Understanding the Impact of Trauma on Youth in Foster Care

**FRANK**

What are some of the possible traumatic events that he has experienced?

- ▶ He was being beaten by his father.
- ▶ He was removed from his home and placed with families he did not know.
- ▶ He had multiple moves in foster care.

How do you think he experienced these events? What feelings? Thoughts?

- ▶ He felt unprotected and possibly betrayed by his mother (regarding his sexual orientation).
- ▶ His sexual orientation was an additional cause for abuse by his father; he felt rejection from one of the two people who should most protect/be committed to him.
- ▶ He may have felt misunderstood, rejected or a burden to his multiple foster care providers.

What do you think some of the long-term effects of this have been? Do you see any evidence of these effects in his current behavior?

- ▶ He has poor self-esteem.
- ▶ He lacks trust in adults and may feel the need to distance himself to avoid possible hurt.
- ▶ He has no sense of a positive future – giving up on even those things that give him pleasure (science).
- ▶ He is feeling unlovable, pushing away Tony.
- ▶ Down the road, there is potential for unsafe sex and unhealthy relationships to both satisfy his need for affection and the belief that he isn't deserving of it.
- ▶ He is at risk of suicidal thoughts or suicide, depression and substance abuse as research shows these are greater risks when a youth is physically abused by a parent because of the youth's sexual orientation.

Introduction and Understanding the Impact of Trauma on Youth in Foster Care



LISA

What are some of the possible traumatic events that she has experienced?

- ▶ She was abandoned by her mother with no explanation.
- ▶ She lost her grandmother at age 11.
- ▶ She was sexually abused by her uncle.
- ▶ She had multiple foster placements.
- ▶ She was betrayed by the aunt who didn't believe her (or didn't want to).

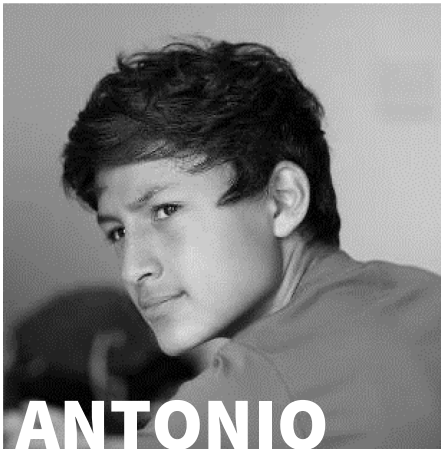
How do you think she experienced these events? What feelings? Thoughts?

- ▶ She was confused, feeling abandoned and looking for explanations about what happened to her mother and why she wasn't around; may have felt abandoned by her grandmother too.
- ▶ She was betrayed by her aunt who blamed her when she said she had been abused.
- ▶ She may have felt rejected by her multiple foster parents.

What do you think some of the long-term effects of this have been? Do you see any evidence of these effects in her current behavior?

- ▶ She lacks trust in adults.
- ▶ She may be confused about love/attention/sex.
- ▶ She may be more likely to pursue unsafe sex/relationships.
- ▶ She may be more likely to use sex to gain control, and to feel a sense of self-worth.

Introduction and Understanding the Impact of Trauma on Youth in Foster Care



ANTONIO

What are some of the possible traumatic events that he has experienced?

- ▶ He was placed in an orphanage after being abandoned by his mother.
- ▶ He was separated from his siblings.
- ▶ He had a failed adoption and again was separated from his brother.

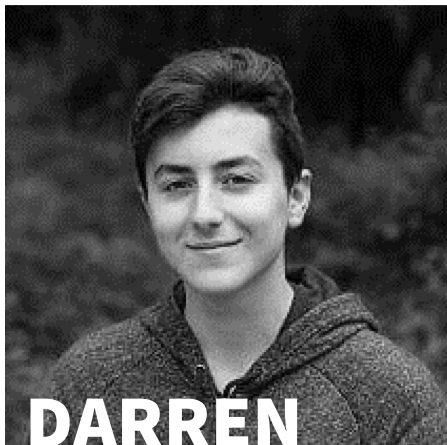
How do you think he experienced these events? What feelings? Thoughts?

- ▶ He may have felt rejected by his mother; may be seeking answers about what happened to him.
- ▶ He may feel deep loss because he is not with his siblings.
- ▶ He may feel rejected; let down by his adoptive father for not following through on keeping him and Juan.

What do you think some of the long-term effects of this have been? Do you see any evidence of these effects in his current behavior?

- ▶ He lacks trust in adults; is not willing to allow himself to get close.
- ▶ He is biding his time until he can be on his own and not have to depend on others.

Introduction and Understanding the Impact of Trauma on Youth in Foster Care



DARREN

What are some of the possible traumatic events that he has experienced?

- ▶ He experienced domestic violence.
- ▶ He was abandoned by his mother.
- ▶ He had multiple placements in foster care.

How do you think he experienced these events? What feelings? Thoughts?

- ▶ He feels alone and unsure how to connect with others (peers or parents).
- ▶ He is worried about his future and what will happen to him.
- ▶ He feels disconnected from his family and unsure why his mother disappeared.

What do you think some of the long-term effects of this have been? Do you see any evidence of these effects in his current behavior?

- ▶ He lacks skills and/or confidence in developing relationships.
- ▶ He feels lost and uncertain about his future, not knowing who he can depend on.

Introduction and Understanding the Impact of Trauma on Youth in Foster Care



APRIL

What are some of the possible traumatic events that she has experienced?

- ▶ Her father left her and her mother when she was 8, and she heard what he said about rejecting her because she was “sickly.”
- ▶ Her mother often left her alone for long periods of time.
- ▶ Her mother has disappeared from her life at this time.

How do you think she experienced these events? What feelings? Thoughts?


- ▶ She feels rejected by her father.
- ▶ She may view her mother’s behavior after she entered foster care as yet another rejection.
- ▶ She feels abandoned by her mother now.
- ▶ She is uncertain how much to trust her aunt, given her aunt’s rejection of Spring.

What do you think some of the long-term effects of this have been? Do you see any evidence of these effects in her current behavior?


- ▶ She feels a break in her relationship with both her mother and her father, which may impact her ability to trust other adults.
- ▶ She may experience depression and anxiety as a result of the current loss of her mother, which may continue into the future if her mother stays away.

[PPT #14]: UNDERSTANDING THE BRAIN

Understanding the Brain



VIDEO: Understanding Trauma: Brain Basics



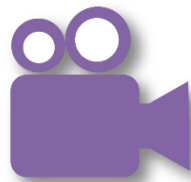
STATE:

A main component of being trauma-informed is being brain aware.

The brain is the organ that drives all of our thinking, feeling and behaving.

Understanding a few key principles of brain organization and functioning will shed light on some of the most confusing and troubling behaviors seen in youth who have been impacted by trauma.

Next, we will see several clips of Dr. Perry providing brief overviews of the brain, the stress response, and trauma. This first video clip will focus on some basics about brain organization.

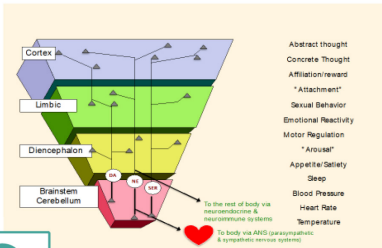



SHOW participants the video “**Dr. Bruce Perry: Understanding Trauma: Brain Basics.**”

5:45 MINUTES

[PPT #15]: UNDERSTANDING THE BRAIN

Understanding the Brain

STATE:

This is the image Dr. Perry discussed in the video that shows the structure of the brain. It is a helpful reminder that our brains are organized from the bottom to the top.

The bottom part of the brain is referred to as the Primitive Brain and is where our stress response is located.

The top part of the brain is the Cortex, or “Thinking Brain”. It is responsible for the higher brain functions and is the most complex.

[PPT #16]: UNDERSTANDING THE BRAIN (CONTINUED)

Understanding the Brain

- Neurons (or nerve cells) transmit information to and from the brain
- Different parts of the brain communicate with each other and with our body.
- Regulate(or control) all of our brain and bodily functions.



STATE:

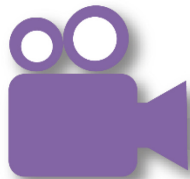
Next, we will look at regulatory networks.

Regulatory networks consist of neurons (or nerve cells) that transmit information to and from the brain. This is how different parts of the brain communicate with each other and with our body.

These networks regulate (or control) all of our brain and bodily functions.

Dr. Perry will be discussing regulatory networks in this next video.

[PPT #17]: UNDERSTANDING THE BRAIN (CONTINUED)



1:43 MINUTES

SHOW participants the video “**Dr. Bruce Perry: Regulatory Networks.**”

Understanding the Brain



VIDEO: Regulatory Networks





STATE:


As Dr. Perry discussed, regulatory networks start from the lowest parts of the brain and send connections to every other part of the brain and the body.

When development goes well, the brain and body work together to smoothly orchestrate emotions, behavior and thinking.

[PPT #18]: UNDERSTANDING THE BRAIN (CONTINUED)

Understanding the Brain

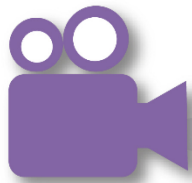

 VIDEO: Developmental Disruptions


STATE:

Now, let's learn about what happens when things don't go so well.

Remember that connections in the brain are made based on experiences. So, if a child does not have such things as loving, attentive relationships, the development of the regulatory networks that control how their brain and body function will be disrupted.

Dr. Perry will be discussing these developmental disruptions in this next video.



1:44 MINUTES

SHOW participants the video “**Dr. Bruce Perry: Developmental Disruptions.**”

STATE:

As Dr. Perry stated in the video, there are three types of disruptions that will predictably change the development and functioning of key regulatory networks.

Can anyone remember what these are?

- ▶ In utero insults such as prenatal alcohol exposure
- ▶ Attachment and bonding disruptions
- ▶ Trauma

Many children in the child welfare system have had all three types of disruptions.

[PPT #19]: UNDERSTANDING THE BRAIN: APPLYING WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED

Understanding the Brain: Applying What We Have Learned

Handout #1.3 – Worksheet #1

Think about the developmental history of their youth or the youth in the selected vignette

Indicate (by marking with an “X”) possible, probable or certain developmental disruptions (known to alter the functioning of the key regulatory networks discussed in the video clip)

Disrupting the development of functioning of these networks (which are involved in the stress response) can, in turn, have a host of emotional, social, physical and behavioral effects.

**STATE:**

85% of children in foster care are estimated to have attachment disruption and 80% to 95% of children in foster care are estimated to have experienced “trauma”.

We will now apply the information that we’ve learned and to do that we will start with **HANDOUT #1.3: WORKSHEET #1 -**

Developmental Disruptions.
 ACTIVITY

INSTRUCTIONS: There are two key areas to focus on in this activity. First is to recognize the degree to which various developmental experiences of the youth may have impacted the development and organization of their brain’s important regulatory networks. Second is to support the participants in making the connection between the disruptions of these key regulatory networks and later behavioral, emotional and behavioral challenges. This will set the stage for helping the parent/caregiver better understand that REFLEXIVE and REACTIVE behaviors related to the youth’s traumatic past are very different from intentional planned behaviors. These concepts will be revisited and expanded upon in Sessions 5 and 6. Having this basic understanding will help participants invest in a new parenting paradigm that requires a different “suitcase” of strategies.

Ask participants to think about the developmental history of one of their youth or, for those who are not currently parenting, one of the youth in the selected vignettes. Then ask participants to indicate (by marking with an X) the probable or certain developmental disruptions the youth experienced.

Point out that some disruptions are listed in more than one category based on when the disruption occurred and what the impact was. For example, domestic violence can impact the development of a child when the mother is pregnant (in utero or intrauterine), can interfere with bonding and attachment, and can be a traumatic event for a child.

Allow a few minutes for participants to do this work. After they complete the worksheet, facilitate a brief discussion about what they discovered.



HANDOUT #1.3: WORKSHEET #1 - DEVELOPMENTAL DISRUPTIONS

Developmental Disruptions	Possible	Probable	Certain
Intrauterine			
Distress/trauma to mother			
Domestic violence			
Alcohol/Drug use			
Malnutrition			
Other			
Bonding & Attachment			
Chaos, poverty			
Domestic violence			
Alcohol/Drug use			
Depression			
Other			
Traumatic events			
Domestic violence			
Physical abuse			
Sexual abuse			
Neglect			
Other			

STATE:

- ▶ Did your youth experience all three forms of developmental disruptions?
- ▶ Was there one (or two) type of disruptions they experienced more of?

Remember that these disruptions change the functions of key regulatory networks, which are involved in the stress response, and can result in a host of emotional, social, physical and behavioral challenges.

Next, we will take a look at the specific issues and challenges that your youth (or a youth from one of the vignettes) is experiencing.

[PPT #20]: UNDERSTANDING THE BRAIN: APPLYING WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED

Understanding the Brain: Applying What We Have Learned

Handout #1.3: Worksheet #2



20

STATE:

Now that you have completed Worksheet #1, we'll move on to

HANDOUT #1.3: WORKSHEET #2 - Issues and Challenges.

This handout includes a list of issues and challenges, organized by the areas of the brain affected. For the youth you are focusing on, to the best of your knowledge, indicate (by placing an "X" in the table) whether and how often they demonstrate these challenges or issues. If you are not currently parenting a youth, use one of the two vignettes we have been using to complete this worksheet.

Ask participants to complete Worksheet #2 for the same youth they thought about for Worksheet #1.




HANDOUT #1.3: WORKSHEET #2 - ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

Area of the BRAIN	Issues and Challenges	Never	Sometimes	Frequently
Cortex, “Thinking Brain”	Trouble with planning			
	Trouble with math			
	Difficulty delaying gratification			
	Reading difficulties			
	Trouble with “right vs wrong”			
	Irrational or odd thinking			
	Speech and language difficulties			
	Aggressive or impulsive			
Middle brain, including Limbic System, “Emotional Brain”	Poor social skills in groups			
	Inappropriate sexualized behaviors			
	Challenges in one-one relationships; few friends			
	Moody, sad, depressed			
	Misreads other people			
	Daydreams, is scatterbrained			
	Sleep problems			
	Anxious or hyperactive			
Primitive, “Survival Brain”	Inattentive, distractible			
	Fine motor problems, such as poor handwriting			
	Sensory integration issues; touch defensive			
	Eating or swallowing issues			
	Difficulty with temperature regulation			



After they complete the worksheet, **FACILITATE A BRIEF DISCUSSION** about what they discovered using the questions below.

- ▶ Are the challenges and issues that you identified primarily associated with one (or more) parts of the brain?
- ▶ What insights did you gain about developmental disruptions to key regulatory networks and the emotional, behavioral, social, or cognitive challenges that your youth is experiencing?

Sequential Processing



VIDEO: Making Sense of the World



STATE:

Now, let's learn about sequential processing. Sequential processing refers to our brain's ability to take in, process, and use information in the order it was received.

Our brain receives information through our 5 senses (*seeing, hearing, touching, smelling and tasting*) and makes connections between different information that is received at the same time. For example, we connect the image of a firetruck with the sound of a siren or the image of a cow with the sound "moo".

Each of us creates a unique set of primary memories or "associations" based on our early life experiences. This has important implications for parenting youth who have experienced trauma.

Let's listen to what Dr. Perry has to say about how we make sense of the world.



SHOW participants the video "**Dr. Bruce Perry: Making Sense of the World.**"

STATE:

As Dr. Perry stated, an early life with consistent and nurturing caregiving will create very different "associations" than an early life with chaos, inconsistency, and threats.

These associations will later be used to interpret the present. For example, a young child who was sexually abused could develop an association between a hug and a threat to their safety. Later in life, a hug that was intended to express warmth and caring would be filtered through their earlier experiences and could be interpreted as a threat to their safety and result in a reaction that is confusing to others.

Small Group Work: Fast Thinking and Triggers

• Think about examples from your life where a song, smell or image evoked a feeling or a memory of a previous experience. Write it down and share it with your small group.

Example:

My brain made a connection between:

The smell of pumpkin pie and being with family for a holiday gathering.

• If holidays with family were joyful and relaxed, the smell of pumpkin pie brings up these feelings: warmth, love, connection, belonging.

• If holidays with family were stressful and chaotic, the smell of pumpkin pie could bring up these feelings: fear, hurt, loneliness.



STATE:

We are going to do an activity that will help you better understand fast thinking and triggers in both ourselves and the youth we are or will be parenting. Please take out **HANDOUT #1.4: Fast Thinking and Triggers.**



HANDOUT #1.4: FAST THINKING AND TRIGGERS

My brain made a connection between:

The sight, sound, **smell**, touch, or taste of pumpkin pie _____
and being with family for the holidays.

If holidays were joyful and relaxed:

When I see, hear, **smell**, touch, or taste pumpkin pie _____,
it brings up these feelings: warmth, love, connection, and belonging.

If holidays with family were stressful and chaotic,

When I see, hear, **smell**, touch, or taste pumpkin pie _____,
it brings up these feelings: fear, hurt, loneliness.

Complete for two different connections:

1. My brain made a connection between:

the sight, sound, smell, touch, or taste of _____
(circle one)

and _____.

When I see, hear, smell, touch, or taste _____,
(circle one)

it brings up these feelings: _____.

Introduction and Understanding the Impact of Trauma on Youth in Foster Care



INSTRUCTIONS: Inform participants that this activity will have three parts. Have participants complete Part 1 of the Worksheet. Instruct participants to think about examples from their life where a song, smell or image brought up a feeling or a memory of a past experience (e.g., the smell of pumpkin pie triggering a memory and feeling of being with family at a holiday dinner). Ask participants to try to come up with connections that bring positive as well as slightly negative memories or feelings, but not those that are very upsetting. After giving participants a few minutes, ask for a few volunteers to share some of the connections that their brain made.

Next instruct participants to think about how this type of fast thinking or triggering can play out in themselves and in their own relationships. Ask participants to take 2-3 minutes to complete Part 2 of the handout individually, then ask for volunteers to share. Validate responses, acknowledging that we all have triggers.

Part 2:

My hot button issues (triggers)	Possible source from my past
<i>When someone criticizes me</i>	<i>My father used to always tell me what I did wrong</i>

For the final part of the activity, ask participants to go back to their groups. Instruct groups to take 5 minutes to discuss possible triggers for youth, either based on those they are parenting or from some of the Developmental Disturbances we spoke about earlier. Have groups report out their responses.

Part 3:

My youth's hot button issues (triggers)	Possible source from their past

Introduction and Understanding the Impact of Trauma on Youth in Foster Care

STATE:


Describe what things you tend to react very strongly to from the activity we just completed. Is there something from your past that you think contributes to these “hot button issues”?

For those of you who are parenting, have there been times that your youth had a much stronger reaction to something than you expected? What was their reaction in response to? What do you think the past memory (or trigger) was for that youth? For example, a raised voice may have evoked a memory of an angry, aggressive adult from their past.



What insights did you gain about yourselves and/or your youth?

[PPT #23]: SEQUENTIAL PROCESSING (CONTINUED)

Sequential Processing

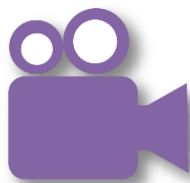


VIDEO: Sequential Engagement



STATE:

Next we will hear Dr. Perry describe Sequential Engagement, which is something that we will refer to often throughout our sessions.



5:12 MINUTES

SHOW participants the video “**Dr. Bruce Perry: Sequential Engagement.**”

[PPT #24]: SEQUENTIAL PROCESSING (CONTINUED)

Sequential Processing

Afferent Components: Modulation of Primary Regulatory Networks

Cerebro-modulatory
Top-down modulation

Somatosensory
Bottom-up modulation

Internal World: Brain

External World: Primary Senses

Internal World: Body

24

STATE:

Let's connect this with what is going on in our brains.

In the brain, information is first received and is acted on by the lower, more primitive part of the brain. This is the home of our survival response which can become activated by a threat or perceived threat (such as a hug for a child who had been sexually abused).

When that happens, information is not able to make its way up to our higher functioning cortex, which would be able to tell that the threat was in the past and not the present.

[PPT #25]: SO, WHAT DOES THIS INFORMATION MEAN?

So, what does this information have to do with the youth you are parenting or will parent in the future?

- The brain will make connections between patterns of neural activity that co-occur (smell pumpkin pie and feel the remembered feelings)
- Trauma can influence brain development in ways that increase fast thinking (reactive, thoughtless behavior) and inhibit slow thinking (rational, future-oriented, thoughtful behavior)
- Most human behavior is influenced by these fast thinking networks.
- Youth who have been traumatized will often **act** before they **think**
- To connect and reason with another person, they must be at some minimal level of regulation

25

STATE:

Trauma can influence brain development in ways that increase fast thinking (reactive, thoughtless behavior) and inhibit slow thinking (rational, future-oriented, thoughtful behavior). The result is that youth who have been traumatized will often **ACT** before they **THINK**.

The behaviors we see in these moments can be very hard to deal with. These are usually the behaviors that cause us to feel shocked or overwhelmed and may hit our “triggers”, based on our personal and family experiences. Understanding our own “triggers” can be extremely helpful in responding to very difficult behaviors.

You may be tempted to react to these behaviors by saying:

- ▶ “What were you thinking?” – They weren’t.
- ▶ “How many times have I told you...?” – Your words never got to their cortex.
- ▶ “You know better than that.” – But not in that moment, because their cortex was “offline”.

In order to connect and reason with another person, they must be at some minimal level of regulation. Trying to reason with a dysregulated person will often further escalate them.

We will be talking about the many ways to respond to youth through trauma-informed parenting. Threatening the youth that he/she will have to leave your home is never the right response.

A key principle is not taking our youth’s behavior personally. This is easier said than done and we will be talking more about this as we move forward.

[PPT #26]: SEQUENTIAL PROCESSING

Sequential Processing

"Out" "In"

New experience is "filtered" through past experience

26

STATE:

This visual shows what we just learned as we completed the worksheet.

It confirms that all new experiences are filtered through past experiences which can act as triggers.

Now let's take a look at how we can apply this information to our parenting, looking at the steps you can take to engage with your child (sequential engagement), incorporating what we know about how our brains are organized and function (sequential processing).

[PPT #27]: PUTTING IT TOGETHER

Putting it Together

Handout #1.5 Wilt

27

STATE:

Let's think about what we have just discussed in relation to another young person, Wilt, whose situation is described in **HANDOUT #1.5: Wilt**.

ACTIVITY

Explain that you will do a two-part activity to learn about Wilt's Trauma Experiences and Wilt's Trauma-Related Behaviors. Ask for a volunteer to play 16-year-old Wilt and a volunteer to play his adoptive father Tom.

INSTRUCTIONS: Have the volunteers come to the front of the room and have the balloons ready. Feel free to substitute other items for the balloons. Refer participants to **HANDOUT #1.5: Wilt**. Ask participants to take turns reading one sentence at a time in Part 1 of the handout. Ask the group to speak up when they hear a potentially traumatic event for Wilt. When they call out a potentially traumatic event, give Wilt a balloon to hold.

Introduction and Understanding the Impact of Trauma on Youth in Foster Care



HANDOUT #1.5: WILT, PART 1

Part 1:

Wilt is a 16-year-old who was adopted from foster care five months ago by Tom, a single parent. Prior to foster care, Wilt was raised by his dad after his mother left the family when Wilt was 8 years old.

Wilt's dad drank heavily and was physically abusive to Wilt. Wilt's father would often strike Wilt with his fists when he was drunk.

At the age of 13, Wilt could take it no more and fought back. His father hit his head on a piece of furniture when Wilt hit him and was hospitalized. Wilt was cared for by his aunt and uncle during this time.

Child Protective Services investigated and learned about Wilt's repeated physical abuse when they talked with Wilt and with members of the family.

When Wilt's father was discharged from the hospital, Wilt was taken into foster care as the aunt and uncle were not able to continue to care for him.

He lived in six different foster homes, frequently running away whenever he perceived that he was not being treated fairly. He would sometimes live on the streets for a few days at a time.

ACTIVITY CONT.



Wilt should be given balloons for the following:

- ▶ Mother left him when Wilt was 8 years old
- ▶ Dad has used/is using substances
- ▶ Dad is physically abusive toward Wilt
- ▶ Wilt injured dad and dad had to go to the hospital
- ▶ Wilt entered foster care
- ▶ Wilt lived with six different foster families
- ▶ Wilt had experiences on the street when he ran away

Ask "Wilt" to try to manage all of the balloons that he has been given and how it feels to manage all of these potentially traumatic events.

Ask "Tom" how it feels to see "Wilt" trying to balance all of the trauma balloons. Ask the participants how they feel seeing "Wilt" attempting to balance the balloons. Relieve "Wilt" of the balloons.

Introduction and Understanding the Impact of Trauma on Youth in Foster Care



HANDOUT #1.5: WILT, PART 2

Part 2:

Tom was Wilt's mentor and got to know him well. After much discussion, Tom and Wilt agreed on adoption and the agency and the court also agreed.

Over the past five months living with Tom, Wilt changed from being a happy kid to being sullen and using disrespectful language to Tom.

He stays out after the established curfew and makes lame excuses. He fails to do his homework and Tom is beginning to get calls from the school about Wilt's attitude.

When Tom presses for explanations, Wilt talks aggressively – using foul language – and recently threatened to take Tom on physically.

ACTIVITY CONT.



Next, ask participants to take turns reading one sentence at a time in Part 2 of the handout. Ask the group to call out when they hear a trauma-related symptom or behavior. When they call out a trauma-related symptom or behavior, ask “Tom” to write them down on a flip chart page/white board.

Items to write down are:

- ▶ Is moody
- ▶ Uses disrespectful and foul language
- ▶ Violates curfew
- ▶ Does not do homework
- ▶ Has an attitude at school
- ▶ Threatens to fight Tom

Ask “Tom” how he understands these symptoms and behaviors in light of “Wilt’s” many traumas. Ask participants to add to the discussion.

FACILITATE A DISCUSSION by using the following questions:

How do parents typically interpret and respond to these behaviors?
How do youth typically react? What would be more effective responses to these behaviors?

What have you learned from our work on Wilt's and Tom's experiences?

SUMMARIZE any final points on this topic before moving to the next section.


SEGMENT IV. PARENTING YOUR YOUTH

SLIDES 28-35


20 MINUTES

[PPT #28]: PARENTING YOUR YOUTH

Parenting Your Youth

 **VIDEO:** Debbie Schugg: Parenting to the Need Behind the Behavior

- Can you think of a time when you reacted to a behavior of a youth or child when you might have asked questions to determine what underlying need the behavior served?
- Does anyone want to share an experience?
- How might you have responded differently?



28

STATE:

Now let's watch Debbie Schugg talk about parenting to the need behind the behavior. Debbie is the parent of 8 children, 7 of whom are adopted.



SHOW participants the video “**Debbie Schugg: Parenting to Need behind the Behavior.**”

FACILITATE A BRIEF DISCUSSION by using the questions on the slide.

STATE:

Debbie talked about responding to the underlying cause of the behavior instead of directly to the behavior itself. Sometimes you will need to set aside your own feelings about a behavior in order to understand the underlying need.

Once you are able to do that, you may be able to help the youth find another way to meet that need, thereby making the behavior unnecessary.

Addressing only the behavior often results in a power struggle and does not lead to a decrease of that behavior.

[PPT #29]: UNDERSTANDING UNDERLYING CAUSES

Understanding Underlying Causes

- What is a behavior that you have been struggling with?
- What questions could you ask the youth to help determine what the underlying need is?
- What do you think is the underlying need that behavior is communicating?
- After listening to Debbie, what new strategies are you thinking of trying?
- Are there other strategies that people think would address the underlying need?

29



FACILITATE additional discussion by asking for two or three volunteers to respond to each question and invite other participants offer suggestions to strengthen each response.

- ▶ What is a behavior that you have been struggling with?
- ▶ What questions could you ask the youth to help determine what the underlying need is?
- ▶ What do you think is the underlying need that behavior is communicating?
- ▶ After listening to Debbie, what new strategies are you thinking of trying?
- ▶ Are there other strategies that people think would address the underlying need?

[PPT #30]: LYING AND STEALING

Parenting Your Youth



VIDEO: Debbie Schugg: Lying and Stealing

- What are your thoughts about how Debbie handled each situation?
- What are some of the ways Debbie used Regulate, Relate and Reason?
- What are some ways you have used to deal with lying and stealing with the youth you are parenting? Have they been effective?



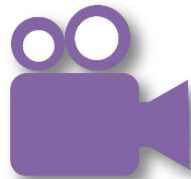
30

**STATE:**

Two of the most common behaviors that parents/caretakers have strong feelings about are lying and stealing. Both are great examples of how important it is to determine what purpose a behavior is serving.

For many children who have been impacted by trauma, lying and stealing are connected to survival, and until they feel they no longer need those behaviors to survive, they will be difficult to stop.

In this next video, Debbie Schugg will share some more about lying and stealing and how she dealt with these behaviors with her own children.



6:00 MINUTES

SHOW participants the video “**Debbie Schugg: Lying and Stealing.**”

Introduction and Understanding the Impact of Trauma on Youth in Foster Care

Using the questions below, **FACILITATE** an open discussion about lying and stealing.

Possible Answers Include:

“Thank you for telling me the truth and let me give you a hug.”

“We value truth in our family, I am so proud of you for telling me the truth.”

Debbie gives an example where she provided an object of connection so that he wouldn’t have to steal.



- ▶ What are your thoughts about how Debbie handled her daughter’s lying and stealing?
- ▶ What are some of the ways Debbie responded to the lying and stealing behaviors?
- ▶ What are some ways you have tried to address lying and stealing? Have they been effective?
- ▶ Why might approaches that have been effective for you in the past not get the same results for youth with trauma histories?

STATE:

It is important to recognize that many traditional parenting strategies will simply not have the same effect with youth in who have experienced trauma.

You must be able to adapt your approaches to the needs of the youth.

[PPT #31]: CONFABULATION: WHEN LYING ISN’T LYING

Confabulation: When Lying Isn’t Lying

- “a memory disturbance, defined as the production of made up, distorted or misinterpreted memories about oneself or the world, without the conscious intention to deceive”
- We need to look at the “lying” or “confabulation” while we acknowledge the anxiety, whether visible or hidden, that is going on within the child.
- When under pressure, it is almost a given the correct story will not come out.
- Filling in the “holes” in the working memory. Would rather look “bad” than “stupid.”



STATE:

Let’s talk a bit more about lying.

The type of “lying” that youth who have experienced trauma most often use is actually a type of “confabulation”. Confabulation is a memory disturbance consisting of distorted or misinterpreted memories without the conscious intention to deceive.

According to Oregon Behavioral Consultation, our memories are not perfect, and our brains don’t always get the details straight. Each time we remember something, our brains distort it. If there is no memory in place our brains will often confabulate rather than let us worry about missing details.

We don’t know when we are confabulating because it feels like we are accessing a normal memory.

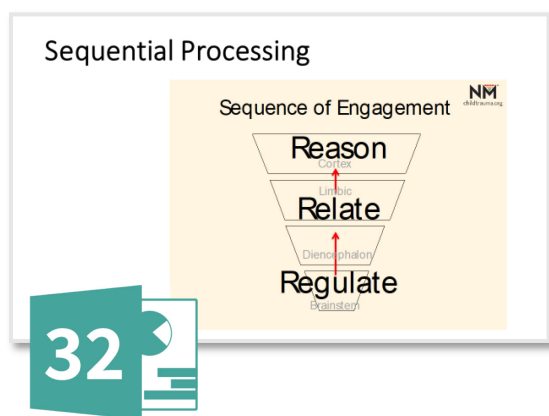
Remember that there is an underlying reason for lying, and it will take time to understand the reason for this survival behavior, what the need behind the behavior is, and why it is hard to stop.

Introduction and Understanding the Impact of Trauma on Youth in Foster Care

The best way to build a trusting relationship with a youth is to:

- ▶ Put the “lie” in the context of the confabulation definition. Ask yourself, “Is this a result of a memory disturbance or traumatic experience?”
- ▶ Work to discover what the underlying anxiety is.
- ▶ Know that when scared or pressured, the youth is much more likely to create a protective story.
- ▶ Acknowledge that for many youth who have experienced trauma, it feels safer to look “bad” than to look “stupid”.

[PPT #32]: REGULATE, RELATE, REASON

**STATE:**

Dr. Perry has described a critical framework which will help you remember how to best respond to youth who have been impacted by all types of trauma. The framework is a sequence of engagement called "REGULATE, RELATE, REASON".

To adequately connect to another person and ultimately to reason with them, they have to be at some minimal level of regulation, meaning that they are feeling physically and emotionally settled. Until a child is regulated, he is unlikely to be able to relate to you. Remember that you also need to be regulated.

Once everyone is regulated, the youth is more likely to be feeling connected, calm and comfortable. (RELATE).

As you and the youth are able to relate, you will both be ready for higher level thinking and processing (REASON) such as reflecting, problem-solving, perspective taking, planning for the future, and considering multiple solutions.

Respecting this sequence of engagement can minimize interpersonal confrontations, escalations and acting out.

[PPT #33]: WAYS TO ADDRESS CHALLENGING BEHAVIOR

Ways to Have Difficult Conversations about Behavior: Regulate

- Doing side-by-side (instead of face-to-face) activities such as going for a walk or riding in the car— they will be much more likely to talk
- Setting aside your own feelings about the youth's behavior
- Not engaging in an argument the youth tries to start; acknowledge his or her anger, remain calm, and respond with confidence.
- Not addressing everything at once

**STATE:**

Let's talk now about some suggested ways to address challenging behaviors using REGULATE, RELATE, REASON.

When talking about difficult topics with your child, there are several strategies you can use that will help them feel more regulated and calm. Some examples include:

- ▶ Doing side-by-side (instead of face-to-face) activities such as going for a walk or riding in the car— they will be much more likely to talk.
- ▶ Setting aside your own feelings about the youth's behavior.
- ▶ Not engaging in an argument that the youth tries to start; acknowledge his or her anger, remain calm, and respond with confidence.
- ▶ Not addressing everything at once.

Remember when Debbie said in the video, "Thank you for telling me the truth, and let me give you a hug."? She was using REGULATE.

[PPT #34]: WAYS TO ADDRESS CHALLENGING BEHAVIOR (CONTINUED)

Ways to Have Difficult Conversations about Behavior: Relate

- Remaining focused on the relationship, and not just the behavior (you do not need to address every behavior if it will harm your relationship)
- Using the element of surprise; doing something positive and supportive, rather than punitive
- Reframe the behavior as a strength of the youth (survival skill, resilience, stick-to-it attitude, etc.)

**STATE:**

Now that your child is regulated, you can use strategies to relate to them and build the relationship. Some examples include:

- ▶ Remaining focused on the relationship, and not just the behavior (you do not need to address every behavior if it will harm your relationship).
- ▶ Using the element of surprise; doing something positive and supportive, rather than punitive.
- ▶ Reframe the behavior as a strength of the youth (survival skill, resilience, stick-to-it attitude).

In the video, Debbie gives an example where she provided an object to the child. She was RELATING to her child, giving the child an object of connection.

[PPT #35]: WAYS TO ADDRESS CHALLENGING BEHAVIOR (CONTINUED)

Ways to Have Difficult Conversations about Behavior: Reason

- Getting to the “why” of the behavior — what purpose does it serve
- Finding other ways to meet the youth’s needs or provide safety if the behavior is risky
- Waiting to talk more about next steps

**STATE:**

Now you can add the final layer, which is to begin to REASON with your child. Some strategies that you can use in this phase include:

- ▶ Getting to the “why” of the behavior — what purpose does it serve?
- ▶ Finding other ways to meet the youth’s needs or provide safety if the behavior is risky.
- ▶ Waiting to talk more about next steps.

Remember when Debbie said in the video, “We value truth in our family, I am so proud of you for telling me the truth.”? She was using REASONING to reinforce her feeling valued when she tells the truth in the future.

SUMMARIZE any final points on this topic before moving to the next section.



SEGMENT V. SUMMARY, HOMEWORK AND CLOSING

SLIDES 36-41

5 MINUTES

[PPT #36]: REVIEW

Review and Closing

- Traumatized youth will often act before they think.
- The sequential organization of the brain means that the lower, more reactive parts of the brain get to encounter and act on incoming information before it can even get to the rational, thinking part of the brain.
- It is important to understand the impact of trauma on brain development and child and adolescent development because of the emotions and behaviors that youth with trauma histories may present.
- Even if we have been a successful parent to children born to us, parenting the child or youth who has experienced trauma requires that we modify our parenting to take into account the needs of each youth and their trauma history.

36

**REVIEW** the points on the slide.

- ▶ Traumatized children will often act before they think.
- ▶ Remembering the sequential organization of the brain is important to how we think about our responses to our youth.
- ▶ We must understand the impact of trauma on brain development and know that our parenting strategies must be modified to respond to our youth in an effective way.

[PPT #37]: KEY POINTS

Key Points

- We need to be able to look beyond behavior to the underlying cause of the behavior and not react to the behavior alone.
- Understanding the message — or decoding the behavior — is how we will be able to help the youth change the behavior to get their needs met in a more acceptable way.
- Being attuned to the youth and not taking behaviors personally, but instead being curious about them and adding some lightness to the situation, will allow the youth to be more honest about what their needs are.

37

**REVIEW** the points on the slide.

- ▶ We need to be able to look beyond behavior to the underlying cause of the behavior and not react to the behavior alone.
- ▶ Understanding the message — or decoding the behavior — is how we will be able to help the youth change the behavior to get their needs met in a more acceptable way.
- ▶ Being attuned to the youth and not taking behaviors personally, but instead being curious about them and adding some lightness to the situation, will allow the youth to be more honest about what their needs are.

[PPT #38]: KEY POINTS (CONTINUED)

Key Points

- Connectedness and attachment are the basis for relationships, and our goal is to form a relationship with the youth that will help them begin to heal and cope with very big emotions.
- Remember that this is difficult work. We also need to take care of ourselves so that we have the energy and compassion to support the youth and create a nurturing environment that is so essential to this work.



REVIEW the points on the slide.

- ▶ Connectedness and attachment are the basis for relationships, and our goal is to form a relationship with the youth that will help them begin to heal and cope with very big emotions.
- ▶ Remember that this is difficult work. We also need to take care of ourselves so that we have the energy and compassion to support the youth and create a nurturing environment that is so essential to this work.

[PPT #39]: CLOSING ACTIVITY

Closing Activity





INSTRUCTIONS: Have a small ball or other light object for group members to toss to each other as they share something they learned from Session One. Ask that the object be tossed to all members. Note that participants that choose not to share can say “pass”. Provide some guidance to help participants reflect for a few minutes before starting the activity so that they are prepared with a few ideas to share, such as asking questions like:

- ▶ What stood out for you from today’s session?
- ▶ Is there anything you learned that you think will be especially helpful?

[PPT #40]: HOMEWORK

Homework

1. **Complete Handout #1.6**
This work will help you begin to develop an important parenting skill: focusing on understanding the cause of a youth’s behavior rather than reacting to the behavior. Try to find at least three opportunities. If you are not parenting a youth at this time, apply this skill to the behavior of your spouse, co-worker or another adult in your life.
2. **Read Handout #1.7**
Jot down three ways that you took care of yourself between our sessions.
3. **Read Handout #1.8**
Jot down three key points in this article that impressed you and think about how you would apply them in your parenting. Be prepared to share your points and how you will apply them when we meet for our next session.



STATE:

There are three things that we’d like you to do prior to our next session.

First, between now and our next session, complete **HANDOUT #1.6: Underlying Causes of Behavior Worksheet**. This work will help you develop an important parenting skill: focusing on understanding the cause of a youth’s behavior rather than reacting to the behavior. Try to find at least three opportunities to reflect on behaviors. If you are not parenting a youth at this time, apply this skill to the behavior of another youth or adult in your life.



HANDOUT #1.6: UNDERLYING CAUSES OF BEHAVIOR WORKSHEET

Date	Behavior of Concern	How I Tried to Understand the Cause of the Behavior	What I Learned

Introduction and Understanding the Impact of Trauma on Youth in Foster Care

Next, complete **HANDOUT #1.7: The Importance of Self Care.** On this handout, you will jot down three ways that you took care of yourself and how you made time for your own rest and renewal.

**HANDOUT #1.7: THE IMPORTANCE OF SELF CARE**

Three Ways I Took Care of Myself since Last Session:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

How I Made Time for My Own Rest and Renewal:

Read **HANDOUT #1.8: Children Don't Misbehave.** Did anyone experience “fast thinking” when you saw the title? Perhaps you decided in that moment that this author must be confused or wrong! Try to keep an open mind and consider what the article has to say. After reading the article, jot down three key points in this article that impressed you and how you would apply them in your parenting. We will be sharing these reflections in our next session.

**HANDOUT #1.8: CHILDREN DON'T MISBEHAVE**

By Thomas Gordon, Ph.D. (author of P.E.T., founder of Gordon Training International)

If parents only knew how much trouble this word “misbehavior” causes in families! Thinking in terms of children misbehaving not only spells trouble for the kids, obviously, but it brings on unnecessary problems for their parents.

Why is this so? What is wrong with thinking and saying that your child misbehaved? Every parent does. Yes, and their parents before them did. In fact, the origin of the concept of child misbehavior goes back so far in history it is doubtful if anyone actually knows when it started or why. It's so common nobody thinks to question it.

Strangely enough, the term misbehavior is almost exclusively applied to children – seldom to adults, friends, and spouses. Have you ever overheard someone say, “My husband misbehaved yesterday,” “I took my friend to lunch and got so angry at her misbehavior,” “My team members have been misbehaving,” or “Our guests misbehaved at our party last night”? Apparently, then, only children are seen as misbehaving – no one else misbehaves.

Misbehavior, then, is “parent language”, tied up somehow with the way parents traditionally have viewed their offspring. Parents say children misbehave whenever their actions (or their behaviors) are contrary to how parents think their children ought to act or behave. More accurately, misbehavior is behavior that produces some sort of bad consequences for the parent.

Misbehaving = Child is doing something that is bad for the parent.

On the other hand, when a child engages in behavior that does not bring bad consequences for the parent, that child is described as “behaving.”

Introduction and Understanding the Impact of Trauma on Youth in Foster Care

“Jack was well-behaved at the store”; “We try to teach our children to behave”; “Behave yourself!”

Now we have:

Behaving = Child is doing something that is acceptable to the parent.

All Behaviors are Solutions to Human Needs

Family life would be infinitely less exasperating for parents and more enjoyable for children as well if parents accepted these basic principles about children:

Principle 1:

Like adults, children have basic needs that are important to them, and they continually strive to meet their needs by doing something.

Principle 2:

Children don't misbehave. Their behaviors are simply actions they have chosen to meet these important needs.

These principles suggest that all children's actions are behaviors. Viewed in this way, all day long a child is behaving, and for the very same reason all other creatures engage in behaviors – they are trying to get their needs met.

This does not mean, however, that parents will like all the behaviors their children engage in. Nor should they be expected to, for the children are bound to do things that sometimes produce unacceptable consequences for their parents. Kids can be loud and destructive, delay you when you're in a hurry, pester you when you need quiet, cause you extra work, clutter up the home, interrupt your conversation, and break your valuables.

Think about such behaviors this way: they are behaviors children are engaging in to meet their needs. If at the same time they happen to interfere with your pursuit of pleasure, that doesn't mean children are misbehaving. Rather, their particular way of behaving is unacceptable to you. Don't interpret that children are trying to do something to you – they are only trying to do something for themselves. And this does not make them bad children or misbehaving children. But it may cause you a problem.

An infant cries because she is hungry or cold, or in pain. Something is wrong; her organism needs something. Crying behavior is the baby's way of saying, “Help.” Such behavior, in fact, should be viewed as quite appropriate (“good”), for the crying is apt to bring the child the help that is needed. When you view the child as a creature that is doing something appropriate to get its needs met, you can't really call it misbehaving.

If parents would strike the word “misbehaving” from their vocabulary, they would rarely feel judgmental and angry. Consequently, then they would not feel like retaliating with punishment. However, all parents do need to learn some effective methods of modifying behaviors that interfere with their needs and causes them a problem but labeling the child as misbehaving is not one of them.

(Excerpted from the P.E.T. Participant Workbook. Copyright 2006, Gordon Training International).

Three key points that impressed me:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

How I will apply these in my parenting:

Thank You!



THANK participants for their time and attention. Remind participants that the next session will focus on parenting youth who have experienced trauma. Confirm the date and time of the next session.

CORE TEEN CURRICULUM

SESSION



PARENTING YOUTH WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED TRAUMA

Name: _____ Session Date: _____ Location: _____

SESSION 2: PRE AND POSTTEST ANSWER KEY

1. Hyperarousal and dissociation are two common ways teens respond to feeling threatened. (circle one) **True**
False
2. During a 'flight' response a teen is typically more alert. (circle one) **True** False
3. If the teen is in a fear state, the parent can de-escalate the situation by having a quiet calm presence and reducing sensory input. (circle one) **True** False
4. When a teen is demonstrating a 'flight' response, what should the parent **NOT** do?
 - a. Remain calm
 - b. Provide individual attention
 - c. Physically restrain the teen**
 - d. Disengage but remain present
5. A teen who has experienced trauma may feel and act as if they are under continuous threat. (circle one) **True**
False
6. It is important for parents to try to predict how a teen may respond so they can plan how to best approach the situation. (circle one) **True** False
7. Robbie refuses to abide by curfew, always arriving at least 15 minutes late and when confronted, he makes his hands into a fist and clenches his jaw. What response is Robbie using?
 - a. Reflect
 - b. Flock
 - c. Flight
 - d. Fight**
8. When a teen is in the freeze response, parents can use a comforting voice and reflective listening to help the teen de-escalate behaviors. (circle one) **True** False

9. When teens are stressed or threatened, the parents may use the three R's. What are the three R's?
- Relate, remind, reassure
 - Regulate, reason, recreation
 - Reassure, relate, reward
 - Regulate, relate, reason**
10. As the teen moves from being calm to more fearful, they become better at solving problems. (circle one) True
False
11. Which of the following is **NOT** a good reason for you, as a parent, to be aware of your own history?
- You would understand how the teen's trauma may bring up your own trauma history
 - You would know your own triggers, allowing you to regulate yourself
 - You would be better able to predict your teen's response to various situations**
 - You will understand your comfort level in responding to different behaviors
12. Trauma-informed parenting requires that parents **NEVER** talk with the teen about their past trauma. (circle one) True **False**
13. Suzanne received a letter from her daughter Maria's teacher. The teacher stated that Maria was disrespectful to her, saying, "You are so irritating, you talk too much, and I don't understand what you are saying. You need to find a new job 'cause you don't know how to teach." Suzanne explained to Maria that she was glad she was able to communicate her frustration and acknowledge a lack of understanding of the school work. Suzanne then worked with Maria to find better words to articulate her needs. This is an example of a
- Positive reframe**
 - Recognizing emotional age of the teen
 - Knowing the teen's trauma history
 - Self-regulation
14. As a trauma-informed parent, it is helpful to connect the teen's current behavior with their past experience. (circle one) **True** False

SESSION 2: PARENTING YOUTH WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED TRAUMA



Core Competency: Parents nurture and promote the well-being of their youth through trauma-informed parenting.

SEGMENTS

- I. Welcome and Debrief **(15 MINUTES)**
- II. Building Parental Self-Awareness **(10 MINUTES)**
- III. Stress Responses and State-Dependent Functioning **(40 MINUTES)**
- IV. Parenting Skills for Our Suitcases **(40 MINUTES)**
- V. Self-Care **(10 MINUTES)**
- VI. Summary, Homework and Closing **(5 MINUTES)**

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

Three blue, three green and three red flip chart markers

PREPARE

PREPARE 3 pieces of flip chart paper, one for each of the following adaptive responses:

1. Freeze
2. Flight
3. Fight

WRITE the adaptive response on the top of the paper and create three columns below, one for Behaviors, one for Escalating Responses and the other for De-Escalating Responses.

PREPARE two signs to be hung on the wall, one that says: “Very confident” and another that says: “Not at all confident”.

REVIEW the Right Time materials on Trauma Informed Parenting 1 and Trauma Informed Parenting 2.

SEGMENT I. WELCOME AND DEBRIEF

SLIDES 1-5
15 MINUTES

[PPT #1]: WELCOME

Session #2: Parenting Youth Who Have Experienced Trauma

Welcome Back!



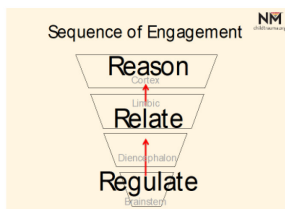
NOTE: Display this slide as participants are getting seated and welcome participants as they enter the room.

STATE:

Welcome to Session Two. Parenting Youth Who Have Experienced Trauma. In this session, we will learn more about the impact of trauma, and why we need to shift our parenting to adapt to the impact of trauma on our youth.

[PPT #2]: PARENTING THE NEED BEHIND THE BEHAVIOR

Parenting to the Need Behind the Behavior



STATE:

Before we begin Session Two, let's call to mind something that we learned in Session One: Dr. Perry's sequence of engagement: Regulate, Relate and Reason.

In order to parent to the need behind the behavior, it is important to stay calm and help your child stay calm (REGULATE), then connect with them (RELATE), before you will be able to effectively communicate (REASON).

Part of keeping yourself regulated is to practice good self-care. One of your homework assignments from last session was to complete **HANDOUT #1.7: The Importance of Self Care**. On this handout, you were asked to jot down three ways that you took care of yourself and how you made time for your own rest and renewal. Turn to the person next to you and talk for a minute or two about your experience with the homework assignment.

SESSION 2

Parenting Youth Who Have Experienced Trauma

[PPT #3]: PARENTING THE NEED BEHIND THE BEHAVIOR (CONTINUED)

Parenting to the Need Behind the Behavior

- Use Regulate, Relate, and Reason
- Youth's response can be unpredictable
- Not all concerns need to be addressed at once



STATE:

In the last session, we learned about the importance of responding to the underlying cause of a youth's behavior. As a homework assignment, you were asked to complete **HANDOUT #1.6: Underlying Causes of Behavior Worksheet**. The task was to focus on understanding the cause of a youth's behavior rather than reacting to the behavior. You looked for at least three opportunities to reflect on behaviors. Turn to the person next to you and talk for a minute or two about what you learned while completing this assignment.

When a parent approaches a youth with regulate, relate and reason, there is no predictable way they will respond. Some youth will walk away mid-conversation, some will not respond, and some may argue.

We asked you to read **HANDOUT #1.8: Children Don't Misbehave** and jot down three key points in this article that impressed you and how you would apply them in your parenting. Turn to the person next to you and talk for a minute or two about what stood out to you from that reading and what you think you might apply in your parenting.

It is important not to engage in an argument with the youth. If the approach does not work the first time, come back to the conversation at a later time when the youth is calm. Even if the youth does not want to have the conversation in that moment, they've heard what you've said and will likely think about it.

Do not discuss all of the concerns at once, instead, address what are considered to be the most important issues first and hold off on addressing the other issues until a later time.

Keeping Regulate, Relate, Reason in mind as you respond to your youth is critically important and foundational to the way that you will need to shift your parenting approach.

SESSION 2

Parenting Youth Who Have Experienced Trauma

[PPT #4]: QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

Are there any questions/comments about Session 1?



4

STATE:

We covered a great deal of information during our last session.

Are there any questions or comments about Session One?

[PPT #5]: LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Learning Objectives

- Adaptive responses are those behaviors that a child or youth might develop in order to protect themselves when they feel unsafe.
 - Describe the two major adaptive responses to threats.
- Describe how fear changes the way youth think, feel, and act.
- Describe three trauma-informed techniques to effectively parent youth, based on their emotional age and developmental stage.

5

STATE:

Now let's look at the learning objectives for Session Two. By the end of this session, you will be able to:

1. Describe the two major adaptive responses to threats (those behaviors that a child or youth might develop in order to protect themselves when they feel unsafe).
2. Describe how fear changes the way youth think, feel, and act.
3. Describe three trauma-informed parenting techniques, based on the youth's emotional age and developmental stage.

SEGMENT II. BUILDING PARENTAL SELF-AWARENESS

SLIDES 6 - 7
10 MINUTES

[PPT #6]: BUILDING PARENTAL SELF-AWARENESS

Building Parental Self-Awareness

- Each of us reacts to different challenging behaviors in different ways.
- Youth with histories of trauma may engage in a range of behaviors, some of which can be provocative.
- Later in the session, you will hear Dr. Bruce Perry explain that some behaviors can be better understood as state-dependent, “reactive behavior” of the arousal, or dissociative stress responses. This is not “bad” behavior.



STATE:

It’s important to realize that each of us reacts to different challenging behaviors in different ways.

Youth with histories of trauma may engage in a range of behaviors, some of which can be provocative.

Later in the session, you will hear Dr. Bruce Perry explain that some behaviors can be better understood as state-dependent, “reactive behavior” of the arousal, or dissociative stress responses. This is not “bad” behavior.

[PPT #7]: BUILDING PARENTAL SELF-AWARENESS (CONTINUED)

Building Parental Self-Awareness

Handout #2.1
My Level of Confidence in Responding to Youth Behaviors



STATE:

Next, we will do a quick activity to help us explore our level of confidence in responding to youth behaviors.

ACTIVITY



INSTRUCTIONS: Ask participants to review the handout. Instruct them to place an “X” next to each behavior in the column that best describes their level of confidence in responding to the behavior. While they are working on the handout, place a sign on one side of the room that says: “Very confident” and another that says: “Not at all confident” on the other side of the room. Explain that the signs on opposite sides of the room indicate to ends of a continuum between “Not at all confident” and “Very confident.” Tell participants that you will read each behavior and ask them to stand in the location that represents where they place themselves on that continuum related to their level of confidence in responding to that behavior. As you read the behaviors, ask for volunteers from those who are standing closer to the “Not at all confident” sign to share their concerns/hesitations about responding to that behavior. Ask for volunteers standing closer to the “Very confident” sign to respond to those concerns/hesitations and/or to share how they would address the behavior.



HANDOUT #2.1: MY LEVEL OF CONFIDENCE IN RESPONDING TO YOUTH BEHAVIORS

How comfortable and confident do you feel about responding to the following behaviors?

Youth Behavior	Level of Confidence		
	Not at all Confident	Somewhat Confident	Very Confident
Youth joined a gang			
Youth was arrested for defacing public property			
Youth masturbates in front of you			
Youth cuts herself			
Youth binge eats and vomits			
Youth is cyberbullying other students from school			
Youth is shoplifting			
Youth hides drugs in their room that you find			
Youth hit a teacher at school			
Youth returns home drunk at 4:00 AM			

I am **most** comfortable responding to the following behaviors:

.....

.....

I am **least** comfortable responding to the following behaviors:

.....

.....

STATE:

As we continue through the CORE Teen sessions, you will find new items to pack in your “parenting suitcase” to help you feel more confident responding to youth behaviors. You will also understand more clearly what items need to be “unpacked”.

SEGMENT III. STRESS RESPONSES AND
STATE-DEPENDENT
FUNCTIONING

SLIDES 8-14
40 MINUTES

[PPT #8]: STRESS RESPONSES AND STATE-DEPENDENT FUNCTIONING

Stress Responses and State-Dependent
Functioning

Most common responses to stress:

- Hyperarousal- flock, freeze, flight, and fight
- Dissociative- disengage, avoid, comply, dissociate, and shut down

Sensitized responses in youth: *over-active and overly reactive*



STATE:

Let’s talk now about Stress Responses and State-Dependent Functioning.

The most common responses to stress are:

1. Hyperarousal, which includes flock, freeze, flight, and fight; and
2. Dissociative, which is when people disengage, avoid, obey, and dissociate, and/or shut down.

In youth who have experienced trauma and loss, these responses can become “sensitized”, which means they are overly active and overly reactive. This results in a host of emotional, behavioral, social, and cognitive challenges.

SESSION 2

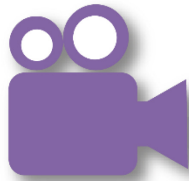
Parenting Youth Who Have Experienced Trauma

[PPT #9]: STRESS RESPONSES AND STATE-DEPENDENT FUNCTIONING (CONTINUED)

Stress Responses and State-Dependent Functioning



VIDEOS:
The Arousal Continuum



5:47 MINUTES

STATE:

We will be discussing these different responses and the way they interact with each other. Let's start with the video of Dr. Bruce Perry talking about the Flock, Freeze, Flight and Fight responses of the Arousal Continuum.

SHOW participants the video “**Dr. Bruce Perry: The Arousal Continuum.**”

STATE:

Which parts of the brain is in control when you're in the flight or fight stage?

- ▶ **Possible responses:** Flight = Diencephalon; Fight = Cerebellum—both are lower parts of the brain that do not allow for access to the thinking part (Cortex) of the brain.

What do we know about the lower parts of the brain?

- ▶ **Possible responses:** Very primitive, survival responses, can't tell time.

What is happening with the cortex when the lower parts of the brain are in control?

- ▶ **Preferred response:** It is shut down.

Are you able to reason with someone when the cortex is shut down?

- ▶ **Preferred response:** No!

As Dr. Perry stated, “the result is, you can't reason with someone who is in that fight or flight stage.”

SESSION 2

Parenting Youth Who Have Experienced Trauma

[PPT #10]: STRESS RESPONSES AND STATE-DEPENDENT FUNCTIONING (CONTINUED)

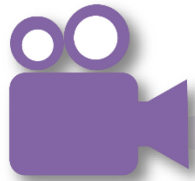
Stress Responses and State-Dependent Functioning



VIDEOS:
The Dissociative Continuum
Dr. Bruce Perry



10



5:38 MINUTES

STATE:

Now, let's watch the video of Dr. Bruce Perry talking about the Dissociative Continuum.

SHOW participants the video “**Dr. Bruce Perry: The Dissociative Continuum.**”

STATE:

As Dr. Perry stated, a youth can display a fight or flight response to certain circumstances and a dissociative or avoidance response to others.

- ▶ Can someone share a situation when their youth has reacted with a fight or flight response?
- ▶ What about an example of a situation when they reacted with a dissociative or avoidance response?
- ▶ In the video, you heard about how dissociation can be connected to regulation. What are some activities that your youth may be choosing to do to help them to self-regulate?

Next, we'll talk about state-dependent functioning.

SESSION 2

Parenting Youth Who Have Experienced Trauma

[PPT #11]: STRESS RESPONSES AND STATE-DEPENDENT FUNCTIONING (CONTINUED)

Stress Responses and State-Dependent Functioning

- State-dependent: Cognition and emotional, social, and motor functioning shift with the individual's internal state.
- Youth with a history of trauma and maltreatment may actually function as if he or she is continuously under threat
- Stress responses will depend on:
 - The nature and timing of the youth's traumatic experiences
 - The presence of protective factors (primarily healthy relationships) during and after the traumatic experiences



STATE:

All brain functioning is “state-dependent”. This means that different parts of our brain will be activated when we are in different internal states, such as calm, alert, alarm, fear and terror.

Thinking, as well as emotional, social, and motor functioning can all change with an individual's internal state. Therefore, a youth with a history of trauma, loss, or abuse, and subsequent over-active and overly re-active stress responses, may actually function as if he or she is continuously under threat.

The specific nature and combination of altered stress responses will depend on many factors, including the nature and timing of the youth's traumatic experiences and the presence of protective factors (especially healthy relationships) during and after the traumatic experiences.

[PPT #12]: STRESS RESPONSES AND STATE-DEPENDENT FUNCTIONING (CONTINUED)

Stress Responses and State-Dependent Functioning

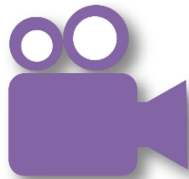


VIDEO: State-dependent Functioning
Dr. Bruce Perry



STATE:

Let's hear from Dr. Perry again, describing more about State-Dependent Functioning.



SHOW participants the video “**Dr. Bruce Perry: State-dependent Functioning.**”

6:00 MINUTES

[PPT #13]: STRESS RESPONSES AND STATE-DEPENDENT FUNCTIONING (CONTINUED)

Stress Responses and State-Dependent Functioning

- Youth can show both overly reactive dissociative and hyperarousal responses at the same time
- Different events or sensations (which can be a sight, sound, touch, smell, taste) can bring about different responses
 - A youth may display outward behaviors in response to a male teacher and inward behaviors in response to a female teacher
- Additional Resources:
 - NMC Ten Tip Series: Understanding Hyperarousal: The “Flock, Freeze, Flight and Fight” Continuum
 - NMC Ten Tip Series: Understanding Dissociation



STATE:

Remember, it is common for youth with complex trauma to have both an overly reactive hyperarousal response and a dissociative response in response to different experiences.

For example, a child who acts out in response to a male voice may be hyperactive and aggressive in a class with a male teacher. That same child may have an inward behavior in response to a female voice, like becoming withdrawn and overly obedient in a class with a female teacher.

This results in a confusing and complicated behavior picture.

Two articles in the Resource Notebook from the ChildTrauma Academy provide a deeper explanation of these key points and provide tips for parents and caregivers:

- ▶ **RESOURCE #2.1: The NM Ten Tip Series: Understanding Hyperarousal: The “Flock, Freeze, Flight and Fight” Continuum**
- ▶ **RESOURCE #2.2: The NM Ten Tip Series: Understanding Dissociation.**

STATE:

Next, we will do an activity to help us explore the stress responses of our youth and consider the types of responses that we make to these stress responses that are likely to either de-escalate or escalate the youth’s behaviors.

SESSION 2

Parenting Youth Who Have Experienced Trauma

NOTE: Depending upon time and the quality of the discussion, some of the following examples can be shared with participants to help reinforce the learning point.

Examples of escalating responses:

- ▶ Asking a youth with no history of trauma the moment he comes home from school if he will take out the garbage and then mow the lawn. (Increases the likelihood of activating arousal response)
- ▶ A teacher in a discussion with a youth who has a history of physical abuse about whether he has gotten his homework done on time and/or why he did not complete his homework. (Increases arousal response and will likely lead to defiance and possibly aggression)
- ▶ A youth with a history of early life sexual abuse and neglect in an argument with a peer. (Increases dissociation, shutting down, likely that youth will comply with peer's opinion)
- ▶ A youth with a history of chaos, early life neglect and multiple placements at a party with peers. (Increases the "regulatory" power of alcohol, marijuana, opioids; puts youth at greater risk for overuse and abuse of these drugs)

Examples of de-escalating responses:

- ▶ Youth with a history of trauma given an after-school snack and 30 minutes on her favorite videogame before she is asked about homework. (Provides regulation through a calming routine)
- ▶ A parent of a youth with a family history of domestic violence and aggression discussing household expectations by speaking in a calm and nurturing tone of voice. (Models for the youth a well-regulated interaction and promotes youth regulation)

SUMMARIZE any final points on this topic before moving to the next section.



SEGMENT IV. PARENTING SKILLS FOR OUR SUITCASES

SLIDES 15 - 25
40 MINUTES

[PPT #15]: APPROACHES AND STYLES FOR PARENTING TEENS

Approaches and Styles for Parenting Teens

- The Rewards/Consequences Approach
- The Tough Love Approach
- Authoritarian Parenting
- Permissive Parenting
- Authoritative Parenting
- Some tribal cultures: Sit with a healer, a medicine person, or an Elder; not be able to go to a tribal activity such as a powwow.



STATE:

Let's look at which teen parenting strategies you currently have in your suitcase. Our goal is not just to add new strategies, but also to subtract strategies that are not useful to lighten the load.

Whether or not you are currently a parent, please call out some parenting styles or philosophies you have used, seen, or read about.

FACILITATE A DISCUSSION and make notes on a flip chart page of the parenting strategies that are named. Add the following common parenting methods as needed:

- ▶ The Rewards/Consequences Approach—Using behavior modification (plans, sticker charts, and, of course, rewards and consequences). May include time out, taking away a privilege, curfew, grounding, as well as rewards such as extra privileges, earned things, or extra attention from a parent.
- ▶ The Tough Love Approach—May include withholding time together, removal of privileges, hard rules, consequence-based; often used to stop behaviors that can seriously hurt the teen.
- ▶ Authoritarian Parenting—High expectations with little feedback or nurturance.
- ▶ Permissive Parenting—Not setting many limits; focused on creativity and feelings.

Parenting Youth Who Have Experienced Trauma

- ▶ Authoritative Parenting—Child-centered, parents closely interact with their children while keeping high expectations for behavior and performance; sticking to schedules and discipline.
- ▶ In some tribal cultures, the youth might be directed to sit with a healer, a medicine person, or an Elder; may not be able to go to a tribal activity such as a powwow as a consequence.

STATE:

Now, let's look at Trauma-Informed Parenting and how it is different from more common parenting styles.

[PPT #16]: WHAT IS TRAUMA INFORMED PARENTING?**Parenting Skills for Our Suitcases**

- Trauma-informed parenting : You as the parent are taking into account the early trauma that the youth has experienced, and you are modifying your parenting to meet the youth's individual needs.
- Sometimes also called Therapeutic Parenting
- Combines structure with nurturing to create a safe and supportive environment for the youth, creating the opportunity for trust-building and connectedness



16

**STATE:**

Let's look at the idea of trauma-informed parenting and talk about some of the essential elements of this approach.

Trauma-informed parenting starts with considering the early trauma that the youth experienced and changing your parenting (even if you have successfully parented children without histories of trauma) to meet their individual needs.

Trauma-informed parenting is sometimes referred to as Therapeutic Parenting, and combines structure with nurturing to create a safe and supportive environment for the youth. This creates the opportunity for building trust, attachment and safety in your relationship with your youth.

The Regulate, Reason, Relate framework that we have been learning is a cornerstone of Therapeutic Parenting.

You can refer to the article in the Resource Notebook, **RESOURCE #2.3: Attachment & Trauma Network: Therapeutic Parenting** for more information on trauma-informed or therapeutic parenting.

Parenting Skills for Our Suitcases

Regulating yourself before you engage your child.

The skill to develop is catching yourself before **YOU** act.

Think about a recent experience with a youth or another person when you had a quick, negative, or even angry reaction that didn't help the situation. It might have been a reaction to a behavior, a difference of opinion, a traffic incident, an insult, or something you heard on TV. Close your eyes and try to recreate the emotions you had at that time. Now take three slow, deep breaths. Did the deep breathing help calm you down? Do you think your response might have been different if you had paused before reacting? If yes, how? If no, consider why.



STATE:

Now let's turn to some key trauma-informed parenting skills that you will want to develop and add to your suitcase.

Let's talk first about regulating yourself before you engage your child.

The next time you find yourself wanting to correct, instruct, edit, or discipline your child, catch yourself, before you react. Literally, take a step back and a few deep breaths. As Dr. Perry discussed, make sure your cortex is "online" so that you can help regulate your child.

Think about what may be behind the behavior. Why did they forget their lunch again? Why did they lie to you? Did they "dissociate"? Are they dysregulated and, therefore, less capable of keeping things in mind?

The skill to develop is catching yourself BEFORE YOU REACT. This will help you get better regulated and give you a chance to help regulate your child. Let's try it.

Think about a recent experience with a youth or another person when you had a quick, negative, or even angry reaction that didn't help the situation. It might have been a reaction to a behavior, a difference of opinion, a traffic incident, an insult, or something you heard on TV.

Close your eyes and try to recreate the emotions you had at that time. Now take three slow, deep breaths.

- ▶ Did the deep breathing help calm you down? Do you think your response might have been different if you had paused before reacting? If yes, how? If no, why?

Over the next few weeks, practice taking three deep breaths before responding to everyday situations. This will help you create a habit of pausing and thinking before responding.

[PPT #18]: UNDERSTANDING YOUTH'S TRAUMA HISTORY

Parenting Skills for Our Suitcases

Full understanding of the young person's trauma history



- **VIDEO:** Kim Stevens: How to sensitively talk with youth about their trauma history.
- A Life Book or Loss or Memory Box
- Review of Life Book and adding new photos and experiences
- For some youth: Searching for information or visiting important places in their past

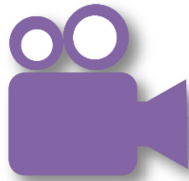
18

**STATE:**

Next, we will talk about the importance of having a full understanding of the young person's trauma history.

It is very important to engage with your youth in understanding their trauma history and helping them make sense of their life story. You need to know as much as possible about your youth's life story so that you can join with them in understanding what happened to them.

Let's watch a brief video of Kim Stevens, adoptive mother, providing tips on how to talk with youth about their trauma history.

**1:49 MINUTES**

SHOW participants the video Kim Stevens: **“Talking to kids about their trauma story.”**

Kim gave several tips to keep in mind when thinking about how to support your youth in talking about their trauma story. She talked about:

- ▶ Letting the youth take the lead
- ▶ Keeping the door open
- ▶ Going back to the conversation again and again
- ▶ Never giving up and being consistently available

Talk with a few people around you about Kim's tips and consider how comfortable you feel about the idea of communicating in these ways with your youth.

Art can be very healing for youth and also can create opportunities to discuss your youth's important life experiences. Some examples of art activities are: creating a Life Book that tells the youth's story, making a collage that reflects the youth's identity or experiences, and making a Loss or Memory Box for items that are important to your youth.

Parenting Youth Who Have Experienced Trauma

We have included three articles about life books in the Resource Handbook that you can refer to later: **RESOURCE #2.4: Why and How to Make a Life Book**, **RESOURCE #2.5: Lifebooks: Keeping It Together**, and **RESOURCE #2.6: Child Information Gateway: Lifebooks**.

If the youth has a Life Book, it would be helpful to review it from time to time and add new photos and experiences that include your family. This will create the opportunity to perhaps add to it if the youth remembers new events, and also to help him or her feel a part of your family into the future.

For some youth, searching for information or visiting places such as the hospital where they were born, or the house they lived in, and taking a photo for their Life Book, can be a valuable journey.

[PPT #19]: CONSIDERING EMOTIONAL AGE AND DEVELOPMENTAL STATUS

Parenting Skills for Our Suitcases

Attention to the child's emotional age and developmental status

- Youth's chronological (actual) age may not always line up with the youth's emotional age or ability to self-regulate
- Behavior as a clue about the youth's emotional, cognitive, or social age in a particular circumstance and in response to different evocative cues
- Not helpful to tell the youth to "act your age"
- Be attuned to the message underneath the behavior and respond with compassion, structure, and nurturance

19

**STATE:**

Not let's talk about considering the child's emotional age and developmental status.

Let's remember that multiple traumas can impact a youth's emotional, cognitive, and social development. As a result, the youth's actual age may not always line up with the youth's emotional age, or ability to self-regulate.

A youth can be at different stages in their development at the same time. For instance, a 16-year-old may cognitively be at a 16-year-old level, but socially and emotionally, function at a much younger age. This can make things difficult in school, since he/she may do well in the classroom but be isolated socially.

The opposite may also be true, especially for young people who have certain types of intellectual or developmental disabilities. They may be socially and developmentally on track but struggle a lot with school assignments. A teacher may mistakenly think this is a lack of effort rather than a result of brain function.

Sometimes behavior can give you a clue about the youth's emotional, cognitive, or social age in a particular circumstance, and in response to different triggers; it is helpful to respond to the behavior in accordance with the age it reflects, rather than the youth's actual age.

Parenting Youth Who Have Experienced Trauma

It is not helpful to tell the youth to “act your age,” since they may well be acting their emotional, cognitive, or social age.

In trauma-informed parenting, healing is best done when you parent to the youth’s emotional age in stressful situations.

Look for the message underneath the behavior and respond with compassion, structure, and nurturance.

[PPT #20]: CONSIDERING EMOTIONAL AGE AND DEVELOPMENTAL STATUS (CONTINUED)

Parenting Skills for Our Suitcases

Handout #2.2 Leanne

What do you think of Joan’s parenting?
Can you think of other activities Joan could try?

20

STATE:

Look at **HANDOUT #2.2: Leanne Vignette**. It provides an excellent example of how Leanne’s foster mom, Joan, is attuned to Leanne’s emotional age.



INSTRUCTIONS: Ask one participant to read the case study aloud. Facilitate a discussion by asking: What do you think of Joan’s parenting strategies? Can you think of other activities Joan could try?

**HANDOUT #2.2: LEANNE VIGNETTE**

Leanne was neglected when she was a baby, left alone in her crib and rarely held and rocked by her birth parents. She remained with her parents until she was four, and then was removed and placed in foster care. She was in six homes before she was 13 when she was placed in her current foster home. Leanne did not like being touched and was difficult to console when she was upset or angry, and each of her foster parents felt rejected as a result of her behavior.

Leanne's behavior is reflective of the neglect she experienced as an infant, when she was not attended to, not held or rocked, and her needs were not being met. Emotionally, she is still stuck in an early developmental stage. In her current family, her foster parents are working with a therapist to create opportunities for non-threatening touch experiences in order to work up to being able to give Leanne a hug without her pulling away. They are also working on activities to build Leanne's trust that her needs will be met.

With the guidance of the therapist, Joan, Leanne's foster mother, is brushing Leanne's hair and helping her with fun, new hairstyles. They are playing with makeup together, putting it on each other, and Joan is able to put nail polish on Leanne's toenails and fingernails. Joan is using a feather to lightly touch Leanne's arms and face, and letting Leanne do the same to her, to help Leanne experience light, friendly touch. Leanne is participating in team sports in school where there is acceptable contact with teammates. Leanne really wanted to be able to swim, so she and Joan go to the sports center where Joan holds Leanne as she learns to float. Slowly, Leanne is becoming more accepting of touch, and Joan can now put an arm around Leanne to show her support when Leanne does something praiseworthy. Leanne is also beginning to trust that Joan will keep her safe, as she supports her in the pool. Joan looks for every opportunity to praise Leanne!

STATE:

Note that Joan is engaging Leanne in activities that Leanne enjoys and wants to try, such as learning to swim. It is important to find out what activities the youth enjoys or is interested in, and find opportunities to share those activities in the interest of establishing a strong relationship.

Don't be reluctant to engage in play that seems much younger than the child's chronological age. For some youth, they never had the chance to play with dolls, dress up, just be silly, have water gun fights, blow soap bubbles, and do things a much younger child would do. Engaging in play is a great way to regulate and relate with your youth, which will strengthen your relationship.

Parenting Skills for Our Suitcases

Reframing behavioral challenges as survival skills

- Finding the positive, strengths-based aspects of behavior, which would normally be seen as negative

Handout #2.3 Role Play: Jason and Sandra

- How would you have handled this situation?
- Can you think of other ways to reframe Jason's behavior to give him positive feedback and still suggest a change in the negative behavior?



STATE:

Now we will talk about reframing behavioral challenges as survival skills.

Positive reframing involves finding the positive, strengths-based aspects of behavior, which would normally be seen as negative.

The behavior might not be fully acceptable, but it might also include some positive elements that can be highlighted to the youth. This will help change the overall behavior by supporting the youth's strengths.

ACTIVITY



INSTRUCTIONS: Inform participants that you will need two volunteers to demonstrate positive reframing. The role play script is on **HANDOUT #2.3 Role Play: Jason and Sandra**. Note: If participants are uncomfortable with doing a role play, the two trainers can demonstrate it for them and take on the roles of Jason and Sandra.



HANDOUT #2.3: ROLE PLAY - JASON AND SANDRA

Jason has been sent to the principal's office for fighting with Peter on the playground. Jason's foster mother, Sandra, has been called to the school to take him home since he was suspended for two days. Jason and his sister, Leila, were abused in their birth family and he was always her protector; he is quick to lash out, especially when he feels he needs to protect Leila.

Sandra: Jason, tell me what happened on the playground.

Jason: Peter was bullying Leila, and I told him to stop. He wouldn't stop, so I hit him to get him away from her. He hit me back and we got into a fight.

Sandra: I understand that you were protecting Leila, which is a very good thing to do. You are a good brother. Could you have found another way to do that?

Jason: I didn't see any teachers around who could stop Peter, and he is a bully anyway. Other kids were standing around, but they didn't do anything. Leila needs to be protected and it is my job as her brother.

Sandra: It was brave of you to step in and stop Peter. It sounds like maybe other kids are afraid of him. Is that true?

Jason: Yeah, other kids don't stand up to him.

Sandra: It is a good thing to stand up for your sister. However, getting into a fight might not be the best way to do that. What else might you have done?

Jason: Jason thinks. Then he says: I could have asked other kids to surround Leila so Peter couldn't talk to her. And then I could have gone to find a teacher on the playground and reported Peter.

Sandra: That is good thinking, Jason. I am glad you are protective of your sister, and that you are willing to stand up to a bully. Next time, maybe you can think of another way to solve the problem besides fighting.

[PPT #22]: REFRAMES FOR BEHAVIOR (CONTINUED)

Parenting Skills for Our Suitcases

Handout #2.4 In Other Words, Positive Reframes



22

STATE:

Now we will talk for a moment about some suggestions of reframes for behaviors or characteristics that we usually think of as negative.



INSTRUCTIONS: Refer participants to **HANDOUT #2.4: In Other Words, Positive Reframes**. Ask participants to take a few moments to review the content on the handout and then facilitate a large group discussion by asking: What examples stand out to you? What are your thoughts on positive reframing? How might positive reframing be helpful?



HANDOUT #2.4: IN OTHER WORDS... POSITIVE REFRAMES

Current Frame	Positive Reframes
Argumentative	knows what they want, knows what they believe, persuasive, passionate, determined, persistent, confident, daring, decisive, bold, strong-willed, strong
Attention-seeking; wants attention	likes being with you, wants to be seen/heard, wants to feel important and valued, affectionate, determined, passionate, persistent, captivating
Bossy	straightforward, passionate, bold, confident, natural leader, daring, confident, strong-willed, decisive, determined, frank, independent, goal directed
Clingy	affectionate, protective, passionate, faithful, loving, loyal, compassionate
Compulsive	detail-oriented, thorough, persistent, passionate, efficient, ambitious, determined, precise, decisive, diligent, focused, meticulous, organized, prudent
Conceited	confident, bold, decisive, values self, optimistic, passionate, straightforward
Dawdles, wastes time	easy going, non-authoritarian, mindful
Defiant	determined, tough, passionate, strong-willed, decisive, fearless, strong, holds strong beliefs, courageous, brave, independent
Demanding	bold, frank, tough, determined, assertive, expressive, persistent, steadfast, captivating, strong, confident, daring, decisive, passionate
Dependent	loyal, faithful, connected, caring, compassionate
Dramatic	imaginative, creative, emotionally aware, expressive, innovative, witty, amusing, spontaneous, captivating, enthusiastic, passionate
Fearful	perceptive, diligent, thoughtful, careful, cautious
Foolish	non-authoritarian, fun loving, playful, amusing, sociable, likes to make others smile, charming, friendly, imaginative, humorous, passionate
Fussy	expressive, has discerning tastes and needs, communicates needs, determined, passionate, persistent
Goofy/Silly	joyful, entertaining, good sense of humor, carefree, likes to make others smile, innovative, sociable, optimistic, personable, amusing, funny, passionate, captivating, charming, friendly, witty, energetic, enthusiastic, imaginative, humorous, gregarious
Impulsive	spontaneous, adventurous, passionate, ambitious, trusting, confident, daring, optimistic, free-spirited, energetic, enthusiastic, independent
Lazy	relaxed, independent, carefree, easy going, needs encouragement
Loud	exuberant, confident, enthusiastic, gregarious, passionate, optimistic, captivating, daring, energetic, expressive

SESSION 2

Parenting Youth Who Have Experienced Trauma

Current Frame	Positive Reframes
Manipulative	resourceful, imaginative, gets needs met, understands people, innovative, steadfast, perceptive, intuitive, confident, skillful
Mean	expressive, bold, seeking validation/control, decisive, straightforward
Messy	creative, practicing/learning skills, passionate, carefree, easy going, imaginative, spontaneous, non-authoritarian
Mouthy	expressive, passionate, brave, bold, daring, quick-witted, confident, determined, independent
Naughty	daring, needing guidance, independent, explores boundaries, strong-willed
Nosey	curious, perceptive, straightforward, caring, inquisitive, explores boundaries, compassionate, intuitive
Quiet	uncomplaining, discreet, reserved, thoughtful, reflective, insightful, humble, intuitive, peaceful, prudent
Rigid	decisive, high sense of order, stable, rational, diligent, logical, frank, sensible, organized
Sensitive	caring, empathetic, sympathetic, thoughtful, compassionate, intuitive, aware of feelings, understanding, insightful, perceptive
Shy	uncomplaining, discreet, insightful, reserved, inner directed, values trust, intuitive, thoughtful, peaceful, humble, prudent
Sneaky	inventive, creative, confident, determined, ambitious, innovative, daring, resourceful
Stubborn	strong, strong-willed, diligent, determined, persistent, tough, independent, decisive, passionate, confident
Talkative	gregarious, good communicator, wants to be heard, expressive, personable, sociable, passionate, spontaneous, confident, energetic, enthusiastic
Talks back	daring, bold, brave, courageous, determined, passionate, confident, strong-willed
Timid	tolerant, uncomplaining, careful, cautious, adaptable, reserved, agreeable, discreet, gentle, intuitive, insightful, prudent, patient
Unfocused	creative, relaxed, spontaneous, independent, abstract thinker, processing information, easy going, imaginative, innovative, non-authoritarian
Whiny	expressive, needs assurance, passionate

[PPT #23]: CONNECTION BETWEEN PAST EXPERIENCES AND CURRENT BEHAVIORS

Parenting Skills for Our Suitcases

Helping the youth understand the connections between their past experience and current behaviors

- How would you help Jason understand that his reaction in protecting Leila was connected to their earlier experiences when he was her protector, that he was parentified (acting as her parent), and that adults can now help to protect her also?

**STATE:**

Now let's look at how we can help the youth understand the connections between their past experience and current behaviors.

Let's return to Jason.

NOTE: Allow a few minutes to discuss these questions:

- ▶ How would you help Jason understand that his reaction in protecting Leila was connected to their earlier experiences when he had to "parent" her?
- ▶ How do help him understand that adults can now help to protect her also?

STATE:

While making this connection between the past and the present is often difficult for youth, it is helpful to have the conversation and begin to lay the foundation.

It may not completely make sense to them until adulthood, but the conversation about making the connection can start sooner.

Adolescence is the time when youth are often beginning to re-evaluate their earlier life experiences as they work on their identity. These simple check-ins can help them connect the dots.

[PPT #24]: MAKING ADJUSTMENTS

Parenting Skills for Our Suitcases

Adjusting routines, expectations, and interpretations

Handout #2.5 Kaylene

- What expectations do you have that would be challenged by Kaylene?
- What does Kaylene's behavior tell you about her past? What might be the reasons behind her behavior?
- What behaviors would you be most likely to address first and how would you address them?

**STATE:**

Another trauma-informed parenting technique is making adjustments in routines, parental expectations, and interpretations of youths' behaviors.

Let's look at **HANDOUT #2.5: Kaylene**.

**HANDOUT #2.5: KAYLENE**

Kaylene is 16 years old and has only been in her foster home for three weeks. She doesn't eat much at mealtimes but gets up in the middle of the night and takes food from the kitchen, eats some of it, and hides the rest in her room. She is adamant about not having anyone coming into her room and has asked for a lock on her door. She leaves her clothes on the floor after she takes them off at night. She has to be reminded to put her dirty clothes in the hamper to be washed, and sometimes she wears the same clothes for two or three days in a row, even though she has lots of new clothes to choose from.

ACTIVITY



INSTRUCTIONS: Divide participants into three small groups. Ask someone to read **HANDOUT #2.5: Kaylene**. Assign the questions on the slide so that each group will discuss one question. After providing a few minutes for the groups to work, ask each to share their responses with the larger group (the bullets under each question are notes for the trainer to discuss after the participants have given their answers).

STATE:

What expectations do you have that would be challenged by Kaylene?

Possible responses:

- ▶ Everyone eats meals together and gets their hunger addressed.
- ▶ There is no need to sneak or hoard food since there is plenty.
- ▶ Dirty clothes go in the hamper to be washed.
- ▶ We don't wear dirty clothes for several days when we have clean clothes.
- ▶ Nobody locks their bedroom door in case there's a fire.

Parenting Youth Who Have Experienced Trauma

What does Kaylene's behavior tell you about her past? What might be the reasons behind her behavior?

Possible responses:

- ▶ Kaylene did not have enough to eat at some time in her life and she had to take food to save for times when she didn't have any. She may also have had to eat only a little because there wasn't enough food for everyone.
- ▶ Kaylene did not have enough clothes and she had to wear the same thing for days.
- ▶ Kaylene did not expect anyone to wash her clothes for her.
- ▶ Kaylene might not feel entitled to have nice clothes.
- ▶ Kaylene might be feeling overwhelmed by everything in her new home.
- ▶ Kaylene might feel that this is just another place she'll leave, and she doesn't want to get too used to being in this home. She might not think it makes much sense to learn and follow new rules.
- ▶ Kaylene might have had someone entering her room at night in other homes, and she might have been molested.

What behaviors would you be most likely to address first and how would you address them?

Possible responses:

- ▶ Let go of expectations to allow Kaylene to settle in.
- ▶ Slowly help her to change her behavior as she becomes more familiar with her new home and feels safe.

Parenting Skills for Our Suitcases

Flexibility: Balancing limit setting with the unique needs of youth

Looking at Kaylene's situation, how might you encourage her and set limits at the same time?

- Food hoarding
- Dirty clothes
- Re-wearing clothes
- Locked door
- Remember that you do not have to address all the concerns at once.

25

STATE:

Let's look at flexibility, which we define as balancing limit setting with the unique needs of youth

Looking at Kaylene's situation, how might you encourage her and set limits at the same time?

Possible responses:

- ▶ Food hoarding — Help Kaylene choose two or three wrapped food items (granola bars, crackers, etc.) or piece of fruit, which she can take to her room after meals, so that she has the comfort of having food if she needs it. Give her a small plastic box to keep the food in. Request that Kaylene bring any remaining unwrapped food or food wrappers back to the kitchen in the morning and explain that keeping unwrapped food in her room could attract bugs. She can take more food to her room after dinner that day.
- ▶ Dirty clothes — Put a hamper in Kaylene's room to remind her to put her dirty clothes in there when she takes them off.
- ▶ Re-wearing clothes — Go through her closet with Kaylene and have her decide which clothes she likes and is comfortable wearing. Remove any clothes that she doesn't like. Encourage her to choose her clothes for the next day before she goes to bed.
- ▶ Locked door — Put a sign on Kaylene's bedroom door saying, "Please knock before entering," and be sure everyone in the household abides by that rule.

NOTE: Remember that you do not have to address all the concerns at once. Choose the most concerning and then tackle another one when that one is addressed.

SUMMARIZE any final points on this topic before moving to the next section.

SEGMENT V. SELF-CARE

SLIDES 26 - 29
10 MINUTES

[PPT #26]: SELF-CARE

Self-Care

- List three ways you take care of yourself when your life is stressful.
- List three people who support you when you need help. Will they be or are they supportive when you are experiencing parenting challenges?

26

STATE:

Let's return to Self-Care for a few minutes, considering our own Self-Care plans.



INSTRUCTIONS: Provide a few minutes for participants to consider the questions on the slide. Ask for volunteers to share a few of their ideas with one another.

STATE:

Let's look now at some of the ways to be sure that you have the supports you need in place.

[PPT #27]: SELF-CARE (CONTINUED)

Self-Care



- Make a plan for how you will manage a stressful situation that you have experienced and that might occur again.
- Know who you can call for help.
- If you are connected to a faith community, rely on that community for support. If not connected to a faith community or that is not part of your family culture, find other communities or groups to connect with.
- Consider meditation, yoga, exercise, or other strategies for self-regulation and relaxation.
- Join a support group of other parents where you can share experiences, get ideas, and establish a network of others who understand.

27


ASK participants to take turns reading each of the points on this slide and the next slide.

SESSION 2


Parenting Youth Who Have Experienced Trauma

[PPT #28]: SELF-CARE (CONTINUED)

Self-Care




- Arrange opportunities for respite for yourself when your youth is in school, at an activity that does not require your attendance, or visiting a friend.
- If you have a partner, make time to be alone with just the two of you, as well as trading off time with your kids so you each have time for yourselves.
- Know when to ask for help from professionals and other community resources.
- Make sure you are taking care of yourself so that you can take care of others.



NOTE: Continue having participants review the points on the slide.

[PPT #29]: SELF-CARE (CONTINUED)

Self-Care



Resource

Taking Care of Yourself: Tips for Foster and Resource Parents, from the Center for the Study of Social Policy's Strengthening Families



STATE:

It is very important that you take care of yourself and that you take the time for “refueling” your own energy level. This helps build your own resilience and adds to your ability to stay regulated so that you can regulate your youth and ultimately relate and reason with them as well.

Parenting youth who have experienced trauma is difficult and stressful, and often not immediately rewarding. Progress can be slow and rewards rare. Be sure you have the support you need.

The tool **RESOURCE #2.7: Taking Care of Yourself: Tips for Resource Parents** in the Resource Notebook is designed to help you:

- ▶ Reflect on your experience as a resource parent,
- ▶ Identify your strengths and where you may need more support,
- ▶ Be aware of how traumatic experiences may affect the child in your care and how that might impact you as a caregiver, and
- ▶ Respond to the child in your care in a supportive way even when their behavior is challenging.

You can use the resource to help you think through ways that you might strengthen your support system.

SEGMENT VI. SUMMARY, HOMEWORK AND CLOSING

SLIDES 30 - 33
5 MINUTES

[PPT #30]: SUMMARY

Review of Learning Objectives

- Describe the two major adaptive responses to threats.
- Describe how fear changes the way youth think, feel, and act.
- Describe three trauma-informed techniques to effectively parent youth, based on their emotional age and developmental stage.

30



STATE:

During the session, we learned about the two major adaptive responses to threats:

1. Hyperarousal, which includes flock, freeze, flight, and fight; and
2. Dissociative, which is when people disengage, avoid, obey, and dissociate, and/or shut down.

We examined how fear changes the way youth think, feel and act.

Finally, we explored trauma-informed parenting techniques.

[PPT #31]: HOMEWORK

Homework

For Current Parents: Practice at home with your youth one or more of the trauma-informed parenting techniques that we discussed today:

- Reframing behavioral challenges as survival skills
- Helping the youth understand the connections between their past experiences and current behaviors
- Regulating your response to stressful situations by stepping back
- Adjustment of routines, expectations, and interpretations
- Flexibility: Balancing limit setting with the unique needs of youth
- Awareness of your triggers, what sets you off, and when you need to take a few breaths before responding

31



STATE:

Let's review the homework for Session Two.

First for those of you who are CURRENTLY PARENTS, practice one or more of the trauma-informed parenting techniques that we discussed today as described on the slide.

Jot some notes about how it went on **HANDOUT #2.6: Trauma-Informed Parenting Techniques**

- ▶ **NOTE:** Read each of the bullets on the slide to help participants begin to think about which of the techniques they might choose.

SESSION 2

Parenting Youth Who Have Experienced Trauma

[PPT #32]: HOMEWORK (CONTINUED)

Homework

For Parents To Be:

- Think about the seven trauma-informed parenting techniques that we discussed. Which of these do you believe will come naturally to you? Which of these may be a challenge for you? Why?
- Make a list of challenging behaviors and what some positive reframing might be.
- Practice responding to stressful situations by taking deep breaths before reacting.



STATE:

For PARENTS TO BE, think about the trauma-informed parenting techniques that we discussed today and consider which you believe will come naturally to you and which may be a challenge for you. Why?

Make a list of challenging behaviors and what some positive reframing might be.

Practice responding to stressful situations by taking deep breaths before reacting.

Use **HANDOUT #2.6** to record your results.



HANDOUT #2.6: TRAUMA INFORMED PARENTING TECHNIQUES

For Current Parents

Trauma-Informed Technique Practiced	Notes about How It Went

For Parents to Be

Trauma-Informed Techniques Natural to Me	Challenging Trauma-Informed Techniques

Challenging Behavior	Positive Reframe

SESSION 2

Parenting Youth Who Have Experienced Trauma

[PPT #33]: CLOSING

THANK
YOU!



THANK participants for their time and attention. Remind participants that the next session will focus on developing and sustaining a healthy and supportive relationship with their youth.

CORE TEEN CURRICULUM

SESSION

3

DEVELOPING AND SUSTAINING A HEALTHY AND SUPPORTIVE
RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR YOUTH

SESSION 3 PRE AND POSTTEST ANSWER KEY

1. What can a parent do to help the teen process grief and loss?
 - a. **Help them understand it's normal to have these emotions and feelings of grief and loss**
 - b. Avoid talking about the loss
 - c. Normalize the teen's aggressive behavior
 - d. Focus on the good things in the teen's life

2. Teens who experience loss may display anger and aggression. (circle one) **True** False

3. De'Anthony's mother stopped visiting him in foster care six months ago. He continues to talk about her. Valerie's father often comes over to her grandmother's house, where she lives, but is addicted to heroin and is unable to parent her. Which teen might experience ambiguous loss?
 - a. De'Anthony
 - b. Valerie
 - c. **Both De'Anthony and Valerie**
 - d. Neither De'Anthony nor Valerie

4. Attunement requires the parent to
 - a. Only meet the teen's basic needs
 - b. **Be aware of and responsive to the teen**
 - c. Only focus on emotional needs
 - d. Meet teens' basic needs and tell them how they feel

5. Which of the following parent actions does not promote attunement?
 - a. Meet the teen's basic needs
 - b. Listen to the teen and be genuine
 - c. **Tell the teen how they should feel about their experiences**
 - d. Understand their point of view and accept them unconditionally

6. The type of attachment the teen has experienced in the past will have no impact on the relationship he/she builds with you. (circle one) True **False**

7. You are working with Isabella to help her develop a new set of associations related to attachment. Which of the following is true about successful parenting with her?
- It will take a few weeks to develop trust with her
 - You will need to—over a period of time and repeatedly—show her that you care about her and can be trusted**
 - Leave her alone and let her work through the issues on her own
 - You will not be able to change her associations about attachment
8. Teens may use emotional distance to
- Protect themselves from the pain of rejection and separation**
 - Disregard rules and avoid responsibility
 - Show intense emotions
 - Meet their attention needs
9. The prefrontal cortex or higher areas of the brain experience gradual changes during teens' development and are responsible for
- Basic functions such as heart rate and respiratory rate
 - Language and communications
 - Reasoning and impulse control**
 - Emotions and feeling recognition
10. You are parenting a teen who has experienced trauma. Which of the following is something that you should **NOT** do?
- Never talk to the teen about the trauma**
 - Be predictable
 - Let the teen express himself/herself without judgement
 - Seek professional help, if needed
11. Devin walks into the house smelling like marijuana. You are angry and concerned that he might be doing drugs or at the very least hanging around with others who are using. The first thing you need to do as a parent is
- Take away all his methods of communication since he is hanging out with a bad crowd
 - Tell him all the reasons why he shouldn't be doing this and that you are very disappointed in him
 - Check your own emotions, take a deep breath, and think about how and when you want to begin this conversation**
 - Pretend you don't smell it and never address it

12. Parents can help their teens with identity formation by doing all of the following, **EXCEPT**
- a. Talking to the teen about their birth parents
 - b. Encouraging the teen to identify with the foster or adoptive parent's cultural heritage and practices**
 - c. Supporting the teen in building a deeper understanding of their own heritage and cultural background
 - d. Talking openly about sexuality and support/affirm LGBTQ2S teens
13. Parents can strengthen their attachment with their teen by doing all of the following **EXCEPT**
- a. Being aware of their proximity to the teen
 - b. Being present and positioning themselves by side by side with their teen
 - c. Being patient
 - d. Being in control of when conversations take place**
14. You have just told Javier that he will not be able to have friends over after school since he didn't do his homework. He gets angry, calls you names and starts yelling about how unfair you are. In this state of dysregulation, Javier does not have the ability to think clearly. (circle one) **True** False

SESSION 3: DEVELOPING AND SUSTAINING A HEALTHY AND SUPPORTIVE RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR YOUTH



Core Competency: Parents develop and sustain a healthy and supportive relationship with their youth.

SEGMENTS

- I. Welcome and Debrief **(10 MINUTES)**
- II. Understanding Grief and Loss **(30 MINUTES)**
- III. Attachment and Attunement **(30 MINUTES)**
- IV. Parenting to Promote Attachment to Youth **(45 MINUTES)**
- V. Summary, Homework and Closing **(5 MINUTES)**

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

No additional materials needed.

PREPARE

This session contains content in several sections that is dense and can be more challenging to digest. Consider **MONITORING TIME** more carefully during the session and work to cover material efficiently while still allowing interaction among participants.

REVIEW the Right Time materials on Relationship Development to support the content presented in this session.



SEGMENT I. WELCOME AND DEBRIEF

SLIDES 1-4

10 MINUTES

[PPT #1]: WELCOME

Session #3: Developing and Sustaining a Healthy and Supportive Relationship with Your Youth



Welcome
Back

1

NOTE: Display this slide as participants are getting seated and welcome participants as they enter the room.

STATE:

Welcome to Session Three. Developing and Sustaining a Healthy and Supportive Relationship with Your Youth. In this session, we will focus on developing and keeping a healthy and supportive relationship with your youth.

[PPT # 2]: REVIEW OF HOMEWORK

Your Homework from Session #2

For Current Parents: Practice at home with your youth one or more of the trauma-informed parenting techniques that were discussed:

- Reframing behavioral challenges as survival skills
- Helping the youth understand the connections between their past experience and current behaviors
- Regulating your response to stressful situations by stepping back
- Adjustment of routines, expectations and interpretations
- Flexibility: Balancing limit setting with unique needs of youth

For Parents To-Be: Think about the seven trauma-informed parenting techniques that we discussed. Which of these do you believe will come very naturally to you? Which of these may be a challenge for you? Why?

2

STATE:

Before we begin, let's talk about the homework assignments you completed for today.

We will have a few people report back about what they tried (current parents) and what they thought would be easier or more challenging trauma-informed parenting techniques (parents-to-be).

NOTE: Ask for a few participants to share their experiences completing the homework for Session Two.

[PPT # 3]: QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

Any questions from Session #2?



3

STATE:

We covered a great deal of information during our last session.

Are there any questions or comments about Session Two?

[PPT # 4]: LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Learning Objectives

1. Describe the impact of loss and grief on teens.
2. Describe two actions that parents can take to increase attachment and strengthen their relationship with youth.
3. Describe two ways that parents can deepen attunement with their youth or a youth they will parent.

**STATE:**

Now, let's dive into our work today. Here are our learning objectives.

By the end of this session, you will be able to:

1. Describe the impact of loss and grief on teens.
2. Describe two actions that parents can take to increase attachment and strengthen their relationship with youth.
3. Describe two ways that parents can deepen attunement with their youth or a youth they will parent.

SEGMENT II. UNDERSTANDING GRIEF AND LOSS

SLIDES 5-12

30 MINUTES

[PPT #5]: UNDERSTANDING GRIEF AND LOSS

Understanding Grief

Think about the losses experienced by youth in foster care.
What types of losses have these youth experienced?

**STATE:**

As you likely learned in your preparation training to become resource parents, grief and loss are powerful experiences in the lives of children and youth in foster care and those who have been adopted, whether from care, privately, or internationally.

Developing and Sustaining A Healthy and Supportive Relationship with your Youth


 ACTIVITY

INSTRUCTIONS: Ask participants to take a few minutes to think about the losses experienced by youth in foster care. After 2-3 minutes, ask participants to start sharing their ideas and record responses on flip chart paper.

Add the following to the list if needed:

- ▶ Parents
- ▶ Siblings
- ▶ Extended family
- ▶ Friends
- ▶ Pets
- ▶ School
- ▶ Important adults in their lives before foster care
- ▶ Former caregivers and supports
- ▶ Birth order
- ▶ Status within the family, school and friends
- ▶ Various foster families and homes
- ▶ Other children and teens they connected with while in care
- ▶ For children in guardianship, loss of traditional relationship
- ▶ Belongings, familiar environments, foods, way of life
- ▶ Connections to their community and culture
- ▶ Shared language and history
- ▶ Access to their personal history including baby and family photos, birth and medical information, school records and records of other milestones
- ▶ Privacy
- ▶ Identity
- ▶ Comfort in how things work in the home
- ▶ Sense of control over their lives
- ▶ Sense of belonging
- ▶ Loss of innocence


STATE:

Take a moment to look at the list we have created. Many of these apply to children adopted privately and internationally too.

What are some of your reactions to seeing the number of losses that our youth experience?

[PPT #6]: UNDERSTANDING LOSS AND GRIEF (CONTINUED)

Understanding Grief



Think about the most significant losses in your life. As you feel comfortable, share your feelings about these losses.

How do your experiences with loss help you understand youth's experiences of loss?



STATE:


It is helpful to think about our own experiences with loss as we work to understand how youth in our care are experiencing their losses.

Think about the most significant losses in your life.


FACILITATE A DISCUSSION of participants' feelings in response to their losses by inviting those who are comfortable to share their feelings about the losses they brought to mind a moment ago. Consider asking questions such as: How do your experiences with loss help you understand youth's experiences of loss?

[PPT # 7]: AMBIGUOUS LOSS

Understanding Loss and Grief



Ambiguous Loss

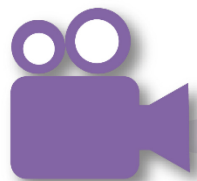


VIDEOS: Debbie Riley, LMFT – How Loss and Grief are Different for Youth in Foster Care and Adoption or Guardianship
 What did you learn about youth's experience of loss and grief?
 What do you think about her guidance on the parent's role in supporting youth to grieve?



STATE:

Let's listen to a video clip by Debbie Riley on How Loss and Grief are Different for Youth in Foster Care and Adoption or Guardianship.



1:08 MINUTES

SHOW participants the video "Debbie Riley: Ambiguous Loss."

STATE:

What did you learn from the video about ambiguous loss?

- ▶ Ambiguous loss is loss that is uncertain and not final; teens may still hope for reunification or relationship with birth family; youth may be thinking about their birth parents/siblings even when they are not physically present.

What do you think about her guidance on the parent's role in supporting youth to grieve?

[PPT # 8]: AMBIGUOUS GRIEF (CONTINUED)

Understanding Grief: Ambiguous Loss

Brandon, age 15, and Angel, age 12, are Latino young people who came into foster care after Brandon called the police because their father was physically abusing Angel. Their mother had left home a week before and no one knew where she was. The police assessed the situation and called in child protective services. Brandon and Angel do not want to leave their home, but they were nevertheless taken into foster care. Their father was arrested and is in jail until he can make bond.

**STATE:**

Let's consider ambiguous loss for youth who have been placed in foster care.



INSTRUCTIONS: Divide participants into two groups. Start by having both groups review the short vignette on the slide. After the vignette has been reviewed, transition to the next slide and assign one group the first set of questions on the slide and the other group the second set of questions on the slide.

[PPT # 9]: AMBIGUOUS GRIEF (CONTINUED)

Understanding Grief: Ambiguous Loss

How might Brandon and Angel feel about this situation? What do they know/do not know about their current situation and what the future might be like?

What do you think Brandon and Angel might believe about the possibility of their mother being found and coming for them? What might they believe about being returned to their dad? How might they express those beliefs?

**NOTE:**

Possible responses to each set of questions are shown.

How might Brandon and Angel feel about this situation? What do they know or not know about their current situation and what the future might be like?

Possible responses:

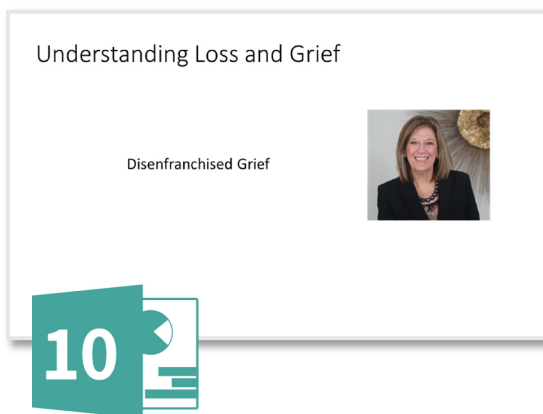
- ▶ They might feel angry, confused, scared, uncertain about what is happening and what will happen next. They may possibly feel a sense of relief at being away from their father, but also feel guilty for feeling this way.
- ▶ They know very little about their current situation. How were they placed with their current family? Who is this family and how they will treat them? How long will they be there? Will someone look for their mother? What about school and their friends? They may lack any information on what will happen in the future.
- ▶ They may worry about being separated from one another.

Developing and Sustaining A Healthy and Supportive Relationship with your Youth

What do you think Brandon and Angel might believe about the possibility of their mother being found and coming for them? What might they believe about being returned to their dad? How might they express those beliefs?

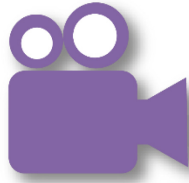
Possible Responses:

- ▶ They might fantasize that their mother suddenly appears and takes them home. They may worry that she will not be able to find them. They may worry that she will be angry that Brandon called the police and that they were placed in foster care. They may worry that she has been hurt and will not return to them.
- ▶ They may not be certain of exactly what will happen to their dad. They may feel that they do not want to be with him and hope to remain away from him. They may regret having called the police and want to be reunited with him, especially if their mother does not come back. They may have mixed feelings and be unsure of whether they want to be with him or not.
- ▶ They may express their beliefs about their mother and father directly (“Our mom is coming to get us” or “My dad is not going to come to this house, is he?”) or through references to their parents (“This isn’t what my mom cooks”) or behavioral reactions of startle, fear or hiding when they hear loud voices or see anger in any of the adults in the home.

[PPT #10]: DISENFRANCHISED GRIEF**STATE:**

Let's turn now to the topic of "disenfranchised grief."

In this video, Debbie Riley will introduce us to this idea and then we will take some time to explore disenfranchised grief a bit more.



1:12 MINUTES

SHOW participants the video “Debbie Riley: Disenfranchised Grief.”

STATE:

What did you learn from Debbie about disenfranchised grief?

Possible responses:

- ▶ Disenfranchised grief is grief that is not socially acknowledged or supported.
- ▶ We often focus on the positive aspects of adoption without acknowledging that it is premised on loss, and teens need opportunities to acknowledge and grieve these losses.

[PPT #11]: DISENFRANCHISED GRIEF (CONTINUED)

Understanding Grief: Disenfranchised Grief

Sarah, who is white, entered foster care at age 5, and experienced 8 different placements before joining her adoptive family at age 12. She is now 15. All of her foster placements were with her younger brother who had serious emotional and mental health problems. Each time she was moved, her foster parents cited his disruptive behavior as a problem. When Sarah was placed with her adoptive parents, her brother was placed in a residential setting where his needs could better be met. Her birth mother, who experienced significant mental health issues, continued to make promises about trying to get her back when they had visits. Sarah carries grief over the loss of her brother, confusion about her mother's inability to parent her and the broken promises she keeps making, and the trauma of multiple placements, many of which were traumatic in themselves.

**STATE:**

Let's consider a second case and think about disenfranchised grief in Sarah's life.

Take a look at the vignette on this slide.

[PPT #12]: DISENFRANCHISED GRIEF (CONTINUED)

Understanding Grief: Disenfranchised Grief

What do you understand about Sarah's grief given what you know now about disenfranchised grief?

Resources:

- **Ambiguous Loss**
- **Understanding Ambiguous Loss**
- **The Grief of Adopted Children**

**STATE:**

What do you understand about Sarah's grief given what you know now about disenfranchised grief?

There is much to be learned about youth's experiences with loss and grief. There are several resources in the Resource Notebook to help you better understand grief and loss.

RESOURCE #3.1: Ambiguous Loss - In this article, JaeRan Kim explains how youth experience ambiguous loss and how their foster/adoptive/guardianship families can support them.

RESOURCE #3.2: Understanding Ambiguous Loss - In this article, Foster Parent College describes the symptoms of ambiguous loss and how to help children with ambiguous loss.

RESOURCE #3.3: The Grief of Adopted Children - This article describes ambiguous loss and disenfranchised grief for children adopted at birth and children adopted through the child welfare system and how children can be helped.

SUMMARIZE any final points on this topic before moving to the next section.

SEGMENT III. ATTACHMENT AND ATTUNEMENT

SLIDES 13-27

30 MINUTES

[PPT #13]: ATTACHMENT AND ATTUNEMENT

Attachment and Attunement



Dr. Bruce Perry

VIDEO: Attachment

13

STATE:

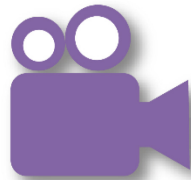
Let's turn now to attachment and attunement.

Attunement is our ability to be present with another person's expression of their experience. Attunement combines empathy, mindfulness, immediacy, active listening, presence, experience, knowledge, and cognitive understanding.

Simply put, when someone is attuned to us, we feel they really GET us, EXPERIENCE us and UNDERSTAND us.

Developing and Sustaining A Healthy and Supportive Relationship with your Youth

Dr. Bruce Perry explains attachment and attunement in the following video.




4:06 MINUTES

SHOW participants the video “**Dr. Bruce Perry: Attachment.**”


[PPT #14]: ATTACHMENT AND ATTUNEMENT

Attachment and Attunement



Is Mom Attuned?

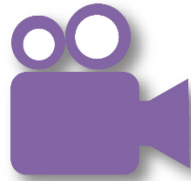
Parent – Child Communication vignettes



STATE:

One way to build attachment—to get past the intimacy barrier that Dr. Perry talked about—is to be attuned with the youth. Let’s consider what attunement between parents and youth looks like.

We will see two short vignettes in which a mother and her daughter interact. We want you to note the ways in which the mom demonstrates attunement or lack of attunement.



1:21 MINUTES / 1:45 MINUTES

SHOW “**No you can’t go – Not attuned scenario**” and “**No you can’t go – Attuned scenario.**”

STATE:

Are there any thoughts about the difference in attuned versus non-attuned communication?

Preferred responses:

- ▶ In the first vignette of Phoebe and her mom, Phoebe asks to go to a friend’s house and her mom responds in a way that is not attuned.
- ▶ In the second vignette, mom responds with attunement, acknowledging Phoebe’s frustration but also highlighting safety. The mom demonstrated attunement by looking at Phoebe and acknowledging Phoebe’s frustration while also highlighting her own need to be sure Phoebe is safe.

[PPT #15]: ATTACHMENT AND ATTUNEMENT (CONTINUED)

Attachment and Attunement

The type of attachments that youth formed in past relationships will impact:

- The way a youth reacts in a distressing situation
- How a youth reacts to a new caregiver's attempts to offer care and concern
- The amount of energy the youth has available to explore something new

**STATE:**

When we begin parenting an older child, we need to work to build attachment and must overcome challenges that come from their past experiences with hurtful relationships.

Each youth will have experienced relationships with various levels of attachment in the past. The type of attachments that youth formed in past relationships will impact:

- ▶ The way a youth reacts in a distressing situation.
- ▶ How a youth reacts to a new caregiver's attempts to show care and concern.
- ▶ The amount of energy the youth has available to explore something new. Think about your own experiences when you are feeling that you are running low on energy.

[PPT #16]: ATTACHMENT AND ATTUNEMENT (CONTINUED)

Attachment and Attunement: Some Key Points

- Attachment experiences stored as "associations"
- Secure attachments: Associations help develop a secure self, caring parents and a kind world
- Insecure or disorganized attachments: See caregivers and world as dangerous and unpredictable and themselves as bad or unworthy of love and care
- Shape the way a youth approaches new relationships
- Youth in foster care or adopted: Multiple associations, both positive and negative, of attachment figures

**STATE:**

Let's review a few key points about youth's attachment experiences:

- ▶ Youth think about their attachment experiences based on what they have experienced with caregivers. In Session One, you heard Dr. Perry talk about these unique sets of primary memories as "associations."
- ▶ Youth with secure attachments build associations that help them develop a secure sense of self and ideas that parents are caring and that the world is kind.
- ▶ Children who enter care with a history of unresponsive or hurtful caregiving expect that those who care for them will be unresponsive or will hurt them. They make associations that caregivers and the world are dangerous and unpredictable, and they can develop a view of themselves as bad or unworthy of love and care.
- ▶ They cannot understand how their present caregiver can be available and nurturing when all their previous experience tells them that caregivers are unresponsive and frightening. These are their "associations."

Developing and Sustaining A Healthy and Supportive Relationship with your Youth

- ▶ When placed in foster care or adopted, youth will usually carry several associations, both positive and negative, of attachment figures, including their birth parents, relatives, previous foster parents and social workers.
- ▶ Youth who experience multiple separations have not had a chance to develop a working model of relationships as secure and expect rejection and separation with each new caregiver. They resist forming relationships by actively detaching or alienating themselves from the caregiver.
- ▶ Youth may respond to new caregivers as representative of caregivers in general, who are associated with unhappy and frightening feelings and memories. They use survival strategies—such as emotional distance—as self-protection. These youth learn not to form attachments to avoid the pain of losing them.
- ▶ Youth will not consciously hold these beliefs, and will only change their “associations” over time after thousands of demonstrations from caregivers that are consistently responsive and nurturing.

[PPT #17]: ATTACHMENT AND ATTUNEMENT (CONTINUED)

Attachment and Attunement

George, who is 14, came into care when he was 6, after the death of his grandmother, who helped his developmentally disabled parents care for him since birth. George has very few boundaries when it comes to intimacy. He easily attaches himself to others, regardless of their age or gender. When being introduced to friends of the family, George typically hugs who he is meeting, causing both physical and emotional discomfort in others. He also “falls in love” with every girl in school, which leads to many heartbreaks and emotional outbursts when the foster parents attempt to comfort him and educate him on the boundaries of friendships. The foster parents are very fearful of George’s need for nurturance and believe he could easily be the victim of cruel intentions.

**STATE:**

So, what do these “associations” look like in terms of a youth’s behavior? Let’s look at some examples of two very different youth.

NOTE:

Ask for a volunteer to read the slide. Move on to the example on the next slide before asking for reactions.

[PPT #18]: ATTACHMENT AND ATTUNEMENT (CONTINUED)

Attachment and Attunement

Darren, a 17-year-old male, has been in foster care since he was 10. His mother had mental health issues and struggled with addiction. Darren is an especially quiet boy who seems to want to keep to himself all the time. He would play video games all day if he could. He stays in his room as much as he can and has little to say. His foster parents try to coax him out of his room and struggle to figure out how to engage with him. They have tried to get him into sports or afterschool activities, but he just shrugs his shoulders when they talk about these with him. Darren does not seem to have many friends.

18



NOTE: Ask for a volunteer to read the slide.

STATE:

George seems to want nothing more than the attention of his caregivers and Darren seems to want nothing to do with his caregivers.

These extremes in behaviors both have something in common. They are both based in the youth's associations, or what they have come to believe about caregivers and about themselves.

[PPT #19]: ATTACHMENT AND ATTUNEMENT (CONTINUED)

Attachment and Attunement

- Keep feelings under wraps, closed and cautious
- Seek safety in activities, be overly cooperative
- Stiffen when held, reluctant to seek comfort.
- May put on an act of attaching while not truly connecting
- Seem starved of attention; easy to please
- Show intense emotions
- Exaggerate expression of emotions to gain attention from caregivers
- Overly affectionate or overly friendly (even strangers)



19

**STATE:**

Let's consider some other examples of how youth might show us what they have learned in their past attachment experiences.

- ▶ Some youth keep their feelings under wraps. These youth shy away from emotional closeness and are closed and cautious.
- ▶ They may seek safety in activities or may be overly cooperative.
- ▶ Others may stiffen when held, refuse to admit that they have been hurt, or be reluctant to seek comfort.
- ▶ Some youth may put on an act of attaching (using titles like "mom" and "dad") while not truly connecting.
- ▶ Some youth will seem starved of attention and easy to please.
- ▶ They might show intense emotions and feelings of anger and frustration as well as pleasure.
- ▶ They may be physically restless and lack concentration.
- ▶ They may exaggerate their expression of emotions to gain attention from caregivers.
- ▶ Youth may behave in an overly affectionate or overly friendly manner toward any adult (even strangers).
- ▶ Because they crave attention, youth may misinterpret friendships for something deeper.

Developing and Sustaining A Healthy and Supportive Relationship with your Youth

- ▶ Youth with a trauma history or insecure attachments may also have challenges with self-image, self-esteem and self-confidence. They may feel inadequate or unloved.

[PPT #20]: ATTACHMENT AND ATTUNEMENT (CONTINUED)

Attachment and Attunement

How as parents can we successfully parent a youth
and build attachment?

From Abbie Smith, LCSW, Clinical Director at Holt International
Handout # 3.1 Adolescent Attachment

**STATE:**

Let's consider how as parents we can successfully parent a youth and build attachment. Over the next several slides we're going to share some of the main takeaways from an article written by Abbie Smith, LCSW, Clinical Director at Holt International. The full text of her article is provided for you in **HANDOUT #3.1: Adolescent Attachment**.

Developing and Sustaining A Healthy and Supportive Relationship with your Youth



HANDOUT #3.1: ADOLESCENT ATTACHMENT

Website: <https://www.holtinternational.org/pas/newsletter/2013/11/30/adolescent-attachment/>

ADOLESCENT ATTACHMENT



Posted on November 30, 2013
by Abbie Smith, LCSW

On November 6, 2013, Holt presented the first of two webinars on Adolescent Attachment. This article will highlight some of the great information in that broadcast. First, typical teen developmental will be covered. Second, the impact of past trauma on current behavior, a comparison of infant attachment cycle to teen attachment cycle, and characteristics of families who successfully adopt teens will be presented.

Typical teen development is very interesting. It is getting to be common knowledge that the first three years of a child's life are the formative years for brain development. Kids at this age are like sponges absorbing everything around them, learning how to relate to others by what they observe in their familial relationships. What is just beginning to be known is that teens go through a second huge brain developmental period. A very simplified explanation of the unique brain changes during adolescence is that up to this point the brain has been actively making neuron to neuron connections, trying to hook up with each other as much as possible. Quite a few neurons never get a chance to hook up with other neurons and sit dormant or only have one connection. During adolescence, the brain says, 'whoa, let's get organized here,' and begins to spend a few years pruning neurons that have not been used very much or at all. This remodeling process can make parts of the brain less functional than they were at say 10 or 12 years old. It has been described as the brain going offline. I bet a lot of you can relate, sometimes asking yourself, 'What were they thinking?' Well they were not able to think clearly. They have reduced capabilities in reflection, planning, organization and increased behaviors of risk-taking, conflict seeking, and distractibility.

Another part of the typical developmental process for teens is that hormones change. Boys have a 1000% increase in testosterone! The amygdala, a part of the emotional brain, gets repeatedly flooded with testosterone, which increases angry and aggressive behavior, reduces their impulse control and ability to regulate their emotions and, of course, increases their sex drive. Their right brain (emotional side) overrides their left brain (the thinking side) and they can become withdrawn, sullen, and asocial. Girls also have increased testosterone but, along with it, their oxytocin increases. Oxytocin is referred to as the cuddle hormone and results in wanting physical closeness and relational orientation. They also can manifest increased anger, but is it usually associated with verbal aggression, moodiness, and Drama!!! Their left brain over-rides their right brain, increasing their proclivity to argue, be talkative, and talk about their feelings.

Things behind the scenes are a mess for teens. Their brain is undergoing a major overhaul and they are saturated with hormones. Makes me shiver thinking about it. For our adopted teens, we add to this: a foundation of loss experiences, identity formation process, layered with complicated differences, reemergence of "I am not supposed to be here" feelings, and heightened sense of loss of control and loss of trust in adults, which can intensify typical teen annoyance or rebellion. All of this creates six major hurdles for adopted adolescents (from "Beneath the Mask" by Debbie Riley): wondering again why they were adopted, seeking out details of missing or difficult birth family information, wanting desperately to fit in but looking so different, and uncertainty about their adoptive parents' level of commitment to them. All of this can result in testing with huge stakes, identity confusion, and, lastly, loyalty issues.

Developing and Sustaining A Healthy and Supportive Relationship with your Youth

Another layer for adopted teens is complex developmental trauma. This adds to their feelings of powerlessness and hypervigilance, which adds to their emotional reactivity. Many of these teens never had a caring relationship with an adult that would have helped them develop emotional regulation, so they have an additional layer of reactivity with minimal ability to calm themselves down. Their prominent feelings are fear, terror, and shame without an internalized sense of felt safety. They often only have fight, fright, or freeze responses at their disposal when they perceive danger. Some will cope by developing over-controlling or perfectionist strategies that help minimize their uncomfortable feelings. Some may even seek out substance abuse, sensation seeking, or sexual encounters to numb their feelings.

Most of you have heard of the infant attachment cycle: baby has a need, baby cries, parent comes and meets the need, and baby develops trust in the world that she will be taken care of. The traumatized adopted teen attachment cycle has a different twist to it. Here is how it goes: teen screws up, teen blames parent and acts out, teen apologizes (on a good day), parents forgive, and trust develops. I want to elaborate on this. Research shows that when an older child screws up and expects their parents to be really angry with them, but instead finds their parents so relieved that their child is OK, responding from a love and support perspective, that attachment is greatly deepened. This is true for all kids, not just adopted ones. Many years ago I had a friend who was fostering a teen. It was not long after she moved in that she took the family van without permission and wrecked it. She was expecting to be moved to yet another foster home, which would be a pretty predictable outcome. However her parents forgave her and went on to adopt her. In retrospect they saw that event as a turning point in their relationship with their daughter, and she was able to trust that she was an accepted and loved member of the family.



How can a family tell if they have what it takes to successfully bring a teen into their family? Some shared attributes are that the parents have the ability to tolerate their own ambivalent feelings and/or strong negative feelings. This ability to tolerate uncomfortable feelings will help get them through the hard stuff. An ability to see the invariable rejection by their teen as an expression of the immense fear their teen is struggling with. Fear of being rejected yet again. This predictable aspect of teen attachment requires that parents have an ability to delay their own need for parental gratification. It will be a long time before the teen will be able to appreciate the positive aspects of having had their life turned inside out. Being able to see the cup as

half full is also important for parents. This perspective lets the parent notice the small incremental signs of an emerging attachment relationship. All parents are more successful the more flexible they can be, and when you adopt a teen you need to be able to stretch and bend in all directions. Parents need to claim their teen as their child and feel a strong sense of entitlement to be that teen's parent. If you don't firmly claim them as yours, any child will sense this and maintain an emotional distance as a self-protective response. Remember that teens only have part of their brain available to them; adopted teens could also be handicapped by complex developmental trauma, and may not even be able to use your language very well. All of this comes together to create extreme intrusiveness, coupled with controlling behavior. Parents need the ability to NOT take this personally! It is not personal, no matter who their adopted parents were, adopted teens would act in similar fashion. Lastly, as with all things in life, liberal doses of humor and self-care will keep you ready for whatever comes next.

My next article will be a review of Part 2 on Adolescent Attachment: Smooth Moves for Parents.

The holidays are upon us. Please refer to back issues for Holiday Behavior Management tips.

Happy Holidays,

Abbie Smith, LCSW

[PPT #21]: ADOLESCENT ATTACHMENT

Attachment and Attunement

Tolerate our own ambivalent (uncertain) or negative feelings



21

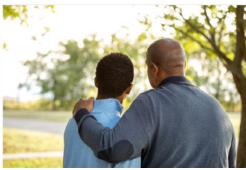
STATE:

Parents have the ability to tolerate their own ambivalent (uncertain) or strong negative feelings. Being able to sit with uncomfortable feelings will help get you through the hard stuff. What this means is that, even though you may sometimes feel disconnected or dissatisfied with your youth, you understand that these feelings can be overcome and will pass.

[PPT #22]: ADOLESCENT ATTACHMENT (CONTINUED)

Attachment and Attunement

See the fear that the teen is struggling with



22

STATE:

Parents of teens need the ability to see rejection by their teen as an expression of the teen's great fear of being rejected yet again.

Because of this aspect of teen attachment, parents must have an ability to delay their own need for parental gratification.

[PPT #23]: ADOLESCENT ATTACHMENT (CONTINUED)

Attachment and Attunement

As challenging as it may be, see the cup as half full!



23

STATE:

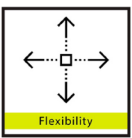
It will be a long time before the teen will be able to appreciate the positive aspects of having had their life turned inside out.

Being able to see the cup as half full is also important for parents. This perspective lets the parent notice the small signs of a beginning attachment relationship.

[PPT #24]: ADOLESCENT ATTACHMENT (CONTINUED)

Attachment and Attunement

Be flexible




STATE:



All parents can feel more successful as they can become more flexible; and when you adopt a teen you need to be able to stretch and bend in all directions.

Parents need the ability to NOT take things personally! No matter who their adopted parents were, adopted teens would act in similar way.

Lastly, as with all things in life, liberal doses of humor and self-care will keep you ready for whatever comes next.

[PPT #25]: ATTACHMENT AND ATTUNEMENT

Attachment and Attunement

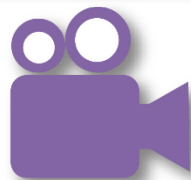



Dr. Bruce Perry
VIDEO: The Intimacy Barrier



STATE:

Now let's watch a video clip of Dr. Bruce Perry that provides some explanation about why youth respond to caregivers from a place of fear, and hear Dr. Perry talk about some of the things that we can have in our parenting suitcase to help.



3:42 MIN

SHOW participants the video "Dr. Bruce Perry: The Intimacy Barrier."

[PPT #26]: ATTACHMENT AND ATTUNEMENT (CONTINUED)


Attachment and Attunement

Key elements to understanding youth's fear-related behaviors in their relationships with you:

- Sensitivity to being physically close
- Lack of control
- Fear of abandonment

Practical Tips: The Four P's

- Proximity
- Presence
- Parallel
- Patience



• Resource: Dr. Bruce Perry, *Bonding and Attachment in Maltreated Children: Consequences of Emotional Neglect in Childhood*



STATE:

As you heard from Dr. Perry, there are some specific techniques that we can use to respond to fear-related behaviors. Let's talk more about these now.

Developing and Sustaining A Healthy and Supportive Relationship with your Youth

Three key elements to understanding youth's fear-related behaviors are:

- ▶ Sensitivity to being physically close. Youth usually require more distance to feel that someone is NOT in their personal space.
- ▶ Lack of control. If the youth controls the timing and nature of the interaction, it feels less threatening.
- ▶ Fear of abandonment. Youth will overreact if you are too close AND if you seem to be emotionally or physically disengaging.

There are four practical tips that flow directly from these three ideas. We can remember these by thinking of them as the "Four P's".

- ▶ Watch your proximity. Giving about two feet more of space to a youth than you would to a youth who has not experienced trauma. Native American children and youth may need even more.
- ▶ Be present. Simply being quiet and near can be reassuring to a teen who is relearning attachment.
- ▶ Position yourself in parallel to the youth. Walk side by side, go for a ride in the car, or do things like cooking gardening or playing basketball.
- ▶ Be patient. Give your youth time and space; be ready to wait for their lead.


You can learn more about attachment by reading an article in the Resource Notebook by Dr. Perry, **RESOURCE #3.4: Bonding and Attachment in Maltreated Children: How You Can Help**. Another key resource, **RESOURCE #3.5: The NM Ten Tip Series: The Intimacy Barrier** also developed by Dr. Perry, provides more detail related to what we just covered together.

[PPT #27]: ATTACHMENT AND ATTUNEMENT (CONTINUED)

Attachment and Attunement

Case Study - Handout #3.2

How would you support a healthy attachment with the youth in the case example and promote attunement with him/her?


STATE:

Let's consider now how to apply these important ideas in parenting a teen. Let's return to a case we worked with in our first session. This can be found in **HANDOUT #3.2: Case Study**.

Developing and Sustaining A Healthy and Supportive Relationship with your Youth

ACTIVITY



INSTRUCTIONS: Select one of the two vignettes for the activity (either Lisa or Darren). Ask participants to review the selected vignette in **HANDOUT #3.2** that will be discussed.

This activity can be done either as a large group discussion or in small groups with a debrief as a large group.

Ask participants to identify ways that they can support a healthy attachment with the youth in the vignette and promote attunement. Possible responses are shown after each vignette.



HANDOUT #3.2: CASE STUDY



LISA, A 15-YEAR-OLD AFRICAN AMERICAN FEMALE: I live with my adoptive moms. I was happy with my real mom until I was about 3 years old. No one has ever explained why it happened, but I moved in with my grandmother about that time. My mom just disappeared, and my grandma would say that she had problems she needed to work out by herself. She never came back for me. My grandma died when I was 11 years old and this time, I was sent to live with my aunt and uncle. It was okay at first but then my uncle started to put his hands all over me. I didn't know what to do.

I stayed quiet for a while but then he began to take off his clothes and make me do things I didn't want to do. When that happened, I didn't know what to do. I felt frozen. I was afraid but couldn't move or say anything. When I finally told my aunt, she went crazy. She accused me of lying and told me to never say anything like that again. I ran away, not knowing where to go. The police caught me and brought me back to my aunt and uncle. The sexual stuff continued, and I kept running away, only to be dragged back to them. Finally, when I was 12, he had sex with me. I told my teacher at school. Child protection came in and I went into foster care. It was rough. The only time I felt safe was when I was writing my rhymes and drawing or reading. I went through four foster homes and ran away from every one of them.

After two years, I met Mandy and Evelyn who wanted to adopt me. I couldn't understand why but they were really interested in me. They gave me lots of time and space but were always there to talk to when I felt like it. They saw me as a strong person who had gone through a lot and they showed me real respect. I liked them, and I liked having two strong African American women in my life. I liked that they liked me. They adopted me last year.

Developing and Sustaining A Healthy and Supportive Relationship with your Youth

Things are not going so well with them now. They have changed. It's like they want to control everything in my life. They make a big deal out of the way I dress and how I talk with guys. They are pushing me to the edge. Last week, they were after me for my outfit and began criticizing me for being friendly with a man who lives in an apartment on our floor. I had had it! I broke some of the dishes that they make a big deal about and then slammed my bedroom door and refused to talk with them. I hate it when they are trying to have a "serious" talk with me. I just stand there, and they talk and talk. I just zone out.

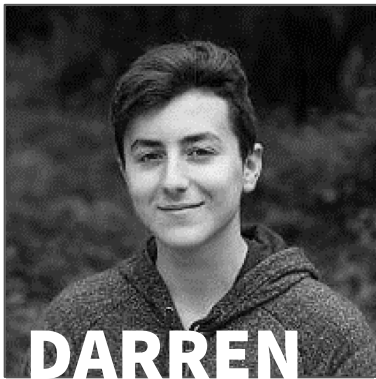
MANDY (ADOPTIVE MOTHER): Lisa is a strong and focused young woman. What she has been through is too terrible. Evelyn and I want so much to support her in having a good life and a wonderful future. We want her to have self-esteem, particularly because, as we know so well, there is lots of discrimination out there. We want to protect her after everything she has been through. It scares us that she dresses in a way that will just invite guys' attention to her sexually. She is too friendly with males – teens and adults alike. We have to stop this even if she doesn't like it! We want to talk with her but she either gets really nasty or sits there and just nods at everything we say; and then she does something that is exactly what she has agreed not to do. It is just so disrespectful and plain irritating. I just hate it when she starts to mimic my voice and my words when I am talking to her. It gets me going. Evelyn was really upset when Lisa marched herself into the kitchen and deliberately broke three dishes that Evelyn loves. I hate that kind of thing too. We want to help Lisa, but she is really pushing us away.

ACTIVITY

Ways to support healthy attachment for Lisa:

- ▶ Rather than trying to have a "serious" talk with Lisa with her just standing there and her zoning out, invite her to go on a walk and allow her to guide the conversation.
- ▶ Re-consider how much to try to control in terms of Lisa's clothing choices.
- ▶ Don't take the mimicking of your voice and words, or the breaking of the dishes personally.

Developing and Sustaining A Healthy and Supportive Relationship with your Youth



DARREN, A 17-YEAR-OLD WHITE MALE: I've been in foster care since I was 10. My dad disappeared when I was a baby. My mom did the best she could but there were always problems. She went to a counselor and she told me that he said she had mental health issues, but I never understood exactly what was wrong. She did lots of drugs. We lived with a bunch of different guys – some were okay, but some hit my mom a lot. The last one was really violent, and we left and lived in my mom's car for a while. I didn't go to school because we were always on the move. I guess someone saw us and called the state. That was when I came into foster care. My mom has faded away. She came to visit me at first, but I haven't seen her in more than a year now.

I don't like being in foster care but at least I have a place to stay – for a while. I am on my sixth foster family now. I have been here about 8 months and I guess these people are okay. Maybe this one will be better. I just try to keep my head down; I want to stay under the radar. I am going to school and I am doing okay. But it is hard. I am trying to keep up and I feel really alone at school. My only friends are the ones I play online games with. I really want to be a part of what is going on at school but that never works out for me. I am not sure what will happen to me when I turn 18. I feel really scared about it. I want to have a future with a girlfriend and a good job. But I don't know how to make this happen.

EVAN (FOSTER FATHER): Joan and I have been foster parents for 12 years and have had lots of teenagers in our home. Darren is an especially quiet boy and we are working hard to get to know him. We know he is bright and he has a good sense of humor, which we have seen only a few times, but we know it is there. He seems to want to keep to himself all the time; he would play video games all day if he could. He stays in his room as much as he can and has little to say. We try to coax him out of his room and sometimes we succeed – if only for a half an hour or so. We are struggling to figure out how to engage with him – he is such a loner. We would love to get him into sports or afterschool activities, but he just shrugs his shoulders when we talk about these with him. We want Darren to succeed but are not sure how to approach him and help him get on a good track.

ACTIVITY

**Ways to support healthy attachment for Darren:**

- ▶ Ask him to teach you how to play his favorite video game.
- ▶ When you are able to coax him out of this room, give all of your attention and presence to him during that time for as long as he will tolerate it, but recognize when he retreats to his room that he is simply trying to control the timing of the interaction.
- ▶ Try to capitalize on the natural points throughout the day when you can have a positive interaction, such as during the morning and evening routine and meal times. Do all that you can to free yourself from distractions during these times so that you can tune in to Darren.

STATE:

When youth feel safe, they are better able to attach to their parents.

NOTE:

If you are using Right Time videos, participants can learn more on this topic by viewing the Relationship Development video.

SUMMARIZE any final points on this topic before moving to the next section.


SEGMENT IV. PARENTING TO PROMOTE ATTACHMENT TO YOUTH


SLIDES 28-42
45 MINUTES

[PPT #28]: PARENTING TO PROMOTE ATTACHMENT

Parenting to Promote Attachment to Youth

Let's continue repacking our suitcases!





STATE:


Now, let's go deeper into parenting to promote attachment with your youth.


[PPT #29]: PARENTING TO PROMOTE ATTACHMENT

Parenting to Promote Attachment to Youth

"In helping families of children with severe acting out behaviors, the focus of the intervention needs to be the relationship, not the behaviors. Emphasis should be placed on creating a secure base for the child within the relationship with the parents."

Heather Forbes





STATE:

Let's see what Heather Forbes has to say about the importance of the parenting relationship.

Would someone read the quote from Heather?

What are your reactions to this message?

[PPT #30] PARENTING TO PROMOTE ATTACHMENT

Parenting to Promote Attachment to Youth

For Discussion:

- Traditional parenting techniques don't work: Feelings of rejection and helplessness can be difficult to manage
- Stress builds
- Parents disconnect as their survival strategy
- Entire family can find themselves living in survival mode
- Parents may find themselves asking how they went from a state of love to a state of fear

**STATE:**

Let's consider a few more points here.

When traditional parenting techniques don't work and parents struggle to connect with their youth, the feelings of rejection and helplessness can be difficult to manage.

Stress builds when parenting a youth who does not respond positively and who does not look to his parents for comfort.

Parents find themselves disconnecting as their own survival strategy.

Before long, the entire family can find themselves living in survival mode and parents often demonstrate difficulties in responding to their youth in nurturing ways.

Parents may find themselves asking how they went from a state of love — wanting so badly to adopt (or foster) a child — to a state of fear — wanting to get away from the youth.

NOTE: Ask participants to turn to the person next to them and talk briefly about any experiences they have had where traditional parenting techniques did not seem to have the desired impact.

[PPT #31]: PARENTING TO PROMOTE ATTACHMENT TO YOUTH

Parenting to Promote Attachment to Youth

Tools for Our Suitcases

- Focusing on felt safety
- Providing structure and nurturing

**STATE:**

Now, let's look at some additional items for our suitcases.

Remember what we learned about how the past experiences of youth may impact their development and the organization of the brain's important regulatory networks. Now we will add two more items: focusing on felt safety and providing structure and nurturing.

Parenting to Promote Attachment to Youth: Felt Safety

- When youth feel safe, they are better able to attach to their parents.
- Felt safety: A young person feels and experiences safety for themselves; youth knows and believes that he or she:
 - will not be harmed
 - will have enough food
 - will be comforted when cared for
 - will not be rejected because of his/her behavior, race/culture or gender identity/sexual orientation
 - is valued and his or her desires are important



STATE:

“Felt safety,” a concept developed by Dr. Karin Purvis, is when a young person feels and experiences safety for themselves.

“Felt safety” means that a youth knows and believes that he or she:

- ▶ will not be harmed;
- ▶ will have enough food;
- ▶ will be comforted when scared;
- ▶ will not be rejected because of his/her behavior, race/culture or gender identity/sexual orientation; and
- ▶ is valued, and that his or her desires are important.

It is important to note that even if young people ARE safe, they may not FEEL safe.

Parenting to Promote Attachment to Youth: Felt Safety

- Handout #3.3 What Happens When a Youth Does Not Feel Safe.
- Parents arrange the environment and adjust their behavior so youth can feel in a deep and basic way that they are truly safe in their home and with their parents.
- Until a youth experiences safety for himself or herself, trust cannot develop, and healing and learning cannot progress. We offer felt safety so healing and attachment may begin.



STATE:

So, what happens when youth do not feel safe? Let’s look at

HANDOUT #3.3: What Happens When a Youth Does Not Feel Safe.

**HANDOUT #3.3: WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A YOUTH DOES NOT FEEL SAFE?**

When Fear Is in Control: A fearful youth focuses strictly on survival issues such as:

- ▶ safety
- ▶ hunger and thirst
- ▶ fatigue
- ▶ escaping scary situations
- ▶ making hurts stop and go away

When Fear Is in Control: A scared youth cannot grasp:

- ▶ discussions, sermons or lecture
- ▶ complex reasoning, logic or stories
- ▶ philosophical discussions or abstract concepts
- ▶ solving puzzles or mathematics

When Fear Is in Control: The primitive brain's fight, flight or freeze response can make a youth:

- ▶ run away and hide
- ▶ lash out physically or verbally
- ▶ get angry or cry
- ▶ stonewall and become unresponsive
- ▶ try to control the situation

STATE:

As Dr. Purvis points out, parents need to arrange the environment and adjust their behavior, so youth can feel in a deep and basic way that they are truly safe in their home and with their parents.

Until a youth experiences safety for himself or herself, trust cannot develop, and healing and learning cannot progress. We offer felt safety so healing and attachment may begin.

[PPT #34]: FELT SAFETY (CONTINUED)

Parenting to Promote Attachment to Youth:
Felt Safety

Key TBRI (Trust-based Relational Intervention) Principles

- Ensure that the youth feels seen, heard and valued
- Say “Yes” a lot
- Set the bar low: Having realistic and flexible expectations
- Repeatedly praise success

**STATE:**

Trust-Based Relational Intervention (TBRI) is a therapeutic model developed by the late Dr. Karyn Purvis, that trains caregivers to provide effective support and treatment for at-risk children.

Let’s review a few key principles from TBRI:

- ▶ Ensure that the youth feels seen, heard and valued.
- ▶ Say “Yes” a lot.
- ▶ Set the bar low. When Dr. Purvis talks about “setting the bar low,” she means having realistic and flexible expectations (not having low expectations)!
- ▶ Repeatedly praise success.

[PPT #35]: FELT SAFETY (CONTINUED)

Parenting to Promote Attachment to Youth:
Felt Safety**Handout #3.4 Promoting Felt Safety.**

Talk about how you would promote a sense of felt safety for the youth in the assigned vignette, using the TBRI principles.

**STATE:**

Let’s look at some situations where a youth is not experiencing felt safety with these Trust-based Relational Intervention (TBRI) principles in mind.



INSTRUCTIONS: Divide participants into small groups. Refer them to **HANDOUT #3.4: Promoting Felt Safety** and assign one vignette to each small group. Ask the groups to talk about how they would promote a sense of felt safety for the youth using the TBRI principles. Feel free to use only two of the vignettes that best reflect the participants’ experience or in the interest of time. Allow about 5 minutes for this work. Then, bring the participants together and have each group share its vignette and the ways they would parent the youth toward a greater sense of felt safety. Allow about 8 minutes for this discussion.



HANDOUT #3.4: PROMOTING FELT SAFETY

#1. Davis, an African American boy who is 16-years-old, was physically abused by his stepfather. He ran away a number of times, and when on the street, he was sexually assaulted at least twice. He entered foster care at age 13 and was in four foster homes before you adopted him three months ago at age 16. Davis is withdrawn and rarely speaks. His only real interest is music. He spends lots of time with his headphones on, listening to music. You have no idea what music he listens to. You want him to know that he is important to you.

#2. Jessica is a 15-year-old who was adopted from a Russian orphanage when she was 5 years old. As a single parent, you have always struggled with her expressions of affection with people whom she barely knows. She is now showing troubling levels of affection with boys in her class to the point that her teachers have brought you into to speak with them about what they see as a growing problem. You have attempted to talk with Jessica about this, but she becomes angry and tearful at the mere mention of her behavior. You are fearful of what might happen next. You want her to trust you to help her.

#3. Mateo, a 16-year-old Latino boy, came into foster care at age 15 when his father, with whom he had lived for 6 years in the United States, was deported to Mexico. You are his cousin and are trying to help him through this situation. Mateo is dealing with lots of anger about what happened to his dad. He reacts to virtually any frustration by lashing out verbally or, in some cases, physically by breaking or punching things (not people). As his parent, you know that Mateo is grieving the loss of his father with whom he was close. You want to help him feel that he is safe with you.

#4. Autumn is 14, her mother died of breast cancer, and her father abandoned her by stating he no longer want to be a parent. She has lived on the reservation for two years with her grandmother who is now diagnosed with terminal cancer. She was placed in your home an hour away from the reservation. She is mostly quiet but states she doesn't like school and misses her friends and extended family on the reservation. She has begun to cut herself. As a foster parent, you have tried to address the cutting by asking her about the cuts on her arm. She responds, "Oh that, I was just trying to make it look like a tattoo." You are concerned she may accidentally or on purpose cut herself as a suicide attempt.

NOTE: The following talking points may be used to facilitate the group's discussion.

Davis:

- ▶ Acknowledge his love of music and ask him to share some of his favorite artists/songs with you.
- ▶ Offer to play his music when traveling in the car or at home (even if you do not particularly like the music). This is a good reminder that music can be a regulating force – repetitive beats and rhythms. This is not the time to be critical of his music choices.

Jessica:

- ▶ Focus on praising positive behaviors.
- ▶ Find ways to highlight her talents – if she likes to draw or take photographs, frame some of her pictures; if she likes fashion, ask for her help in sorting clothes for you to keep or give away.

Developing and Sustaining A Healthy and Supportive Relationship with your Youth

- ▶ Do fun things together.

Mateo:

- ▶ Find ways to weave his father into the conversation: “I know you’re missing your dad...”.
- ▶ Use current events to open discussion about his anger at his father’s deportation.
- ▶ Include Mateo and his dad with family photos.

Autumn:

- ▶ Acknowledge how difficult it must be for her to have left her grandmother and to know that her grandmother will pass away.
- ▶ Acknowledge how hard it must be to be away from her friends, her family and the reservation.
- ▶ Explore whether she has photos of friends, family and home that she would like to display.
- ▶ Explore with her what she likes doing and what she finds interesting; build on her interests.
- ▶ Seek professional help if cutting behavior continues.

STATE:

It is important to recognize that while we think our homes and families are safe, we need to have patience with and provide support to our youth who have experienced trauma in order for them to feel emotionally safe with us.

[PPT #36]: PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY

Parenting to Promote Attachment to Youth: Psychological Safety

- Three parts of psychological safety: We feel safe, capable, and lovable.
- How can we as parents send these messages?
- **Handout #3.5 Psychological Safety for Youth**
- **Resource: Trauma Concept: Being Safe vs. Feeling Safe**

NCTSN
The National Child
Traumatic Stress Network

Image obtained from: <http://www.nctsn.org/>

36

STATE:

As a final part of our consideration of safety, let’s think about psychological safety as having three parts:

- ▶ Feeling safe
- ▶ Feeling capable
- ▶ Feeling lovable

How can we as parents send these messages?

Let’s look at **HANDOUT #3.5: Psychological Safety for Youth**.

Developing and Sustaining A Healthy and Supportive Relationship with your Youth

NOTE: Briefly review key points in each area. Encourage participants to share ideas.



HANDOUT #3.5: PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY FOR YOUTH

1. You Are Safe

- Reassure youth that life has changed and that everyone is working to keep them safe.
- Back up statements of reassurance with action, again and again.
- Be aware of trauma reminders; remove them when possible.
- Maintain youth's contact with loved ones, friends, and siblings to reassure them that the people who matter to them are still in their lives.
- Use compassion and understanding when addressing challenging behaviors.

2. You Are Capable

- Taking into account their developmental level, give youth control over as many aspects of their lives as possible.
- Help youth learn skills to manage overwhelming emotions.
- Make it clear that as their foster/adoptive/guardianship parent, you are sure they will succeed in managing their emotions and behaviors.
- Build on youth's existing skills and strengths.

3. You Are Lovable

- Show unconditional positive regard for the youth as frequently as possible.
- Separate what youth do from who they are – make it clear that they can make bad choices and still be a good person.
- Be excited to see them when they come home from school or have been separated from you.
- Express interest in what they think, feel, and are interested in; talk to them and ask their opinions about what is happening in their lives and the world around them.
- Create opportunities to laugh and have fun with your youth.

STATE:**RESOURCE #3.6: Trauma Concept: Being Safe vs. Feeling Safe**

developed by the National Child Traumatic Stress Network can be found in the Resource Notebook and provides additional ideas about felt safety.

[PPT #37]: STRUCTURE AND NURTURE

Parenting to Promote Attachment to Youth:
Structure and Nurture

- Youth's fear-based world view, fear of trusting a parent and intense need for safety
- A safe, caring and nurturing environment that is structured helps youth let down defenses
- Providing both nurture and structure for youth who have attachment issues and histories of trauma.

**STATE:**

As we already have said, youth with histories of trauma often have a difficult time trusting their caregiver. They operate from a fear-based world view. It is because of this that creating a feeling of safety for the child is so important, so they can let down their defenses and experience all the positive things we want to give them.

It is this fear of trusting a parent and the intense need for safety that makes providing structure and nurture so critical.

So, when we are talking about structure and nurture, what do we mean?

[PPT #38]: STRUCTURE

Parenting to Promote Attachment to Youth:
Structure

Why Structure?

- Structure makes people feel safe
- Consistent boundaries and routines held in place by loving, yet firm parents are something the youth can depend on
- Limiting a youth's choices, their activities or their access to stimulating experiences
- Providing structure in a calm, caring, self-regulated manner: parent remaining calm, using body language that shows love and self-confidence.
- Done with an attitude of love and respect for the youth
- Youth hears message: "This parent cares about me, about what I do, about how I behave"
- The parent's calm, loving structure also conveys the message of strength

**STATE:**

Let's talk about why structure is so important. It is important that youth from a background of trauma feel safe – and structure makes people feel safe.

Consistent boundaries and routines established by loving and firm parents are something the youth can depend on.

Limiting a youth's choices, their activities, or their access to stimulating experiences is necessary.

But structure without nurture can feel cold and punishing. This is why providing structure must be done in a calm, caring, self-regulated manner, with parents remaining calm, and using body language that shows love and self-confidence.

Structure can also seem very controlling. Youth whose previous lives have been full of chaos will often find this level of control very uncomfortable at first. Youth who lived in extremely controlled environments may believe that structure in your home is more of the same. This is why it must be done with an attitude of love and respect for the youth.

The youth, even if pushing back, needs to clearly feel "this parent cares about me, about what I do, about how I behave."

The parent's calm, loving structure also conveys the message of strength—that the parent is strong enough to handle the youth's deepest, darkest trauma and loss. Over time, this will help the youth start to feel safe.

Parenting to Promote Attachment to Youth: Nurture

- Expectation that youth will have a give and take relationship with them
- Parents may be surprised (and unhappy) to learn that their youth do not (really they cannot) respond in that way.
- It is important to underscore the difference between “cannot” and “will not.”
- Often the more the parent tries to nurture and shower the youth with loving interactions, the more the youth’s behavior “pushes away.”
- An important reason that these youth are often suspicious of nurturing and praise is because it does not match with their own self-image.



STATE:

When you think about nurture, think in terms of the kind of nurturing a parent does with an infant or very young child – that kind of nurturing is the rebuilding you will do as a parent.

Parents expect their youth to have a give and take (reciprocal) relationship with them — one where the youth gives back positive emotions and both parent and youth feel connected to one another.

The parent of a youth with a history of trauma and attachment issues may be surprised (and unhappy) to learn that their youth cannot respond in that way.

It is important to understand the difference between “cannot” and “will not.” These youth really cannot respond in a reciprocal way.

Often the more the parent tries to nurture and shower the youth with loving interactions, the more the youth’s behavior seeks to push the parent away.

An important reason that these youth are often suspicious of nurturing and praise is because it does not match with their own self-image. They may think, “I’m just not good enough to deserve to be treated like this.” Or they see the adult as not strong enough to understand all the feelings of anger and rage within them. They also may have a past in which parental care/love was associated with pain, rather than nurturing.

Parenting to Promote Attachment to Youth: Nurture

Talia, a 16-year-old, was sexually abused by her father for three years beginning when she was 12. She entered foster care at age 15 when the abuse was discovered, and it was learned that her mother had known of the abuse and was unable to protect her. Talia was placed in a group home where she developed a romantic relationship with a female counselor. When this relationship was discovered, she was quickly removed from the group home and placed with foster parents, Dan and Myra, who are already fostering 15-year-old Tammy. Talia has been in the home for 6 weeks and has been unresponsive to Dan, Myra and Tammy. She physically withdraws whenever she can and rarely speaks. She wears sweatpants and a sweatshirt almost all of the time. Myra and Tammy have tried to draw Talia into conversation and activities, but she refuses. She flinches when either of them reaches out to touch her. Dan has maintained a polite and respectful distance.



STATE:

How might youth with a history of trauma and maltreatment react to nurturing?

Let’s consider the following example of Talia, who is rejecting her parents’ nurturing efforts. Let’s read it together and talk about how the parents can begin to nurture her in a way that she can accept.

It is important to pay attention to where the relationship is in the moment. Starting small is the place to begin.

FACILITATE THE DISCUSSION of how Dan, Myra and Tammy can nurture Talia. Add the following as potentially appropriate if needed:

Developing and Sustaining A Healthy and Supportive Relationship with your Youth

- ▶ Interact with Talia side-by-side, such as driving in the car, working alongside one another on a project, taking a walk.
- ▶ Leave surprise messages. Notes in Talia’s lunch, backpack, and other places around the house will remind her that she is loved and belongs.
- ▶ Place special items in Talia’s room.
- ▶ Take a family photo and display it in the house. A framed photo for Talia to see every day will help her believe that she is part of your family now.
- ▶ Involve Talia in planning future activities.
- ▶ Treat Talia to a special day—just you and she spending time together.
- ▶ Go shopping and let Talia pick out whatever she would like up to a certain budget.
- ▶ Buy matching t-shirts.
- ▶ Find concrete ways to praise Talia.

In spite of how they may react, nurturing, even in very small doses is exactly what the youth needs and is necessary for helping youth to heal. Continuing to meet behaviors using the Regulate, Relate, Reason framework is necessary.

As parents, we have to find ways to give our youth the nurturing they need and give them messages that undo their negative sense of self and world view.

[PPT #41]: OPTIMIZING STRUCTURE AND NURTURE

Parenting to Promote Attachment to Youth: Structure and Nurture

- Challenge to optimize both high structure and high nurture is very difficult
- Two goals:
 - recognize the need for both and to practice
 - think about which one is easier for you so that you can think about ways to improve the other
- **Handout #3.6 How can a parent help a youth recover and heal?**



STATE:

It can sometimes be tough to balance both structure and nurture. On any given day, you may err on one side or the other.

There are two goals to keep in mind: (1) recognize and practice the need for both structure and nurture and (2) think about which one is easier for you so that you can think about ways to improve the other.

Developing and Sustaining A Healthy and Supportive Relationship with your Youth

Let's look at **HANDOUT #3.6: How can a parent help a youth recover and heal?** and review some key points for parents in their work to nurture their relationships and strengthen attachments with their youth.

NOTE: Briefly review some of the key points with participants.



HANDOUT #3.6: HOW CAN A PARENT HELP A YOUTH RECOVER AND HEAL?

Experienced foster and adoptive parents have shared the following tips with us about supporting a youth who has experienced trauma and has attachment issues:

1. Be patient and consistent and do not take youth's behavior personally.
2. Do not expect to learn upfront about all the trauma the youth has experienced. Some of the trauma's effects may not become apparent for months or even years.
3. Be prepared to have patience and talk things through—a lot!
4. Be open to solving problems in new ways.
5. Never be afraid to reach out for help and advice from others. Parent support groups can be a great source of information.
6. Work hard to understand the trauma and how the trauma affects your youth. Not all cases are textbook, but research can help.
7. Utilize and seek out community resources. Training may be available through hospitals, school programs, therapeutic, and private agencies.
8. Participate in cultural and community activities that honor the youth's race, ethnicity and/or culture.
9. Ask your youth's doctor for additional services and resources.
10. Take the long view. The trauma did not happen overnight, and the healing will not either.
11. Finally, as one mother said: "The thing I've learned most from parenting traumatized children is that they are amazing, resilient, and strong."

[PPT #42]: ATTACHMENT FOCUSED PARENTING

Parenting to Promote Attachment to Youth: Attachment-focused Parenting



Resource by Dr. Dan Hughes:
27 "S's" – S's to increase and S's to decrease

STATE:

Structure and nurture is the basis of developing and strengthening the attachment process with your youth.

A resource that provides guidance for attachment-focused parenting has been developed by Dr. Dan Hughes. In the Resource Notebook, you will find **RESOURCE #3.7: 27 "S's" – S's to Increase and S's to Decrease.**

42

SUMMARIZE any final points on this topic before moving to the next section.



SEGMENT V. SUMMARY, HOMEWORK AND CLOSING

SLIDES 43-45

5 MINUTES

[PPT #43]: SUMMARY

Summary

- The impact of loss and grief on teens
- The importance of attachment and attunement
- Actions that parents can take to enhance attachment and strengthen the relationship with youth
- Ways that parents can deepen attunement with their youth or a youth they will parent



STATE:

In this session, we have talked about the impact of loss and grief on teens and the importance of attachment and attunement.

We identified actions that parents can take to enhance attachment and strengthen their relationship with youth and ways that parents can deepen attunement with their youth or a youth they will parent.

We also focused on how parents can maintain and positively manage youth's important relationships, particularly with siblings, to maintain a sense of connectedness.

[PPT #44]: HOMEWORK

Homework

- Homework #1: **Handout #3.7, Part 1: Nurturing the Relationships and Strengthening Attachment**
- Homework #2: **Handout #3.7, Part 2: Taking Care of Myself:** Write down 5 ways that you took care of yourself between this and the next session.
- Homework #3: **Handout #3.7, Part 3:** Review your self-assessment on attunement. Think about your strengths and challenges in this area.



STATE:

HANDOUT #3.7: Homework, Part 1 is a log to chart how you nurtured your relationship and strengthened the attachment with your youth each day. If you are not yet parenting, complete the same task with respect to other people in your life.

Developing and Sustaining A Healthy and Supportive Relationship with your Youth



HANDOUT #3.7: HOMEWORK, PART 1

Parents: Chart how you nurtured your relationship and strengthened your attachment with your youth each day. For non-parenting participants, complete the same task with respect to people in your lives.

Nurturing the Relationships and Strengthening Attachment		
Date	Interaction	How the interaction nurtured the relationship and strengthened attachment

STATE:

As we discussed, balancing structure and nurture is challenging. On **HANDOUT #3.7: Homework, Part 2**, write down at least five ways that you took care of yourself between this session and the next session.



HANDOUT #3.7: HOMEWORK, PART 2

Five Ways I Took Care of Myself	
What I Did	How it Felt

Developing and Sustaining A Healthy and Supportive Relationship with your Youth

NOTE: If you are using the self-assessment process as part of the training you may also assign the homework of reviewing the self-assessment on attunement as described below.

STATE:

Spend some time reviewing your self-assessment on attunement and think about and jot down on **HANDOUT #3.7: Homework, Part 3**, your strengths and challenges in both areas.



HANDOUT #3.7: HOMEWORK, PART 3 (OPTIONAL)

Attunement Self-Assessment	
Strengths	Challenges

[PPT #45]: CLOSING



STATE:

Thank you for your attention and hard work.

In our next session, we will focus on nurturing youth’s cultural, racial and ethnic needs and sexual orientation and gender identity.

CORE TEEN CURRICULUM

SESSION

4

NURTURING YOUTH'S CULTURAL/RACIAL/ETHNICITY AND
SEXUAL ORIENTATION/GENDER IDENTITY AND EXPRESSION

Name: _____ Session Date: _____ Location: _____

SESSION 4: PRE AND POSTTEST ANSWER KEY

1. The formation of identity is determined by race, culture, heritage, and experiences. (circle one) **True** False
2. Parents who are “colorblind” are able to prepare their teen to handle discrimination. (circle one) True **False**
3. Dion is a 17-year-old teen who is of a different race than his adoptive parents. The family lives in a diverse community but only interacts with community members of the parents’ race. This behavior does which of the following?
 - a. Helps the teen integrate into the family
 - b. Helps the teen feel a sense of pride in his race
 - c. Provides the teen with an opportunity for racial socialization
 - d. Makes it difficult for Dion to feel he belongs in the family**
4. Which of the following is an example of parental behaviors that would enhance their relationship with a teen of a different race or culture?
 - a. Being colorblind
 - b. Having open and honest conversations about race/culture and identity**
 - c. Not bringing attention to the racial/cultural differences
 - d. Discouraging the teen’s participation in activities with other teens of their race/culture
5. When Lawanda, an African American teen, has a strong sense of cultural membership, she is able to
 - a. More fully work on her identity**
 - b. Appreciate other cultures more fully
 - c. Make friends with teens of other races
 - d. Have a colorblind view of life
6. It is my job as a parent to provide my teens the tools to cope with microaggressions and discrimination. (circle one) **True** False

7. Monica, 15 years old, is Mexican. Her biological family would celebrate “Día de Muertos” or “Day of the Dead” every year. Monica is placed with a Muslim family. What can the family do to honor Monica’s culture and build family identity?
 - a. Explain why they don’t celebrate “Day of the Dead” in the home
 - b. Invite Monica to teach the family about her traditions and find ways to incorporate those traditions into the family**
 - c. Let Monica know that the family will keep their own traditions and she can celebrate her culture on her own
 - d. Explain that Monica is a part of their family now and encourage her to follow their traditions

8. A teen does not have to experience trauma first-hand to be impacted by historical trauma such as housing discrimination for African-Americans or involuntary placement of native children in boarding schools. (circle one) **True** False

9. Believing children shouldn’t be placed with kin because ‘the apple doesn’t fall far from the tree,’ impacts how we perceive others and behave even if we don’t realize it is an example of implicit bias. (circle one) **True** False

10. It is important for parents to know that LGBTQ2S teens are at an increased risk of all of the following, **EXCEPT**
 - a. Victimization by predators
 - b. Bullying or violence from peers
 - c. Being subjected to shaming
 - d. Becoming violent offenders**

11. Michael, 15 years old, is gender neutral. What can Michael’s parents do to honor Michael’s gender expression?
 - a. Use the pronouns that Michael chooses (“he,” “she,” “they,” or “ze”)**
 - b. Use the pronoun “he” so others won’t be confused
 - c. Tell others that Michael is gender neutral
 - d. Tell others that Michael is struggling with his identity

12. Which of the following statements is true about microaggressions?
 - a. Microaggressions are not as harmful as explicit bias
 - b. Microaggressions are not meant to cause harm
 - c. Microaggressions can affect physical and mental health**
 - d. Microaggressions are clear and easily recognized

SESSION 4: NURTURING YOUTH'S CULTURAL/RACIAL/ ETHNICITY AND SEXUAL ORIENTATION/GENDER IDENTITY AND EXPRESSION



Core Competency: Parents honor their child's identity with acceptance, nurturing, and support including their culture, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and gender identity and expression.

SEGMENTS

1. Welcome and Debrief **(15 MINUTES)**
2. Fostering Youth's Racial, Cultural and Ethnic Identity **(40 MINUTES)**
3. Fostering Youth's Sense of Connectedness and Belonging to Their Family and Culture of Origin **(20 MINUTES)**
4. Understanding Implicit and Explicit Bias **(15 MINUTES)**
5. Promoting Racial and Ethnic Pride **(15 MINUTES)**
6. Nurturing Youth's Sexual Orientation/Gender Identity **(25 MINUTES)**
7. Summary, Homework and Closing **(5 MINUTES)**

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

No additional materials needed.

PREPARE

This session can be challenging to facilitate as it addresses many sensitive subjects that are often connected to deeply rooted values and beliefs for some participants. The intention of this session is not necessarily to change participants' personal values and beliefs but rather is for the participants to find opportunities to recognize their views and evaluate the impact of these views on youth in their care who might be sorting out their own values and beliefs.

REVIEW the resource provided at the end of this session outline from the Center for Research on Learning and Teaching at the University of Michigan, which provides helpful information about strategies to have productive conversations about this challenging topic.

REVIEW the Right Time materials on Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression to support the content presented in this session.

SEGMENT I. WELCOME AND DEBRIEF

SLIDES 1-5

15 MINUTES

[PPT #1]: WELCOME

Session #4.
Nurturing Youth's Cultural/Racial/Ethnic
Needs and Sexual Orientation/Gender
Identity and Expression



NOTE: Display this slide as participants are getting seated and welcome participants as they enter the room.


STATE:

Welcome to Session Four. In this session, we will explore ways that parents can honor their child's identity with acceptance, nurturing, and support including their culture, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and gender identity and expression.

[PPT #2]: HOMEWORK REVIEW

Your Homework

- (1) Nurturing Interactions
- (2) Identifying Ways to Take Care of Yourself


STATE:

Before we begin, let's talk about the homework assignments you completed for today.

We will have a few people report back about their successes and challenges with nurturing interactions and taking care of yourself.

Ask for a few participants to share their experiences completing the homework for Session Three.

NOTE: If you are using the self-assessment process as part of the training you may have also assigned the homework of reviewing the self-assessment on attunement.

[PPT #3]: QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

Questions from last session



3

STATE:

We covered a great deal of information during our last session.

Are there any questions or comments about Session Three?

[PPT#4]: LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Learning Objectives

1. Identify ways to incorporate the youth's race, culture, and ethnicity into family life.
2. Demonstrate two skills in communicating acceptance and support for youth who are questioning their sexuality or gender identity and/or identify as LGBTQ2S (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning or Queer, 2 Spirit).

4

STATE:

Let's dive into our work today. Here are our learning objectives.

By the end of this session, you will be able to:

1. Identify ways to incorporate the youth's race, culture, and ethnicity into your family life.
2. Demonstrate two skills to communicate acceptance and support for youth who are questioning their sexuality or gender identity and/or identify as LGBTQ2S (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning or queer, 2 spirit).

[PPT #5]: DEVELOPING IDENTITY

Activity: Developing Your Identity

- Identify your own cultural and family beliefs and values, thinking about your experiences growing up in your family.
- Define your own personal culture/identity: ethnicity, age, experience, education, socio-economic status, gender, sexual orientation, and faith or spiritual beliefs.
- Are you aware of your personal biases and assumptions about people with different values or backgrounds than yours?
- Challenge yourself in identifying your own values as the "norm."

5

STATE:

We are going to start by talking about race, culture, and identity – and the ways they are understood by us and our children.

Let's start with a short activity to gain insight into the development of your own identity.

ACTIVITY



INSTRUCTIONS: Ask participants to refer to **HANDOUT #4.1: Developing Your Identity**. Inform participants that you will allow them to spend about 7-8 minutes reflecting on and jotting down their thoughts about the questions on the handout. Invite participants to share some of their thoughts with the person next to them.

**HANDOUT #4.1: DEVELOPING YOUR IDENTITY**

1. Identify your own cultural and family beliefs and values, thinking about your experiences growing up in your family.
 - What did you learn about your identity from your father?
 - From your mother?
 - What are some of the key lessons you learned growing up that you would like to pass on to your children?
 - Others that you would want to (or did) change or eliminate?
2. Define your own personal culture/identity: ethnicity, age, experience, education, socio-economic status, gender, sexual orientation, and faith or spiritual beliefs.
 - How have you integrated your early experiences into who you are today?
 - To what extent have your beliefs and values changed as you have grown up?
3. Are you aware of your personal biases and assumptions about people with different values or backgrounds than yours?
 - In what situations do you find it hard to relate to others?
4. Challenge yourself in identifying your own values as the “norm.”
 - For instance, think about and describe a time when you were aware of being different from other people. How did that feel? What did you do to find comfort?

STATE:

One thing that is important to recognize is that we have internalized many of our beliefs from our parents, grandparents, and community, often based on events that happened before we were able to make our own determinations about their meaning.

The goal of the activity was to first understand what your internal beliefs are and second, to think about how they might need to be altered. Each of you has developed a strong identity that incorporates all that you know you are as well as the values your family and community has instilled in you. The youth we are parenting have developed their own sense of identity in this same way.

In this session, we want you to learn some new skills and strategies to support your youth in making their identity strong and positive and an essential part of your family's identity as a whole.

SUMMARIZE any final points on this topic before moving to the next section.

SEGMENT II. FOSTERING YOUTH'S RACIAL, CULTURAL & ETHNIC IDENTITY

SLIDES 6-19

40 MINUTES

[PPT #6]: FOSTERING YOUTH'S RACIAL, CULTURAL AND ETHNIC IDENTITY

Fostering Youth's Racial, Cultural and Ethnic Identity

- Cultural values
- Traditions
- Beliefs
- Customs
- Rules of behavior
- Food preferences
- Language
- Rituals
- Art and music
- Preferred styles of dress
- Religious beliefs, and spirituality
- Experiences with racism and discrimination

**STATE:**

In this segment we will explore how you can honor and incorporate your youth's race and culture into your family life.

Every teen who enters the child welfare system brings his/her cultural, racial, ethnic, and gender identity with them. Over time, you will be able to ask questions that will help you uncover your youth's understanding of their racial, cultural, ethnic, and gender identity.

Nurturing Youth's Cultural/Racial/Ethnicity and Sexual Orientation/Gender Identity and Expression

If your youth has a Life Book, or another chronicle of their story, it will be helpful to review it together. This could lead to conversations about what is important to them, what their customs have been, and what celebrations matter to them. If they do not have a Life Book, this can be a great project to both learn more about the youth and to demonstrate your caring and respect.

You may want to do some research on your own about the teen's background, race, culture, or gender identity before having this conversation. Asking questions respectfully about cultural values, traditions, beliefs, customs, rules of behavior, food preferences, language, rituals, art and music, preferred styles of dress, religious beliefs, and spirituality, will help you learn about your youth's cultural, racial, and ethnic heritage.

Knowing what their experiences with racism and discrimination have been will help you to better understand—and address—their fears, anxieties, and behaviors.

Communicating your appreciation of their heritage and identity will also help to establish and strengthen your relationship with your youth.

[PPT #7]: FOSTERING YOUTH'S RACIAL, CULTURAL AND ETHNIC IDENTITY (CONTINUED)

Fostering Youth's Racial, Cultural and Ethnic Identity

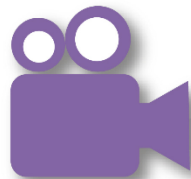


VIDEO: "Because I'm Latino, I can't have money?" Kids on Race

7

STATE:

Let's listen to the voices of youth talking about their feelings and experiences with discrimination based on race and culture.



SHOW participants the video "Because I'm Latino, I can't have money?"

4:17 MINUTES

[PPT #8]: FOSTERING YOUTH'S RACIAL, CULTURAL AND ETHNIC IDENTITY (CONTINUED)

Fostering Youth's Racial, Cultural and Ethnic Identity

- What reaction do you have to these young people talking about their experiences?
- If you are parenting a youth, have you asked them if they have experienced discrimination based on their appearance or cultural practices?
- If so, have they expressed similar feelings as the youth in the video about their experiences?
- If you have not talked with them about their experiences with discrimination, is there something that has prevented you from asking about it?

**STATE:**

Lets' consider some questions in response to the video.

NOTE: Use the questions on the slide to facilitate the group's discussion:

- ▶ What reaction do you have to these young people talking about their experiences?
- ▶ If you are parenting a youth, have you asked them if they have experienced discrimination based on their appearance or cultural practices?
- ▶ If so, have they expressed similar feelings as the youth in the video about their experiences?
- ▶ If you have not talked with them about their experiences with discrimination, is there something that has prevented you from asking about it?

[PPT #9]: FOSTERING YOUTH'S RACIAL, CULTURAL AND ETHNIC IDENTITY (CONTINUED)

Fostering Youth's Racial, Cultural and Ethnic Identity

- Your family's culture: Family traditions, rules, and customs; habits or beliefs that will not align with yours.
- Differences of religion and the right of teen to worship as they choose or not at all
- Differences in class, such as moving from poverty to plenty
- Responding to behaviors not within the normal family routine with curiosity and respect
- Explaining why a behavior is not acceptable

**STATE:**

A teen who is entering your home will likely have habits and beliefs that do not align with yours, and they will need information about your family's culture, including traditions, rules, and customs. This can include such things as routines, bedtime rituals, and access to food other than at mealtime.

You will need to talk about how they can maintain their own habits and beliefs too. It is important to discuss differences of religion and to respect the right of the teen to worship in their own faith, or not at all.

Differences in class, such as a teen moving from poverty to plenty, can be overwhelming and may cause feelings self-consciousness. When a teen does something that is outside of your family's normal routine, respond with curiosity and respect; if it is not acceptable, explain the reason why.

Understand and accept that your youth may have learned a different way of doing things in a previous home and may be trying to please you. You both will need to be flexible – it is important that you are including some routines and customs of your youth into your family's experience.

Now, let's take a closer look at racial identity and culture.

[PPT #10]: RACIAL IDENTITY

Fostering Youth's Racial, Cultural and Ethnic Identity

Racial Identity

- No biological basis for race
- Division of people, often by skin color, that is created and accepted by society
- Self-identity; as identified by others
- For youth: Racial identity may be simple or complex
- Transracial/transcultural families: Racial identity may be very challenging

10

**STATE:**

Let's begin by defining racial identity. We must recognize that there is no biological basis for race. It is division of people, often by skin color, that is created and accepted by a society. Even though it has no basis in science, most of us still develop some form of racial identity.

In addition, we may be racially identified by others, based on our appearance or affiliation. We may define ourselves or be defined by skin color, ethnicity, culture, or by a combination of these.

For individuals of mixed heritage, their racial identity may change over time and they may choose one racial identity over another.

Developing a racial identity may be simple or complex for youth. In transracial/transcultural placements, it may be very challenging for youth to establish their racial identity.

[PPT #11]: RACIAL SOCIALIZATION

Fostering Youth's Racial, Cultural and Ethnic Identity

- **Racial Socialization:** "the developmental processes by which children acquire the behaviors, perceptions, values, and attitudes of an ethnic group, and come to see themselves and others as members of the group."
- Among black parents, racial socialization is a protective factor against institutional racism in America
- Same socialization occurs in other cultures, such as immigrant families who teach their children about assimilation, and other parents teach their children about how to live in a society that may target them for discrimination or deny them privileges that others have
- **Resource:** Talking to Teens about Race Momentous Institute

11

**STATE:**

Now, let's look at racial socialization, which is defined by Wikipedia as "the developmental processes by which children acquire the behaviors, perceptions, values, and attitudes of an ethnic group, and come to see themselves and others as members of the group."

Research tells us, that among African American parents, racial socialization is a protective factor against institutional racism in education, health care, and the workplace.

Institutional racism directly and negatively affects the daily lives and experiences of African Americans. Children are given explicit and implicit messages about what it means to be African American, including values, norms, and beliefs.

This same socialization occurs in other cultures, such as immigrant families who teach their children about assimilation, and other parents who teach their children about how to live in a society that may target them for discrimination or deny them privileges that others have.

The article **RESOURCE #4.1: Talking to Teens about Race** is included in the Resource Handbook. While it is not written for youth who are living with foster or adoptive families, it does offer some ideas about how to start these conversations.

[PPT #12]: FOSTERING YOUTH'S RACIAL, CULTURAL AND ETHNIC IDENTITY (CONTINUED)

Fostering Youth's Racial, Cultural and Ethnic Identity

- Support and skills so youth are prepared to succeed in a society in which they will experience discrimination
- Open conversations about race that are supportive and realistic
- Youth need to be prepared to handle discrimination
- Color blindness discounts the value of the youth's identity

**STATE:**

Young people need support and skills to prepare them to succeed in a society in which they will experience discrimination. You must be able to have open conversations about race that are supportive and realistic.

The idealistic view that families can be color blind can create danger for the youth who is likely experiencing discrimination and is unprepared to handle it. Color blindness also discounts the value of the youth's racial and cultural identity, and can make him or her feel invisible.

[PPT #13]: FOSTERING YOUTH'S RACIAL, CULTURAL AND ETHNIC IDENTITY (CONTINUED)

Fostering Youth's Racial, Cultural and Ethnic Identity

What are some attitudes, beliefs, or life choices by parents that could make it more challenging for a youth of a different culture or race to become a part of a transracial/transcultural family?

**STATE:**

Let's talk a bit more about fostering youth's racial, cultural and ethnic identity.

ACTIVITY



INSTRUCTIONS (PART 1): This activity is a two-part discussion that will be facilitated with the large group. For the first part, ask the group to brainstorm some attitudes, beliefs, or life choices by parents that could make it more challenging for a youth of a different culture or race to become a part of a transracial/transcultural family. Write these responses on a flip chart.

Be sure to include the following if they are not mentioned:

- ▶ Color blindness that prevents honest conversations that prepare youth to cope with racism and discrimination
- ▶ Denial or lack of understanding of a child's heritage and culture
- ▶ Denial of the need for same-race adult role models
- ▶ Parental lack of understanding or appreciation of the teen's experience as a minority youth
- ▶ Lack of understanding of the importance of living in and connecting with diverse communities, especially those that reflect the youth's community of origin
- ▶ Parental lack of understanding or appreciation of the teen's experience in a transracial/transcultural placement, even if parents and teen share the same racial background
- ▶ Non-acceptance by extended family and friends of the youth's race or culture
- ▶ Blatant racism or discrimination within the family or the community
- ▶ Lack of preparation for being in the world without the protection/privilege of the family

[PPT #14]: FOSTERING YOUTH'S RACIAL, CULTURAL AND ETHNIC IDENTITY (CONTINUED)

Fostering Youth's Racial, Cultural and Ethnic Identity

How can you as a parent enhance your relationship with a youth of color or of a different race/culture in your family?

What are some parental behaviors that would reinforce positive interaction and support of the youth of color or of a race, culture, or tribe different from their own in their family?

14

**STATE:**

Remember that race, ethnicity, and culture create an additional overlay to the already complex issues of youth in foster care, adoption, or guardianship.


 ACTIVITY

INSTRUCTIONS (PART 2): Next, ask participants to share ideas about how parents can enhance their relationship with a youth of a different race/culture, particularly for youth who may be uncomfortable with parents of a different race.

Be sure to include the following if they are not mentioned:

- ▶ Having honest conversations with youth about race, racial bias, and discrimination and their experiences
- ▶ Engaging in and being comfortable with conversations about the youth's mixed feelings about being in a family that is different
- ▶ Fostering a healthy racial identity
- ▶ Recognizing and embracing that you are a multicultural family
- ▶ Participating in cultural events and customs that support the youth's racial and cultural identity and pride in their heritage
- ▶ Connecting youth to peers, adults, groups, and mentors of their same race or culture
- ▶ Integrating music, art, ceremonies, food, and other elements of the youth's heritage or culture into family life
- ▶ Creating a sense of belonging by talking about similarities as well as differences
- ▶ Living in a multicultural community
- ▶ Choosing an integrated school
- ▶ Ensuring that you have a diverse network of friends and social circles, especially in support of the youth in your family
- ▶ Calling out racism and microaggressions and standing for fairness—for your child and other people and communities of color
- ▶ Giving youth the tools they need to cope, defend against, and assess the risks of racism and discrimination
- ▶ Building self-esteem, confidence, and resiliency in all youth and children in the family
- ▶ Acceptance of family diversity by extended family, friends, and community
- ▶ Letting your children know that you “have their back,” no matter what happens
- ▶ Inviting adults from the youth's cultural community to be mentors to the youth and cultural guides/mentors to yourselves as parents
- ▶ Maintaining relationships with people from the teen's past
- ▶ Maintain an attitude and family culture of “zero tolerance” for any discriminatory or insulting language, including jokes

**STATE:**

What do we mean by “privilege”? Privilege refers to the advantages that members of any majority group have, even without knowing they have them, that allow them to move through life without having to think about certain things.

What do we mean by “majority groups”? Majority groups are those groups that have historically had more social power than others.

- ▶ In the United States, Caucasian people are considered to be the racial majority group.
- ▶ Individuals of heterosexual orientation are considered to be a majority group.
- ▶ When it comes to gender, men are considered to be the majority group in the United States because they have more social power than women.

Majority group members do not have question whether they will have access to certain social privileges. For example, a woman who wants to marry a man does not have to think about whether she lives in a state that will allow her to legally marry her partner.

In contrast, minority group members often face discrimination in multiple areas of social life, including housing, employment, healthcare, and education.

Parents who are part of a majority group who are parenting children of a minority group need to learn and understand the ways that their experience of the world will be different than their child's.

In 1988, Wellesley College professor Peggy McIntosh wrote an article called “White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack”. The article described examples of unearned privileges and opportunities that members of the majority race benefit from.

We can use these ideas to think about not only about race related privilege, but about other privileges of majority groups as well.

[PPT #16]: UNPACKING THE INVISIBLE KNAPSACK

Fostering Youth's Racial, Cultural and Ethnic Identity

Handout #4.2 Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack



Unpacking
the
Invisible
Knapsack

16

STATE:

Let's do an activity to explore this further.

ACTIVITY



INSTRUCTIONS: Divide the group into pairs (anyone who does not have a partner can join a pair make a group of three). Ask each person to select a category in which they are part of a majority group (each person will have a partner who may or may not have identified the same majority group). Explain that each pair will be asked to consider parenting a youth who is a member of a minority group. Ask the pairs to review the items in the “invisible knapsack” and consider the answers from both their perspective as a member of the majority group as well as from the perspective of their child (a member of the minority group). Remind them that they might have each selected a different “majority” group and they should help each other identify privileges for both groups.



HANDOUT #4.2: UNPACKING THE INVISIBLE KNAPSACK

Complete the worksheet, based on the majority group you selected for yourself and the minority group you selected for your child.

Rate each item as follows:

- Y for “Yes, I can do this (almost) whenever I want and wherever I am”
- N for “No, I cannot (or can rarely) do this whenever I want and wherever I am”

Privilege Statements	True for Me	True for My Child
1. I can be in the company of people like me most of the time.		
2. If I should need to move, I can be pretty sure of renting or purchasing housing in an area which I can afford and in which I would want to live.		
3. I can be pretty sure that my neighbors in such a location will be neutral or pleasant to me.		
4. I can go shopping alone most of the time, pretty well assured that I will not be followed or harassed.		
5. I can turn on the television or open to the front page of the paper and see people like me widely represented in a positive light.		
6. When I am told about our national heritage or about “civilization,” I am shown that people of my color made it what it is.		
7. I can be sure that my children will be given curricular materials that testify to the existence of their race.		
8. I can be pretty sure of having my voice heard in a group in which I am the only member of my race, gender or sexual orientation.		
9. I can go into a supermarket and find the staple foods which fit with my cultural traditions.		
10. I can go into a hairdresser’s shop and find someone who can cut my hair.		
11. Whether I use checks, credit cards or cash, I can count on my skin color, hair style, or number of tattoos not to work against the appearance of financial reliability.		
12. I am protected most of the time from people who might not like me.		
13. I do not have to be aware of discrimination for my own daily physical protection.		
14. I can swear, or dress in second hand clothes, or not answer letters, without having people attribute these choices to the bad morals, the poverty or the illiteracy of my race.		

Nurturing Youth's Cultural/Racial/Ethnicity and Sexual Orientation/Gender Identity and Expression

Privilege Statements (Handout #4.2 Continued)	True for Me	True for My Child
15. I can speak in public to a powerful male group without putting my race on trial.		
16. I can do well in a challenging situation without being called a credit to my race or gender.		
17. I am never asked to speak for all the people of my race, gender or sexual orientation.		
18. I can be pretty sure that if I ask to talk to the “person in charge”, I will be facing a person of my race, gender or sexual orientation.		
19. If a traffic cop pulls me over or if the IRS audits my tax return, I can be sure I haven't been singled out because of my race.		
20. I can easily buy posters, post-cards, picture books, greeting cards, dolls, toys and children's magazines featuring people of my race.		
21. I can be pretty sure that an argument with a colleague of another race is more likely to jeopardize her/his chances for advancement than to jeopardize mine.		
22. I can take a job with an affirmative action employer without having my co-workers on the job suspect that I got it because of my race.		
23. I can choose public accommodations without fearing that people of my race, gender or sexual orientation cannot get in or will be mistreated in the places I have chosen.		
24. I can be sure that if I need legal or medical help, my race, gender or sexual orientation will not work against me.		
25. I can arrange my activities so that I will never have to experience feelings of rejection owing to my race.		
26. I can expect figurative language and imagery in all of the arts to testify to experiences of my race, gender or sexual orientation.		
27. I can choose blemish cover or bandages in “flesh” color and have them more or less match my skin.		
28. I can travel alone or with my spouse without expecting embarrassment or hostility in those who deal with us.		
29. I have no difficulty finding neighborhoods where people approve of our household.		
30. My children are given textbooks and classroom materials in school which implicitly support our kind of family unit and do not turn them against my choice of domestic partnership.		
31. I feel welcomed and “normal” in the usual walks of public life, institutional and social.		
32. I can attend services in my chosen faith without worry of judgment or violence.		

Nurturing Youth’s Cultural/Racial/Ethnicity and Sexual Orientation/Gender Identity and Expression

Answer the following if parenting an American Indian/Alaskan Native teen	Yes	No
1. My child can be treated by a medicine person in the community.		
2. My child can take lessons in their native tribal language, if it is not English.		
3. My child can attend a powwow as a dancer.		
4. My child can interact with other youth from their community on and off the reservation.		
5. My child can learn traditional artistry.		

[PPT #17]: UNPACKING THE INVISIBLE KNAPSACK (CONTINUED)

Fostering Youth’s Racial, Cultural and Ethnic Identity

Does anyone want to share any awareness gained from this exercise?
 Do you feel that you have inherent privilege, or are you aware that you don't?
 What did you discover from your responses about the youth?



STATE:

Does anyone want to share any insights you gained from this exercise? Do you feel that you have inherent privilege, or are you aware that you don't? What did you discover from your responses about the youth?

Sometimes, member of majority groups who have been struggling with other disadvantages, or who worked hard for the successes they've had, can feel as though the term privilege is unfair because it seemingly minimizes their own hardships.

What gets lost in this view is that people of minority groups are facing the same hardships as struggling members of a majority group in addition to a system that is rigged against them.

It is important not to take it personally if you are born into a system of privilege, but to recognize and be aware of its impact.

The full article, **RESOURCE #4.2: White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Backpack**, by Peggy McIntosh is included in the Resource Handbook for you to read on your own.

[PPT #18]: FOSTERING YOUTH'S RACIAL, CULTURAL AND ETHNIC IDENTITY (CONTINUED)

Fostering Youth's Racial, Cultural and Ethnic Identity

Opportunity to be surrounded by people of their own race, culture, or tribe to help them feel connected to and proud of their identity



18

STATE:

Children of minority groups need the opportunity to be surrounded by people of their own race, gender or sexual orientation to help them feel connected to and proud of their identity. This is especially important for youth who are being parented by people of a race, gender or sexual orientation different from their own.

Having meaningful relationships with adults of their own race, gender or sexual orientation can provide them with important information about how to navigate the world. You, as parents, will benefit from those relationships as well. They will help you to understand your youth's needs, the risks they face, and how to best support them.

[PPT #19]: FOSTERING YOUTH'S RACIAL, CULTURAL AND ETHNIC IDENTITY (CONTINUED)

Fostering Youth's Racial, Cultural and Ethnic Identity - Resources

Transracial Adoption: Love is Just the Beginning
Deb Reisner



Seven Tasks for Parents: Developing Positive Racial Identity
Dr. Joseph Crumbley

19

STATE:

There are two excellent resources for parents from the North American Council on Adoptable Children (NACAC) on transracial parenting included in the Resource Handbook:

- ▶ **RESOURCE #4.3: Transracial Adoption: Love is Just the Beginning**
- ▶ **RESOURCE #4.4: Seven Tasks for Parents: Developing Positive Racial Identity**

SUMMARIZE any final points on this topic before moving to the next section.



SEGMENT III. FOSTERING YOUTH'S SENSE OF CONNECTEDNESS AND BELONGING TO THEIR FAMILY AND CULTURE OF ORIGIN

SLIDES 20 - 28

20 MINUTES

[PPT #20]: FOSTERING YOUTH'S SENSE OF CONNECTEDNESS AND BELONGING TO THEIR FAMILY AND CULTURE OF ORIGIN

Fostering Youth's Sense of Connectedness and Belonging to Their Family and Culture of Origin

"Culture is the sum total of the ways of living, including values, beliefs, aesthetic standards, linguistic expression, patterns of thinking, behavioral norms and styles of communication which a group of people have developed to assure its survival in a particular physical and human environment."

20

STATE:

Now, we are going to dig a little deeper into the importance of connection to culture and/or ethnic heritage.

On the slide is a definition of culture by Mary Kay DeGenova:

- ▶ "Culture is the sum total of the ways of living, including values, beliefs, aesthetic standards, linguistic expression, patterns of thinking, behavioral norms and styles of communication which a group of people have developed to assure its survival in a particular physical and human environment."

Every one of us has an identity connected to our culture or ethnic heritage. This can be expressed by such things as customs, celebrations, rituals, the food we eat, music and art, holidays we celebrate, the clothes we wear, the structure of our families, our spiritual beliefs, and the geographic region we come from.

[PPT #21]: FOSTERING YOUTH'S SENSE OF CONNECTEDNESS AND BELONGING TO THEIR FAMILY AND CULTURE OF ORIGIN (CONTINUED)

Fostering Youth's Sense of Connectedness and Belonging to Their Family and Culture of Origin

Write down four practices that are part of your culture that you would miss if they were not a part of your life.



STATE:

Let's take a moment now to give you all an opportunity to call to mind some of your own important cultural practices.

ACTIVITY



INSTRUCTIONS: Ask participants to write down four practices that are part of their culture that you would miss if they were not a part of your life. Some examples include: hosting or attending wedding or baby showers, the traditions that surround holiday celebrations, the ways that you greet others (handshakes, an embrace, a kiss on the cheek). After providing some time for participants to create their lists, instruct them to cross off two of the practices from their list. Ask, "How does it feel to lose those cultural practices forever?" Ask for a few participants to share their list, what they crossed off, and how they feel about it.

[PPT #22]: FOSTERING YOUTH'S SENSE OF CONNECTEDNESS AND BELONGING TO THEIR FAMILY AND CULTURE OF ORIGIN (CONTINUED)

Fostering Youth's Sense of Connectedness and Belonging to Their Family and Culture of Origin

Understand and respect the culture and ethnicity of the youth who enters your home

Ask them about what is important to them so that you can incorporate some of their culture into your family

What is normal to them may seem odd or disrespectful to you

What is normal to you may seem odd or disrespectful to them



STATE:

It is important that you understand and respect the culture and ethnicity of the youth who enters your home. Take the time to ask about what is important to them so that you can incorporate some of their cultural practices into your family. This is true for any transracial or transcultural family, which includes not only race and ethnicity, but also gender and sexual orientation, or any other aspect of culture.

There likely will be some behaviors related to their culture that may seem odd to you, and maybe even feel disrespectful. Keep in mind that some of your own behaviors related to culture may seem odd or disrespectful to them as well!

By taking the time to learn about and understand their culture, you will be more accepting and understanding of those behaviors.

Nurturing Youth's Cultural/Racial/Ethnicity and Sexual Orientation/Gender Identity and Expression

Incorporating the youth's cultural practices into your family life will not only help them feel a part of your family, but also convey respect for who they are and the value they bring.

Some ways that you might learn about what is important to the youth in terms of their culture include:

- ▶ Asking questions
- ▶ Listening to and learning about the youth's preferred music
- ▶ Attending cultural events in your community
- ▶ Cooking food from his or her culture and making it a regular part of family meals
- ▶ Incorporating special cultural celebrations that the youth values
- ▶ Honoring family connections that the youth cherishes
- ▶ Seeking out role models and groups in your community that share your child's cultural backgrounds

[PPT #23]: HISTORICAL TRAUMA

Fostering Youth's Sense of Connectedness and Belonging to Their Family and Culture of Origin



VIDEO: What is Historical Trauma?

University of Minnesota Extension Children, Youth and Family Consortium

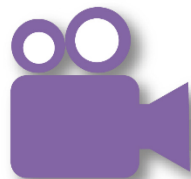
The information given in this video is for educational purposes only © 2018, Regents of the University of Minnesota. All rights reserved

23

STATE:

Now, let's shift to talking about historical trauma and its impact on youth you may be parenting.

First let's watch a short video about historical trauma created by the University of Minnesota Extension Children, Youth and Family Consortium.



SHOW participants the video "What is Historical Trauma?"

5:52 MINUTES

[PPT #24]: HISTORICAL TRAUMA (CONTINUED)

Fostering Youth's Sense of Connectedness and Belonging to Their Family and Culture of Origin

Historical Trauma

Collective emotional and psychological wounding across generations, resulting from significant events, and can grow over time

Groups experiencing historical trauma: American Indians, African Americans, Holocaust survivors, Japanese Americans, and Armenians

Carried forward over generations with psychological and cultural impacts today.

Compounded by racism, discrimination, and assaults on identity

24

**STATE:**

As stated in the video, historical trauma is the collective emotional and psychological wounding across generations, resulting from significant events, and it can grow over time. Historically, American Indians, African Americans, Holocaust survivors, Japanese Americans, and Armenians, among other groups, have experienced such trauma, resulting in the devastation of their culture and way of life.

This trauma has been carried forward over generations, and continues to have psychological and cultural impacts today. Think about the culture of the children you are parenting or might parent, and then think about the significant events their ancestors experienced. The impact of these events echo through the generations and can affect current patterns of behavior, relationships, and psychological responses.

This is compounded by the racism, discrimination, and assaults on identity, which youth may face on a regular basis.

[PPT #25]: AMERICAN INDIANS' EXPERIENCE

Fostering Youth's Sense of Connectedness and Belonging to Their Family and Culture of Origin

American Indians' experience:

- Colonization
- Relocation to reservations from their native lands
- Genocide
- Institutional racism
- Children taken from their families and sent to Indian boarding schools
- Children taken from their families and placed in white foster and adoptive families

The story-telling tradition of American Indians: Elders have retold the experiences of their people

25

**STATE:**

American Indians have endured colonization, relocation to reservations from their native lands, genocide, institutional racism, the removal of children from their families and forced residence at Indian boarding schools.

Families also suffered the removal of their children for placement with Caucasian foster and adoptive families, in spite of the fact that there was no abuse or neglect occurring in the family.

These experiences have a deep and lasting effect on how American Indians relate to the institutions that provide child welfare services to their communities, and how Native Americans view foster care, adoption, and guardianship.

Native American elders have retold the experiences of their people through their tradition of story-telling.

[PPT #26]: AMERICAN INDIANS’ EXPERIENCE (CONTINUED)

Fostering Youth’s Sense of Connectedness and Belonging to Their Family and Culture of Origin



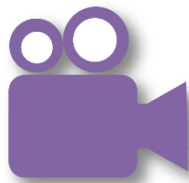
• VIDEO: Terry Cross, Founder and Senior Advisor for the National Indian Child Welfare Association (NICWA)



26

STATE:

Let’s hear Terry Cross talk about the effects of Historical Trauma on the American Indian community.



SHOW participants the video “Terry Cross: Fostering Youth’s Sense of Connectedness and Belonging to their Family and Culture of Origin.”

2:49 MINUTES

[PPT #27]: AFRICAN AMERICANS’ EXPERIENCE

Fostering Youth’s Sense of Connectedness and Belonging to Their Family and Culture of Origin

African Americans’ Experience:

- Slavery
- Capture from their native lands
- Loss of their native languages and destruction of their cultures
- Separation of families
- Bans against reading or learning
- The Jim Crow era
- Institutional racism
- Distrust of the child welfare system

27

STATE:

African Americans endured slavery, capture from their native lands, loss of their native languages and destruction of their cultures, separation of families, bans against reading or learning, the Jim Crow era, and institutional racism.

Grandparents and great-grandparents who witnessed lynching, experienced raids by the Ku Klux Klan, and were subjected to racially motivated violence, pass down protective behaviors within their families.

Distrust of the child welfare system by the African American community is understandable when viewed through the lens of historical trauma, and made more complicated by current experiences with institutional racism. Youth may carry that distrust into your home and see you as part of the system that broke up their family.

[PPT #30]: UNDERSTANDING IMPLICIT AND EXPLICIT BIAS

Understanding Implicit and Explicit Bias

Bias: "...a tendency to believe that some people, ideas, etc., are better than others that usually results in treating some people unfairly."

- "Adopted children in the United States can have everything they need and want here. Families in Guatemala could never give their children what they need."
 - "It's dangerous for youth to visit with birth families—the neighborhoods where they live are filled with criminals."
 - "Birth mothers are usually drug addicts and going to end up in prison. Kids come into foster care to save them from this kind of life."
- What do you think about these statements? What bias do they show?

**STATE:**

The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines bias as: "...a tendency to believe that some people, ideas, etc., are better than others that usually results in treating some people unfairly."

Examples of biases foster parents might have are:

- ▶ a belief that birth parents who abuse their children or use drugs don't deserve a chance to change their lives and reunify with their children,
- ▶ that children should only be placed with parents of the same race or ethnicity,
- ▶ that children should always be placed in a more economically advantaged environment.

Bias can also be expressed in beliefs that certain communities are not safe for children, or that relatives are not appropriate because "the apple does not fall far from the tree," or that people from a particular culture have substance abuse issues. They can be expressed in statements such as the following:

- ▶ "Adopted children in the United States can have everything they need and want here. Families in Guatemala could have never given their children what they need."
- ▶ "It's dangerous for youth to visit with birth families—the neighborhoods where they live are filled with criminals."
- ▶ "Birth mothers are usually drug addicts and going to end up in prison. Kids come into foster care to save them from this kind of life."

The media might influence your thinking about different cultures, and contribute to the creation of bias. News stories about how individuals from different cultures discipline their children, view members of the LGBTQ2S community, use drugs, or commit crimes can cause you to form impressions based on stereotypes and biases toward an entire culture.

Being aware of your biases helps you to remain open-minded and neutral in your parenting decisions, and in the relationships you have with the youth in your family.

[PPT #31]: UNDERSTANDING IMPLICIT AND EXPLICIT BIAS (CONTINUED)

Understanding Implicit and Explicit Bias

- Implicit bias: Attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner.
- **VIDEO:** Dushaw Hockett: Implicit Bias TEDxMidAtlanticSalon




image obtained from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6tU10k8PwY>

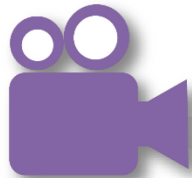


STATE:

Implicit bias refers to the attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in ways that we are unaware of. They are biases that develop over a lifetime, as a result of direct and indirect messages we receive from people in our lives and from the media, early life experiences, and religious beliefs.

We are often not aware of our implicit biases since they are held at an unconscious level.

Let’s hear now from Dushaw Hockett on this topic.



SHOW participants the video “**Dushaw Hockett: Implicit Bias.**”

NOTE: STOP VIDEO AT 6:11 MINUTES

6:11 MINUTES

[PPT #32]: UNDERSTANDING IMPLICIT AND EXPLICIT BIAS (CONTINUED)

Understanding Implicit and Explicit Bias: Resource



Project Implicit®
understanding unconscious bias

<https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/>

image from <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/> for educational purposes of this presentation



STATE:

If you want to further explore biases you may have, you can go to Project Implicit’s website and take a variety of tests. You may be surprised at the results.

It is important for you to keep in mind that everyone has biases – the point is to be aware of what your biases are so that you can keep them from negatively affecting your relationship with your youth.

Recognizing your biases, and being open to exploring alternative viewpoints and evidence to the contrary, can be helpful in changing your perspective.

SUMMARIZE any final points on this topic before moving to the next section.



SEGMENT V. PROMOTING RACIAL AND ETHNIC PRIDE

SLIDES 33-35

15 MINUTES

[PPT #33]: PROMOTING RACIAL AND ETHNIC PRIDE**Promoting Racial and Ethnic Pride**

- Ethnic and racial pride: Feelings of being a member of one or more ethnic and/or racial groups and an appreciation for one's culture and history.
- Task of the teen years: Identity formation; identification with a particular peer group
- Youth trying on different identities

33

STATE:

Ethnic and racial pride are the feelings of appreciation for one's culture and history as a member of an ethnic and/or racial group. The task of the teen years is to work on identity formation, and identifying with a particular peer group is especially important.

Youth may try on different identities, especially if they are multi-racial and exploring which culture or racial identity they feel most comfortable with. They may be identified by their community as a member of a different racial or ethnic group than they identify with, which can be confusing and uncomfortable.

If youth maintain connections to their birth family, their identity is generally more clearly defined. If not, and they are multi-racial, it may be more challenging for them.

[PPT #34]: PROMOTING RACIAL AND ETHNIC PRIDE**Promoting Racial and Ethnic Pride****Handout #4.3 Case History – Keisha**

What are some of the issues you would expect that Keisha needs to address in order to help her reconcile her established identity with the information she gathered about her heritage?

34

STATE:

Let's look now at a case example of a young woman whose identity was challenged in her teens when she reunited with her birth family.

**HANDOUT #4.3: CASE HISTORY – KEISHA**

Ask for a volunteer to read the case study on the handout.

Keisha came into foster care at age four. She was in three homes before she joined her adoptive family at age 11. Keisha's heritage was recorded as African American and Italian.

Keisha was adopted by a Caucasian couple who had three children by birth, and who had adopted three other children, all of whom were of mixed racial heritage. Keisha identified as African American; she had friends of different ethnicities, and she dated only African American boys in high school. Her parents honored her heritage, and since their family was multi-racial, they held many different cultural celebrations in their home and attended different cultural events in their community.

When Keisha was 17, she decided to do a search for her birth family, with the support of her adoptive parents. With the help of the Internet she made contact with her birth sisters. She was shocked to find that there was no African American heritage in her background. Instead, her birth family on her mother's side was Mexican. She had sisters who looked like her and with whom she found many commonalities. Her birth mother refused to meet her, but one of her aunts told her that she remembered her birth father, who was Caucasian, not African American. It is possible he was Italian, but she could not confirm that information.

Keisha was completely thrown by this information, and struggled to think again about her identity, as she had always identified as African American. Her search had revealed unexpected information that turned her life upside down for a period of time. Her behaviors reflected her confusion: she became angry and oppositional, began skipping school and her schoolwork suffered. Her parents sought professional help for her and participated in her therapy so that they could support her in sorting through this crisis. It was clear that the change in her behavior was connected to the struggle that Keisha was experiencing with this new information.

STATE:

Let's consider what we can learn from this case study.

What are some of the issues that Keisha needs to address in order to help her merge her established identity with the new information she learned about her heritage?

NOTE: Write responses on a flip chart or white board. Add the following if not identified by participants:

- ▶ Anger at not having correct information about her heritage
- ▶ Feeling that she had been living a lie
- ▶ Confusion about identifying and living as an African American
- ▶ Learning and celebrating her true heritage of Mexican/Italian
- ▶ Coming to terms with still feeling most comfortable in the African American community
- ▶ Recognizing that her family is multicultural and she was free to choose the culture she feels most comfortable with

[PPT #35]: PROMOTING RACIAL AND ETHNIC PRIDE (CONTINUED)

Promoting Racial and Ethnic Pride

- A positive sense of identity and ethnic/racial pride:
 - Fosters positive self-esteem, a sense of well-being, positive academic adjustment
 - Lowers anxiety
 - Reduces risk of substance abuse and other risky behaviors
- Steps to take:
 - Incorporate the youth's culture into your family
 - Clarify information about their history
 - Discuss differing information with the youth
 - Watch movies/videos with positive messages about their culture, race, or ethnic group

**STATE:**

Research tells us that having a positive sense of identity and ethnic/racial pride fosters positive self-esteem, a sense of well-being, positive academic adjustment, and lowered anxiety. It also tends to reduce the risk of substance abuse and other unsafe behaviors.

We talked earlier about some ways to incorporate the youth's culture into your family. It is also important to clarify information for the youth about their heritage and their history if you have information the youth does not have or is different from their recollection. You can discuss that information with them and explore which feels more accurate to them.

SUMMARIZE any final points on this topic before moving to the next section.



SEGMENT VI. NURTURING YOUTH'S SEXUAL ORIENTATION/GENDER IDENTITY

SLIDES 36-47

25 MINUTES

[PPT #36]: NURTURING YOUTH'S SOGIE

Nurturing Youth's Sexual Orientation/Gender Identity

- LGBTQ2S youth enter the foster care system for many of the same reasons as heterosexual youth in care
- They also carry the added trauma of being rejected and/or mistreated because of their sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression, and this rejection often comes from their own families
- They are often subjected to additional bias and discrimination because of their race, disability, culture, or class.
- Adolescence is a time when many young people either realize or acknowledge their sexual orientation or gender identity or explore gender expression



STATE:

Now let's talk about parenting youth with diverse sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression, sometimes referred to as "youth with diverse SOGIE."

The Human Rights Campaign study on LGBTQ2S youth in the foster care system found that while LGBTQ2S youth enter the foster care system for many of the same reasons as heterosexual youth in care—such as abuse, neglect, and parental substance abuse—they also carry the added trauma of being rejected or mistreated because of their sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression. This rejection often comes from their own families.

Some LGBTQ2S youth also experience added bias and discrimination because of their race, disability, culture, or class.

Please keep in mind that adolescence is a time when many young people either realize or acknowledge their sexual orientation or gender identity or explore gender expression. LGBTQ2S youth are over-represented in foster care, so even if you are not planning to or currently parenting a teen who is LGBTQ2S, you might be in the future.

Let's quickly define a few terms.

[PPT #37]: SEXUAL ORIENTATION

Nurturing Youth's Sexual Orientation/Gender Identity

Sexual orientation: A person's inherent and enduring emotional, romantic, or sexual attraction to other people. Examples of sexual orientations include heterosexual/straight, gay, lesbian, bisexual, and asexual.

**STATE:**

Sexual orientation refers to a person's inherent and enduring emotional, romantic, or sexual attraction to other people. Examples of sexual orientations include heterosexual or straight, gay, lesbian, bisexual, and asexual.

[PPT #38]: GENDER IDENTITY

Nurturing Youth's Sexual Orientation/Gender Identity

Gender identity: A person's innate, deeply known identification as a man, woman, or some other gender. Examples of gender identities include male, female, genderqueer, genderfluid, and bigender.

**STATE:**

Gender identity refers to a person's innate, deeply known identification as a man, woman, or some other gender. Examples of gender identities include male, female, genderqueer, genderfluid, and bigender.

[PPT #39]: GENDER EXPRESSION

Nurturing Youth's Sexual Orientation/Gender Identity

Gender expression: The external display of a person's gender identity, which may or may not conform to socially defined behaviors and characteristics typically associated with being either masculine or feminine. Examples of words that describe someone's gender expression include masculine, feminine, androgynous, butch, and femme.

**STATE:**

Gender expression refers to the external display of a person's gender identity, which may or may not follow socially defined behaviors and characteristics typically associated with being either masculine or feminine. Examples of words that describe someone's gender expression include masculine, feminine, androgynous, butch, and femme.

[PPT #40]: TRANSGENDER

Nurturing Youth's Sexual Orientation/Gender Identity

Transgender: An umbrella term for people whose gender identity and/or expression is different from cultural expectations based on the sex they were assigned at birth. (Please note that it's not acceptable to call someone transgendered.)

**STATE:**

Transgender is an umbrella term for people whose gender identity and/or expression is different from cultural expectations based on the sex they were assigned at birth.

It is not acceptable to call someone transgendered since it is in the past tense and does not reflect that it is their current identity.

A person whose gender identity is the same as the sex assigned at birth is called cisgender.

[PPT #41]: TWO SPIRIT

Nurturing Youth's Sexual Orientation/Gender Identity

Two spirit: A term used in the Native American community for a person who has both a masculine and a feminine spirit, and is used by some people to describe their sexual, gender, or spiritual identity.

**STATE:**

Two spirit is a term used in the Native American community for a person who has both a masculine and a feminine spirit, and is used by some people to describe their sexual, gender, or spiritual identity.

[PPT #42]: NURTURING YOUTH'S SOGIE (CONTINUED)

Nurturing Youth's Sexual Orientation/Gender Identity



VIDEO: LGBTQ Youth: Voices of Trauma, Lives of Promise



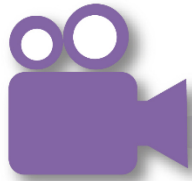
What are some of the issues these young adults mentioned about their struggle as youth?



<https://www.nctsn.org/resources/lgbtq-youth-voices-trauma-lives-promise>

STATE:

Let's listen to some young adults who speak about their struggles in this next video clip.



SHOW participants the video “**LGBTQ Youth: Voices of Trauma, Lives of Promise.**”

NOTE: STOP VIDEO AT 5:26 MINUTES

5:26 MINUTES

STATE:

What are some of the issues these young adults mentioned about their struggle as youth?

NOTE: Be sure to include the following:

- ▶ Violence because of gender identity or sexual identity
- ▶ Rejection by family because of being gay, trans, lesbian, etc.
- ▶ Expectation of discrimination
- ▶ Overlay of racial or cultural discrimination
- ▶ Lack of respect for how they present themselves and their gender
- ▶ Teasing and jokes
- ▶ Feeling unsafe
- ▶ Needing to hide who they are because of their fear of discrimination
- ▶ Needing an advocate or ally to accompany them in potentially traumatic situations
- ▶ Self-esteem issues resulting from being told that who they are is wrong
- ▶ Feeling that there is something spiritually wrong with them

[PPT #43]: DEVELOPMENTAL CHALLENGES FOR LGBTQ2S YOUTH

Nurturing Youth's Sexual Orientation/Gender Identity

Developmental Challenges for LGBTQ2S Youth

- Same developmental challenges as any other teen
- Additional challenge of becoming comfortable with their sexual orientation or gender identity and expression in a social environment that may not be sympathetic to or accepting of who they are
- If no support from family, peers, and other adults such as coaches, teachers, and spiritual leaders: risks become much greater

Can you think of additional risks that LGBTQ2S youth might have experienced?

43

**STATE:**

LGBTQ2S youth face the same developmental challenges as any other teen, such as emerging changes in their body, developing hormones, identity formation, and striving for independence.

However, LGBTQ2S youth have the additional challenge of becoming comfortable with their sexual orientation or gender identity and expression in a social environment that may not be sympathetic to or accepting of who they are. They may feel compelled to keep their true identity hidden, leading to guilt and shame, and ultimately isolation.

LGBTQ2S youth who express their true identity may be exposed to homophobia or bi- or transphobia. This may create or reinforce feelings of self-hate and, in extreme cases, increase risk of suicide.

If the youth does not have support from family, peers, or other adults such as coaches, teachers, and spiritual leaders, their risks become much greater.

Can you think of additional risks for LGBTQ2S youth might have experienced? Let's list a few of them.

NOTE: Use brainstorming, write on a flip chart or white board, and be sure to include the following:

- ▶ Victimization by predators
- ▶ Risk of being trafficked
- ▶ Hostility, bullying, or violence from the community and/or peers
- ▶ Verbal, physical, sexual, or emotional abuse
- ▶ Attempts to change their sexual orientation or gender identity/expression
- ▶ Medical neglect
- ▶ Rejection by their faith community
- ▶ Breach of confidentiality, being outed by someone
- ▶ Differential treatment in dating relationships, or in sharing a room with another youth of the same sex, especially if they have been in congregate care

Nurturing Youth's Cultural/Racial/Ethnicity and Sexual Orientation/Gender Identity and Expression

- ▶ Lack of privacy
- ▶ For trans youth, inability to use bathrooms or locker rooms that match their gender identity
- ▶ Multiple placements due to non-acceptance
- ▶ Lack of cultural competence in service providers
- ▶ Inappropriate response to disclosure by professionals, schools, peers, etc.
- ▶ Homelessness

[PPT #44]: NURTURING YOUTH'S SOGIE

Nurturing Youth's Sexual Orientation/Gender Identity

Handout #4.4: Tips for Creating Safety for Youth who are LGBTQ2S

44

STATE:

As a parent, it is important that you make your relationship, family, and home safe for youth are LGBTQ2S.

Let's do an activity that will help us explore way to do this.

ACTIVITY



INSTRUCTIONS: Refer participants to **HANDOUT #4.4: Tips for Creating Safety for youth who are LGBTQ2S**. Explain that for each item, they will be asked to note if they are: 1) completely comfortable, 2) willing to learn, or 3) not comfortable carrying out that tip.



HANDOUT #4.4: TIPS FOR CREATING SAFETY FOR YOUTH WHO ARE LGBTQ2S

From the list of tips below, consider how comfortable you would be in carrying it out by using the following ratings:

1 - Not comfortable

2 - Willing to learn

3 - Completely comfortable

Tips for Creating Safety for Youth who are LGBTQ2S	Rating
1. See the youth as a whole person, not only in terms of their sexual orientation or gender identity.	
2. Call the youth by their chosen name and pronoun (him, her, they, ze, hir, etc.).	
3. Maintain confidentiality about the youth's sexual orientation. Understand it is up to the youth to decide when and who to disclose to.	
4. Ensure the youth's privacy and assign bedrooms appropriately. Ask the youth what they would be comfortable with.	
5. Become confident and competent in talking with youth about their sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, social challenges, and feelings.	
6. Support the youth's choice of clothing and grooming that reflect their self-image.	
7. Keep your language positive and accepting, even if you are adjusting to new information. Help your family do the same.	
8. Call out others when they don't use affirming language.	
9. Be accepting of the youth's mannerisms, friends, and lifestyle in the home as well as in the community.	
10. Advocate in the community to protect the youth from discrimination.	
11. Help ensure that youth have contact with other LGBTQ2S youth and mentors by finding resources in the community that offer LGBTQ2S youth groups and activities for both the youth and your family to participate in.	
12. Make sure that the school the youth attends is respectful of LGBTQ2S youth, and there is a policy to deal with harassment and bullying that is enforced.	
13. Find health professionals who are comfortable talking with the youth about sexuality, gender identity, and any other concerns they may have.	
14. If the youth is in therapy, make sure the therapist is LGBTQ2S affirming and that the parent participates when possible so they can support the youth's progress.	

[PPT #45]: NURTURING YOUTH'S SOGIE (CONTINUED)

Nurturing Youth's Sexual Orientation/Gender Identity

- Can you think of anything else we might add to the list?
- Take a look at your answers and see how many 1's you marked, how many 2's, and how many 3's.
- Does anyone want to share any insights they gained from this activity?

45

STATE:

Can you think of anything else we might add to the list?

Take a look at your answers and note how many 1's, 2's, and 3's you marked.

Does anyone want to share any insights they gained from this activity?

[PPT #46]: NURTURING YOUTH'S SOGIE (CONTINUED)

Nurturing Youth's Sexual Orientation/Gender Identity

- Be open and committed to listening and learning
- Have supportive conversations with the youth
- Advocate when necessary
- Fully and lovingly accept a LGBTQ2S youth
- Reach out to community groups that affirm LGBTQ2S youth
 - PFLAG
 - Community groups
 - Role models in the LGBTQ community
- Help the youth start a gay/straight alliance at school if one doesn't exist



Image obtained from <https://www.pflag.org/>

46

GSTATE:

It is important to realize that you don't have to know all of the LGBTQ2S or SOGIE language to parent LGBTQ2S youth. You just have to be open and committed to listening and learning.

Parenting LGBTQ2S youth requires that you can fully and lovingly accept youth who have likely suffered rejection before they came to your home. Your ability to show them true acceptance and provide them with support can make all the difference in how they move through their teen years into adulthood.

Many communities have a strong and vibrant LGBTQ2S community that parents can connect with and learn from—and that their children can become part of.

- ▶ Reach out to community groups that affirm LGBTQ2S youth.
- ▶ Join PFLAG (Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) if there is a local chapter.
- ▶ Find role models in the LGBTQ2S community.
- ▶ Help the youth start a gay/straight alliance at school if one doesn't exist.

[PPT #47]: NURTURING YOUTH'S SOGIE (CONTINUED)

Nurturing Youth's Sexual Orientation/Gender Identity

Resource:

Supporting Your LGBTQ Youth: A Guide for Foster Parents



Ensuring Safety, Permanency, and Well-Being for Transgender



Image obtained from: <https://www.childwelfare.gov/>

47

STATE:

In the Resource Notebook, there are two helpful articles with more on this topic.

- ▶ **RESOURCE #4.5: Supporting Your LGBTQ Youth: A Guide for Foster Parents** from the Child Welfare Information Gateway
- ▶ **RESOURCE #4.6: Ensuring Safety, Permanency, and Well-Being for Transgender Youth** by Alison Delpercio, from the North American Council on Adoptable Children

NOTE: If you are using Right Time materials, suggest that participants view the Right Time video on Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression, which provides more information on this topic.

SUMMARIZE any final points on this topic before moving to the next section.

SEGMENT VII. SUMMARY, HOMEWORK AND CLOSING

SLIDES 48-50

5 MINUTES

[PPT #48]: SUMMARY AND CLOSING

Summary: Learning Objectives

- Identify ways to incorporate the youth's race, culture, and ethnicity into family life.
- Demonstrate two skills in communicating acceptance and support for youth who are questioning their sexuality or gender identity and/or identify as LGBTQ2S (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning or Queer, 2 Spirit).

48

STATE:

In addition to covering many other topics in today's session we covered the learning objectives shown on the slide.

We covered many aspects of incorporating a youth's race, culture and ethnicity into your family life.

We explored multiple ways to demonstrate acceptance and support for youth with diverse SOGIE.

Homework

For Current Parents: Have a conversation with your youth about microaggressions and bullying and gather information about what they experience on social media, on TV, and in school.

- Explain what microaggressions are and give some examples from this lesson.
- Ask them if they observe or experience microaggressions or discrimination in their school and have an honest conversation about how they feel about it and what they would like to do about it.

For Parents To Be: Be aware and make a list of microaggressions around you for a racial, cultural, or disability group other than your own, and identify some that might be offensive to youth you might parent. Include those that pertain to race, culture, religion (or lack of religion), sexual orientation, and gender identity or expression.

49

STATE:

Let's review your homework assignment for this session.

Review **HANDOUT #4.5: Microaggressions and Bullying**, which provides information about how you can recognize and respond to these issues.

**HANDOUT 4.5: MICROAGGRESSIONS AND BULLYING**

Children in the child welfare system are often victims of bullying, and most youth of minority groups, LGBTQ2S youth, or members of other marginalized groups are exposed to microaggressions.

MICROAGGRESSIONS

What is microaggression? The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines microaggression as follows: "A comment or action that subtly and often unconsciously or unintentionally expresses a prejudiced attitude toward a member of a marginalized group".

Microaggressions can be aimed at race, ethnicity, religion, culture, nationality, gender, gender identity, or a variety of other groups. Sometimes the danger of microaggression lies in its invisibility to the wrongdoer, who believes he or she is not biased.

The following comments and behaviors are examples of microaggressions:

- ▶ Saying, "You're articulate for a black person," which implies that African Americans are not smart
- ▶ Saying, "If you're Asian, you must be smart," assuming all Asians are good students
- ▶ Asking someone who looks Hispanic or Asian where they're from (assuming they're not American)
- ▶ Crossing the street when you see a black teenager walking toward you (assuming that all black teenagers are dangerous)
- ▶ Making racial/ethnic/religious jokes or slurs
- ▶ Displaying the Confederate flag or swastika
- ▶ Appropriation of symbols, cultural items or rituals by people not of the culture (i.e., use of "Redskins" as a team mascot; dressing as a Native American)

- ▶ Referring to an assertive woman as a “bitch” but an assertive man as a strong leader (having different standards for men and women)
- ▶ Referring to a movie as “gay” when you don’t like it (implying that being gay is bad)
- ▶ Referring to negotiating the price at a yard sale as “jewling them down” (implying that Jews are cheap)
- ▶ Having black youth followed in a store to make sure they don’t shoplift or require them to provide multiple forms of ID to pay with checks or credit cards

BULLYING

What is bullying? Dan Olweus, creator of the *Olweus Bullying Prevention Program*, defines bullying in his book, *Bullying at School: What We Know and What We Can Do* in the following way:

- ▶ “A person is bullied when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other persons, and he or she has difficulty defending himself or herself.”

This definition includes three important components, according to Olweus:

- ▶ Bullying is aggressive behavior that involves unwanted, negative actions.
- ▶ Bullying involves a pattern of behavior repeated over time.
- ▶ Bullying involves an imbalance of power or strength.

Cyberbullying is especially dangerous since it is usually anonymous and youth today are so tied into social media.

Racially or culturally-based bullying often takes the form of name calling, threats of physical harm, acts of intimidation that are attached to the child’s identity, or attacks of the child’s birth family with insulting labels or stereotypes.

- ▶ For example, American Indian boys with long hair are often called “girl”; some are threatened or actually have their hair cut off. This is of particular concern in tribes where hair has spiritual meaning.
- ▶ Some children have items of cultural or spiritual significance spit on or stolen by the bully.

IMPACT OF MICROAGGRESSIONS AND BULLYING

Experiencing repeated microaggressions or bullying can have a profound effect on both physical and mental health in the form of chronic stress, depression, isolating behaviors, poor self-esteem, and chronic physical illness.

Sometimes microaggressions and bullying are hard for others to see and sometimes they are obvious, but they are always hurtful and can cause confusion.

Youth may not want to tell you about the bullying without prompting, since bullying can increase their sense of shame.

It is important to ask a teen if he or she is being bullied at school or elsewhere, particularly if the youth is showing new signs of depression, sadness, suicidal thoughts, isolation, poor concentration, sleeping or eating problems, or declining school performance and attendance.

RESPONDING TO MICROAGGRESSIONS AND BULLYING

Be aware of the kind of microaggressions that youth might be subjected to based on their race, ethnicity, cultural heritage, family diversity, disability, class, sexual orientation or gender identity/expression, and be alert to those you observe and can prevent.

Have conversations with the youth about what might affect them, and encourage them to express their feelings.

Paying attention to news events, what is trending on social media, and television programs can give you opportunities to have these important conversations.

Bullying is never okay, and any suspicion of bullying should be reported to the school or other authority.

Supporting a young person related to bullying is important, but we should never suggest that they hide who they are. For example, suggesting to an LGBTQ2S youth that they should “act less gay” or “dress like a girl at school” is victim blaming and hurtful. When we say this to LGBTQ2S young people, we are telling them to keep a secret, and that their true self should be a secret. This is detrimental to their sense of self and their parent's relationship with them.

All youth need to feel supported by their caregivers. It is fine if a youth decides on their own to change the way they act or dress, or associate with a different peer group as a way to keep themselves safe, but it has to be their choice.

Raising the issue for discussion in PTOs/PTAs or other parent groups is a good way to advocate for your teen in school and in the community.

STATE:

FOR CURRENT PARENTS: Have a conversation with your child(ren)/youth about microaggressions and bullying, and gather information about what they experience on social media, on TV, and in school. Explain what microaggressions are and give some examples from this lesson. Ask them if they observe or experience microaggressions or discrimination in their school. Have an honest conversation about how they feel about it and what they would like to do about it. Think about any microaggressions you notice on TV or in your interactions with others.

FOR PARENTS TO BE: Make a list of microaggressions around you that pertain to race, culture, religion (or lack of religion), disability, sexual orientation, and gender identity or expression. Consider how these microaggressions could impact a youth you will be parenting and how you might address it with them.



HANDOUT 4.6: MICROAGGRESSIONS HOMEWORK

FOR CURRENT PARENTS:

Microaggressions that my youth as experienced or have observed in their school:

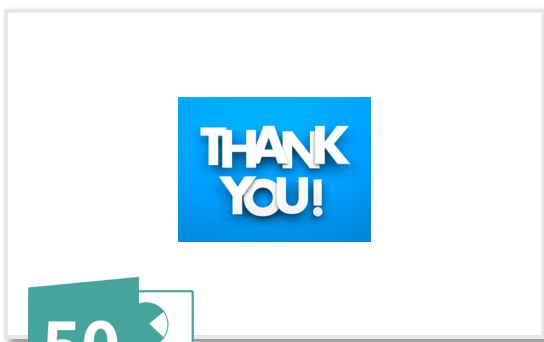
Microaggressions I noticed on TV or in my interactions with others:

FOR PARENTS TO BE:

List microaggressions around me that pertain to race, culture, religion (or lack of religion), disability, sexual orientation, and gender identity or expression.

How could these microaggressions impact a youth I will be parenting and how do I address this?

[PPT #50]: CLOSING



THANK participants for their time and attention.

Remind participants that the next session will focus on Understanding and Managing Youth’s Challenging Behaviors.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCE FOR TRAINERS

Adapted from: Guidelines for Discussing Incidents of Hate, Bias, and Discrimination

<http://www.crlt.umich.edu/publinks/respondingtobias>

Discussion about topics such as hate, bias and discrimination will be most effective when they:

- are structured in a way that defines boundaries for the process, and that brings the discussion to closure within the classroom
- somehow include all students in the class
- extend discourse beyond polarized and polarizing debates
- acknowledge that facts and interpretations of specific social conflicts may change with time, but tools for conceptual understanding and dialogue will continue to be useful past the current moment

Spontaneous Discussions: Dealing with the Unanticipated

If, during class, a student raises for discussion an issue or incident involving hate or bias, consider the following strategies:

1. Acknowledge the student who raised the issue or example while noting that students may vary in their responses and concerns.
2. Decide whether you are ready and willing to engage with this topic right away.
3. Quickly assess whether the class would like to spend time sharing views about the topic. If students want to have a dialogue, schedule a discussion for a later class and suggest ways that students could prepare. Consider the strategies outlined in the “Planned Discussions” section below.

Planned Discussions

Planning a discussion on an issue related to hate, bias, or discrimination benefits from consideration of the following topics, each of which is addressed below:

- Identifying a clear purpose
- Establishing ground rules
- Providing a common base for understanding
- Creating a framework for the discussion that maintains focus and flow
- Including everyone
- Being an active facilitator
- Summarizing discussion and gathering student feedback
- Handling issues that involve the instructor’s identity
- Identifying university resources

GUIDELINES FOR DISCUSSING INCIDENTS OF HATE, BIAS, AND DISCRIMINATION

Identifying a clear purpose

Starting a discussion with clearly articulated objectives can help shape the nature of the discussion and link it to other course goals. Examples of general objectives include:

- Connecting the topic with course material, including fundamental concepts and strategies for analysis and thoughtful reflection
- Increasing awareness about the topic by providing information that is not generally addressed in informal discussions
- Promoting critical thinking by helping students to understand the complexity of the issues
- Enhancing skills for dialogue that students can take into other venues
- Relating classroom discussion to the roles that students have as citizens within their community and larger society

More specific objectives for discussion about social conflicts, especially those involving language of hate or bias, may focus on policies, social conventions, or civic responsibilities, including the following:

- Examining and developing positions on issues of social policy, agency policy, or social convention.
- Identifying a core problem underlying social conflicts and exploring possible answers to the problem.
- Analyzing the root causes or reasons for a social conflict (i.e., a past-oriented discussion).
- Exploring possible consequences or implications of a conflict (i.e., a future-oriented discussion).
- Planning effective actions to reduce such incidents and/or to support vulnerable populations.

(This second list is adapted from Ronald Hyman, 1980, *In Improving Discussion Leadership*. New York: Columbia University, College Teachers Press.)

Establishing ground rules or guidelines

In class, instructors can either work with students to generate ground rules or discussion guidelines, or they can present a set of guidelines and then work with students to accept or modify them. Referring back to these community agreements can be very helpful if discussion becomes tense. Some suggestions include the following:

- Listen respectfully, without interrupting.
- Listen actively and with an ear to understanding others' views. (Don't just think about what you are going to say while someone else is talking.)
- Criticize ideas, not individuals.
- Commit to learning, not debating. Comment in order to share information, not to persuade.
- Avoid blame, speculation, and inflammatory language.
- Allow everyone the chance to speak.
- Avoid assumptions about any member of the class or generalizations about social groups. Do not ask individuals to speak for their (perceived) social group.

It is important that students agree on the ground rules before discussion begins.

GUIDELINES FOR DISCUSSING INCIDENTS OF HATE, BIAS, AND DISCRIMINATION

Providing a common basis for understanding

Providing students with a common basis for understanding from the start will help keep the discussion focused and provide concrete case studies or examples. For instance, you can assign readings on a specific conflict, instruct students to select their own readings to bring to class, or show a video clip to prompt discussion. Another option is to have students review materials during class and follow up with a structured discussion.

You can also draw upon students' own knowledge to establish a common basis:

- In class, ask students to identify key points of information, stating their source. (You can ask students to do this individually and then pool the information, or you can simply elicit information from the class as a whole.) Make a list of these for the whole class.
- Use this elicitation as a time to distinguish evaluative, “loaded,” comments from less evaluative statements, and from statements of personal opinion or experience. Acknowledge how difficult it may be to make these distinctions at times.
- In order to identify and situate threads of discussion that are extraneous to the focus, or are very speculative, ask for and identify information that students would like to know to clarify their understanding on these questions or tangents, even if that information is not available.

Creating a framework for the discussion that maintains focus and flow

Because any social conflict or controversy is a complex topic, it is important to create a framework for the discussion in addition to having clearly defined objectives. Your framework can be a guide, balancing the need to have clear purpose and direction while being open to student observations and interpretation.

The following strategies can help you maintain the focus and flow of the discussion:

- Begin the discussion with clear, open-ended but bounded questions that encourage discussion.
 - Avoid “double-barreled questions” which pose two problems simultaneously, or “hide the ball” questions that search for a specific answer.
 - Ask questions that prompt multiple answers rather than short factual responses or simple “yes” or “no” replies.
- Prepare specific questions to use if the class is silent or hesitant about speaking. Some examples include: “What makes this hard to discuss?” and “What needs to be clarified at this point?”
- Encourage students to elaborate upon their comments where needed. With probing questions, an instructor can prompt students to share more specific information, clarify an idea, elaborate on a point, or provide further explanation.
- Be prepared to re-direct the discussion if students go beyond the intended focus. Drawing attention to the readings or reminding the class about the discussion objectives are useful management techniques.
- When students raise points that are extraneous to the focus, note that these are important but tangential. Recap them at the end of class as other topics to think about on one’s own, to validate student contributions.
- Recap the key discussion points or issues at the end of class, in writing if possible.

GUIDELINES FOR DISCUSSING INCIDENTS OF HATE, BIAS, AND DISCRIMINATION

Including everyone

To include all students' perspectives can be challenging in a whole group discussion, especially if students are dealing with unfamiliar or controversial material. Moving beyond a whole group discussion format allows all students to participate and helps prevent the most talkative or opinionated students from dominating the conversation. Using small groups, your class can hear from students who may not speak otherwise, including those who may see their views as marginalized as well as those who want to explore ideas they are not sure about.

Some methods for increasing the number of discussants include:

- **The Round:** Give each student an opportunity to respond to a guiding question without interruption or comments. Provide students with the option to pass. After the round, discuss the responses.
- **Think-Pair-Share:** Give students a few minutes to respond to a question individually in writing. Divide the class into pairs. Instruct the students to share their responses with group members. Provide students with explicit directions, such as "Tell each other why you wrote what you did." After a specified time period, have the class reconvene in order to debrief. You can ask for comments on how much their pairs of views coincided or differed, or ask what questions remain after their paired discussion.
- **Sharing Reflection Memos:** Prior to the discussion, have students write a reflective memo in response to a question or set of questions that you pose. As part of the discussion, ask students to read their memos, and/or share them in pairs or threes.

With each of these methods, the instructor needs to summarize the various responses and relate them to the discussion objectives.

Being an active facilitator

In order to keep a discussion focused and purposeful, it is important to be an active facilitator rather than a passive observer. Be careful to maintain some control but not over-control. Your role as an active facilitator can include rewording questions posed by students, correcting misinformation, making reference to relevant reading materials or course content, asking for clarification, and reviewing main points.

Students may expect their instructors to express their own point of view, or they may ask explicitly for this view. In deciding how to respond, instructors should consider their comfort in expressing personal views, and also the impact such expressions will have on this and future discussion in class. For instance, will sharing your perspective usefully model the way one can take a stance on a complex topic, or will it more likely shut down those students who may disagree with you? Or, will your sharing of your perspective helpfully respond to comments that marginalize or devalue students in your class?

Summarizing discussion and gathering student feedback

It is very important to save time at the end of class to conclude by summarizing the main points of the discussion. Students are more likely to feel that a discussion was valuable if the instructor, with the help of the class, synthesizes what has been shared or identifies the key issues explored.

GUIDELINES FOR DISCUSSING INCIDENTS OF HATE, BIAS, AND DISCRIMINATION

To obtain student feedback about the quality of the discussion and to identify issues that may need follow-up, you can save the last five minutes of class for students to write a Minute Paper. Ask them to respond to some or all of these questions:

- What are the three most important points you learned today?
- What important questions remain unanswered for you?
- What did you learn specifically from what someone else said that you would not have thought of on your own?

Review the student responses before your next meeting with the class. During the next class, briefly summarize the student feedback and thank the students for their participation.

Handling issues that involve the instructor's identity

Discussing an issue of social conflict can involve the instructor's identity in a number of ways. Students may make assumptions about the expectations an instructor has in leading the class discussion. Assumptions may be based on the students' perception of the instructor's identity, on the way that the instructor has handled other class sessions, and on their personal interactions with the instructor.

In addition, some issues and events may trigger reactive responses in an instructor, and students may say things and speak in ways that trigger emotional reactions. Instructors need to be aware of the possibility (or even the likelihood) of having an emotional response, even if a discussion is thoughtfully planned. Recognizing the response and the trigger as such will help an instructor to stay even-tempered in leading the discussion. To handle statements that trigger emotional responses, instructors will want to draw on techniques that will allow them and the class to step back and gain perspective (e.g., naming the triggering issue, giving oneself time by asking students to do a brief writing exercise, working with the class to reframe or contextualize the triggering statement). If an instructor needs to let such a moment simply pass by, it is important to find time later to talk through the experience, and to address the triggering issue with others who are outside of the class.

In the event that one or more students try to draw the instructor into an emotional response, the ground rules for discussion can play a vital role, and the instructor can model constructive behavior in demonstrating how to unpack such a heated moment by reviewing what had led up to it, in pointing out differences between baiting, debating, and discussing, and/or steering the discussion into a more useful direction.

CORE TEEN CURRICULUM

SESSION

5

UNDERSTANDING AND MANAGING YOUTH'S CHALLENGING
BEHAVIORS, PART 1

SESSION 5: PRE AND POSTTEST ANSWER KEY

1. Identifying feelings and understanding the reasons for feeling them is
 - a. Not necessary to regulate emotions and responses
 - b. The first step to being able to regulate emotions and reactions**
 - c. Important for teens to understand but not necessary for parents
 - d. Important for parents to understand but not important for teens

2. Techniques parents can use to prevent emotional responses to teen behavior include all of the following, **EXCEPT**
 - a. Taking a deep breath
 - b. Taking a break to collect thoughts
 - c. Identifying feelings and reflecting on why you feel this way
 - d. Venting to another adult in front of the teen about the situation**

3. When a person is processing their experience in the lower level of the brain their reaction reflects
 - a. An instinctual response**
 - b. A thought-out response
 - c. An understanding of consequences
 - d. An ability to reason

4. A technique to de-escalate a teen who is being emotionally reactive is to reason with them. (circle one) True
False

5. An effective technique to help deescalate a teen is to
 - a. Explain why the parent is right
 - b. Explain that the parent is in charge
 - c. Keep your own emotions under control**
 - d. Ask the teen to calm down

6. A key component to behavior management is
 - a. Creating strict guidelines
 - b. Building relationship**
 - c. Taking away positive experiences as a consequence to inappropriate behavior
 - d. Avoiding all positive interactions to encourage the teen to change behavior

7. Taylor, who is 15 years old, got suspended from school for swearing at the teacher. The parent is called in to the school to pick up Taylor and meet with the principal. The parent's first response to the teen should be
 - a. Tell Taylor she should know better than to swear at teachers
 - b. Tell Taylor her behavior was not appropriate, and she will have a consequence at home as well
 - c. Ask Taylor what happened and check to make sure she is okay**
 - d. Tell Taylor that the parent is embarrassed and ashamed of the behavior

8. Jesse, a 14-year-old, was confronted after his parent found out he was smoking marijuana. Jesse shouted at his parent and broke a glass vase when he knocked over a small table. After Jesse is calm, it is important for the parent to do all of the following, **EXCEPT**
 - a. Encourage an open and non-judgmental conversation with Jesse about what he felt and why
 - b. Ask Jesse "What could you have done differently?"
 - c. Tell Jesse how the parent felt in that situation
 - d. Ask Jesse "Why did you do this?"**

9. Encouraging a child to recognize what they are feeling in moments of stress will
 - a. Cause them to relive the stressful event
 - b. Help them develop an understanding of how their body is responding so they can better respond to stressful situations**
 - c. Overwhelm them
 - d. Help them ignore their body's responses to stress

10. When designing a reward system, parents should consider
 - a. What the parent is willing to let the teen have; input from the teen is not needed
 - b. Only long-term reward possibilities
 - c. Using rewards that are difficult to obtain
 - d. What motivates the teen**

11. When a parent is developing behavior standards for their teen, they need to include which of the following?
 - a. Expectations that are challenging for the teen to achieve
 - b. Expectations that are age and ability appropriate**
 - c. The same expectations as other children in the family
 - d. Clear and strict rules that assure the parent has control

12. Alex's kinship caregiver says that Alex lies, talks back, and harasses her siblings. What should the caregiver do if she wants these behaviors to change?
 - a. Tell Alex if she doesn't lie, talk back, or harass her siblings for 3 weeks, she will get an expensive item she wants
 - b. Pick one behavior to focus on at first, then when that behavior significantly improves address another**
 - c. Expect all three behaviors to stop at the same time
 - d. Create a reward chart with special rewards and consequences for each behavior

13. Tonya is a 17-year-old who has difficulty expressing feelings. Which of the following is not helpful for the parent to do?
- a. The parent can verbally express their own feelings and demonstrate good listening skills such as summarizing what the teen says
 - b. Have the teen state their feelings and why they are feeling this way anytime the parent notices an emotional reaction**
 - c. Provide the teen with a list of feeling words they can go over on their own
 - d. Name the emotions the teen might feel in the same situation
14. Signs that the parenting/teen relationship is under stress include all the following, **EXCEPT**
- a. Parent has less interest in the teen's life
 - b. Parent is judgmental of the teen
 - c. Parent is frustrated and angry all the time
 - d. Parent shows no need to control the youth**
15. Activities that build parent-teen relationships include
- a. Giving the teen freedom from rules, giving the teen material things they desire
 - b. Giving the teen praise and recognition, engaging in activities together**
 - c. Giving the teen freedom from rules, engaging in conversation with teen
 - d. Giving the teen material things they desire, giving the teen freedom from rules.
16. Active engagement with a teen's mental health treatment provider includes all of the following, **EXCEPT**
- a. Providing information on the nature and scope of the teen's emotional and behavioral problems
 - b. Sharing family experiences, including what has worked best at home
 - c. Withholding information about the family to protect confidentiality of the teen**
 - d. Learning new parenting skills and strategies from the therapist

SESSION 5: UNDERSTANDING AND MANAGING YOUTH'S CHALLENGING BEHAVIORS, PART 1



Core Competency: Parents understand their youth's challenging behaviors and are able to safely and effectively manage them.

SEGMENTS

- I. Welcome and Debrief **(10 MINUTES)**
- II. Coping with and Managing Emotions in the Face of Youth's Challenging Behaviors **(20 MINUTES)**
- III. Regulation **(10 MINUTES)**
- IV. Responding to Youth's Rejecting, Testing, and Challenging Behaviors **(45 MINUTES)**
- V. Relationships Under Stress **(15 MINUTES)**
- VI. Using Supports as a Strength **(10 MINUTES)**
- VII. Summary, Homework, and Closing **(10 MINUTES)**

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

Two bottles of 12 ounce of soda with a twist cap for the Impact of Trauma activity.

PREPARE

REMOVE half of soda from each soda bottle before the session and secure the cap tightly. Practice the Impact of Trauma activity so that you get a sense of how much time you may need to allow the soda to start to settle as described in the instructions.

This session contains content in several sections that is dense and can be challenging to digest. Consider **MONITORING TIME** more carefully during the session and work to cover material efficiently while still allowing interaction among participants.

REVIEW the Right Time materials on Parental Regulation and Parental Adaptation to support the content presented in this session.

SEGMENT I. WELCOME AND DEBRIEF

SLIDES 1-4
10 MINUTES

[PPT #1]: WELCOME

Session #5. Understanding and Managing Youth's Challenging Behaviors, Part 1

Welcome Back!



NOTE: Display this slide as participants are getting seated and welcome participants as they enter the room.

STATE:

Welcome back CORE Teen Training.

In both Session Five and Session Six, we will start taking a more in depth look at understanding and managing youth's challenging behaviors.

In today's session, we will be talking about strategies and techniques that you can use in everyday situations. In Session Six, we will share additional ideas that will help you respond when your youth's trauma is triggered and behaviors escalate or become more high-risk.

[PPT # 2]: REVIEW OF HOMEWORK

Homework: How did you do?

For Current Parents: Have a conversation with your youth about microaggressions and bullying and gather information about what they experience on social media, on TV, and in school.

For Parents To Be: Be aware and make a list of microaggressions around you for a racial, cultural, or disability group other than your own, and identify some that might be offensive to youth you might parent.



STATE:

Before we begin, let's talk about the homework assignments you completed for today.

We will have a few people share some of the insights that you gained from exploring microaggressions and bullying with your youth, or for those of you not yet parenting, making note of the microaggressions around you.

NOTE: Ask for a few participants to share their experiences completing the homework for Session Four.

[PPT #3]: QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

Any questions about Session #4?




3

STATE:

We covered a great deal of information during our last session.

Are there any questions or comments about Session Four?

[PPT #4]: LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Learning Objectives

- Demonstrate two coping skills parents use to manage their own emotions in the face of their youth's challenging behaviors.
- Demonstrate two ways that parents can effectively respond to their youth's rejecting, testing, and challenging behaviors.
- Describe at least two signs that their relationship with the youth is under stress.



4

STATE:

Let's review our learning objectives for this session. At the end of this session, you will be able to:

- ▶ Demonstrate two coping skills parents use to manage their own emotions in the face of their youth's challenging behaviors.
- ▶ Demonstrate two ways that parents can effectively respond to their youth's rejecting, testing, and challenging behaviors.
- ▶ Describe at least two signs that their relationship with the youth is under stress.

SEGMENT II. COPING WITH AND MANAGING EMOTIONS IN THE FACE OF YOUTH'S CHALLENGING BEHAVIORS

SLIDES 5-8
20 MINUTES

[PPT #5]: COPING WITH AND MANAGING EMOTIONS

Coping with and Managing Emotions in the Face of Youth's Challenging Behaviors

- *This Session:* "Challenging" behaviors such as those that involve rejection, testing, disrespect, anger, withdrawal, truancy, lying, stealing, and substance misuse.
- *Next Session:* High-risk behaviors and the vulnerabilities of youth with special conditions
- Parenting skills you have used in the past
- Rethinking parenting instincts
- Learning new skills to add to your suitcase and support your existing skills and strategies



STATE:

We will have two sessions on understanding and managing youth's challenging behaviors. In the next session, we will focus on high-risk behaviors and the vulnerabilities of youth with challenging behaviors who have experienced trauma. In this session, the focus will be on challenging behaviors such as rejection, testing, disrespect, anger, and withdrawal. You will recall we talked about lying in a previous session.

These behaviors were at one time needed to survive and are common in youth who have experienced early trauma. They may bring these same behaviors into your family, even though they are no longer needed for survival.

As we have discussed previously, the parenting skills you have used in the past may not be effective with teens who have experienced trauma or loss. Today's session will focus on rethinking your parenting instincts and learning new skills to add to your suitcase.

[PPT 6]: COPING WITH AND MANAGING EMOTIONS (CONTINUED)

Coping with and Managing Emotions in the Face of Youth's Challenging Behaviors

- Regulating ourselves and understanding how our own past trauma—or our *lack* of past trauma—affects the way we parent

ACTIVITY: Naming Our Emotions

Handout #5.1 Teens' Challenging Behaviors: What Would Be Your Emotional Response?

- How did you respond to each case?
- How easily were you able to name your emotions?

**STATE:**

An essential skill to pack in your trauma-informed parenting suitcase is managing your own emotions when youth are engaging in challenging behaviors.

In order to help our teens manage their range of emotions, which are often triggered by past experiences, we must be able to regulate ourselves. We have talked about this as part of Dr. Perry's Regulate, Relate, Reason framework.

It is also important to understand how our own past trauma—or our LACK of past trauma—affects the way we parent.

Let's begin by doing an activity intended to help us in naming our own emotions.

ACTIVITY



INSTRUCTIONS: Divide the participants into small groups of two to four people. Provide them with **HANDOUT #5.1: Teens' Challenging Behaviors: What is Your Emotional Response?** and assign each group one of the scenarios in the handout. Ask the groups to discuss what feelings come up as they read about the youth's challenging behavior and have them name their emotions. After the groups appear to have had enough time for small group discussion, facilitate a large group discussion of participants' responses by asking a few groups to share how they responded to their assigned case and to describe how easy (or difficult) it was to name their emotions.



HANDOUT #5.1: TEENS' CHALLENGING BEHAVIORS: WHAT IS YOUR EMOTIONAL RESPONSE?

1. Maria, who is 16 years old, has been in foster care with you for the last eight months, and has been told that her curfew is 10PM. She doesn't come home until 11:30PM and you have been waiting up for her. When you ask where she has been, she says, "Wouldn't you like to know?" and stomps off to her room.
2. A store manager who you know calls to tell you that Tamara, your 17-year-old adopted daughter, was caught shoplifting snacks. She does not want to call the police but wants you to pick up your daughter. When you arrive, your daughter smirks and says that the manager is "an idiot" and planted the snacks on her. She rolls her eyes when you ask her if she took the snacks and says, "What difference does it make? They didn't belong to the manager."
3. Eric is 16-years-old, and has been in foster care for four years. He has lived with you for more than a year and wants to go to a party with friends. He knows which kids you approve of and which ones you don't want him hanging out with. You ask him who will be at the party and he responds, "John, Omar, Sarah and some other kids. We're playing cards." You later learn that the "other kids" included the ones you disapprove of. You also learn that they were drinking and one of them drove him home under the influence of alcohol.
4. Your 13-year-old adoptive daughter Kendra has been sexting naked photos of herself to boys she doesn't know. When confronted, she said, "It's not your body; it's mine and I can do whatever I want."
5. Your 17-year-old grandson, José, has been living with you since his parents have been in treatment on and off for their drug use. You recently found several hunting and switchblade knives when you were cleaning his room. You also found a bong and other drug-related objects.

[PPT #7]: COPING WITH AND MANAGING EMOTIONS (CONTINUED)

Coping with and Managing Emotions in the Face of Youth's Challenging Behaviors

1. The first step is awareness.

2. Discover the "why" of your emotions.

"What is wrong? What is causing me to feel this way?"

ACTIVITY: Return to Handout #5.1 and your small group. Talk about why you felt the way you did.



STATE:

Now that we have practiced naming our emotions, let's look at three specific ways we can manage those emotions and stay regulated in the face of challenging behaviors.

The first step is awareness. As we practiced earlier, we can start by monitoring and naming our emotions. It can sometimes be difficult to identify what we are feeling. Naming the feelings helps us understand ourselves better, which is then helpful in managing our responses.

Discover the "why" of your emotions. Once we identify how we are feeling, we want to discover why we feel that way. There could be many reasons and to find out, we have to ask ourselves, as we would a friend, "What is wrong? What is causing me to feel this way?"

Let's look again at **HANDOUT #5.1**.

Understanding and Managing Youth's Challenging Behaviors, Part 1

ACTIVITY



INSTRUCTIONS: Instruct participants to return to their small groups to discuss the reasons why they felt the way they did about the case discussed earlier. Ask participants to report back on the “why” of their emotions. If you are using the Self-Assessment process as part of the training, suggest that participants reflect back on the skills and/or characteristics that they noted as challenges in their self-assessment. Ask participants to consider if any of these challenges relate to the reasons they may have been triggered by any of these scenarios.

Responses may include:

- ▶ Maria: Fear about where she was and whether she was safe; frustration about family rules being disregarded; anger at being trivialized.
- ▶ Tamara: Embarrassment that you have been called on a shoplifting incident; fear that the manager may change her mind and call the police; anger that you have been embarrassed in front of someone you know; worry that Tamara is not taking the situation seriously and doesn't value the property of others.
- ▶ Eric: Anger at being lied to through omitting important information; fear that he is involved with the wrong people and could be in danger; worry that he cannot be trusted; scared that he could have been injured in a car accident.
- ▶ Kendra: Sadness that she doesn't value her body; fear she could be victimized by others; fear that she may have been sexually abused; worried about her lack of self-esteem.
- ▶ José: Fear that he could physically harm a family member or someone else; anxious that he is following in the footsteps of his parents and may have a drug problem; worried he might be dealing drugs or involved in a gang.

STATE:

You may have noticed that many of your feelings are about concern for your teen – fear, anxiety, worry – rather than anger.

These are feelings that demonstrate to the youth that they are valuable and cared for, and are feelings that are more effective to share than anger, disappointment, embarrassment, or frustration.

[PPT #8]: COPING WITH AND MANAGING EMOTIONS (CONTINUED)

Coping with and Managing Emotions in the Face of Youth's Challenging Behaviors

3. Don't react right away.

- Problems in reacting immediately to emotional triggers
- Reacting emotionally in the moment to triggers may be our default
- Step back and pause—maybe take a deep breath, try to separate from the situation and strive to stabilize your overwhelming impulses
 - Affirm to yourself that this is only temporary
 - Affirm to yourself that the youth's behavior is not personal to you and is meeting their needs

**STATE:**

The third way we can manage emotions in the face of challenging behaviors is to resist the urge to react right away. Reacting emotionally can result in power struggles and dysregulation for both parents and youth.

Teens who have experienced trauma and loss might react to your anger, disappointment, or frustration by further escalation, lying, becoming defensive, or immediately shutting down.

It is essential that you are regulated before responding to challenging behaviors that may have triggered you emotionally. Before responding with an argument driven by your emotions, step back and pause, take a deep breath, and try to stabilize your overwhelming impulses.

As you become more regulated, affirm to yourself that this is only temporary and that the youth's behavior is meeting their needs and is not personal to you.

SEGMENT III. REGULATION

SLIDES 9-11

10 MINUTES

[PPT #9]: REGULATION RECAP

Regulation: Recap from Dr. Perry

- Every experience or interaction is "processed" by our brains in an orderly way—starting with the lowest areas of the brain. At the lower level there is **no intention of behavior**.
- We feel and act before we "think"
- Most human behavior is influenced by these fast-thinking networks.
- Slow thinking—when we use our higher brain to reflect, plan, and then send signals down to act—is harder to do.

**STATE:**

In our first session, we watched a video with Dr. Perry talking about regulation. It is important to revisit these points as we think about responding to our youth's challenging behaviors.

This is the heart of trauma-informed parenting.

The reality is that the same rules that apply to the stress response system for our teens apply to us as well.

Let's recap.

[PPT #10]: SEQUENTIAL PROCESSING

Sequential Processing

New experience is "filtered" through past experience

10

STATE:

Every experience or interaction is processed by our brains in an orderly way—starting with the lowest areas of the brain, where our stress response is located. These areas will process and act on the incoming signals BEFORE they have a chance to reach higher areas of the brain, where the thinking and planning processes take place.

The lower levels of the brain are not able to place information in the context of time, which is needed to think through the consequences of one's behavior. This means that, when a person's survival response is activated, there is no conscious intention behind the behavior and they are not purposefully rejecting, lashing out, withdrawing, or displaying other challenging behaviors. This means that we feel and act before we think, which is the opposite of what we tell our children when we say "Think before you act".

Most human behavior is influenced by these fast-thinking networks. Slow thinking—when we use our higher brain to reflect, plan, and then send signals down to act—is harder to do.

[PPT #11]: REGULATION RECAP (CONTINUED)

Regulation: Recap from Dr. Perry

- Need to get through the lower, more "primitive" or instinctual parts of the brain
- Trying to reason with a dysregulated person is folly and often simply escalates them.
- Stop reacting in the moment and begin to anticipate how our teens may respond—expecting their stress response
 - (1) stay regulated ourselves
 - (2) help our teen become regulated before we can begin to reason and talk through the behavior itself.
- Once triggered, your teen cannot respond thoughtfully until he or she is calm again
- Ten Tips Series: Understanding Hyperarousal handout: Session #2.

11

STATE:

In order to get to the higher areas of the brain—the smartest part of the brain—we first need to get through the lower, more primitive area of the brain. When we or our teens are dysregulated, information will get lost or short-circuited by these lower areas. This often leads to misunderstandings and ineffective responses. Trying to reason with a dysregulated person often simply escalates them. Respecting this response in ourselves, and in our teens, can lead to fewer arguments, escalations, and acting out.

This means that we must stop reacting in the moment and begin to anticipate our teen's stress response. When it happens, we must be willing to step back, take a breath, and realize that our reaction may cause or increase negative behavior. When our teens are dysregulated is not the time to hunker down because "we're right" or engage in power struggles because "we're in charge." These techniques won't work in the face of a dysregulated teen. We need to stay regulated ourselves, and help our teen become regulated so that we can relate to them and ultimately get to reasoning or talking through the behavior itself.

Understanding and Managing Youth's Challenging Behaviors, Part 1

Remember that when triggered, the emotional side of the brain will shut down the thinking side of the brain and your teen cannot respond thoughtfully until he or she is regulated and calm again. This happens at youth's pace, not by you telling them to do so. There is a saying that goes, "Never in the history of calming down has anyone calmed down by being told to calm down".

A resource to revisit is **RESOURCE #2.1: The NM Ten Tip Series: Understanding Hyperarousal** in the Resource Handbook in the Session Two section.



SEGMENT IV. RESPONDING TO YOUTH'S REJECTING, TESTING, AND CHALLENGING BEHAVIORS

SLIDES 12-53

45 MINUTES

[PPT #12]: RESPONDING TO YOUTH'S REJECTING, TESTING AND CHALLENGING BEHAVIORS

Responding to Youth's Rejecting, Testing, and Challenging Behaviors

"I talk to my son all the time. I even try to compliment him when I can, but he is out of control, and there's nothing I can do to control him. I'm at my wit's end!"

STATE:

Let's look at this statement: "I talk to my son all the time. I even try to compliment him when I can, but he is out of control, and there's nothing I can do to control him. I'm at my wit's end!"

Does this sound familiar to anyone?

12



[PPT #13]: RESPONDING TO YOUTH'S REJECTING, TESTING AND CHALLENGING BEHAVIORS (CONTINUED)

Responding to Youth's Rejecting, Testing, and Challenging Behaviors

- Understand that a child is not acting out of willful disobedience
- For children who have experienced trauma
 - Mind is altered
 - Behaviors are often desperate means
 - Taking back control of their lives and bodies
 - An attempt to isolate oneself to prevent future hurt
 - Result of being unable to access executive functioning and problem-solving skills

13

STATE:

The key to responding to youth's rejecting, testing, and challenging behaviors is first understanding that a child is not acting out of willful disobedience.

These behaviors are often desperate means of taking back control of their lives and bodies in an attempt to prevent future hurt, or are the result of being unable to connect to their executive functioning and problem-solving skills.

[PPT #14]: IMPACT OF TRAUMA

Impact of Trauma



14

STATE:

We're going to do a brief activity now that will help us gain a deeper understanding of the impact of past trauma experiences on the youth's present behavior.

ACTIVITY



INSTRUCTIONS: Explain that you have two identical bottles of soda. Pick up and shake one, stating: "This bottle is a youth and the shaking represents the experiences of trauma they have had". Pass the bottle to the next participant and instruct that the bottle be passed around the room, stating: "I'd like each of you to give the bottle a shake and name a stressor that may have happened during the day to the youth". Ideas of stressors might include a triggered memory, insult from a peer, or a teacher interaction. Next place the shaken bottle next to the one that was not shaken and state: "At a quick glance, you cannot tell the difference between these two bottles. Often our triggers or "shakes" are invisible to someone else. But what happens if we try to interact with the shaken "youth" without attending to their "shakes"?" Ensure the intended response, which is that the youth explodes, is stated before moving on.



INSTRUCTIONS (CONTINUED): Next inform participants that you will pass the shaken bottle around the room, asking each person to tap the top and name a strategy to calm the triggers or undo the damage. Examples include: time to unwind and de-stress, mindfulness techniques, classroom strategies to minimize stress, fun with a friend, sensory activities. When the bottle gets back to you, open the cap to demonstrate that it will not explode. If you begin to open the top and you sense that the soda is not settled, explain to participants that this like how we need to be “attuned” to our youth in that sometimes we think they are ready to engage, but we need to watch for signs as we begin to interact with them that ensure they are truly regulated and ready to relate.

[PPT #15]: RESILIENCY FACTORS AND HEALING STRATEGIES

Resiliency Factors and Healing Strategies



15

STATE:

The same way that those taps helped to settle the carbonation in the bottle, calming words and activities that are regulating, and thoughtful interactions and a soothing presence that help you relate to the youth, can help minimize the explosive reaction to stress in a youth with a history of trauma and loss.

[PPT #16]: SENSORY ACTIVITIES

Sensory Activities for Supporting Positive Development and Behaviors

- Proprioception: the body's ability to sense itself
- Vestibular: movement and balance; centered in inner ear
- Tactile: sense of touch
- Auditory: sense of hearing
- Visual: sense of sight
- Olfactory: sense of smell

16

STATE:

Another area of impact that may be affecting a youth's behavior is their sensory systems. These systems include:

- ▶ proprioception (the body's awareness of itself),
- ▶ vestibular (relating to movement and balance),
- ▶ tactile (sense of touch),
- ▶ auditory,
- ▶ visual, and
- ▶ olfactory (sense of smell).

Understanding and Managing Youth's Challenging Behaviors, Part 1

RESOURCE #5.1: Sensory Activities is a great overview of how the sensory systems can be affected and some strategies to help your youth that you can incorporate into your parenting skills suitcase.

Let's focus now on additional skills for our suitcases that will strengthen our ability to effectively respond to and manage a youth's rejecting, testing, and challenging behaviors.

[PPT #17]: RESPONDING TO YOUTH'S REJECTING, TESTING AND CHALLENGING BEHAVIORS
(CONTINUED)

Responding to Youth's Rejecting, Testing, and Challenging Behaviors

- Relationship building is essential to responding to behaviors
- Opportunities for you and your teen to have positive, playful time together to build relationship even in the midst of challenging behaviors
- Counter any intuitive response to curtail the positive things you do together as a family in response to negative and challenging behaviors



STATE:

A strong relationship between parent and youth is essential for effective behavior management. This means that you must be intentional about making sure that you and your teen have opportunities to have positive, playful time together, even in the midst of challenging behaviors. As an example, a teen may be grounded from going out with friends but should still be allowed and encouraged to participate in family outings and activities.

The priority in parenting youth who have experienced trauma, loss, and rejection is nurturing your attachment with them. As in the example just given, the youth's misbehavior was addressed by taking away time with friends but not by taking away time with family. This is the idea behind structure and nurture that we talked about in Session Three.

[PPT #18]: RESPONDING TO YOUTH'S REJECTING, TESTING AND CHALLENGING BEHAVIORS
(CONTINUED)

Responding to Youth's Rejecting, Testing, and Challenging Behaviors

From an adoptive parent: "In terms of discipline, we always made grounding a bit different. If our teenage kids were grounded, that meant that they couldn't go to a friend's house or have a friend over, BUT they could do things with us like going to dinner, the movies, on a hike—whatever we parents felt like doing. This allowed us to have quality time together during a stage in their lives when they might not otherwise be around us often. Over time, our teens began telling friends they were grounded in order to save face or avoid bad situations, knowing they could still enjoy time with us."



STATE:

One adoptive parent explained her family's use of grounding this way: "In terms of discipline, we always made grounding a bit different. If our teenage kids were grounded, that meant that they couldn't go to a friend's house or have a friend over, BUT they could do things with us such as going to dinner, the movies, on a hike—whatever we parents felt like doing. This allowed us to have quality time together during a stage in their lives when they might not otherwise be around us very often. Over time, our teens began telling friends they were grounded in order to save face or avoid bad situations, knowing they could still enjoy time with us."

This is a great example of a way to balance structure and nurture.

[PPT #19]: RESPONDING TO YOUTH'S REJECTING, TESTING AND CHALLENGING BEHAVIORS (CONTINUED)

Responding to Youth's Rejecting, Testing, and Challenging Behaviors

- It is important to choose when you respond and not respond to every challenging behavior that comes up.
- It is important to understand the meaning of your teen's behaviors so you can respond to the causes, needs, and motivations behind the behavior.



19

**STATE:**

It is important to choose when you respond to challenging behaviors.

As long as there aren't any safety concerns, you don't always have to intervene. It could be that you prioritize which behaviors you respond to so that you are not trying to address too many things at once. Or that you wait until you have the patience, knowledge, and ability to fully address the issue at hand.

As discussed earlier, it is important for parents to be mindful of their verbal and non-verbal responses, such as the tone of voice and body posture, which may be triggers for teens. Without intending to, we may cause more fear or anger with our responses. Remember that a teen with a trauma or loss history may experience your words as shouting, even when the volume of your voice is not raised.

[PPT #20]: TEXTING AS A STRATEGY

Texting as a Strategy

- Comfortable, familiar and routine to youth
- Natural tendency to respond
- Easier to take strong, negative emotions out of the message
- It provides an opportunity to read and edit



20


**STATE:**

Many parents of teens have found that texting is an excellent way to connect and communicate with their youth. There are several reasons for this.

- ▶ It reaches the youth in a way that is comfortable, familiar and routine to them.
- ▶ There is a natural inclination to respond to the text, since this is the usual way teens communicate with one another.
- ▶ It makes it easier to take strong, negative emotions out of the message given, as well as the way we receive them.
- ▶ It provides an opportunity to read and edit what you want to say that speaking does not.

[PPT #21]: TEXTING AS A STRATEGY (CONTINUED)

Texting as a Strategy



You call this a family – this isn't a family!

"I need to think about what you are saying. I'll need a few minutes."



STATE:

Let’s take a look at this interaction.

Clearly, this is a potentially explosive interaction.

Notice how mom stays regulated and removes herself from the situation.

[PPT #22]: TEXTING AS A STRATEGY (CONTINUED)

Regulate, Relate, Reason

Mom:

- “What you said hurt my feelings, but I thought your feelings must be pretty hurt too. Can we talk about them this way?” (by text)
- “Thanks, I appreciate that.”
- “Wow. That has to feel terrible. What can we do to fix it or help you? We didn’t even know you were feeling that way. I am so sorry.”

Daughter:

- “I guess so. I have to think about it.”
- “I just don’t feel like I’m part of the family. I don’t think anyone likes me.”



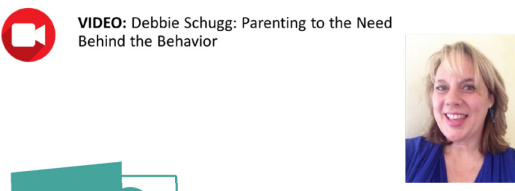
STATE:

Let’s take a moment to read this exchange through text messages between a mom and her daughter, showing how texting can defuse this potentially explosive interaction.

Without facial expression, tone, or body language, both mom and youth are able to get to a calm place, understand each other a bit better, and begin a conversation to make repairs to their relationship.

[PPT #23]: PARENTING TO THE NEED BEHIND THE BEHAVIOR

Parenting Your Youth



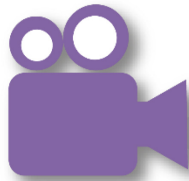
VIDEO: Debbie Schugg: Parenting to the Need Behind the Behavior



STATE:

We have been talking about the importance of understanding the meaning of your teen’s behaviors so you can respond to the causes, needs, and motivations behind the behavior.

Let’s re-visit a clip we saw in an earlier session of Debbie Schugg, talking about why this is so important.



SHOW participants the video “**Debbie Schugg: Parenting to the Need Behind the Behavior**”

2:19 MINUTES

[PPT #24]: RESPONDING TO YOUTH'S REJECTING, TESTING AND CHALLENGING BEHAVIORS
(CONTINUED)

Responding to Youth's Rejecting, Testing, and Challenging Behaviors

Behavior management is about teaching, not punishing or controlling.

Collaborative Problem Solving

• View that youth's behavioral challenges are:

- Best understood as the result of a gap in thinking skills, rather than as attention-seeking or manipulative behaviors.
- Best addressed by teaching youth the skills they lack rather than through reward and punishment or insistence on obedience.

<http://www.thinkkids.org/learn/our-collaborative-problem-solving-approach/>



24

STATE:

Behavior management is about teaching, not punishing or controlling. As we discussed earlier, regulation and relating must happen before we are able to move to reasoning and teaching.

You may remember from a previous session we shared tips for interacting with your youth from Dr. Perry, referred to as The Intimacy Barrier. One of those tips was to give your youth ‘elements’ of control’. Dr. Perry describes providing clear and unambiguous boundaries (such as expectations about physical harm to others or destruction of property) but within these ‘picking your battles.’ For example, if they don’t want to eat something, or do their homework, let them live with the consequences of their choices; be hungry and fail the class. Dr. Perry also noted the importance of giving options and learning like reflective listening or Collaborative Problem Solving.

Collaborative Problem Solving is a model of therapeutic parenting that is based on the concept of “skill not will.” It promotes the view that youth’s behavioral challenges are:

- ▶ Best understood as the result of a gap in thinking skills, rather than as attention-seeking or manipulative behaviors, and
- ▶ Best addressed by teaching youth the skills they lack rather than through reward and punishment or insistence on obedience.

RESOURCE #5.2: The Collaborative Problem Solving® (CPS)

Approach provides more information on Collaborative Problem Solving, and can be found in your Resource Handbook.

[PPT #25]: HELPING TEENS UNDERSTAND THEIR BEHAVIORS

Responding to Youth's Rejecting, Testing, and Challenging Behaviors

- Help teens understand their behavior.
- Be able to access *your* emotional intelligence and executive functioning

Do	Don't
Ask "What do you think you could have done instead?"	Ask "Why did you do this?"
Share how you might have felt in the situation	Label or try to get the teen to label their feelings

25

STATE:

It is also important for teens themselves to have opportunities to think about and better understand their behavior.

When both you and the youth are calm and regulated, try to relate to your youth through an open discussion about what led up to the behavior. What do they remember feeling in that moment? What was happening for them around the time the behavior happened?

- ▶ If a teen is unable to identify their feelings, tell them how you might have felt in that situation.

After spending some time reflecting, without giving in to the temptation to lecture, try to reason with the youth about what could be done differently next time.

- ▶ Avoid asking, "Why did you do this?" Instead, ask, "What do you think you could have done instead?"

By using the Regulate, Relate, Reason sequential engagement steps, you will show the youth that you are there to support them, no matter what.

Remember, teens who struggle to regulate their emotions will benefit from seeing you regulate your emotions and in doing so they can see how this allows you to access the top part of your brain so that you can consider solutions and start to solve problems.

[PPT #26]: HELPING TEENS UNDERSTAND THEIR BEHAVIORS (CONTINUED)

Responding to Youth's Rejecting, Testing, and Challenging Behaviors

Encourage the teen to recognize what they are feeling in these moments of stress: How their body is working to help them respond to difficult situations

"What did you feel in your stomach when this situation happened? What did you hear? What did you see?"

Not every incident can lead to this productive conversation

Handout #5.2: Positive Behavior Management Strategies



26

STATE:

Encouraging a youth to recognize what they are feeling in these moments of stress can provide them with a way to understand how their body is helping them respond to difficult situations. This can help them feel more in control of themselves and their decisions.

Some questions you can ask to focus on their physical state are:

- ▶ What did you feel in your stomach when this situation happened?
- ▶ What did you hear?
- ▶ What did you see?

Understanding and Managing Youth’s Challenging Behaviors, Part 1

It is important to remember that not every incident can lead to a productive conversation. Right after a high-intensity moment, the youth will likely not be regulated and therefore not ready for reasoning yet. In those moments, show the child that you are there for them by helping them regulate and asking them if they need anything; a way to relate in that moment.

With these key points in mind, let’s look at **HANDOUT #5.2: Positive Behavior Management Strategies**.

We will use this chart as a framework for discussion. You will see that the strategies are organized into four major categories:

1. Giving something;
2. Changing the environment;
3. Teaching; and
4. Doing nothing.

We will talk about these strategies in more detail shortly.



HANDOUT #5.2: POSITIVE BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

Giving Something	Changing the Environment	Teaching	Doing Nothing
<p>REWARDING Giving something meaningful to a youth following a behavior (by intention or by chance), resulting in the promotion of that behavior.</p>	<p>REDUCING STIMULUS Being aware of the volume on devices like TVs and radios, limiting excessive activity in the home, moving people in or out of a room.</p>	<p>INSTRUCTION Using explanations, cues, and corrections rather than commands to promote a behavior.</p>	<p>IGNORING Decreasing attention to a negative behavior (or providing a neutral emotional expression) and focusing on building the relationship first.</p>
<p>LOGICAL CONSEQUENCES Providing a consequence that would not naturally follow (but is connected to the behavior) in order to discourage it in the future.</p>	<p>ROUTINES AND STRUCTURE Creating and utilizing routines and providing higher levels of structure to create predictability in the environment.</p>	<p>MODELING “Teaching by example,” or demonstrating a behavior, (consciously or not), to promote a behavior.</p>	<p>NATURAL CONSEQUENCES Not interfering with the consequences that normally follow a behavior, (as long as they are safe) to discourage a behavior.</p>

[PPT #27]: POSITIVE BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

Responding to Youth's Rejecting, Testing, and Challenging Behaviors

What is NOT in Handout #5.2

- Punishing
 - Pain or discomfort (physical striking or emotional from verbal abuse and yelling)
 - Work (extra chores, excessive physical exercise)
 - Public humiliation, excessive isolation, or excessive physical restraint
- Time-out: Isolating and separating the teen from the rest of the family

**STATE:**

Notice that punishment and time-outs are NOT included on this chart.

Typical punishments include:

- ▶ Pain or discomfort (physical or emotional from verbal abuse and yelling)
- ▶ Work (extra chores, excessive physical exercise)
- ▶ Public humiliation, excessive isolation, or excessive physical restraint

Time-out (isolating and separating a teen from the rest of the family) sends the message that “we don’t want you with us”.

The focus of trauma-informed parenting is teaching the skills that our teens don’t currently have—not punishing them for behaviors they don’t yet have the skills to stop or control.

Punishments and time-outs create barriers to relationship building and can be very troubling for children and teens who have experienced trauma, loss, abandonment, and rejection.

Let’s consider how we can use the positive behavior management strategies in Handout #5.2 in response to youths’ rejecting, testing, and challenging behaviors.

[PPT #28]: IDENTIFY THE BASIC REWARD

Rewarding

Identify the Basic Reward

Messages:

- 1) Your *needs* are important to me, and I am paying attention to them
- 2) Your *behavior* is important to me and doing the best you can will help you get your *wants* met.

- Teen verbalization or through observation
- Tangible and immediate
- Be careful about using food as a reward
- Give teen options about rewards that get their *wants* met

**STATE:**

Let’s start by discussing rewards, which can be used for both increasing positive behaviors and decreasing negative behaviors.

The first step is knowing what your youth likes and wants, so that you can respond in ways that will actually influence the behavior. Parents are encouraged to involve their youth in discussing the rewards as well as the behaviors that are being encouraged or discouraged. This sends the message that, “Your needs and behavior are important to me, and I am paying attention to them.”

When identifying potential rewards, make sure they are real and immediate.

Be careful about using food as a reward. Youth who have experienced a lack of control in early life may have strong control issues about food. In addition, the more rewarding foods are often filled with sugar, which increases hyperactivity.

Rewarding

- Be aware of their teen's abilities so as not to mislabel "can't" behavior as "won't" behavior and risk setting teens up for failure
- Avoid rewarding the undesirable behaviors
- Reward the **absence** or **decline** of problem behaviors: "Catch" your teen doing something positive and provide opportunities to praise and reward



29



STATE:

When identifying undesirable behaviors, it is essential to be aware of the youth's abilities so you don't mistake behaviors they "can't" do as ones they "won't" do. For example, parents think a youth isn't trying when he really just doesn't understand instructions or have the underlying skills to complete the task. Rather than take a risk of looking or feeling dumb, he may refuse to do anything.

The cultural perspective must also be considered. For instance, in his tribal culture, a youth asked to take out the garbage may have all day to do it, as long as it is done before the scheduled pick-up. In mainstream culture, if he doesn't do it right away, he may be seen as disobedient or stubborn.

In many cultures, looking an adult or authority figure in the eye is thought to be disrespectful. Knowing the abilities and cultural norms for your youth will help you be a more effective trauma-informed parent.

Parents can praise and reward the absence or decline of problem behaviors. This provides opportunities to "catch" your youth doing something positive, instead of focusing on the negative, which parents tend to do more of.

Rewarding a decline in problem behavior

Every time her sister irritates her, Melissa (14) hits her. One time, after being irritated, Melissa yelled at her instead. Her mother said, "I'm proud of you for not hitting your sister" and sat down to watch a video with her.



How would it feel to "reward" the decline of problem behavior when the behavior is not 100 percent of what you want?

30



STATE:

Let's look at this example and provide you with an opportunity to share your thoughts.

Turn to the person next to you and talk about this question: How would it feel to "reward" the decline of problem behavior, when the behavior is not 100 percent of what you want?

NOTE: Ask for a few participants to share how they answered this question.

Rewarding

Identify Desirable Behaviors

- Teens don't automatically know what to do; constantly test their environment and their parents
- Parents: Develop behavior standards for youth that are reasonable: Setting expectations based on reasonable values and an understanding of the teen's developmental age, and then encouraging teens to follow them.



STATE:

Many teens come to families not knowing what is desirable and will often test their parents, even without meaning to. Parents need to work with the youth to set expectations that are reasonable and developmentally appropriate.

Remember that the youth's "associations" will also be at work.

Let's brainstorm some positive behaviors you might want to see from your youth.

NOTE: As participants mention behaviors, list them on a flip chart. Add the following if not already mentioned:

- ▶ Being honest and truthful
- ▶ Being helpful or doing things for others
- ▶ Taking responsibility for one's behavior
- ▶ Attending school on time
- ▶ Completing homework on time
- ▶ Speaking in a respectful manner to others
- ▶ Carrying out chores or responsibilities at home
- ▶ Spending time with family, including required activities (celebrations, dinners, holidays) without protest
- ▶ Participating in extracurricular activities
- ▶ Communicating clearly with parents about their activities, whereabouts, plans, etc.
- ▶ Doing what they say they'll do; i.e., being where they said they'd be when they said they'd be there
- ▶ Returning home at an agreed-upon time
- ▶ Practicing self-care

STATE:

Keep in mind that while these are common desirable social behaviors to teach and reinforce, many of these will be difficult for teens who have experienced trauma, and teens won't do all of them all the time.

[PPT #32]: REWARDING (CONTINUED)

Rewarding



Begin with one behavior, and once that improves significantly, focus on another.

32

STATE:

Remember to start small. Begin with one behavior, and once that improves significantly, focus on another.

Working on one thing at a time as another great way to balance structure and nurture.

[PPT #33]: DELIVER THE REWARD

Rewarding: Deliver the Reward

- When the desired behaviors occur, provide the reward to reinforce the positive behaviors and increase the chances that they will repeat it.
- Reward your teen every time he or she displays a desired behavior, as soon as possible after the behavior is completed.
- Include an explanation for the reward
The sooner a reward follows a behavior, the greater its influence.



33

STATE:

Reward your teen every time he or she displays a desired behavior. Include an explanation for the reward, instead of assuming that your teen knows what he or she did well.

Timing is critical. The sooner a reward follows a behavior, the greater its influence.

[PPT #34]: REWARDING EXAMPLE

Rewarding Example

- Randy, age 15, has been in foster care with your family for five months. He walks to school, which is eight blocks from your home, and is expected to arrive at 8AM. The school has let you know that Randy has been more than an hour late for school for the past two days. You have previously identified the rewards that Randy would like.

How might you discuss the use of rewards with Randy in this situation?



34

STATE:

Let's look at an example to help you consider how you might set up rewards with your youth.



INSTRUCTIONS: Divide participants into small groups and ask them to turn their attention to the case example on the slide. Ask each group to share a few ideas about how they would talk with Randy about rewards.

[PPT #35]: ENVIRONMENT CONTROL

Environmental Control

Making changes in the physical environment to influence behavioral changes

- Track the youth's behavior
- Write down what happens leading up to the challenging behavior
- Note the behavior itself with the exact words and actions
- Write down how you or others respond to the behavior
- Think about whether there is a pattern that may be contributing to a perfect storm for your teen

35



STATE:

Let's now consider Environmental Control.

This technique involves making changes in the physical environment to influence behavioral changes.

The first step to help you make changes in the physical environment is to track the behavior by writing down what happens leading up to it. Note the behavior itself with the exact words and actions, as well as how you or others respond to the behavior.

After you take these notes, think about whether there is a pattern that may be contributing to this behavior. Is the environment too stimulating? Are they just tired? Hungry? Anxious about something coming up? Worried about failing in the activity being performed? Is the issue one specific behavior or a set of behaviors?

[PPT #36]: EXAMPLES OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL

Environmental Control: Examples

- Modifying schedules
- Structuring activities
- Introducing people into the child's space
- Changing the parent's behavior
- Removing the teen from a stimulating environment to help them calm down
- Provide cues to help them know a transition is coming
- Be cautious when it comes to using this technique—you don't want the teen to feel even more powerless.

36



STATE:

Environmental control may include modifying schedules, structuring activities, introducing people into the youth's space, and changing the parent's behavior. It may also include removing the youth from a stimulating environment to help them calm down.

One specific example of an environmental control is to provide cues to help the youth know that a transition is coming. For example, you may say, "You have another 15 minutes on the computer before you start your homework. Would you like a reminder when there's only 5 minutes left so you can finish what you're doing and save it?"

Note that asking for their input (within reasonable limits) allows teens to have a sense of control rather than feeling powerless. This is critical for teens who have experienced trauma and were denied control over their life and body.

[PPT #37]: ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL TECHNIQUES



STATE:

Let’s do a short activity to explore this further.



INSTRUCTIONS: Ask participants to look at **HANDOUT #5.3: Environmental Control Techniques** and with a partner, complete the chart on environmental control techniques that they would use and how the technique would provide behavior management. Review with the group the example provided for Don before they start their discussions.



HANDOUT #5.3: ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL TECHNIQUES

Situation	Environmental Control Technique	How This Provides Behavior Management
Don, age 16, is hanging out after school with kids who smoke and drink on the street. Two neighbors have called you to complain about his behavior.	<i>You talk with Don about his interests and based on what he tells you, you enroll him in a karate class after school.</i>	<i>The new activity removes one opportunity to hang out with the kids who smoke and drink.</i>
Rudy, age 17, has been raiding the family liquor cabinet when you are away from home.	<i>You remove all liquor from your home.</i>	<i>Change in the home physical environment removes the opportunity.</i>
Almost every day, Charlene, age 15, comes home angry from school, complaining about how awful her teachers are. She then argues with everyone and ends up slamming the door to her bedroom.	<i>You invite Charlene’s friend, Laurie, to come home with Charlene after school and to stay for dinner.</i>	<i>The introduction of a new person creates extra attention and socializing opportunities, and changes the home atmosphere, which disrupts the previous pattern of parent-teen interactions.</i>

[PPT #38]: MODELING

MODELING: Teaching by example

- Youth constantly look for behavioral models
- Parents are teaching their children by example whether they mean to or not.
- Positive modeling improves odds that a teen will follow the demonstrated behavior

**STATE:**

Modeling, or teaching by example, is the most powerful parenting technique.

Youth constantly look for behavioral models, although they may not admit or realize it, and often follow adult behaviors.

Through their daily behavior, attitudes, and expressions, parents are teaching their children by example, whether they mean to or not. Although positive modeling does not guarantee that a teen will follow the demonstrated behavior, it improves the odds. Knowing this, parents can model proactively.

[PPT #39]: PROACTIVE MODELING METHODS

Proactive Modeling Methods

- Decide how you want your youth to act and plan precisely what behaviors you will demonstrate to him or her
- Demonstrate behaviors that could be potentially difficult for a teen to learn.
- Practice self-improvement
- Ask for feedback from friends, other parents, and/or professionals
- Reflect on your self-assessment and the questions that relate to trauma-informed parenting.

**STATE:**

Decide how you want your youth to act and plan precisely what behaviors you will demonstrate to him or her.

Demonstrate behaviors that could be potentially difficult for a teen to learn.

For teens who are not in touch with their emotions, this might include modeling expression of feelings, sensitivity, and listening skills. Assertiveness, self-care, and body acceptance might be helpful to model for teens who are struggling with self-esteem.

Choose times and settings to model these behaviors that will increase the likelihood of your youth paying attention and being receptive to them (for example, when you know he or she is in a good mood).

Limit your teens exposure to people who may be modeling undesirable behaviors, including friends or negative role models of media, entertainment, and sports.

Reflect on any of your own behavior that may be teaching a teen undesirable conduct. This can be a difficult task for parents and asking for feedback from friends, other parents, and/or professionals can help with this process.

[PPT #40]: MODELING (CONTINUED)

Modeling



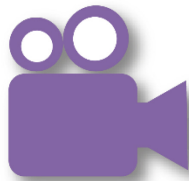
VIDEO: Heather Forbes, adoptive mother and author of *Beyond Consequences*, talks about modeling



40

STATE:

Let's watch a clip of Heather Forbes, adoptive mother and author of *Beyond Consequences*, talk about modeling.



1:53 MINUTES

SHOW participants the video “**Heather Forbes: Children Learn by Modeling.**”

[PPT #41]: MODELING (CONTINUED)

Engage Teens in Modeling

- Engage your teen in a round of role-playing by taking turns acting out a distressing behavior
 - Have the other person practice/model expressing their feelings then have a conversation about it.
- Talk about the different responses people can have to upsetting situations—from crying, to getting mad, to running away, to having a conversation.
- Provide teens with opportunities for “do-overs” so they can have a second chance of responding to a situation in a more productive way.

41

STATE:

Let's consider some ways that you can use modeling.

Engage your teen in a round of role-playing by taking turns acting out a distressing behavior and having the other person practice/model expressing their feelings. Then have a conversation about it.

Talk about the different responses people can have to upsetting situations—from crying, to getting mad, to running away, to having a conversation.

Provide teens with opportunities for “do-overs” so they can have a second chance of responding to a situation in a more productive way.

[PPT #42]: MODELING ROLEPLAY

Modeling Roleplay

- Pair up and practice role-playing a scenario where one models desired behaviors to the other
- Come up with your own scenario or use one of these suggestions:
 - Your teen is in line at the school cafeteria and another teen pushes in front
 - Asking a teacher for help with schoolwork
 - Accepting a compliment
 - Receiving feedback
 - Asking someone out on a date
 - Being turned down for a date

42

**STATE:**

Let's take a few minutes to practice modeling.



INSTRUCTIONS: Have parents pair up and practice role-playing a scenario they come up with or one of the following: responding to a teen who pushes in front of them in line at the school cafeteria, asking a teacher for help with schoolwork, accepting a compliment, receiving feedback on a school assignment, asking someone out on a date, being turned down for a date. Consider asking participants to act out their scenario in different ways and discuss the pros and cons of each.

[PPT #43]: INSTRUCTING

INSTRUCTING

- INSTRUCTING:** Teaching a youth how to do something or telling a youth to carry out a behavior already mastered
- Assess a teen's developmental needs
 - If a teen struggles to understand instruction, limit instructions to one step at a time
 - Provide visual examples of instructions when it comes to daily routines
 - Have a plan in place to address inevitable noncompliance
 - Explain rationale for a request or instruction or respond, "Because it is important to me that you do this."
 - Instruction: Explanations, prompts, and corrections to help a teen master

43

**STATE:**

Instruction involves explanations, prompts, and corrections to help a teen master a task or carry out a behavior already mastered.

Parents sometimes assume that teens know what to do and that they don't require instruction. Remember, many tasks that seem simple or obvious to you may be completely new to a teen who has been impacted by trauma or who has brain injury from prenatal exposure to drugs or alcohol.

It is important to assess a teen's developmental needs; if they struggle to understand instruction, limit your instructions to one step at a time. Provide visual examples of instructions for daily routines such as getting ready in the morning or preparing for bed.

Have a plan in place for when your teen is not able to meet your expectations. Will you use other behavior management techniques such as modeling and rewarding?

Explaining the reason for a request or instruction can be helpful to teenagers who are more mature.

Instructing

Handout #5.4
**How to Improve the Frequency and Accuracy of Your Youth's
 Response to Instruction**

Be prepared that any of these will not result in immediate change.
 The process takes time, patience, and repetition.

44

STATE:

Let's look now at **HANDOUT #5.4: How to Improve the Frequency and Accuracy of Your Youth's Response to Instruction.**

NOTE: Review the five points on the handout.



HANDOUT #5.4: HOW TO IMPROVE THE FREQUENCY AND ACCURACY OF YOUR YOUTH'S RESPONSE TO INSTRUCTION

1. Make sure you have your teenager's full attention before giving an instruction.
2. Avoid commanding language; generally, teens do not want to be told what to do. If a parent sends the message, "Here is what you do" rather than "Do this, do that," the teen will likely respond with more willingness and effort.
3. Tell the teen what you want them to do, *not* what you *don't* want them to do. Instead of saying, "Get your feet off of the table," say, "Please put your feet on the floor."
4. Give tips to help your teen perform the behavior correctly as they are completing it, rather than waiting for them to make a mistake and having to correct it.
5. Praise compliance, cooperation, effort, and attempts that come close to the desired response. Encourage your teen to keep trying until she gets it right and promote the idea of trial and error to improve future efforts.

STATE:

Note that points #2 and #3 (avoiding commanding language and telling the teen what you want them to do, *not* what you *don't* want them to do) are often the most challenging and may take the most practice.

IGNORING

IGNORING: Removing attention given to a behavior to decrease or eliminate it.

Assumption: A youth is acting a certain way to influence a parent, but the behavior does not necessarily demand a response

When ignoring a behavior:

Do not: Leave the room or totally shut your youth out.

Do: Remove enough attention so that you are not engaging them or reinforcing their behavior.

Ignoring is most powerful when a parent can maintain a neutral emotional expression.

**STATE:**

Ignoring as a parenting strategy doesn't mean ignoring the teen. Rather, it involves removing attention given to a behavior to decrease or eliminate it.

The thought behind ignoring is that a youth is acting a certain way to influence a parent. For instance, a youth may try to get a reward, escape a consequence, or provoke angry or guilty feelings. These attempts could be verbal, or may involve other behaviors such as acting tough and slamming doors.

When ignoring a behavior, the parent does not leave the room or totally shut the youth out. However, they must remove enough attention so that they are not interacting with them or reinforcing their behavior. For example, the parent may change the subject if it's a verbal interaction or continue what they were doing prior to the disruptive behavior, such as cooking or watching tv.

Ignoring is most powerful when a parent can appear calm by maintaining a neutral emotional expression.

Ignoring: Roleplay

Practice Ignoring:

Pair up; one person is the parent trying to maintain a neutral expression while the other person, playing the teen, makes hurtful or annoying statements

**STATE:**

Let's practice ignoring.



INSTRUCTIONS: Have parents pair up and decide who will play the parent and who will play the teen. The parent will try to maintain a neutral expression while the teen says hurtful or annoying statements.

[PPT #47]: IGNORING (CONTINUED)

Ignoring should only be used under the following conditions:

- A teen uses words or behaviors for the purpose of getting his/her way.
- A teen uses words or behaviors to test a parent's reaction or to provoke them.
- The language or behavior is undesirable, but is not dangerous.
- You can endure the behavior until it stops.

**STATE:**

Ignoring should only be used under the following conditions:

- ▶ A teen uses words or behaviors for the purpose of getting his/her way.
- ▶ A teen uses words or behaviors to test a parent's reaction or to provoke them.
- ▶ The language or behavior is undesirable, but is not dangerous.
- ▶ You can endure the behavior until it stops.

[PPT #48]: IGNORING (CONTINUED)

Ignoring

Common Misuses of Ignoring

- Ignoring a teenager's attempts for attention
- Ignoring aggression
- Partial ignoring
- Unsuccessful ignoring

**STATE:**

Situations in which ignoring should NOT be used include:

- ▶ A teenager's need for attention and nurturing. Ignoring should not be used if a teen is engaging in attention-seeking behavior, even if it is negative or annoying. This deprives a teen of a healthy developmental need and hurts your relationship with him. If a teen is seeking attention in an inappropriate manner, your first priority is to teach positive attention-seeking behavior, rather than ignoring the negative behavior.
- ▶ In response to aggression. We will talk much more about aggression in Session Six.
- ▶ Dangerous behaviors such as fighting, suicidal threats, or promiscuity (since ignoring them may result in harmful consequences).

Be careful about "partial ignoring".

- ▶ If you initially ignore a behavior, but then give attention to it before it stops, you are rewarding a youth's persistence in that behavior—they learn that if they practice the behavior long enough, they will get their way.

If ignoring is unsuccessful, for example, it increases your child's anger or agitation, try another strategy. However, ignoring may still be effective at a later time.

Ignoring

Handout #5.5

Would you use ignoring as a tool in the following situations?

49

STATE:

Let's do an activity now to help us consider when we should and should not use ignoring.



INSTRUCTIONS: Refer participants to look at **HANDOUT #5.5: Would you use ignoring as a tool in the following situations?** Divide participants into pairs or small groups to discuss the examples on the handout and share their own personal examples. Ask participants to share their ideas.



HANDOUT #5.5: WOULD YOU USE IGNORING AS A TOOL IN THE FOLLOWING SITUATIONS?

Would you use ignoring as a tool in the following situations?

1. Sandra, your 17-year-old adopted daughter, knows that her curfew is 11PM on Saturday nights. She begins begging you on Saturday morning to extend her curfew to 1AM because of plans that she has. When asked to describe her plans, she is evasive.
2. Joel, your 16-year-old in foster care, is furious that you and the family are going to a family reunion and he is expected to attend. He calls you “stupid” and your family “disgusting” and insists that he will not go. He slams his bedroom door multiple times.
3. Jamie, your 16-year-old niece who is in your guardianship, constantly seeks attention from boys. She only talks about boys in her class and seems to only want to spend time with boys.

NOTE: Below are some responses that can be shared if needed.

- ▶ **Sandra:** After making clear that the curfew will not be extended, a parent may use ignoring—turning to another task or changing the subject—to remove attention and decrease/eliminate Sandra's begging or whining behavior.

Understanding and Managing Youth's Challenging Behaviors, Part 1

- ▶ **Joel:** Joel's behavior likely reflects deep-seated issues related to his family of origin and current family relationships. Ignoring his behavior would prevent an opportunity to explore these important needs and would likely hurt the parents' relationship with him. If the parent attempts to discuss his feelings and he still refuses to go, it might be appropriate for a parent to stay home with him.
- ▶ **Jamie:** Jamie's behavior is not a matter to be ignored. Attention needs to be paid to how she is relating to her peers in general and boys in particular.

[PPT #50]: LOGICAL CONSEQUENCES

LOGICAL CONSEQUENCES

- As logical and natural as possible
- Short-term
- Have your teen help you come up with the consequence of a poor choice to help them better remember and understand, as well as to increase a sense of control
- Expect teens to test limits several times
- Offer the opportunity for them to try the plan again a few times if needed
- Remain calm in your tone and body language and stay consistent.
- For youth who feel they have lost everything of value to them already, the loss of things may be meaningless
- Stacking consequences on top of each other for each issue is not effective

**STATE:**

To be effective, consequences should be as logical and as closely connected to the behavior as possible.

Consequences should be short-term. If your teen is irresponsible with their electronics, for example, then they can be taken away for a day or two. Extending the consequence for longer periods of time will leave them feeling defeated.

Also, stacking consequences on top of each other (such as taking away the teen's video games and their cell phone) is not effective.

Remain calm in your tone and body language and stay consistent.

Remember to choose only consequences that you are able to follow through with.

It is important to keep in mind that for youth who feel they have already lost everything of value to them, taking away things may not have the intended impact.

Avoid limiting or removing extra-curricular activities, since these are important in building resilience and socialization skills. It is critical that youth have these opportunities and they should not be considered as privileges that need to be earned or that can be taken away.

NATURAL CONSEQUENCES

NATURAL CONSEQUENCES: Allowing a teen to experience consequences that normally occur following a behavior.

- Teaches the limits of behavior
- Allows youth to learn from their mistakes
- Must continually educate youth about potential consequences of their behavior

Do you have any examples of times you have used natural consequences? What were the results?

51

STATE:

Natural consequences involve allowing a teen to experience the consequences that would normally result from a behavior. The use of natural consequences allows youth to learn from their mistakes.

Parents must continually educate youth about the potential consequences of their behavior so that they are never surprised when their behavior brings about a negative result. This can be done by having their teens role-play possible outcomes to their behavior.

Teens with significant learning or attention problems not be able to anticipate consequences. Parents can use modeling or instruction ahead of time to be sure that their teen understands the potential consequences of their actions.

ACTIVITY



INSTRUCTIONS: Refer participants to **HANDOUT #5.6: Logical and Natural Consequences**. Divide participants into pairs or small groups and ask them to discuss whether logical or natural consequences might be used in each situation. Following their completion of the chart, ask participants to share their ideas in a large group discussion. Ask them to explore which natural consequences they need to prevent to ensure safety (drunk driving accidents, for example). Notes are provided in the sample handout that may be shared if needed.



HANDOUT #5.6 LOGICAL AND NATURAL CONSEQUENCES

Situation	Would you use logical or natural consequences?
Veronica, age 16, arrives home drunk, after driving.	<p>Natural – <i>The hangover may be a deterrent to drinking.</i></p> <p>Logical – <i>Veronica loses her driving privileges or is grounded for a time; informing the foster care agency or courts (if in foster care or court-involved).</i></p>
Ricky, age 15, cheated on a test at school. He has been suspended for a week. He wants to go to school to be with his friends and asks you to intervene and tell the principal that he has emotional problems, it was all a mistake, and it will not happen again.	<p>Natural – <i>He doesn't get to see his friends.</i></p>
Donita, age 17, in a rage, tore up a new blouse that her mother bought for her. She wants her mother to buy her another one.	<p>Natural – <i>She has to go without her favorite blouse.</i></p>
Jaxon, age 13, took a bike from the neighbor's house. He damaged it attempting jumps off a bike ramp.	<p>Logical – <i>Have Jaxon apologize and then pay back the damages by mowing lawns or using allowance money.</i></p> <p><i>Note: If the neighbor pressed charges, that would be a significant natural consequence.</i></p>

[PPT #52]: SUMMARY OF POSITIVE BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

Responding to Youth's Rejecting, Testing, and Challenging Behaviors

Six parenting skills that we can pack into our suitcases:

- Rewarding
- Environmental Control
- Modeling
- Instruction
- Ignoring
- Logical and Natural Consequences



52

**STATE:**

We have considered six parenting skills that we can pack into our suitcases:

- ▶ Rewarding
- ▶ Environmental Control
- ▶ Modeling
- ▶ Instruction
- ▶ Ignoring
- ▶ Logical and Natural Consequences

It is important to keep in mind that the strategies you choose will not necessarily be effective for every situation. You also should expect testing by your teen, which is normal behavior.

It is a good idea to have your teen help you come up with rewards and logical consequences for challenging behaviors in advance. This enhances their sense of power and control and ensures that rewards and consequences will be more effective.

Regardless of the parenting strategy that you use, it is critical that you always incorporate the Regulate, Relate, Reason framework.

[PPT #53]: POSITIVE PARENTING STRATEGIES FOR THE TEENAGE YEARS

Responding to Youth's Rejecting, Testing, and Challenging Behaviors

Resource: Positive Parenting Strategies for the Teenage Years

53

**STATE:**

For additional ideas, see **RESOURCE #5.3: Positive Parenting Strategies for the Teenage Years** in the Resource Notebook.

In the next session, we will discuss how to address more challenging and high-risk behaviors. But now we're going to turn to talking about what to do when relationships are under stress.

NOTE: If the Self-Assessment process is being used, suggest to participants that they reflect on the questions that relate to trauma-informed parenting from their self-assessment.


SEGMENT V. RELATIONSHIPS UNDER STRESS

SLIDES 54-59

15 MINUTES


[PPT #54]: RELATIONSHIPS UNDER STRESS

Relationships Under Stress



What are some signs that our relationships with our youth are breaking down?

- Parent has less interest in what is happening in the youth's life
- Youth gives parent the silent treatment or withdraws
- Most communication with youth is around discipline and what to do differently
- Parent is judgmental of the youth
- The youth is more often saying "You are not my family"
- Parent feels the need to control the youth
- Parent is frustrated and angry all the time
- There is constant negativity between parent and youth
- The youth consistently plays one parent against another
- The parent is considering a placement change
- Parents and teens no longer share humor, fun, play
- Parents and teens both find reasons NOT to spend time together



STATE:

There is no doubt that challenging behaviors can stress the relationships with our teens.

Let's review some of the signs that our relationships with our youth are breaking down.

- ▶ Parent has less interest in what is happening in the youth's life
- ▶ Youth gives parent the silent treatment or withdraws
- ▶ Most communication with youth is around discipline and what to do differently
- ▶ Parent is judgmental of the youth
- ▶ The youth is often saying "You are not my family"
- ▶ Parent feels the need to control the youth
- ▶ Parent is frustrated and angry all the time
- ▶ There is constant negativity between parent and youth
- ▶ The youth consistently plays one parent against another
- ▶ The parent is considering a placement change
- ▶ Parents and teens no longer share humor, fun, play
- ▶ Parents and teens both find reasons NOT to spend time together

FACILITATE A DISCUSSION of these signs and ask participants to add others.





[PPT #55]: RELATIONSHIPS UNDER STRESS (CONTINUED)

Relationships Under Stress

First rule of thumb: "Relationship time" to build trust and safety
 Second rule of thumb: How the time is to be used and what is to be accomplished as a result

Three types of activities that help in building the parent-youth relationship:

- Conversation
- Participation in shared activities outside the home
- Verbal praise and recognition





STATE:

Most parents agree that an important part of their job is to ensure that their children are raised to be responsible, to know right from wrong, and to be productive members of society.

This is why we can feel so compelled to "get it right" when it comes to responding to behaviors that seem counter to these characteristics.

We must remember that it is equally important, and in fact in many ways, MORE IMPORTANT, that our youth experience caregiving relationships that are supportive and responsive to their needs. These relational experiences are foundational to empowering youth to reach their fullest potential.

Because of this, it is important to repair our relationships when they are stressed by spending time with our teens and doing all we can to make that time positive.

All relationships are built on caring, dependability, trust, empathy, acceptance, energy, and time. Relationships that are not nurtured on a regular basis can become problematic and eventually break down.

We have to build trust and safety with our youth by spending "relationship time," with them that does not involve discipline or tasks. This is what we mean by "relate".

Conversation, participation in activities outside the home, and verbal praise and recognition are especially helpful in building the parent-youth relationship.

[PPT #56]: CONVERSATION GOALS

Relationships Under Stress

Conversation Goals

- Promote expression of feelings
- Facilitate self-exploration and identity-building
- Identify problems and solve conflicts
- Communicate interest, understanding, and empathy



56

STATE:

Conversations that build the parent-youth relationship do several things including that they:

- ▶ Promote the expression of feelings.
- ▶ Facilitate self-exploration and identity-building.
- ▶ Set the stage for identifying problems and solving conflicts.
- ▶ Communicate interest, understanding, and empathy.

Don't use this time to talk about disciplinary problems, criticism, or attempts to push your own agenda, which is easy to do. Create an atmosphere of exploration and have the youth do most of the talking.

Going for a drive or doing an activity that does not require face to face interaction, such as cooking or walking, can greatly facilitate a youth's comfort and willingness to talk. Issues from movies, TV shows, books, and current events can also be used as prompts.

[PPT #57]: PARTICIPATION IN ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE THE HOME

Relationships Under Stress

Participation in activities outside the home: Extend the parent-youth relationship into the community



57

STATE:

When we extend the parent-youth relationship into the community, we help the youth feel connected to us and our community.

The one-on-one time with your youth can also create a sense of specialness and love. Examples of activities that you can do together are: going out to eat, seeing a movie, hiking, playing tennis, fishing, or riding bikes.

Relationships Under Stress

Verbal praise and recognition

- Youth may not acknowledge you are giving them praise or they may even challenge why you are doing it
- Turn praise into an action
- Youth want to be recognized so if you are not recognizing the good, they will make sure you recognize the negative or the bad
- Giving praise can improve your overall communication
- Despite your teen's oppositional behaviors—yelling, swearing, breaking rules, failing grades, or other challenging behaviors—it is critical that you also “catch them being good”

Resource: *Caring for Kids - How to Talk with Your Teen*



58



STATE:

You want to make sure your teen knows you value them and that they are part of the family by regularly providing praise and recognition, even if they behave as if they don't want or need it.

Even though your youth may not acknowledge you are giving them praise or they may even challenge the reasons you are doing it – it is important that you are praising them consistently.

One strategy to address a youth's inability to accept praise is to make the praise actionable. For example, if your teen is a great artist but cannot accept your compliments, have their artwork professionally framed and displayed in a public area of your home. This demonstrates pride and value in their work and allows for other, less emotionally-charged compliments to come from visitors.

Youth want to be recognized so if you are not recognizing the good, they will make sure you recognize the negative or the bad.

When you stop focusing on the negative, you are showing them that your verbal communication can be positive, which may increase their desire to have conversations with you and improve your overall communication.

Despite your teen's challenging behaviors, such as yelling, swearing, breaking rules, failing grades—it is critical that you also “catch them being good” by looking for and sincerely recognizing the tasks, behaviors, and actions they are doing well.

All teens need to be loved and valued and it is our job as parents to adapt our actions and behaviors to meet these needs.

RESOURCE #5.4: Caring for Kids - How to Talk with Your Teen may be helpful for you in thinking about talking with your youth.

SEGMENT VI. USING SUPPORTS AS A STRENGTH

SLIDES 59-60
10 MINUTES

[PPT #59]: USING SUPPORTS AS A STRENGTH

Using Supports as a Strength

- A robust support system is needed to provide support and guidance
- Call on family and friends who can offer different supports
- Support groups with other parents who are parenting teens



STATE:

The ability to ask for help is a strength, not a weakness. Having a robust support system is critical.

It is important to identify family and friends who can offer different supports to you, your teen, and your family.

Support groups with other parents who are parenting teens can be invaluable. In addition to the network of support, they also provide the opportunity to exchange ideas and strategies.

[PPT #60]: USING SUPPORTS AS A STRENGTH (CONTINUED)

Using Supports as a Strength

- This is difficult work!
- Be realistic about what you can manage and when you need help
- Establish a relationship with the teen
- Continued commitment to the teen



STATE:

It is worth repeating that this type of parenting is difficult, that change does not happen overnight, and that the extent of change will vary.

Many of your youth's behaviors are intended to drive others away, maintain emotional distance, or avoid being vulnerable or hurt. Many of these behaviors have served a purpose in the past, and are deeply rooted. They will be difficult to change and parents must be realistic about what they can manage, and when they need help.

Every bit of progress in establishing a relationship and a measure of trust will be helpful to your teen in the long run, even if you don't see the impact right now. Your continued commitment will help them believe that they matter and that they are worthy of being loved.

SEGMENT VII. SUMMARY, HOMEWORK, AND CLOSING

SLIDES 61-64
10 MINUTES

[PPT #61]: SUMMARY

Summary: Learning Objectives

1. Demonstrate two skills parents use in coping and managing their own emotions in the face of their youth's challenging behaviors.
2. Demonstrate two ways parents can effectively respond to their youth's rejecting, testing, and challenging behaviors.
3. Describe at least two signs that their relationship with the youth is under stress.



STATE:

Let's review our learning objectives for this session.

Demonstrate two coping skills parents use in managing their own emotions in the face of their youth's challenging behaviors. Which skills do you remember?

Share the following if needed:

- ▶ Naming your emotions
- ▶ Exploring why you feel as you do
- ▶ Not reacting right away
- ▶ Not responding to every situation

Demonstrate two ways parents can effectively respond to their youth's rejecting, testing, and challenging behaviors. What are some ways to effectively respond to these behaviors?

Share the following if needed:

- ▶ Building Relationship
- ▶ Rewards
- ▶ Ignoring
- ▶ Natural or Logical Consequences
- ▶ Modeling
- ▶ Instruction

Understanding and Managing Youth's Challenging Behaviors, Part 1

Describe at least two signs that the relationship with their youth is under stress.

NOTE: Share the following if needed:

- ▶ The parent has less interest in what is happening in the youth's life
- ▶ The youth gives the parent the silent treatment or withdraws
- ▶ Most communication with the youth is around discipline and what to do differently
- ▶ The parent is judgmental of the youth
- ▶ The youth is more often saying "You are not my family"
- ▶ The parent feels the need to control the youth
- ▶ The parent is frustrated and angry all the time
- ▶ There is constant negativity between the parent and the youth
- ▶ The youth consistently plays one parent against another
- ▶ The parent is considering a placement change
- ▶ Parents and teens no longer share humor, fun, play
- ▶ Parents and teens both find reasons NOT to spend time together

[PPT #62]: HOMEWORK

Summary: Homework

Homework Assignment #1: Choose two of the parenting skills that we discussed in this session and practice them with your youth or another person in your life. Use the chart in **Handout #5.7 Using the Parenting Skills in Our Suitcases** to describe your experiences.

- Rewarding
- Ignoring
- Environment Control
- Modeling
- Instruction
- Natural Consequences
- Logical Consequences

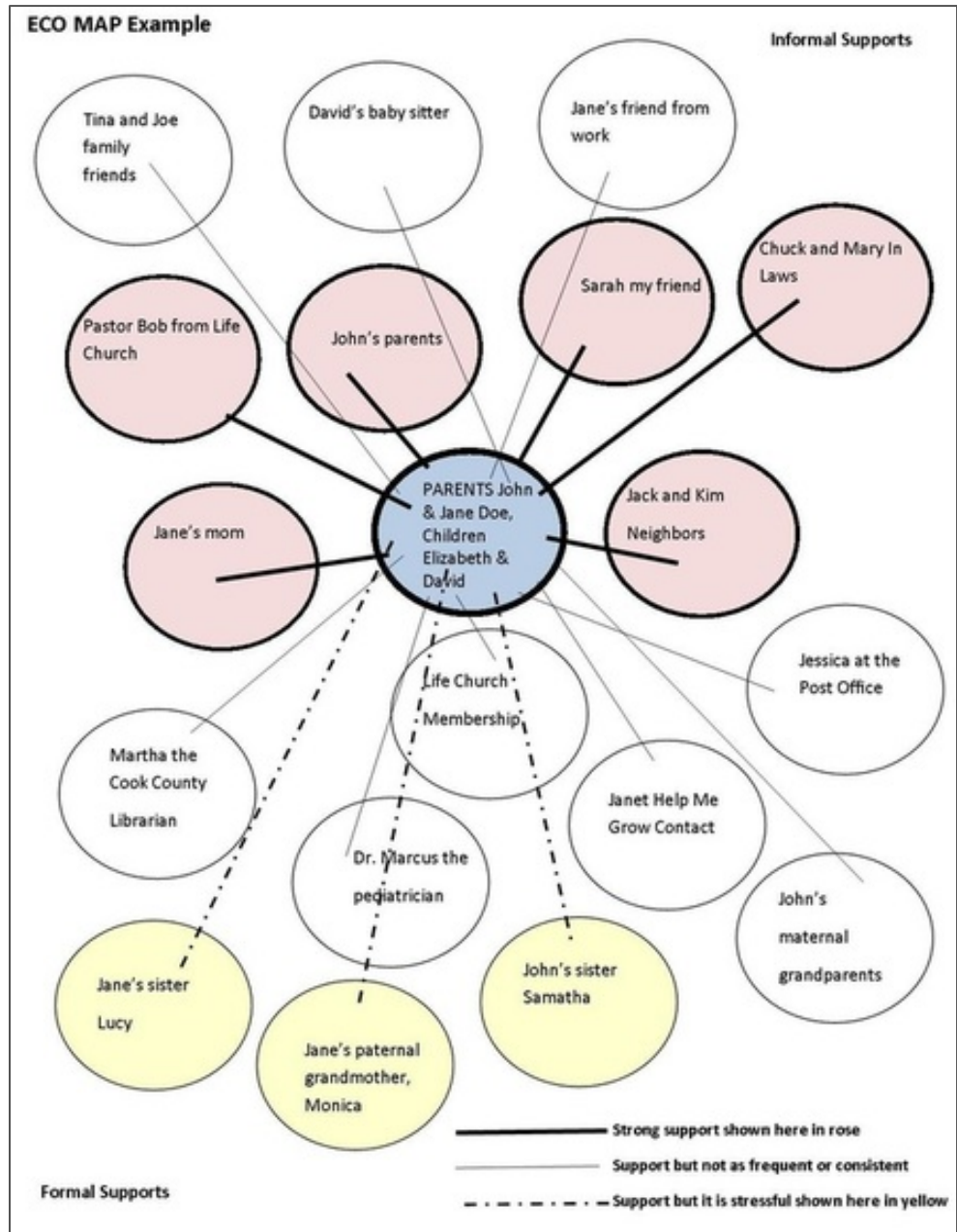


STATE:

Homework Assignment #1 is to choose two of the parenting skills discussed in this session and practice them with your youth or another person in your life. Use the chart in **HANDOUT #5.7: Using the Parenting Skills in Our Suitcases** to note the parenting skill, how it was used, and what the result was.



HANDOUT #5.8: ECO MAP EXAMPLE



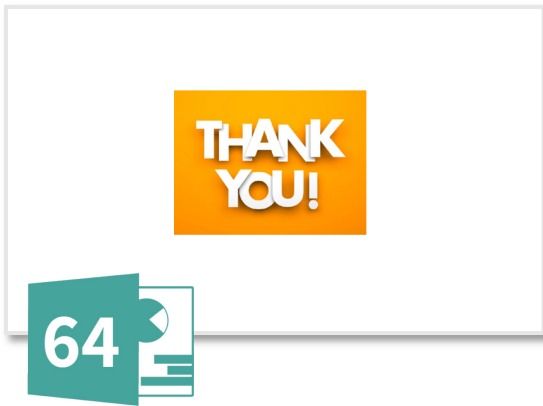
Notice all of the many supports this family named and how they indicated the level of support that they received: a bold line for strong support, a light line for support that is not frequent or consistent, and a dotted line for support that also involves stress.

Begin your own ecomap on a piece of paper with a circle in the center and then build your support network as shown in this example. We will discuss our ecomaps in our next session.

SESSION 5

Understanding and Managing Youth's Challenging Behaviors, Part 1

[PPT #64]: CLOSING



STATE:

Thank you so much for your attention.

At our next session, we will talk about high-risk behaviors and the vulnerabilities of youth with challenging behaviors who have experienced trauma.

CORE TEEN CURRICULUM

SESSION

6

UNDERSTANDING AND MANAGING YOUTH'S CHALLENGING
BEHAVIORS, PART 2

SESSION 6: PRE AND POSTTEST ANSWER KEY

1. Prenatal alcohol exposure affects all of the following, **EXCEPT**
 - a. Executive functioning
 - b. Ability to read social cues
 - c. Ability to understand cause and effect
 - d. Attitude**

2. A parenting technique that will help teens, especially those with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD), complete tasks is
 - a. Giving specific and concrete step by step instructions of what needs to be done**
 - b. Telling the teen what the end goal is
 - c. Providing general instructions so as not to overwhelm them
 - d. Encouraging them to figure out on their own what it is that needs to be completed

3. When a teen with intellectual and developmental disabilities does not follow the instructions, the parent should
 - a. Reteach what needs to be done and let them know that they should be able to remember these steps
 - b. Provide a consequence that helps them understand the importance of listening
 - c. Reteach what needs to be done, repeat the steps, and stay relaxed**
 - d. Repeat the instructions and let them know next time you are not going to repeat yourself

4. Teens who have intellectual and developmental disabilities, or experienced trauma require what two things in the home and school environment?
 - a. Predictability and routines**
 - b. Technology and routines
 - c. Engagement and socialization
 - d. Isolation and quiet

5. To help a teen with significant needs stay safe, the parent should do all of the following, **EXCEPT**
 - a. Finding groups with adult supervision for the teen to join
 - b. Making the home welcoming for your teen to have their friends over
 - c. Offering social skills training to increase awareness of dangers in the environment
 - d. Keeping tight control of the teen's activities outside the home**

6. When a teen says their behavior isn't risky and they can take care of themselves, how should the parent respond?
 - a. "You are too young to understand all the dangers. I know what is best."
 - b. "I know you don't think the behavior is risky, but I do, and my job is to help you see what could happen and how to handle it."**
 - c. "Let me tell you why this behavior is risky and why you need to stop."
 - d. "I need to keep you safe, so I need to control what you do and where you go."

7. All of the following are protective factors for teens, **EXCEPT**
- a. Parental warmth
 - b. Acceptance
 - c. One-way communication**
 - d. Predictable structure
8. To help teens have safe sexual behavior, parents should model appropriate affection, respect privacy and boundaries, and help the teen feel heard and validated. (circle one) **True** False
9. Tim is a 14-year-old who compulsively masturbates and engages in sexually explicit conversations with others. It is important for the parent to
- a. Give Tim his privacy, teens are sexual
 - b. Seek out professional help for Tim while remaining calm**
 - c. Try to ignore the behavior, it will most likely resolve on its own
 - d. Remove any privacy so Tim is not able to engage in masturbation as frequently
10. Jessica is a 13-year-old who loves Instagram. She is constantly posting photos of her day. Her classmates online are requesting Jessica post a sexually suggestive picture of herself in a bikini. Jessica does not see any problem with posting this picture. What question could Jessica's parent ask that might help her think about the consequences?
- a. Would you be ok with your school principal, teachers, or grandparent seeing this photo?**
 - b. Do you think you look good in this photo?
 - c. Do you know the person that is asking you for the photo?
 - d. Why would you want to put this photo on Instagram?
11. You notice Jace, your 16-year-old, is quieter than usual. Jace is not talking about his friends at school and spends most of his time in his room online. He has missed school several times complaining of stomach aches or headaches. You discover that Jace is being bullied at school as well as online. To protect Jace you would do which of the following?
- a. Take away the Internet so his peers do not have access to him at home
 - b. Move his computer into the main area of the house and talk with Jace about his experiences**
 - c. Review his internet history and read every message from the bullies so you know what he has heard
 - d. Tell him "Sticks and stones will break your bones, but words will never hurt you."
12. A teen who engages in cutting is always suicidal. (circle one) True **False**
13. Controlling food intake by either not eating or binge eating is a way to
- a. Feel in control and/or deal with painful emotions**
 - b. Not be hungry and maintain a healthy weight
 - c. Be healthy and feel in control
 - d. Deal with painful emotions and maintain a healthy weight
14. When a teen is confronted by a concerned parent about eating problems, they may be angry, defensive, and deny there is a problem. (circle one) **True** False

15. To de-escalate a situation with your teen, the parent should
- a. **Remain calm, keep a respectful distance from your teen, and be empathetic**
 - b. Remain calm, tell the teen to calm down, talk to the teen about what is bothering them
 - c. Remain calm, speak louder so the teen can hear you, and remain close to the teen
 - d. Remain calm, tell them to calm down, ask the teen why they are upset
16. Juan has been talking about “not being around” and has lost interest in school. Juan just gave away all of his possessions to his friends. Juan is exhibiting warning signs of what?
- a. **Suicidal Ideation**
 - b. Anxiety
 - c. Hyperactivity
 - d. Generosity
17. If you suspect your teen may be suicidal, you need to seek out professional help immediately. (circle one)
- True** False

SESSION 6: UNDERSTANDING AND MANAGING YOUTH'S CHALLENGING BEHAVIORS, PART 2



Core Competency: Parents understand their youth's challenging behaviors and are able to safely and effectively manage them.

SEGMENTS

- I. Welcome and Debrief **(10 MINUTES)**
- II. Impact of Intellectual and Development Disabilities **(30 MINUTES)**
- III. High Risk Behaviors **(40 MINUTES)**
- IV. When Behavior Challenges Become a Crisis **(40 MINUTES)**
- V. Seeking and Obtaining Help **(10 MINUTES)**
- VI. Summary, Homework and Closing **(5 MINUTES)**

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

No additional materials needed.

PREPARE

PREPARE strips of paper that contain questions that participants will read during the activity about being direct in talking about self-injurious and suicidal behavior.

Many challenging topics are covered during the session. Be sure to **CHECK IN** with participants frequently to give them opportunities to react and respond to what they are learning.

REVIEW the Right Time materials on Parental Regulation and Parental Adaptation to support the content presented in this session.

[PPT #3]: REVIEW OF HOMEWORK (CONTINUED)

Homework
An ecomap of your support system

3

STATE:

Your second assignment was to put together an ecomap of your support network.

What did you learn from doing this exercise?

[PPT 4]: QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

Any questions or comments from Session #5?

4

STATE:

We covered a great deal of information during our last session.

Are there any questions or comments about Session Five?

[PPT 5]: LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Learning Objectives

- Demonstrate at least two skills in addressing crises/severe behavior challenges.
- Demonstrate two skills in teaching their youth how to remain safe.
- Recognize vulnerabilities of youth with challenging behaviors who have experienced trauma.
- Describe how to access and be actively involved in professional supports that your youth may need to access.

5

STATE:

Let's look at our learning objectives for this session. At the end of this session, you will be able to:

- ▶ Demonstrate at least two skills in addressing crises/severe behavior challenges.
- ▶ Demonstrate two skills in teaching your youth how to remain safe.
- ▶ Recognize vulnerabilities of youth with challenging behaviors who have experienced trauma.
- ▶ Describe how to access and be actively involved in professional supports that your youth may need to access.



SEGMENT II. IMPACT OF INTELLECTUAL AND DEVELOPMENT DISABILITIES

SLIDES 6-14

30 MINUTES

[PPT #6]: CHALLENGING BEHAVIORS: REASONS RECAP

Challenging Behaviors: Reasons Recap

Reasons for youth's challenging behaviors

- Survival and self-protection in the past
- Need for emotional distance
- Responsive to pain or numbness
- Declarations of independence
- Culturally appropriate to reference group



STATE:

For some youth, living in a family and accepting parental guidance and support is very difficult. Behaviors that have been useful in the past for survival and self-protection, can become instinctive, automatic reactions.

These behaviors can be:

- ▶ useful in creating emotional distance to avoid feeling vulnerable to rejection
- ▶ a response to pain or numbness that they have not learned to address in more constructive ways
- ▶ declarations of independence—both a normal part of development for all teens and a natural response for teens who have not been able to depend on adults in their life
- ▶ culturally appropriate, but may not be familiar to foster or adoptive parents – such as language, eye contact, ways of healing, and important relationships that contribute to their survival

[SLIDE #7]: IMPACT OF INTELLECTUAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

Impact of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

- Intellectual disability
 - Disorders characterized by a limited mental capacity and difficulty with adaptive behaviors such as managing money, schedules and routines, or social interactions.
- Developmental disability
 - Encompasses intellectual disability but also includes physical disabilities. Some developmental disabilities may be solely physical, such as blindness from birth. Others involve both physical and intellectual disabilities stemming from genetic or other causes, such as Down syndrome and fetal alcohol syndrome.

**STATE:**

In addition to the challenging behaviors that are a result of a child's experiences of trauma, grief and loss, some children also experience intellectual or developmental disabilities that can add an additional layer of challenging behaviors.

According to the National Institutes of Health, an INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY refers to a group of disorders characterized by a limited mental capacity and difficulty with adaptive behaviors such as managing money, schedules and routines, or social interactions. Intellectual disability originates before the age of 18 and may result from physical causes, such as autism or cerebral palsy, or from non-physical causes, such as lack of stimulation and adult responsiveness.

A DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY is a severe, long term disability that can affect cognitive ability, physical functioning, or both. These disabilities appear before age 22 and are likely to be life-long. The term "developmental disability" encompasses intellectual disability but also includes physical disabilities. Some developmental disabilities may be solely physical, such as blindness from birth. Others involve both physical and intellectual disabilities stemming from genetic causes, such as Down syndrome, or from what Dr. Perry described in Session One as in utero insults, including prenatal alcohol exposure that can cause Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD).

[PPT #8]: CHARACTERISTICS OF INTELLECTUAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

Characteristics of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

- Prenatal alcohol exposure affects
- Poor peer judgment
- Easily overstimulated and/or overwhelmed
- Difficulty retaining basic information
- Sequencing problems
- Anger management issues
- Depend on others for safety and well-being
- Learning problems
- Have inappropriate sexual behavior, putting them at risk of unplanned pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases
- Poor sense of cause and effect
- Lack social skills and the ability to maintain appropriate boundaries

**STATE:**

Dr. Perry talked about changes in the development and functioning of key regulatory networks in the brain that result in challenging behaviors later in life. Prenatal alcohol exposure affects executive functioning, memory, learning, the ability to read social cues and maintain appropriate boundaries, and the ability to understand cause and effect.

Attachment, bonding, and relationship development can also be impacted.

Understanding and Managing Youth's Challenging Behaviors, Part 2

Depending on the specific nature of the intellectual or developmental disability, your teen may also:

- ▶ Display poor peer judgment
- ▶ Become easily overstimulated and/or overwhelmed
- ▶ Have difficulty retaining basic information
- ▶ Have difficulties with sequencing, which refers to the ability to perceive items in a specific order and to remember that sequence without omitting items
- ▶ Display anger management issues
- ▶ Have inappropriate sexual behavior, putting them at risk of unplanned pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases
- ▶ Depend on others for safety and well-being
- ▶ Lack of a sense of danger, which can be seen in their trust of strangers
- ▶ Have little or no verbal ability

Some teens with intellectual or developmental disabilities have limited social skills, which can mean having fewer, if any, trustworthy friends. They can be easily victimized because they so desperately want to belong.

[PPT #9]: IMPACT ON LEARNING

What it's like in school...

Last serny, Fingledobe and Pribin were in the nerd-link treppering gloopy caples and cleaming burly greps.

Suddently a ditty strezzle boofed into Fingledobe's tresk. Pribin glaped and glaped.

"Oh Fingledobe!" He chifed, "That ditty strezzle is tunning in your grep!"

**STATE:**

Some teens with intellectual or developmental disabilities may not appear to have academic challenges, even though they may be really struggling in school.

Here's a quick exercise to give you a sense of how an intellectual or developmental disability may have an impact on learning.

NOTE: Ask a participant to read the slide.

[PPT #10]: IMPACT ON LEARNING (CONTINUED)

Can you answer?

Last serny, Fingledobe and Pribin were in the nerd-link treppering gloopy caples and cleaming burly greps.

Suddently a ditty strezzle boofed into Fingledobe's tresk.

Pribin glaped and glaped.

"Oh Fingledobe!" He chifed, "That ditty strezzle is tunning in your grep!"

1. When did the story occur?
2. Who were the main characters?
3. What happened to Fingledobe's tresk?
4. What did Pribin do?

10

**STATE:**

Can you answer the following questions?

NOTE: Provide the answers to the questions as indicated in parentheses.

1. When did the story occur? (*Last serny*)
2. Who were the main characters? (*Fingledobe and Pribin*)
3. What happened to Fingledobe's tresk? (*A ditty strezzle boofed into his tresk*)
4. What did Pribin do? (*He glaped and glaped and chifed "That ditty strezzle in tunning in your grep!"*)

STATE:

Youth with intellectual or developmental disabilities are often good at responding to questions but don't really know what we're asking from them. As a parent, it is really important to keep that in mind.

[PPT #11]: STRATEGIES FOR YOUTH WITH INTELLECTUAL OR DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

Challenging Behaviors: Developmental Disabilities

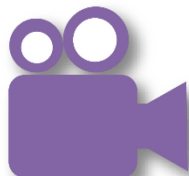
Video: **Helping Your Teen with FASD**



11

**STATE:**

Let's watch a short video about parenting a teen with a specific developmental disorder known as Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder. In the video, you will hear the caregiver describe what his child experiences and some of the strategies that he uses to help her.



2:22 MINUTES

SHOW participants the video "**Helping Your Teen with FASD.**"

Understanding and Managing Youth's Challenging Behaviors, Part 2

You heard the caregiver in the video describe his child who has Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, but some of the suggestions that were mentioned, such as the placement of a cereal bowl and spoon that remind her to make breakfast, or laying her clothes out in the order she needs them to get dressed, can be useful for youth who have other kinds of intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Let's look now at a few other parenting strategies for youth with intellectual or developmental disabilities.

[PPT #12]: STRATEGIES FOR YOUTH WITH INTELLECTUAL OR DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES
(CONTINUED)

Parenting Strategies for Youth with
Intellectual or Developmental Disabilities

- Require immediate feedback
- Routines and predictability
- Finding groups that provide needed socialization
- Social skills training
- Making sure that the teen is being supervised by trusted adults at all times
- Having the teen keep a GPS-equipped cell phone with them at all times so they can be tracked if they get lost



STATE:

Youth with intellectual and developmental disabilities may require immediate feedback and higher levels of consistency and patience than other youth.

Remember the discussion in a previous session about the importance of structure and nurture. Routines, predictability and consistent oversight are especially important to consider.

It may also be helpful to find groups that provide opportunities for socialization of your child needs more support in this area.

Social skills training focused on preventive safety skills may be needed to increase the teen's awareness of strangers and proper social boundaries.

Depending on the severity of their disability, you may need to be sure that the teen is being supervised by trusted adults at all times and you may find you need to educate the adults supervising your teen to be sure they understand the teen's needs.

Having the teen use GPS-equipped apps on their cell phone can be useful so that you can track your teen if they get lost.

[PPT #13]: PRACTICING SPECIFICITY WITH INSTRUCTIONS

Practice: Giving Instructions with Specificity

Exercise

- Think about asking a teen to pick up their bedroom
- Make a list of the directions for cleaning the room



13

STATE:

One of the strategies that you may need to use more often with youth who have intellectual or developmental disabilities, is to be very specific with instructions.

Let's do an activity now to practice this.

ACTIVITY



INSTRUCTIONS: Divide participants into small groups and ask each group to come up with a list of directions, as specific as possible, for a teen to clean up their bedroom. The groups might come up with a list such as the following if they are not thinking about breaking down the steps to the needed level:

1. Clean under the bed
2. Pick up clothing and put away
3. Make the bed
4. Empty the garbage
5. Sweep (or vacuum) the floor

Next, refer the groups to **HANDOUT #6.1: Explicit Directions**. Ask groups to take a few minutes to review the handout, and then have a brief large group discussion about their reactions to using instructions that are broken down into much smaller steps like the examples on the handout.

**HANDOUT #6.1: EXPLICIT DIRECTIONS**

1. Go to the laundry room and get the broom and dustpan
2. Go to your bedroom
3. Use the broom to sweep all items out from underneath your bed
4. Sweep them into the dustpan
5. Take the contents of the dustpan to the trashcan and dump them
6. Put the broom and dustpan aside for use a little later
7. Find a laundry basket
8. Put dirty clothing in the laundry basket
9. If you can't tell if the clothing on the floor is clean or dirty, try to smell it and look for signs of dirt
10. If the laundry smells like body odor, put it in the dirty laundry basket. If it has spots or spills on it, it goes in the dirty laundry basket. If it smells good and looks clean, put it with your clean clothes.

Understanding and Managing Youth's Challenging Behaviors, Part 2

11. Get clean clothes from the other laundry basket
12. Fold the clean clothing
13. Put the clean clothing in the drawers
14. If you open a drawer and it is full, close it and open a different one. Do this until you find a drawer with space
15. If you cannot find space in the drawers, please ask a parent/caregiver for help
16. Close the drawers
17. If you have borrowed any clothing, return it to your sibling's or parent's rooms
18. Remove any stray items from the bed
19. Spread sheets and blankets out smoothly on the bed
20. Tuck sheets and blankets into the foot area of the bed
21. Spread the comforter/bedspread out on top of the blankets
22. Put pillows at the top of the bed where your head lies
23. Return dishes/cups/silverware and any food waste to the kitchen
24. Put dishes/cups/silverware in the dishwasher
25. Throw away food waste
26. While in the kitchen, get a grocery bag from the cabinet under the sink
27. Close the cabinet door
28. Return to your bedroom
29. Put any paper, cans, or recyclable items in the grocery bag
30. Take them to the kitchen
31. Return to your bedroom
32. Pick up garbage from the floor, dressers and other places and put in the trash basket
33. Sweep the floor
34. Sweep dust and trash into a pile and onto the dustpan
35. Empty the dustpan into the trash basket
36. Return the broom and dustpan to the laundry room
37. Put the broom and dustpan in the closet in the laundry room
38. Close the closet door in the laundry room
39. Take the trash bag out of the trashcan
40. Tie the trash bag closed
41. Bring the trash bag outside to the trashcan
42. Replace the trash bag in the trashcan
43. Put these items in the proper place
44. Bring the dirty laundry basket to the laundry room

Understanding and Managing Youth's Challenging Behaviors, Part 2

STATE:

For some youth, instructions need to be as concrete as possible. When you find the youth is not completing the task as directed, do not shame them, tease them, or show them your frustration. Just teach, re-teach and repeat as needed, in a calm and respectful way.

It is important that parents and caregivers are also careful with the language they use. Saying "Go pick up your room" to a youth who is very concrete, might mean they think you want them to "lift up" their bedroom.


For a fun and very accurate look at what this concrete thinking looks like, read any of the Amelia Bedelia books by Peggy Parish.


- ▶ In these stories, Amelia is a maid for a wealthy couple and she often misunderstands her employer by always taking figures of speech and terminology literally, causing her to perform incorrect actions with a comical effect. Because her employers recognize her literalism they write their requests as "put the wet towels in the laundry and replace them with clean dry ones," as opposed to simply "change the towels."
- ▶ This playful look at how concrete thoughts become interesting actions could also be a nice way to connect with a youth who is struggling – helping them grow in development and relationship.

[PPT #14]: SUPPORTS NEEDED

Understanding Challenging Behaviors

- Ask for help you need from professionals and other supports
- You cannot do this alone:
 - Connection to professionals
 - A support system
 - A network of other parents and community connections





STATE:

Parenting a teen with intellectual or development disabilities can be especially hard because it can take so long to see changes in behavior. Know that the positive experiences you contribute will make a difference, even if you can't see it in the moment. Parenting teens with these challenges requires flexibility and the ability to live with situations that you cannot control.

NOTE: If you are using the self-assessment as part of the training, ask participants to revisit their self-assessments on flexibility, adaptability, and consistency.

STATE:

Advocacy is required of parents who have intellectual or developmental disabilities to make sure their teens are understood and served fairly in schools and the community. Working with professionals who have expertise in working with teens with these challenges is essential.



SEGMENT III. HIGH RISK BEHAVIORS

SLIDES 15-55

40 MINUTES

[PPT #15]: WHEN TEENS DISPLAY HIGH RISK BEHAVIORS

When Teens Display High Risk Behaviors

High-risk behavior: Behaviors that are so intense, frequent, or long-lasting that they threaten the quality of life and/or the physical safety of the teen or others

- Risky sexual behaviors
- Aggressive behaviors toward others
- Using the Internet and social media inappropriately
- Self-injurious behaviors and suicidal ideation



- *Remember!* Responses that are isolating or punishing are not effective.

15

STATE:

The high risk behaviors we are talking about in this session are so intense, frequent, or long-lasting that they threaten the quality of life and/or the physical safety of the teen or others.

These can include risky sexual behaviors, inappropriate use of the Internet and social media, self-harming behaviors (such as cutting or eating disorders), suicidal ideation and aggressive behaviors toward others.

Parents can become overwhelmed by these behaviors, fear for the teen's safety, or fear for the safety of others. As a result, they often end up punishing the youth for their behaviors with negative consequences, including isolating their teen.

While it is not hard to understand the motivation to respond in this manner, it does not actually stop the behaviors.

[PPT #16]: WHEN TEENS DISPLAY HIGH RISK BEHAVIORS (CONTINUED)

When Teens Display High Risk Behaviors

- Developmental task of teens: Develop a secure sense of identity and achieve more autonomy
- For teens who have recently joined a family: Normal developmental task complicated by the need to become part of a family and establish relationships at the same time that they are working on becoming independent

16

STATE:

Two important developmental tasks of teens are to develop a secure sense of identity and to gain more independence. They will begin detaching from parents and seeking meaningful relationships outside of the family.

For teens who have recently joined a family, their normal developmental task is complicated by the need to establish relationships with family members at the same time that they are working on becoming independent.

[PPT #17]: WHEN TEENS DISPLAY HIGH RISK BEHAVIORS (CONTINUED)

When Teens Display High Risk Behaviors

- Parenting styles influence on participation in risky behaviors
- Parent-child relationships most likely to provide protective factors for teens:
 - Parental warmth, acceptance
 - Predictable structure
 - Involvement, consistency, connection, and open communication
- Parental interest in, acceptance of, and conversations about the teen's school life, activities, friends, and interests
- Importance of communication and connectedness
- Emphasis on establishing the relationship before addressing the behavior
- Looking for the underlying cause of the behavior

**STATE:**

Research tells us that parenting styles can influence participation in risky behaviors.

The parent-child relationships that are most likely to provide protective factors for teens include parental warmth, acceptance, predictable structure, involvement, consistency, connection, and open communication. Communication and connectedness need to be maintained at the same time you are managing behavioral issues.

Parental interest in and acceptance of the teen's school life, activities, and friends, help to build relationships and open communication.

Remember that relationship and connectedness are the foundation for parenting teens who have come from difficult beginnings. As a result, the emphasis must be on developing a strong relationship. Responding to the underlying cause of the behavior will help to make the behavior unnecessary.

[PPT #18]: WHEN TEENS DISPLAY HIGH RISK BEHAVIORS (CONTINUED)

When Teens Display High Risk Behaviors

Teen denial of riskiness of behavior

"Adolescence and Risk-Taking" by Dr. Carl Pinkhardt:

"I know you don't see any cause for concern or anxiety, but I do. And as your parent part of my job is to help you consider the possibilities to be on the lookout for and have plans for coping, just in case. I am not distrusting you, but I am distrusting all that can harmfully happen in an unpredictable world. Therefore, safety and normal precautions and thinking ahead will be part of our regular conversations from here on out as new and different opportunities for you arise."

**STATE:**

Teens will typically deny that their behavior is risky, and insist that they can take care of themselves. Many of our teens have had to depend on themselves, and sometimes their peers, since adults in their past have not been reliable.

In an article in *Psychology Today*, entitled "Adolescence and Risk-Taking," Dr. Carl Pinkhardt gives the following example of what a parent might say to a teen to set the stage for conversations.

- ▶ "I know you don't see any cause for concern or anxiety, but I do. And as your parent part of my job is to help you consider the possibilities to be on the lookout for and have plans for coping, just in case. I am not distrusting you, but I am distrusting all that can harmfully happen in an unpredictable world. Therefore, safety and normal precautions and thinking ahead will be part of our regular conversations from here on out as new and different opportunities for you arise."

While teens might dismiss the concerns, parents are giving the message that they want to be helpful and supportive, not punishing. Think about Dr. Perry's Regulate, Relate, Reason sequential engagement steps when deciding when, where, and how to have these conversations.

[PPT #19]: WHEN TEENS DISPLAY HIGH RISK BEHAVIORS (CONTINUED)

When Teens Display High Risk Behaviors



While underlying causes and the teen's history play a big part in how they act, what are some other factors that can lead to risky behavior on the part of teens?



Do you remember how you responded to parental advice when you were a teen?



What can you share from your own past or the teens you've been around?

19

**STATE:**

What are some factors that can lead to risky behavior of teens? Do you remember how you responded to parental advice when you were a teen? What can you share from your own experience as a teenager or of teens that you've been around?

NOTE: Ask the group to brainstorm responses while you write them on a flip chart. Be sure to include:

- ▶ Ignoring danger to appear brave in front of peers, like taking a dare
- ▶ Going along with risky behavior to be part of the group
- ▶ Feeling protected from harm
- ▶ Needing excitement to feel alive
- ▶ Feeling too angry to think about the consequences of actions
- ▶ Feeling sad and not caring what happens
- ▶ Acting under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- ▶ Being in the wrong place at the wrong time with the wrong people
- ▶ Peer pressure
- ▶ Gang involvement to feel like they belong or as a result of being coerced
- ▶ Unsafe sexual activity or reactivity to either be connected to others or as a result of past traumas

STATE:

Remember that in most cases, the above risky behaviors are connected to underlying issues related to the teen's trauma history and may be related to mental health diagnoses.

Let's look at some of the behaviors we mentioned earlier.

[PPT #20]: SORTING OUT SEX, ABUSE, LOVE, CARING AND INTIMACY

Sorting Out Sex, Abuse, Love, Caring and Intimacy

What many of the teens are thinking:

- "I'm worthless, it doesn't matter what people do to me."
- "I don't care what it takes, I just want someone to love me."
- "No one could care for me without a sexual relationship."
- "Why do you care if I'm sexual, I'm damaged goods anyway."
- "I hate my body."



20

STATE:

Many of the teens we are parenting may have the following underlying beliefs about themselves such as:

- ▶ "I'm worthless, it doesn't matter what people do to me."
- ▶ "I don't care what it takes, I just want someone to love me."
- ▶ "No one could care for me without a sexual relationship."
- ▶ "Why do you care if I'm sexual, I'm damaged goods anyway."
- ▶ "I hate my body."

[PPT #21]: SORTING OUT SEX, ABUSE, LOVE, CARING AND INTIMACY

Sorting Out Sex, Abuse, Love, Caring and Intimacy



What needs are met through sex?

21

STATE:

What needs are met through sex?

NOTE: Record responses on flip chart and be sure to include the following if not mentioned by participants:

- ▶ Love
- ▶ Affection
- ▶ Intimacy
- ▶ Touch
- ▶ Companionship
- ▶ Nurture

STATE:

While sexual behavior can be normal for teens, the goal is to help them be safe if they do have sexual relationships.

Some teens who have experienced neglect and lack of physical touch or comfort in their early development may crave physical contact as a way to soothe themselves and feel accepted. As a result, they may lack boundaries and become sexually active to feel closeness or to feel loved.

[PPT #22]: INTERVENING IN SEXUAL BEHAVIORS: RELATE

Intervening in Sexual Behaviors: Relate



What can you do to help your teen build a positive sense of self and healthy relationships?

**STATE:**

If you suspect your teen is meeting their emotional needs sexually, it is important to talk openly and non-judgmentally about sex, relationships, consent, and caring for themselves. This is true for both young men and women.

Part of your job as parent is to help them shift their underlying negative beliefs and to feel loved and nurtured in healthy, positive, non-sexual ways.

What can you do to help your teen build a positive sense of self and healthy relationships?

FACILITATE A GROUP DISCUSSION and share the following answers if not mentioned by the group:

- ▶ Model appropriate touch and affection
- ▶ Affirm positive behavior
- ▶ Invite friends over to support healthy connections
- ▶ Be trustworthy, do what you say you will do
- ▶ Spend time together doing fun things
- ▶ Help them feel heard and validated
- ▶ Respect their privacy
- ▶ Show respect and understanding, including about their culture
- ▶ Share times when you didn't make good decisions about a relationship
- ▶ Engage them in a conversation about birth control and safe sex practices to prevent sexually transmitted infections. Parents can also go with them to a clinic or physician for information, a health check and birth control, if appropriate

Intervening in Sexual Behaviors

You can find more information in the following articles:

Resource: Relationships and Sexuality: How to Support Youth in Foster Care and Adoption (NACAC)

Resource: 10 Tips for Foster Parents to Help Their Foster Youth Avoid Teen Pregnancy



STATE:

You can find more information in the following articles in the Resource Handbook:

- ▶ **RESOURCE #6.1: Relationships and Sexuality: How to Support Youth in Foster Care and Adoption by NACAC**
- ▶ **RESOURCE #6.2: 10 Tips for Foster Parents to Help Their Foster Youth Avoid Teen Pregnancy**

Sexualized Behaviors that are Excessive or Harmful to Others

- Sex or sexualized behaviors that could be harmful to the teens or others
- Histories of sexual abuse
- Protection of other children in the home
- Behaviors
 - Watching pornography, especially sexually aggressive porn or porn involving children
 - Exposing oneself or peeping
 - Compulsive masturbation
 - Sexually explicit conversation with others
 - Grabbing, groping, and explicit sexual threats



STATE:

Now let's talk about teens whose sexualized behaviors could be viewed as excessive or harmful to others.

Some common behaviors of these teens include:

- ▶ Watching pornography, especially sexually aggressive porn or porn involving children
- ▶ Exposing oneself or peeping
- ▶ Compulsive masturbation
- ▶ Sexually explicit conversations with others
- ▶ Grabbing, groping, and explicit sexual threats

This behavior may be more common among youth who have been sexually abused. Teens who were sexually victimized as children may be re-enacting what was done to them. Their behavior is more about power than about sex.

[PPT #25]: SEXUAL PERPETRATION (CONTINUED)

Sexual Perpetration

- Consider protection of other children
- Engage professionals to help discover the underlying cause of the behavior and provide therapeutic intervention to change the behavior
- Programs specifically designed to address sexualized behaviors that victimize others
- Support of the family
- Peer support

25

**STATE:**

Sexual perpetration can be difficult to manage, especially since it often makes parents uncomfortable.

When parenting a teen with these behaviors, the protection of other children in the home is most important. It may require significant changes in household rules and routines so that the teen is not alone with other children.

In some cases, families may need to change bedroom arrangements, use alarms on bedroom doors, and closely monitor behavior.

The riskier the behaviors, the more there is a need to engage professionals to help change them. A teen who is sexually abusive to others, especially a teen who victimizes younger children, will require specialized treatment services.

Some of the programs designed to address sexualized behaviors require that the teen live in a residential setting for short-term treatment, and others allow the teen to live at home while they attend treatment as an outpatient.

Treatments for sexual perpetration can be very successful, and one important key is the support of the family. These programs also provide critical peer support for parents so that they can learn how to be more effective in supporting their teen.

[PPT #26]: SEXUAL PERPETRATION: SEEKING SUPPORT

Sexual Perpetration

- Remain calm and seek out help to determine the risk for the teen, the family, and those in the community
- Reach out to placement agency or other community resources for support and assistance
- Safety plans
- **Resource:** Parenting Children or Youth Who Are Sexually Reactive

26

**STATE:**

If you think that your teen is engaging in any of these behaviors, don't ignore them. Remain calm and seek help to determine the risk for the teen, the family, and those in the community.

If the teen is in foster care, this must be communicated to their social worker. If it is post-adoption, reach out to your placement agency or other community resources for support and assistance.

You will find an excellent article entitled **RESOURCE #6.3: Parenting Children or Youth Who Are Sexually Reactive** in the Resource Notebook.

Safety Plans



- Purpose: Recognize the risks in a crisis and collaborate on the action that needs to be taken to keep everyone safe
- Opportunity for teen to:
 - Think through and develop the skills to keep them safe
 - Recognize their own distress
 - Acknowledge that some situations can cause harm to themselves or others.
- Often developed with the help of a mental health professional, but can be developed by the parent and teen
- Can be a safety plan for the family and a specific safety plan for the teen to monitor their own behavior



STATE:

Another strategy for dealing with sexualized behaviors that are excessive or harmful to others is to create a safety plan.

Safety plans can be created for many different types of challenging behaviors.

The purpose of a safety plan is to help you and the youth pro-actively think through areas of high risk and collaborate on the steps that need to be taken to keep everyone safe.

It is an opportunity for the teen to think through and develop the skills to keep themselves safe, recognize their own distress, and acknowledge that some situations can cause harm to themselves or others.

Safety plans are often developed with the help of a mental health professional, but can be developed by the parent and teen when things are calm.

It is important that a safety plan for your teen is written by them. Items to include are warning signs and coping strategies.

[SLIDE #28]: SAFETY PLANS FOR SEXUALIZED BEHAVIOR

Safety Plans: Sexualized Behaviors

- Identification of times and situations when the youth is most likely to have problems in all environments that the youth comes in contact with (i.e. home, school, community)
- Clear guidelines for personal privacy and behavior
- Available supports, what their role is, and when to supports should be accessed

28

STATE:

The following areas should be considered in a safety plan for sexualized behavior:

- ▶ Identification of times and situations when the youth is most likely to have problems in all environments that the youth comes in contact with (i.e. home, school, community). Examples include:
 - When bedroom doors are shut and others are in the same room
 - When left unsupervised
 - When visitors come to the house
 - At night
- ▶ Clear guidelines for personal privacy and behavior. Examples include:
 - Doors are to stay open while playing with friends or siblings
 - An adult needs to be on the same floor (of the house) when with siblings or friends
 - No pets in the bedrooms or bathrooms
 - Never alone with pets
 - No room mates
 - No overnight stays with friends
 - Closed doors when using the bathroom
- ▶ Available supports, what their role is, and when supports should be accessed. Example:
 - Mom or Dad will give Jane a stress ball to squeeze while watching television. A reminder will be given if needed, such as saying “Jane you are touching yourself in a way that is upsetting to the rest of us. Please keep your hands busy by squeezing the stress ball.”

Safety plans may also be created for or shared with schools to assure safety away from home.

[PPT #29]: AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR

Addressing Aggressive Behaviors

- Anger
- Aggressive behavior
- Youth violence towards peers, parents, and animals



Parents:

- Remain calm and regulated
- Model how to respond
- Give ten physical and emotional space
- "I can see you're really upset. Why don't you...go outside and shoot hoops, take the dog for a walk, go for a run, draw or doodle, listen to music."



29

STATE:

Now let's talk about anger and aggressive behavior and youth violence towards peers, parents, other family members, and animals.

A teen's aggression can be scary, not just for those it is directed at, but for the teens themselves. It is hard to understand how frightening it must be to feel such intense emotions and not know how to manage them.

Many teens who exhibit aggression may be triggered by their traumatic past. Recall the information we discussed about the arousal continuum and how common it is for youth with complex trauma to have an overly reactive response. Different cues—such as a loud male voice or authority figures—may cause an externalizing response—such as hypervigilance, hyperactivity, or impulsive and aggressive behaviors.

[PPT #30]: DE-ESCALATION OF AGGRESSION: REGULATION

De-escalation of Aggression: Regulation

First Concern: De-escalating the crisis and avoiding harm to anyone

- If harm not imminent, use patience in de-escalating
- Remain calm
- Do not engage in the confrontation
- Keep a respectful distance from the teen
- Be empathetic and stay present but quiet
- Use nonverbal messages that convey calm

30

STATE:

Think about Dr. Perry's: Regulate, Relate, Reason framework. It is essential for parents to remain calm and regulated during these times, which is not always easy to do and will take practice. A stressed out response will increase the teen's behaviors. If you are able to remain calm, you will also be modeling how to cope with intense emotions.

In a crisis or confrontational situation, such as a teen screaming at you or throwing things, the first concern is de-escalating the crisis and avoiding harm to anyone.

If harm is not about to happen, de-escalation will take patience on your part. Start by remaining calm, not engaging in the confrontation, keeping a respectful distance, and being empathetic or just staying present but quiet. Make sure that your nonverbal messages are conveying calm.

When a teen is escalated is not the time to talk about consequences or try to reason with them. You may need to give them physical and emotional space and could state: "I can see you're really upset. Why don't you go outside and shoot hoops/take the dog for a walk/go for a run/draw or doodle/listen to music".

[PPT #31]: ADDRESSING ANGER AND AGGRESSION: RELATE AND REASON

Addressing Aggression: Relate and Reason

Regulate, Relate, Reason**When teen is calm:**

- Sit with them
- Consider asking teen to take a walk, or sit on the porch swing, glider, or rocking chair if you have one
- Talk about what happened
- Try to help the teen figure out what the trigger was and how they might handle their reaction differently next time
- Be clear about what your expectations for behavior are
- Allow space for your teen to come up with thoughts about their behavior
- Choose carefully what you insist on and be as flexible as you can

**STATE:**

As we discussed in earlier sessions, once the teen is regulated, it is important for you to help them identify their feelings and validate them.

For example, “I know you’re disappointed that your friend couldn’t come over. What are other ways to express your feelings without exploding and punching the wall?”

Recognize that you might not always know what triggered the outburst, so be careful not to make assumptions.

The ultimate goal is to create a relationship where teens are comfortable letting you know how they’re feeling and supporting your teens to be able to express themselves verbally.

Be clear about what your expectations for behavior are but allow space for your teen to come up with thoughts about their behavior as well. Choose carefully what you insist on and be as flexible as you can.

[PPT #32]: WHEN DE-ESCALATION DOESN'T WORK

Addressing Aggression

When De-escalation Doesn't Work

- A safety plan
 - Warning Signs
 - Strategies to Respond
- A supportive team
- Therapeutic support

**STATE:**

Sometimes aggressive behaviors can become potentially dangerous.

It is essential to have a safety plan and a supportive team to help you and your teen manage potentially dangerous aggression.

Safety plans for aggressive behavior should include:

- ▶ The warning signs in your youth that indicate aggression is likely. Examples include:
 - Making verbal threats
 - Using abusive language
 - Assuming threatening posture (e.g., with fists raised)
 - Physically striking out at peers or adults

Understanding and Managing Youth's Challenging Behaviors, Part 2

- ▶ Strategies to respond to verbal or physical aggression.
 - Examples include:
 - Removing others from the immediate vicinity of the youth (to protect their safety and eliminate an audience)
 - Taking a 'supportive stance,' stepping slightly to the side of the youth and orienting your body so that you face the youth at an angle rather than head on
 - Respecting the youth's personal space and ensuring your physical safety by standing at least a leg's length, and preferably more, away from the youth
 - Maintaining a calm tone of voice and body posture to project acceptance and support for the youth
 - Not blocking the door unless you have a compelling reason to do so, as the youth may interpret a blocked exit as a threat and attempt to go around or even through you to escape

If nothing is working to reduce the frequency and duration of your teen's aggression, therapeutic support may be needed.

[PPT #33]: WHEN SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE POSES A DANGER TO TEENS

Social Media Usage that Poses a Danger to Teens

- Communication with friends at the expense of in-person interaction
- Cyberbullying
- Contagion
- Risks and dangerous situations

VIDEO: INTERNET SAFETY -- Julie, 13, Tells Her Story



STATE:

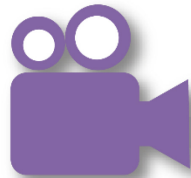
Now let's talk about social media and Internet usage.

Many teens spend a great deal of time on social media—communicating with their friends, sharing photographs, and keeping up with what is going on. When this is at the expense of face to face interaction, it can add to a teen's isolation and depression.

Cyberbullying is especially harmful since it is usually public and observed by a large network, and is often posted anonymously so that the teen cannot do much to make it better.

With contagion, vulnerable teens can be lured into reading about methods of suicide and the normalization of suicide as an acceptable way to solve problems, and even going so far as joining others online in a suicide pact.

Let's watch this short video about another one of the dangers of Internet use.



3:14 MINUTES

SHOW participants the video “Julie, 13 Tells Her Story.”

As we saw in the video, the Internet and social media can also lure teens into situations that are dangerous and, in some cases, lead to kidnapping and injury. Child predators are increasingly using social media and chat rooms to persuade youth to meet them. Teens who are isolated, depressed, and lonely are at risk of believing that a predator they have been interacting with online really cares about them and may choose to run away with them.

[PPT #34]: INTERNET AND SOCIAL MEDIA USE: RELATE

Social Media Usage that Poses a Danger to Teens

When your teen feels lonely and disconnected from you what is your role as a parent? What can you do to assist them?



34



STATE:

When your teen feels lonely and disconnected, what can you do to assist them?

NOTE: Write down responses on a flip chart.

STATE:

You may remember from a previous session we shared tips for interacting with your youth from Dr. Perry, referred to as The Intimacy Barrier. We also talked about these in Session Three, when we talked about the “Four P’s”.

Being PRESENT, PARALLEL and PATIENT means that we engage and interact with our youth in parallel ways rather than in a face-to-face manner. This is much less threatening and allows you to have positive and bonding interactions (e.g., coloring, walking and talking, working with Legos, washing dishes or cooking together, and going for a drive in the car). Quiet presence can be very regulating for your youth. Dr. Perry suggests inviting them to join you while you are working in the yard or doing errands. Having patience while the youth determines when they are ready to engage is also important.

Understanding and Managing Youth's Challenging Behaviors, Part 2

Remember that considering PROXIMITY is also important. Let them come to you. This can be hard because we want to comfort and soothe our youth. If we move in too soon, they push back. Rather than running over when they seem upset and asking ‘what’s wrong?’ slowly walk closer. Sit and let them move towards you. If they control it – and they want your comfort – they will come to you. Do this even with conversation; if you ask how school was – make sure you are either parallel or that you both are doing some kind of regulating activity such as walking or sitting in the car. You can ask a more specific question based on your knowledge of what is happening at school: “So, how was the school play?” or “How did the math test go today? If you get, “Fine.”, let it go. Don’t keep probing, as this will feel intrusive to your youth. Silence is more powerful than you realize.

[PPT #35]: INTERNET AND SOCIAL MEDIA USE: REASON

Intervening in Internet and Social Media Usage that Poses a Danger to Teens

Help teens understand the consequences of posting photographs of themselves in compromising or unflattering situations:

- Would you be okay with your coach or your school principal seeing the photo?
- Would you be okay with your parent or grandparent seeing the photo?
- Do you think the photo could affect your ability to get into college or get a job in the future if someone making those decisions saw it?
- Could someone who doesn't like you use the photo against you?

**STATE:**

You cannot stop your kids from texting and using social media platforms. It is important to have ongoing conversations with youth about Internet use and social media safety.

Consider using social media yourself to stay on top of what your kids are doing. Asking your teen to “teach” you about the different platforms might give you insight into how they are using them.

You can also help teens consider the consequences of posting photographs of themselves in sexual or unflattering situations by teaching them to ask themselves the following questions before they post a photo:

- ▶ Could someone who doesn't like you use the photo against you?
- ▶ Would you be okay with your coach or your school principal seeing the photo?
- ▶ Would you be okay with your parent or grandparent seeing the photo?
- ▶ Do you think the photo could affect your ability to get into college or get a job in the future if someone making those decisions saw it?

Remind them that once they post something on the internet, it no longer belongs to them and may never go away. Others can see it, copy it, change it, share it, and comment on it.

[PPT #36]: USING SOCIAL MEDIA TO CONNECT WITH FAMILY MEMBERS

Intervening in Internet and Social Media Usage that Poses a Danger to Teens

- Use of the Internet is to search for birth family or other connections
- Have a conversation about establishing a connection with family or other important connections
- Join with the teen in the search



36

STATE:

Another common way that teens use the Internet is to search for birth family or other connections. This is something that you should anticipate and plan for.

Youth's relationships with members their birth families may not seem positive or stable to you. As a parent, you may even see the birth family as a source of trauma and pain—something to forget. Many youth, however, can remember good times or make something positive out of the bad times.

You may have reasons to keep some distance from birth family members; however, it is important to stay focused on what's in the best interest of your child. In many cases, finding family and making connections has many benefits for youth.

There may be times that teens may find a relative or past connection who would not be safe to connect with. It is important for parents to join their teen with their search so they can help them to make the decision of whether or not to reach out. Discuss with youth the possibility that a birth relative could try to make contact through social media, the importance of your knowing about any attempts at contact, and the various ways you might respond—together.

You will want to establish Internet rules and provide guidance for safe use such as not giving out identifying information and location.

[PPT #37]: SOCIAL MEDIA AND INTERNET USAGE PROTECTIONS

Intervening in Internet and Social Media Usage that Poses a Danger to Teens

- Techniques:
 - Help balance in-person and online relationships
 - Have the Internet connection in a common area
 - Monitor browser history and usage history
 - Develop a Social Media Contract with the teen
 - Samples: Handout #6.2



37

STATE:

Parents can help their teens balance in-person relationships with online relationships.

Some approaches to safeguard youth include limiting Internet connection to a common area of the house, monitoring browsing history and limiting social media usage through the use of apps connected to your wireless carrier or Internet Service Provider.

Developing a Social Media Contract along with your teen can also be helpful. **RESOURCE #6.4** in the Resource Notebook provides ideas and a sample Social Media Contract.

What other strategies have you used to monitor Internet use?

NOTE: Write responses on a flip chart.

[PPT #38]: SELF-HARMING BEHAVIOR

Self-Harming Behavior

- Most common self-harming behaviors: non-suicidal self-injurious behavior and eating disorders

STATE:

Now let’s shift to talking about self-harming behavior.

Two of the most common self-harming behaviors in teens are eating disorders and nonsuicidal self-injurious behavior. Both can have serious health consequences.

[PPT #39]: EATING DISORDERS

Self-Harming Behavior: Eating Disorders

STATE:

Eating disorders are a group of conditions marked by an unhealthy relationship with food.

The most common eating disorders are anorexia, bulimia, and binge eating disorder.

Teens with anorexia greatly restrict their calories because they need to take control over their life, have an unrealistic sense of their body image, and/or are afraid of becoming fat. They don’t see themselves as thin enough, even when they may appear skeletal, and they are at risk of starving themselves. They may also become obsessed with exercise, take diet pills, use laxatives, or purge after eating.

Teens who suffer from bulimia will often binge eat and then force themselves to vomit in an attempt to avoid gaining weight. They may also use extreme exercise, take laxatives, or fast in order to avoid weight gain.

Teens with binge eating disorder will compulsively and often secretly over eat in a short period of time. They are not able to stop, even when they are no longer hungry, and usually feel guilt and shame over these secret binges.

[PPT #40]: EATING DISORDERS (CONTINUED)

Self-Harming Behavior: Eating Disorders



Less about the food and more about need for control

- Distorted self-image issues concerning weight and body image
- Another way to deal with painful emotions
- Way to feel in control

40

**STATE:**

Eating disorders are more about distorted self-image issues concerning weight and body image, than they are about food. They are also another way to deal with painful emotions.

Restricting or overeating is a way to feel in control, while purging is a way to deal with feelings of helplessness and self-loathing.

Remember that for many teens you are or will be parenting, their lives have been controlled by many people, without their input. Controlling what they put in or take out of their bodies can be the only thing they can control.

Eating disorders are complicated psychiatric and medical illnesses that can be life-threatening.

Eventually, the teen's obsession with food and weight can dominate their life and become dangerous to their health.

[PPT #41]: EATING DISORDERS: REGULATE

Eating Disorders: Regulate

- You may feel helpless, guilty, and out of control.
- Don't take it personally.
- Seek support for yourself.
- Remember to wait until you are both calm before you raise the issue.

41

**STATE:**

Let's consider how we can apply Dr. Perry's three R's in our response to eating disorders.

Here are the ways that we can apply REGULATE:

- ▶ You may feel helpless, guilty, and out of control.
- ▶ Don't take it personally.
- ▶ Seek support for yourself.
- ▶ Remember to wait until you are both calm before you raise the issue.

[PPT #42]: EATING DISORDERS: RELATE

Eating Disorders: Relate

- Express your concerns about their health in a supportive way, and let them know that you care about them and want to help.
- Use "I" statements – "I'm worried because you haven't eaten dinner any day this week."
- Listen for cues in their responses as to why they may be controlling their eating. Is there something that has happened to change things for them?
- Don't comment on their weight or appearance, or tell them they are thin enough.
- Avoid shaming or blaming statements like, "You need to eat," "You are fat," or "You are hurting yourself with this behavior".
- Be prepared for denial and resistance. Most likely your teen will be angry and defensive, and deny that they have a problem.
- Do not give your teen an ultimatum. This will only add pressure and cause more secrecy and denial.
- Be patient and supportive.

42

**STATE:**

Here are the ways that we can apply RELATE:

- ▶ Express your concerns about their health in a supportive way, and let them know that you care about them and want to help.
- ▶ Use "I" statements – "I'm worried because you haven't eaten dinner any day this week."
- ▶ Listen for cues in their responses as to why they may be controlling their eating. Is there something that has happened to change things for them?
- ▶ Don't comment on their weight or appearance, or tell them they are thin enough.
- ▶ Avoid shaming or blaming statements like, "You need to eat," "You are fat," or "You are hurting yourself with this behavior".
- ▶ Be prepared for denial and resistance. Most likely your teen will be angry and defensive, and deny that they have a problem.
- ▶ Do not give your teen an ultimatum. This will only add pressure and cause more secrecy and denial.
- ▶ Be patient and supportive.

[PPT #43]: EATING DISORDERS: REASON

Eating Disorders: Reason

- Explain the reasons you're concerned, noting what you observed in their behavior.
- Don't be afraid to share the consequences of the eating disorder with your teen.
- Don't give up and keep the lines of communication open, even if they shut you out at first.
- Help the youth identify resources and sources of support.

43

**STATE:**

Here are the ways that we can apply REASON:

- ▶ Explain the reasons you're concerned, noting what you observed in their behavior.
- ▶ Don't be afraid to share the consequences of the eating disorder with your teen.
- ▶ Don't give up and keep the lines of communication open, even if they shut you out at first.
- ▶ Help the youth identify resources and sources of support.

Food Hoarding

- Common in children who have been deprived of access to adequate food early in life
- Can also signal difficulties with control and trust
- Ellyn Satter, MS, RD, LCSW, BCD: "Division of Responsibility"
 - Parents decide *what* to eat, *where* to eat, and *when* to eat
 - Children decide *if* they want to eat and *how much* to eat.
- Some additional suggestions include:
 - Predictable routine for meals and snacks
 - Don't yell, threaten, punish, withhold, or reward with food
 - Don't try to shame a child for the hoarding behavior
 - Don't put locks on the kitchen cabinets
 - Give youth their own accessible food cabinet
 - Keep fruit out on the table during the day so your child knows food is always available
 - Don't eat off your child's plate, even if he appears to be finished
 - Remain calm and offer reassurances such as "there will always be enough"

44



STATE:

Another food related issue for youth in foster care is food hoarding.

Hoarding food is a common behavior in children who have been deprived of access to adequate food early in life.

Food hoarding can also signal difficulties with control and trust.

Ellyn Satter, MS, RD, LCSW, BCD is an internationally recognized authority on eating and feeding. A family therapist and feeding and eating specialist, Satter has a private psychotherapy practice in Madison, Wisconsin.

Satter uses an idea called the "Division of Responsibility" to help youth feel more secure around food, where parents decide what to eat, where to eat, and when to eat, and children decide if they want to eat and how much to eat.

Some additional suggestions Satter gives include:

- ▶ Stick to a predictable routine for meals and snacks
- ▶ Don't yell, threaten, punish, withhold, or reward with food
- ▶ Don't try to shame a child for the hoarding behavior
- ▶ Don't put locks on the kitchen cabinets
- ▶ Consider giving the youth their own accessible food cabinet to store snacks that are exclusively theirs
- ▶ Keep fruit out on the table during the day so your child knows food is always available
- ▶ Don't eat off your child's plate, even if he appears to be finished
- ▶ Remain calm and offer reassurances such as "there will always be enough"

[PPT #45]: NON-SUICIDAL SELF-INJURIOUS BEHAVIOR

Non-Suicidal Self-Injurious Behavior

- Also referred to as self-mutilation
- Relatively frequent behavior in adolescents and young adults.
 - Examples include: cutting, burning or hitting oneself, scratching oneself to the point of bleeding and interfering with healing
- Can become chronic and evolve toward other forms of self-injurious behavior and suicide attempts

45

STATE:

Let's turn our attention now to another type of self-harming behavior: nonsuicidal self-injurious behavior.

Nonsuicidal self-injurious behavior, also referred to as self-mutilation, is a relatively frequent behavior in adolescents and young adults.

Examples include: hitting oneself, or cutting, burning, or scratching oneself to the point of bleeding and/or interfering with healing.

The risks of nonsuicidal self-injurious behavior include that it can become chronic and evolve toward other forms of self-injurious behavior, such as suicide attempts.

[PPT #46]: A TEEN'S EXPERIENCE WITH CUTTING

Self-injurious Behavior: Cutting

*"I used to cut. It was my only way of getting away. It was the one pain I could control. But one time I did go too far. I cut too deep. When my mom found out, it was really bad. **When it got to the point to where I was lying all the time and hurting my friends, I knew I had to stop.** I now deal with my scars every day, and if I could go back in time, I would have never made them. I have people that care about me and it took me almost 2 years to figure that out. At this point I am cutting free. And I don't plan to start again."*

46

STATE:

This quote from kidshealth.org describes one teenager's experience with the nonsuicidal self-injurious behavior of cutting.

Let's read about this experience.

Nonsuicidal self-injurious behavior often begins in the early teen years and can become an addiction that is difficult to stop.

Nonsuicidal self-injurious behavior provides temporary relief as a way to deal with feelings that seem too difficult to talk about or manage—such as rage, rejection, desperation, sadness, emptiness, or shame.


Nonsuicidal self-injurious behavior is not meant as a suicide attempt, but can accidentally lead to death.

[PPT #47]: STAYING REGULATED WHEN FACING NONSUICIDAL SELF-INJURIOUS BEHAVIOR

Self-injurious Behavior

As a parent, how might you feel when you learn your teen is engaging in self-injurious behavior?

- Anger and frustration
- Shock and denial
- Guilt
- Sadness
- Disgust



Do you think you might have any or all of these feelings?
What feeling might be the strongest for you?

47

STATE:

Remember, before you can approach the topic of self-injurious behavior with your teen, you need to be regulated. Taking some time to reflect on your own feelings related to this behavior is a critical part of becoming regulated.

Because of the secretive nature of nonsuicidal self-injurious behavior, you may feel anger that your teen is lying to you or hiding this behavior. For many parents, a sense of frustration builds as they place pressure on the teen to stop. Remember that this is an addictive behavior and you are not able to control it on your own.

It might be shocking to learn that your teen would harm themselves in this way. It's important not to deny what you have observed or been told.

You may feel as if you did not offer enough love and attention to your child. However, you are not responsible for how they choose to cope.

You may feel sad that the teen you love is in such pain that they would resort to hurting themselves.

You may feel that self-harming behavior goes against your own values and doesn't make sense.

Acknowledging your own feelings will help you be better able to relate to your teen around this issue. Becoming attuned to your teen and validating their feelings is the way that you can put the "relate" into your response.

[SLIDE #48]: SELF-INJURIOUS BEHAVIOR: RELATE

Self-injurious Behavior: Relate

- Ask them about it. Even if they deny it at first, it might be a relief for them to admit and talk about it.
- Be mindful not to force the conversation, or to shame them, which could make things worse.
- Remember that a trusting, safe relationship is the foundation for healing and you want to let them know that you care and are open to talking.

48

STATE:

If you suspect that your teen is engaging in nonsuicidal self-injurious behavior, ask them about it. Even if they deny it at first, it might be a relief for them to admit and talk about it.

Be mindful not to force the conversation, or to shame them, which could make things worse.

Remember that a trusting, safe relationship is the foundation for healing and you want to let them know that you care and are open to talking.

[PPT #49]: SUICIDAL IDEATION

Suicidal Ideation

- Suicide: Third leading cause of death of 15- to 24-year-olds
- Take expressions of suicidal ideation seriously
- Professional assessment
- Factors that make teen vulnerable:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of trauma and loss • Being bullied • Identify LGBTQ2S • Have a history of suicide in their family • Alcohol use | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental health issue, especially depression or bipolar disorder • Feelings of hopelessness and worthlessness • Isolation, lack of peer support • Emotional, physical, or sexual abuse |
|--|---|

49

**STATE:**

Let's talk about suicide.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, suicide is the third leading cause of death of 15- to 24-year-olds.

Teens who have experienced trauma and loss, who are being bullied, who are part of the LGBTQ2S community, or who have a history of suicide in their family are especially vulnerable to suicidal thoughts.

Some other factors that make teens vulnerable are:

- ▶ Drug and alcohol use
- ▶ Mental health issues, especially depression or bipolar disorder
- ▶ Feelings of hopelessness and worthlessness
- ▶ Isolation, and/or lack of peer support
- ▶ Emotional, physical, or sexual abuse

[PPT #550]: SUICIDAL IDEATION: WARNING SIGNS

Suicidal Ideation

What are warning signs that a teen may be having suicidal thoughts?

50

**STATE:**

Parents need to be aware of the signs that their teen may be considering suicide. There are usually signs that the teen is in distress, but they can be subtle and are often misread.

Let's list some of the warning signs that a teen might be having suicidal thoughts.

NOTE: Write responses on a flip chart as participants brainstorm warning signs.

[PPT #51]: SUICIDAL IDEATION: WARNING SIGNS (CONTINUED)

Suicidal Ideation

Teens who are thinking about suicide might:

- talk about suicide or death in general
- give hints that they might not be around anymore
- talk about feeling hopeless or feeling guilty
- pull away from friends or family
- write songs, poems, or letters about death, separation, and loss
- lose interest in school or sports
- start giving away treasured possessions to siblings or friends
- lose the desire to take part in favorite things or activities
- have trouble concentrating or thinking clearly
- experience changes in eating or sleeping habits
- engage in risk-taking behaviors

51

STATE:

Let's review the signs on the slide and compare them to our list.

Teens who are thinking about suicide might:

- ▶ talk about suicide or death in general
- ▶ give hints that they might not be around anymore
- ▶ talk about feeling hopeless or feeling guilty
- ▶ pull away from friends or family
- ▶ write songs, poems, or letters about death, separation, and loss
- ▶ start giving away treasured possessions to siblings or friends
- ▶ lose the desire to take part in favorite things or activities
- ▶ have trouble concentrating or thinking clearly
- ▶ experience changes in eating or sleeping habits
- ▶ engage in risk-taking behaviors
- ▶ lose interest in school or sports

There may be a different cause for some of these signs, but if you see more than one, you must seek help.

[SLIDE #52]: SUICIDAL IDEATION: REGULATE, RELATE, REASON

Suicidal Ideation: Regulate, Relate, Reason

- Show the love
- Express empathy
- Prioritize the positive
- Talk openly

52

STATE:

Nadine Kaslow, PhD, is a psychologist who was the 2014 President of the American Psychological Association. She is the Vice Chair for Faculty Development at the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at Emory University and Chief Psychologist at Grady Memorial Hospital. Dr. Kaslow provides some guidelines for parents who are worried about suicide, many of which align well with Dr. Perry's Regulate, Relate, Reason framework.

Relate by "showing the love".

- ▶ Especially when they are having a hard time, kids need to hear over and over again from you how much you love them, and how much you care about them. You need to convey that in small and big ways.
- ▶ These days, we all have so many things we're juggling that kids can end up unsure of where they fit in, and whether you really have time for them. Let them know how important they are to you.

Understanding and Managing Youth's Challenging Behaviors, Part 2

Relate by expressing empathy.

- ▶ Make statements that express empathy for your youth's distress: "It sounds like that was really difficult." "I know how painful that can be." "I know what that's like. I've felt that way."
- ▶ Telling them not to feel that way, to "pull it together," isn't as helpful as saying, "What is it that you're concerned about, and how can I help you?"

Relate by prioritizing the positive.

- ▶ Another important way to prevent suicidal behavior is to prioritize interacting with your youth in positive ways. Interacting in positive ways means doing fun things together, hanging out and chatting about things that aren't controversial or difficult.
- ▶ It's part of normal development for adolescents to rebel, and you need to pick what you're going to set limits about. The rest of the time you want to focus on the positive connections.

Reason by talking openly.

- ▶ Sometimes people are afraid that talking about it will make suicidal thoughts more real, and suicide more likely to happen. The truth is that if a child feels that he has someone safe in the family that he can talk to, he feels better and feels more understood.
- ▶ Ask your youth about what you've seen. For instance, if you notice that they are talking about death, or saying things like, "I might not be here much longer," say something to them in private such as, "I notice that you have mentioned not being here much longer. Are you thinking about harming yourself or about suicide?"
- ▶ This gives you an opening to explain the value of therapy, and possibly medication for the feelings that are causing him so much pain. Even if they deny thinking about suicide, you have opened the door to a conversation about what they said, and let them know that you are concerned and available to talk with them.
- ▶ Be sure to convey that getting help isn't weak, but something you would respect him for doing, and that you would work together to accomplish.

[PPT #53]: SAFETY PLANS FOR SELF-HARMING THOUGHTS

Safety Plans: Self-Harming Thoughts

The Teen's Safety Plan

- **Recognize your warning signs:**
 - What sorts of thoughts, images, moods, situations, and behaviors indicate to me that I'm feeling out of control or a crisis may be developing? Write these down in your own words.
- **Coping Strategies:**
 - What are some things that I can do to help me not act on thoughts/urges to harm myself? Make a list of the things that help to distract you from self-harming thoughts.
 - Who can I call or what can I do to take my mind off these self-harming thoughts?
 - List friends or social activities that can help take my mind off these feelings and thoughts.
 - Which family members can I call on for support?

53

STATE:

Safety Plans can be a useful tool to use with teens who engage in self-harming behaviors.

Safety Plans for self-harming behaviors should include:

- ▶ Specific warning signs that you and your teen should look for. Examples:
 - What sorts of thoughts, images, moods, situations, and behaviors tell me that I'm feeling out of control or a crisis may be developing? Have the teen write these down in their own words.
- ▶ Specific coping strategies that work for your teen. Examples:
 - What are some things that I can do to help me not act on thoughts/urges to harm myself? Make a list of the things your teen can do to help distract them from self-harming thoughts.
 - Who can I call or what can I do to take my mind off these self-harming thoughts? List friends or social activities that can help your teen take their mind off these feelings and thoughts.
 - Which family members can I call on for support? Make a list of family members (with phone numbers) who are supportive and who the teen feels they can talk to when feeling stressed.
 - What mental health or other professionals in my life can I reach out to? List names, numbers and/or locations of therapists, local emergency rooms, and crisis hotlines.

Remember that any expression of suicidal ideation must always be taken seriously and assessed by a professional.

Work with your teen's mental health professional to refine safety plans and review and update the plan regularly.

ROLEPLAY

- Often, family and friends are the first to recognize the warning signs of suicide.
- Bringing up the subject of suicide and discussing it openly is one of the most helpful things you can do.

Time to practice!

54

STATE:

Often, family and friends are the first to recognize the warning signs of suicide.

It is a myth that talking about suicide will give someone the idea. Just the opposite is true, bringing up the subject of suicide and discussing it openly is one of the most helpful things you can do.

Let's do an activity now to help us get more comfortable being direct in talking about self-injurious and suicidal behavior.

ACTIVITY



INSTRUCTIONS: Distribute strips of paper that contain questions that parents should ask when they are concerned about self-injurious and suicidal behavior. Keep the questions in order to demonstrate a natural progression in the “conversation”. Distribute all strips, which may mean that participants have more than one slip. Explain that you will play the role of the youth and that the purpose is only to start getting comfortable with direct exploration of self-injurious and suicidal behavior. Start at one end of the room and have each parent take a turn reading the question on the strip of paper they have been given. Respond to each of the participant’s questions as a youth might answer.

- ▶ “You seem really depressed lately – how are you handling that?”
- ▶ “Are you feeling hopeless?”
- ▶ “Have you thought about doing something about that?”
- ▶ “Do you think about hurting yourself?”
- ▶ “How do you feel before you self-injure?”
- ▶ “How do you feel after you self-injure?”
- ▶ “How does cutting help you feel better?”
- ▶ “What did you use to cut?”
- ▶ “Is there something particularly stressful for you right now that I can help you with?”
- ▶ “Do you know that I’m here for you whenever you’re ready to talk?”
- ▶ “Is there somebody else you would feel safe to talk to?”
- ▶ “Have you wished you were dead or wished you could go to sleep and not wake up?”
- ▶ “Have you actually had any thoughts about killing yourself?”
- ▶ “Have you thought about how you might do this?”

After each participant has had a chance to read a question, facilitate a large group discussion by asking questions like:

- ▶ What reactions do you have to that activity?
- ▶ What was it like to say the words “self-injure” or “suicide”?

[PPT #55]: SELF-INJURIOUS AND SUICIDAL BEHAVIOR: GETTING HELP

Self-Injurious and Suicidal Behavior: Getting Help

- Recovery from self-harming behaviors often requires professional help.
- Follow-through is critical.
- Don't accept your teen's excuses to avoid treatment.



55

STATE:

Recovery from self-injurious and suicidal behaviors requires professional help. Parents must seek help from a professional with special expertise in this area.

Trained professionals can help you understand the underlying causes, thoughts, beliefs, and triggers that result in the behavior and find the best ways to address it.

Given the emotional pain that is underlying these behaviors, taking the first step toward recovery is scary for all.

Follow-through is critical. Don't accept your teen's excuses to avoid treatment. Your participation will be essential to support the therapy.

RESOURCE #6.5: Self-Injury Recovery Research and Resources in the Resource Notebook provides more detail about eating disorders.

SEGMENT IV. WHEN BEHAVIOR CHALLENGES BECOME A CRISIS

SLIDES 56-60

40 MINUTES

[PPT #56]: WHEN CHALLENGING BEHAVIORS BECOME A CRISIS

When Challenging Behaviors Become a Crisis



56

STATE:

Families vary in their ability to handle difficult situations. The stress that families experience also varies, and for some families can lead to a crisis.

You can feel like you are in crisis when your stamina starts to get depleted as you respond to challenging behaviors.

When your youth's needs seem greater than your ability to respond, you can feel overwhelmed.

Understanding and Managing Youth's Challenging Behaviors, Part 2

Many of the parenting dilemmas that you will face in caring for youth in foster care are not unlike those you may have faced when raising your other children. The critical difference is in remembering that the responses that you found effective previously are not likely to work, due to the youth's past trauma and their experiences with grief and loss.

[PPT #57]: ROLE PLAY: STAYING REGULATED, LEARNING TO RELATE, FINDING WAYS TO REASON

Staying Regulated, Learning To Relate, and Finding Ways To Reason

ROLEPLAY

57

STATE:

We have talked about Dr. Perry's Regulate, Relate and Reason framework throughout our sessions. In this next part of the session, we will practice these techniques with some vignettes.

ACTIVITY

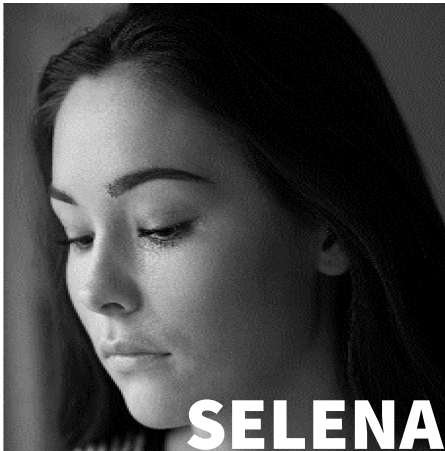


INSTRUCTIONS: Divide participants into groups of 3-4. Refer participants to **HANDOUT #6.2: Behavior Vignettes**. Inform participants that each group will be working on a different vignette. Let participants know that you will be practicing Regulate, Relate and Reason by coming up with two actions the parent could take in response to the challenging behavior. Encourage parents to anticipate how their youth might react with challenging behaviors as were covered throughout the session and remind participants to consider the three R's framework in their responses. Explain that you will work as a large group on the first vignette as an example. After reviewing the example (Selena), allow each group about 20 minutes to work and then allow each group to read their vignette and report their responses.

Facilitate a discussion with the larger group about each group's responses using the questions on the next slide.



HANDOUT #6.2: BEHAVIOR VIGNETTES



Vignette #1 – Selena is 15 years old. She left at 6:30 PM to go to her friend's house to study and came home drunk at 2 AM. She lied about where she was and won't tell you who she was with or how she got home. When you approach her again about the house rules, she explodes into a tantrum and accuses you of treating her differently than the other kids in the house and you never wanted her. She says she hates you and wants to go home.

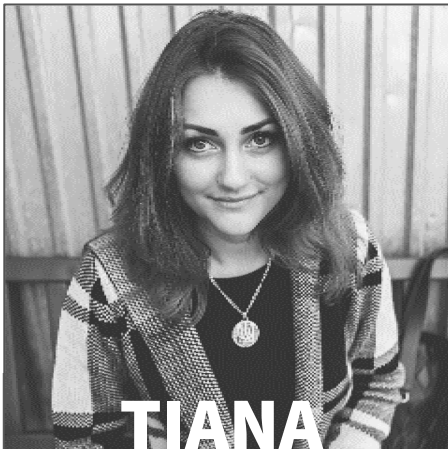
Sample Responses

REGULATE: Stay calm and refrain from an angry lecture-filled response. Remind yourself that it is not the time to talk about consequences—this is not a teaching opportunity about the risks of this behavior yet. Your first response is to make sure everyone stays calm and regulated. Speak to Selena in a calm, even tone.

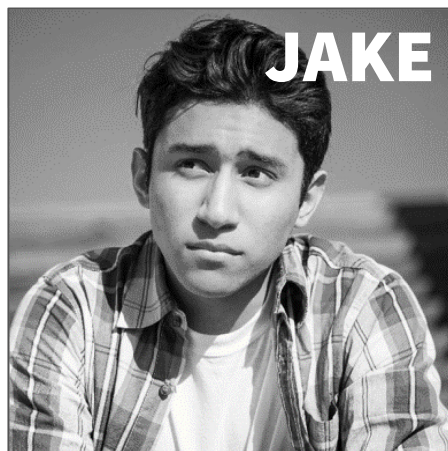
RELATE: Let Selena know that you are happy and relieved that she is home and that she is ok. Provide care measures such as water so that she stays hydrated, supportive presence if she becomes sick, allowing her to sleep and keeping noise down while she recovers from her hangover.

REASON: The next day, and only when Selena appears to be feeling better, invite her to talk about what happened. Make statements that express that you were worried about her when she did not come home and you could not reach her. Allow her to set the pace of the conversation.

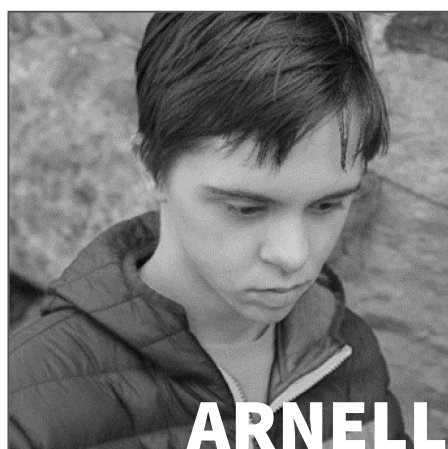
Understanding and Managing Youth's Challenging Behaviors, Part 2



Vignette #2 – After everyone went to bed, you woke up at midnight and heard voices coming from Tiana's room. Tiana is 17. You knocked on her door and when she didn't answer you opened the door to find Tiana and her boyfriend naked in her bed. You calmly ask them to get dressed and ask the boyfriend to leave, but Tiana starts to cry hysterically and accused you of ruining her life and she starts to pack her bags to leave with the boyfriend.



Vignette #3 – Jake, your grandson, is 16 and was arrested for selling Adderall at school. He is supposed to be taking Adderall for his ADD, but you find out that he is not taking his meds and is selling his pills to kids at school. The school has suspended him and Jake is threatening to run away. He says you are too old to take care of him and don't understand what he is going through at school.

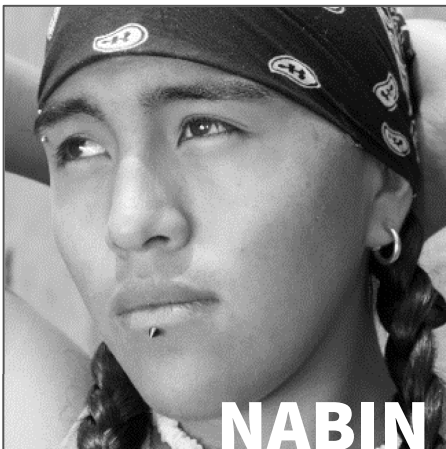


Vignette #4 – You find drugs in Arnell's room and you confront him. Arnell is 14. He tells you that some older boys are paying him to deliver these packages to different people, and the older boys are nice to him. You suspect this is a gang that is using Arnell, but Arnell doesn't believe that they are gang members. He likes hanging out with them because they give him money and are nice to him. He is angry that you went into his room and found the drugs.

Understanding and Managing Youth's Challenging Behaviors, Part 2



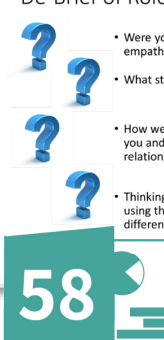
Vignette #5 – Jeremy, 15, does not have a driver's license or a learner's permit and has taken your car on a joyride. He is stopped by the police for speeding and you are called to come and get him at the police station. Your car is parked a few miles away from where he was arrested. Jeremy was drinking and you are aware alcoholism runs in the family. You fear he is becoming addicted.



Vignette #6 – Nabin is 16 years old and lives off the reservation, but “hangs” with his cousins on the reservation. He is a champion fancy dancer and is looking forward to traveling out-of-state to compete. Tonight, he came home at midnight and said he was at the ceremonies, but you know there were no ceremonies held on this day. He claimed his eyes were watery because he was sitting by the fire pit. He accuses you of being ignorant of his culture and screams at you, saying “I never should have come to live with you!”

[SLIDE #58]: DE-BRIEF OF ROLE PLAYS

De-Brief of Role Play



- Were you able to stay calm, respectful, keep your distance, and be empathetic?
- What strategies did you use to relate to your youth in the vignette?
- How were you able to reason with your youth while ensuring that you and the youth stayed regulated while also protecting your relationship with the youth?
- Thinking about a “traditional” parenting response as compared to using the newest items in your parenting suitcase, what is different about your response?

STATE:

Let's talk now about your responses and about what it was like to practice these skills.


- ▶ Were you able to stay calm, respectful, keep your distance, and be empathetic?
- ▶ What strategies did you use to relate to your youth in the vignette?
- ▶ How were you able to reason with your youth while ensuring that you and the youth stayed regulated while also protecting your relationship with the youth?
- ▶ Thinking about a “traditional” parenting response as compared to using the newest items in your parenting suitcase, what is different about your response?

[PPT #59]: FAMILY SAFETY PLANS

Safety Plans

The **family safety plan** should ask:

- What warning signs can you spot that your teen may not be in control of their emotions?
- What have you done in the past to de-escalate and manage a similar situation?
- What can you do to remain calm and show your support?
- Who has agreed to provide support in a crisis?
 - Professional – Name and phone number
 - Family members – Names and phone numbers
 - Friends or neighbors – Names and phone numbers


STATE:

We have talked about the use of Safety Plans for teens as a way to address many of the high risk behaviors that were covered in today's session.

You can also create a Family Safety Plan.

This plan will include the people who will respond in a crisis when you most need them.

A family safety plan should ask the following questions:

- ▶ What warning signs can you identify that your teen may not be in control of their emotions?
- ▶ What have you done in the past to de-escalate and manage a similar situation?
- ▶ What can you do to remain calm and show your support?
- ▶ Who has agreed to provide support to you and your family in a crisis?
 - Professionals – Names and phone numbers
 - Family members – Names and phone numbers
 - Friends or neighbors – Names and phone numbers

[PPT #60]: FAMILY SAFETY PLANS (CONTINUED)

Safety Plans

A family safety plan should ask:

- Is there a safe place your teen can go if they need to be away from the family?
- Are there help lines you or your teen can call for support?
 - Suicide Prevention Hotline
 - Mental Health Hotline
 - Other
- Consult with your public social services agency or private adoption agency to find out what resources are available in your community

**STATE:**

Other things to consider for your Family Support Plan include:

- ▶ Is there a safe place your teen can go if they need to be away from the family?
- ▶ Are there help lines you or your teen can call for support such as the Suicide Prevention Hotline, Mental Health Hotlines, or other hotlines in your community?

Remember, nobody expects you to do this alone, and supports are there because it is expected that you will need them and benefit from them. Consult with your public social services agency or private adoption agency to find out about resources they are able to provide as well as those that are available in your community.

SUMMARIZE any final points on this topic before moving to the next section.

SEGMENT V. SEEKING AND OBTAINING HELP

SLIDES 61-64

10 MINUTES

[PPT #61]: SEEKING AND OBTAINING HELP

Seeking and Obtaining Help

- The importance of obtaining quality behavioral/mental health care for youth
- Care by qualified, competent mental health professionals who have the knowledge and skills to help youth with histories of trauma and their families
- Therapists trained in evidence-based treatment models
- Be open to ways that families in other cultures may address their needs outside the clinical model of service delivery
- Quality behavioral/mental health services: Culturally appropriate and in the language with which the child and family are most comfortable
- Obtain before challenging behaviors escalate into a crisis
- Parents and other family members as active participants in the teen's behavioral/mental health treatment

**STATE:**

Even with the best trauma-informed parenting, many teens in our care will need professional behavioral or mental health services. There are several key points to keep in mind here.

Our youth need care by competent mental health professionals who understand the challenges and needs of this population and are trained in evidence-based treatments that are effective in supporting healing from trauma and strengthening attachment.

The challenge is that many families have difficulty finding the right professionals and many communities do not have enough therapists trained to work with this population.

Understanding and Managing Youth's Challenging Behaviors, Part 2

Therapists who don't understand the impact of trauma and the needs of teens in foster care, adoption, and guardianship can do more harm than good.

Be open to ways that other cultures may address their needs outside the clinical model of service delivery. For instance, American Indian participants may address issues through talking circles, discussions with medicine persons, or meeting with an elder.

Quality behavioral and mental health services need to be culturally appropriate and in the language with which the child and family are most comfortable. Family and youth voices need to be heard and valued.

Quality services are needed before challenging behaviors escalate into a crisis.

[PPT #62]: SEEKING AND OBTAINING HELP (CONTINUED)

Seeking and Obtaining Help

What does it take to be an active participant in your teen's behavioral/mental health treatment?

**STATE:**

Let's now talk about how you can be active participants in your teen's behavioral/mental health treatment.

What does it take to be an active participant?

FACILITATE A DISCUSSION and note the ideas shared on a flip chart.

[PPT #63]: SEEKING AND OBTAINING HELP (CONTINUED)

Seeking and Obtaining Help

- A belief that the solution involves all family members
- Time/commitment
- Willingness to participate actively
- Willingness to advocate for your teen
- Willingness to learn about the role and effects of psychotropic medications

**STATE:**

There are several elements of being an active participant in your teen's behavioral and mental health treatment. They include:

- ▶ A belief that the solution involves all family members. This is not your teenager's problem or burden alone to address. The problems require changes in interactions and communication among all members of the family. This is essential since it helps the teen not to see themselves as "the problem." Also, teens don't live in isolation; if the treatment does not involve family work, it won't be effective in improving family life.

Understanding and Managing Youth's Challenging Behaviors, Part 2

- ▶ Time and commitment. You will need to be committed to the full length of treatment, which may take months. This may mean that you need to take time off work or away from other priorities.
- ▶ Willingness to participate actively. You should expect to participate, at least for a portion of the time, in every session. Therapists should be modeling and coaching you in your interactions with your teen.
- ▶ Willingness to advocate for your teen. It is the parent's job to make sure that the therapist is an appropriate fit for their teen. You may need to ask for additional assessments or evaluations from medical doctors or the school system. You may also be able to request help from their therapist, foster care/adoption worker, or post-adoption service provider to advocate for additional services.
- ▶ Willingness to learn about the role and effects of psychotropic medications. You and your youth's therapists should consult child and adolescent psychiatrists familiar with trauma work to determine appropriateness of medication. In some cases, psychotropic medications can be effective, but they can also be prescribed inappropriately when teens aren't accurately diagnosed.

[PPT #64]: SEEKING AND OBTAINING HELP (CONTINUED)

Seeking and Obtaining Help: Resources

Seeking Meaningful Therapy: Thoughts from an Adoptive Mom (Kinship Center)

Selecting and Working with a Therapist Skilled in Adoption (Child Welfare Information Gateway)

Helping Families Access Services and Information for Children (NACAC)

**STATE:**

There are a number of resources in the Resource Notebook that provide assistance for parents looking for therapists for their teens.

- ▶ **RESOURCE #6.6: Seeking Meaningful Therapy: Thoughts from an Adoptive Mom (Kinship Center)**
- ▶ **RESOURCE #6.7: Selecting and Working with a Therapist Skilled in Adoption (Child Welfare Information Gateway)**
- ▶ **RESOURCE #6.8: Helping Families Access Services and Information for Children (NACAC)**



SEGMENT VI. SUMMARY, HOMEWORK AND CLOSING

SLIDES 65-67

5 MINUTES

[PPT #65]: REVIEW OF LEARNING OBJECTIVES**Learning Objectives**

- Demonstrate at least two skills in addressing crises/severe behavior challenges.
- Demonstrate two skills in teaching their youth how to remain safe.
- Recognize vulnerabilities of youth with challenging behaviors who have experienced trauma.
- Describe ways to be actively involved in the youth's behavioral/mental health treatment.

65

**STATE:**

Let's review the learning objectives:

- ▶ Demonstrate at least two skills in addressing crises/severe behavior challenges.
- ▶ Demonstrate two skills in teaching their youth how to remain safe.
- ▶ Recognize vulnerabilities present in youth with challenging behaviors who have experienced trauma.
- ▶ Describe how to access competent and culturally appropriate services before challenges become a crisis.

Parenting youth with challenging behaviors is an extremely difficult task. However, with support, you can successfully manage these behaviors.

PPT #66]: HOMEWORK**Homework**

Choose 3 videos or articles on the resource list **Handout #6.3** or from the articles in the Resources Section on topics that most concern or interest you and be prepared to report on 2-3 strategies you learned from each to share with other participants.

66

**STATE:**

For this session's homework, you will choose three videos or articles from **HANDOUT #6.3: Resources for Parents** and complete the bottom section with two or three strategies you learned from each resource that you will share with other participants at the next session.

**HANDOUT #6.3: RESOURCES FOR PARENTS**

10 Tips for Foster Parents to Help Their Foster Youth Avoid Teen Pregnancy

<http://www.courts.ca.gov/documents/BTB24-2J-12.pdf>

About Teen Suicide; KidsHealth website

<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/suicide.html>

Adolescence and Risk-Taking

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/surviving-your-childs-adolescence/201407/adolescence-and-risk-taking>

Autism Speaks website (free resources for supporting youth with autism)

<https://www.autismspeaks.org/family-services/tool-kits/transition-tool-kit>

Eating Disorders Toolkit

<https://www.nationaleatingdisorders.org/sites/default/files/Toolkits/ParentToolkit.pdf>

Helping Someone with an Eating Disorder

<https://www.helpguide.org/articles/eatingdisorders/helping-someone-with-an-eating-disorder.htm>

National Eating Disorders Association website

<https://www.nationaleatingdisorders.org/help-support>

Parenting Children or Youth Who Are Sexually Reactive:

<https://www.nacac.org/resource/parentingchildren-or-youth-who-are-sexually-reactive>

<https://www.nacac.org/resource/relationships-and-sexuality/>

Resource on social media

<https://www.welcome2reality.us/parents-corner/>

Risk and Protective Factors for the Safety of Children with Autism

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/280559314_Risk_and_Protective_Factors_for_the_Safety_of_Children_with_Autism_A_Qualitative_Study_of_Caregivers%27_Perspectives

Self-Injury and Recovery Research and Resources website

<http://www.selfinjury.bctr.cornell.edu/resources.html>

Short videos on different subjects, including some on parenting children with challenging behaviors

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCQ6qtXeMCZ-vgC9tG7LokNw/videos>

Understanding and Managing Youth's Challenging Behaviors, Part 2

Teen Risk Behaviors; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

https://www.cdc.gov/parents/teens/risk_behaviors.html

What I Wish Parents Knew About Eating Disorders

<https://thriving.childrenshospital.org/what-i-wishparents-knew-about-eating-disorders/>

Youth with FASD talking about making and keeping friends

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xtH2eFGr7Eo>

Strategies I learned that I will share with other participants at the next session:

Strategy #1:

Strategy #2:

Strategy #3:

SESSION 6

Understanding and Managing Youth's Challenging Behaviors, Part 2

[PPT #67]: CLOSING



STATE:

Thank you for your time and attention during the session.

Remember that the next session is our last, and we will talk about the importance of connections to birth family, learning about secondary trauma and review our new “suitcase” of parenting knowledge and skills.

CORE TEEN CURRICULUM



SESSION

A NEW SUITCASE OF PARENTING KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

SESSION 7: PRE AND POSTTEST ANSWER KEY

1. Trauma-informed parenting combines structure with nurturing to create a safe and supportive environment for the youth. (circle one) **True** False

2. You find drugs in your teenager's room and you want to have a conversation about it. What are the 3 R's in trauma-informed parenting you would use to respond to your teenager?
 - a. Relate, Regulate, Reassess
 - b. Regulate, Relate, Reason**
 - c. Relate, Respond, Rational
 - d. Rational, Response, Role model

3. Ana is a 14-year old who enjoys hanging out with her friends, likes art, and listens to music constantly. Her biological mother died when she was 6. Before that she lived with both her biological mother and her grandmother. Both caregivers struggled with substance abuse. All of the following may impact Ana's attachment with her foster/adoptive parent, **EXCEPT**
 - a. The experience of loss with the death of her biological mother
 - b. The experience of substance use and abuse in the home
 - c. Her mother's age when she died**
 - d. Moving out of her biological family's home and into care

4. Rayshawn's father, Nick, provides him with verbal praise when he demonstrates desired behaviors. Nick will say things like "Rayshawn, I really appreciate you sharing with me how you feel" or "Rayshawn you showed a lot of strength walking away from your sibling to calm down." This is an example of what type of parenting strategy?
 - a. Environmental Control
 - b. Modeling
 - c. Instructing
 - d. Rewarding**

5. Shawn has been hanging out with friends after school. Shawn and his friends were caught smoking marijuana and attempting to steal candy from a local store. What is an effective parenting strategy his mother, Vanessa might use?
 - a. Enroll Shawn in Karate after school**
 - b. Ground Shawn for three weeks
 - c. Delete Shawn's friends' contacts from his phone
 - d. Scold Shawn in front of his friends so he won't see them again

6. Derrick's teen is yelling and trying to engage in a fight with Derrick. Derrick remains calm and does not engage with the youth. Derrick says, "When you are ready to talk, come and sit in the living room – I will be there." Derrick moves to the living room, pulls out a book and begins to read while waiting for the teen to sit down indicating they are ready to talk. This is an example of what type of parenting strategy?
- Environmental Control
 - Modeling
 - Ignoring**
 - Instructing
7. Felicity is the adoptive parent of Ba'Shira, a 16- year old girl. They are shopping together and Felicity gets upset that the store doesn't have what she is looking for. She states, "I am feeling very frustrated that this store does not have what I need. I'm going to find another place to shop." This is an example of what type of parenting strategy?
- Environmental Control
 - Modeling**
 - Ignoring
 - Natural Consequences
8. Michael is a 13-year old who does not like doing homework. As his adoptive parent, you feel it is important that he does well in school. Michael has a project due in two days. You have helped him set up a timeline for when he needs to get tasks completed. The night before it is due, Michael is panicked and asks you to help him finish the project. What do you do in response?
- Do the project for him
 - Offer to call the teacher in the morning to ask for more time
 - Let him get done what he can and turn it in**
 - Tell him to stay home from school
9. Youth who identify as LGBTQ2S will grow out of it. (circle one) True **False**
10. Your teenager is upset that she can't attend a sleep-over with friends this weekend because there will be no adults in the home. Which of the following responses demonstrates attunement?
- "You know the rule, there are no sleep-overs when adults are not in the home."
 - "I know you're upset that you won't be able to be with your friends. Next time we can plan for you to have them come here."**
 - "Why are you making such a big deal about this? There will be other sleep-overs."
 - "I know you're unhappy, but you'll just have to deal with it."

11. Practicing self-care as a parent is essential to supporting the recovery and healthy development of a teen who has experienced trauma. (circle one) **True** False
12. Tayon is a 13-year old who has experienced extreme trauma. His father, Damion, knows that Tayon needs a great deal of support. Damion wants to show Tayon he is committed and will be there for him all the time but also needs time for himself. Which of the following behaviors allows Damion to address his own need for self-care while ensuring Tayon is getting the support he needs?
- a. Damion lets Tayon stay at home while he goes out to dinner with friends
 - b. Damion goes to dinner with a friend while Tayon is at football practice**
 - c. Damion talks to Tayon about the stressors he is experiencing as a parent
 - d. Damion does nothing, he will address his self-care after Tayon gets what he needs
13. Teens who experience trauma may have difficulty letting their parents know they are doing a good job. How can parents get this positive feedback?
- a. You don't really need positive feedback
 - b. Connect with friends and family who can provide support**
 - c. If the teen doesn't want to give it, knowing what you're doing is good will have to be enough
 - d. Ask the teen to tell you at least one positive thing about your parenting every day
14. What can lead to 'Secondary Trauma'?
- a. Experiencing the same trauma multiple times
 - b. Hearing about the traumatic events of others**
 - c. Witnessing the trauma of someone you care about
 - d. Experiencing multiple different traumas
15. Youth who engage in self-harm through cutting are just trying to get attention. (circle one) True **False**

SESSION 7: A NEW SUITCASE OF PARENTING KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS



CORE Competency: Parents nurture and promote the well-being of their youth through trauma-informed parenting.

CORE Competency: Parents develop and sustain a healthy and supportive relationship with their youth.

CORE Competency: Parents safely and effectively manage their youth's challenging behaviors.

SEGMENTS

- I. Welcome and Debrief **(10 MINUTES)**
- II. Relationships with Birth Family Members and Other Key Individuals **(25 MINUTES)**
- III. Review of the Impact of Trauma and Trauma-Informed Parenting Techniques **(20 MINUTES)**
- IV. Secondary Traumatic Stress **(10 MINUTES)**
- V. Self-Care **(45 MINUTES)**
- VI. Summary, Closing and Celebration of Completion of Training **(10 MINUTES)**

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

No additional materials needed.

PREPARE

PREPARE the following flip chart pages for the Makayla case scenario activity:

1. Makayla's History of Trauma;
2. Makayla's Behaviors of Concern; and
3. Trauma-Informed Parenting Skills.

PREPARE the following flip chart pages for the activity about indicators of secondary traumatic stress:

1. Emotional Indicators;
2. Physical Indicators; and
3. Personal Indicators.

PREPARE to celebrate the participants' successful completion of the training with one of the activities at the end of the session or an activity of your own.

SEGMENT I. WELCOME AND DEBRIEF

SLIDES 1-4
10 MINUTES

[PPT 1]: WELCOME

Session #7. A New Suitcase of Parenting Knowledge and Skills



NOTE: Display this slide as participants are getting seated and welcome participants as they enter the room.

STATE:

Welcome to Session Seven. In this session, we will talk about the importance of keeping your youth connected to birth family and other key individuals, review what we have learned about the impact of trauma and trauma-informed parenting techniques, and focus on self-care.

[PPT #2]: REVIEW OF HOMEWORK

Homework

- Which videos or articles did you choose?
- What strategies did you learn from those resources?



STATE:

Before we begin, let's talk about the homework assignments you completed for today.

We asked you to choose three videos or articles from the resource list in **HANDOUT #6.3** on topics that most concern you. We also asked you to write down two or three strategies that you learned from each resource.

- ▶ Which videos or articles did you choose?
- ▶ What strategies did you learn from those resources?

FACILITATE A DISCUSSION about the parenting strategies they learned.

SESSION 7

A New Suitcase of Parenting Knowledge and Skills

[PPT #3]: QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

Any questions or comments about Session #6?



3

STATE:

As always, we covered a lot of material in our last session.

Do you have any questions or comments about what you learned in Session Six?

[PPT #4]: LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Learning Objectives

- Demonstrate two ways that parents can support youth's important connections and a sense of connectedness.
- Demonstrate the impact of secondary trauma on parenting.
- Identify the important elements to developing a self-care plan.

4

STATE:

Now, let's move on to the learning objectives for today.

By the end of this session, you will be able to:

1. Demonstrate two ways that parents can support youth's important connections and a sense of connectedness.
2. Demonstrate the impact of secondary trauma on parenting.
3. Identify the important elements to developing a self-care plan.

SEGMENT II. RELATIONSHIPS WITH BIRTH FAMILY MEMBERS AND OTHER KEY INDIVIDUALS

SLIDES 5-14
25 MINUTES

[PPT 5]: RELATIONSHIPS WITH BIRTH FAMILY MEMBERS AND OTHER KEY INDIVIDUALS

Relationships with Birth Family Members and Other Key Individuals

- Attachments to birth family members and other key individuals in their lives: Healthy relationships are essential in supporting the youth's current and future attachments.
- Almost every birth parent loves their child(ren) to the best of their ability and has provided some good parenting along the way.
- The youth *come from* their birth parents and from their birth cultures. If we reject or dislike them, we are, in effect, doing the same to youth.



STATE:

In Session Six, we talked briefly about youth who may seek contact with family members using social media. We will talk more now about the importance of supporting your youth's relationships with birth family members and other key individuals.

As we focus on attachment with our youth, it is important to recognize a youth's attachments to birth family members and other key individuals.

These relationships are essential in supporting the youth's current and future attachments.

Birth parents love their children and to the best of their ability have provided some good parenting along the way. This should be acknowledged and celebrated.

The youth COME FROM their birth parents and from their birth cultures. If we reject or dislike them, we are, in effect, rejecting our youth.

[PPT #6]: RELATIONSHIPS WITH BIRTH FAMILY MEMBERS AND OTHER KEY INDIVIDUALS
(CONTINUED)

Relationships with Birth Family Members and Other Key Individuals

- Youth's relationships with members their birth families may not seem positive or stable to you
- Respecting their healthy attachments and helping youth maintain them: help youth build a healthy sense of connection to their pasts as they move into the future
- Foster and adopted teens must have the opportunity to reflect on birth family members as they figure out who they look like and how they are different



STATE:

Youth's relationships with members their birth families may not seem positive or stable to you. As a parent, you may even see the birth family as a source of trauma and pain—something to forget. Many youth, however, can remember good times or make something positive out of the bad times.

Youth may have strong connections with siblings, relatives, extended family members, and other adults and children from their communities. By respecting these attachments, and helping youth maintain them, we help youth build a healthy sense of connection to their pasts as they move into the future. An ability to form and keep one attachment helps foster other attachments as well.

During adolescence, youth are often concerned with how their bodies are changing and how they will look in the future. Teens who were in foster care or adopted must have the opportunity to reflect on birth family members as they figure out who they look like and how they are different.

[PPT #7]: RELATIONSHIPS WITH BIRTH FAMILY MEMBERS AND OTHER KEY INDIVIDUALS (CONT.)

Relationships with Birth Family Members and Other Key Individuals



Resource from Wendy Wiegmann



STATE:

An excellent resource from Wendy Wiegmann can be helpful to understanding the essential connections with birth family members.

RESOURCE #7.1: Wendy Wiegmann Article, is located in the Resource Handbook.

[PPT #8]: RELATIONSHIPS WITH BIRTH FAMILY MEMBERS AND OTHER KEY INDIVIDUALS (CONT.)

Relationships with Birth Family Members and Other Key Individuals

Supporting a youth's healthy relationships with birth family members and other key individuals.

Communicate to the youth that you support those healthy relationships and other important connections. These relationships and connections extend to birth parents and extended family members (both paternal and maternal) and siblings.

From Lori Ross



STATE:

Now, let's look at some ways that we can support a youth's healthy relationships with birth family members and other key individuals.

One way is to communicate to the youth that you support those healthy relationships and other important connections. These relationships and connections extend to birth parents and extended family members (both paternal and maternal) and siblings.

Lori Ross is the founder, CEO and President of FosterAdopt Connect. Lori and her husband Randy have been foster/adoptive parents since 1985. Together they have cared for more than 400 foster children and adopted 23 ranging in age from 5 to 34. They also had five biological children along the way.

Lori has talked with great insight about the importance of parents supporting their youth's healthy relationships.

Lori writes:

“About six years into foster/adoptive parenting, I met a young woman who had been adopted by another family. She confided in me about her conflicted loyalty between the love for her adoptive parents and her need to reconnect to members of her birth family. She wasn't rejecting her adoptive family; she was expressing sadness because she thought she had to pick a family.

What hurt her was her adoptive mother's inability to help her navigate those feelings without taking it as a rejection. She was a sensitive, caring young woman, in large part because of the love she had learned in her adoptive family. But she had to hide part of who she was from the people she loved and needed the most.

From that experience, I learned it was my job to help my kids navigate their feelings about their birth families, without making the journey about me. I needed to be secure enough as their mother that I could listen, understand, and support whatever degree of connection they decided to have.”

NOTE: Ask “What are your thoughts about Lori's experience and learning? Are her thoughts similar to or different from your thoughts about supporting healthy birth family connections?”

[PPT #9]: RELATIONSHIPS WITH BIRTH FAMILY MEMBERS AND OTHER KEY INDIVIDUALS (CONT.)

Relationships with Birth Family Members and Other Key Individuals

Support your youth's healthy birth family connections

- Help your youth develop a balanced view of his or her birth parents.
- Avoid agreeing or participating when your youth criticizes the birth parent.
- *If your youth is in foster care:* The goal is to find ways to co-parent or share parenting with birth parents, rather than keeping distance from them.
- *If your youth has an open adoption:* Build healthy relationships with your youth's birth family.
- *If your youth wants to find additional family members:* Talk about options for learning more.
- Be familiar with your youth's social media use.



STATE:

When we think about managing and maintaining healthy birth family connections, communication with youth is important.

Help your youth develop a balanced view of his or her birth parents. Talk about birth parents as complex people with both strengths and faults. Limited or one-sided information does not allow youth to consider all of their parents' experiences and characteristics in developing their own identities.

Avoid agreeing with or participating when a youth criticizes the birth parent. Because their critical thinking skills are still developing, teenagers can be extremely judgmental of others. Teens who were adopted may be angry at birth parents without understanding their difficult situations. Remember that all children in foster care and adoptees come from their birth parents and may take criticism of the birth parent as criticism of them.

Foster parents must support youth before and after their visits with their birth parents. See the article in the Resource Notebook: **RESOURCE #7.2: Making Birth Family Visits Successful for Your Foster Child**, from Plummer Youth Promise which lists some key ideas.

If your youth has an open adoption, build healthy relationships with your youth's birth family. Show respect for the family members and maintain a genuine commitment to staying connected. You may have reasons to keep some distance from birth family members; however, it is important to stay focused on what's in the best interest of your child.

If your youth wants to find additional family members, talk about options for learning more. Ask your teen about his or her feelings about potential contact with birth relatives. This can be a very emotional process. Emphasize the importance of being prepared and having support in place before starting a search.

If you are kinship family, you likely have an existing relationship with the birth parents. This can be a benefit for the youth, but may also put you in situations where you feel conflicted between supporting the birth parent (your relative) and supporting needs of the youth you are caring for. You may feel obligated to allow contact outside of what is approved in the youth's plan. The birth parent may feel resentful toward you or feel judged, making for an even more challenging relationship to navigate.

Shared and Co-Parenting

- Keeping journals
- Taking pictures Saving notes, schoolwork, art projects
- Including birth family members in school activities such as conferences, parents' nights, and athletic events as well as in medical or dental appointments
- Allowing family interactions to take place in the resource family home



STATE:

If your youth is in foster care, the goal is to find ways to co-parent or share parenting with birth parents, rather than keeping distance from them.

The process of shared or co-parenting can benefit youth not only by supporting a connection with their birth parents but also by allowing them to experience a continued caregiving presence from their parents.

According to the North American Council on Adoptable Children, shared or co-parenting techniques can include:

- ▶ Keeping journals on the activities of the children and sharing them with the birth family.
- ▶ Taking pictures of the child's activities to share with the birth family and displaying pictures of the birth family in the child's room and in your home.
- ▶ Saving notes, schoolwork, art projects, etc. for the birth parents.
- ▶ Including birth family members in school activities such as conferences, parents' nights, and athletic events as well as in medical or dental appointments. This can allow the birth parents to practice normal parenting skills while the resource parent plays a mentoring and supportive role.
- ▶ Allowing family interactions to take place in the resource family home.

[PPT 11]: RELATIONSHIPS WITH BIRTH FAMILY MEMBERS AND OTHER KEY INDIVIDUALS (CONT.)

Relationships with Birth Family Members and Other Key Individuals

Support your youth's sibling connections

- Emotionally powerful and critically important relationships
- Longest lasting relationships
- Can provide the support and nurture that are not consistently provided by parents
- Provide protection
- When in foster care: can promote a sense of safety and well-being

**STATE:**

You should also support your youth's sibling connections. Sibling relationships are emotionally powerful and very important not only in childhood but throughout life.

- ▶ Sibling relationships are likely to be the longest relationships that most people experience.
- ▶ In many families involved with child welfare, sibling relationships take on more importance because siblings may have provided the support not consistently provided by parents.
- ▶ Siblings may have served as protection during the worst circumstances.
- ▶ For children entering care, being with their brothers and sisters promotes a sense of safety and well-being and being separated from them can trigger grief and anxiety. As a result, is especially important to protect these ties.

[PPT #12]: RELATIONSHIPS WITH BIRTH FAMILY MEMBERS AND OTHER KEY INDIVIDUALS (CONT.)

Relationships with Birth Family Members and Other Key Individuals

Keeping youth's connections with their siblings when they are not physically together

- Arrange for regular visits.
- Arrange other forms of contact.
- Plan joint outings or camp experiences.
- Arrange for joint respite care.
- Help children and youth with emotions.

Handout #7.1 Sibling Issues in Foster Care and Adoption

**STATE:**

So, what can we do to keep youth's connections with their siblings when they are not physically together?

Let's review some ideas from **HANDOUT #7.1: Sibling Issues in Foster Care and Adoption** by the Child Welfare Information Gateway.



HANDOUT #7.1: SIBLING ISSUES IN FOSTER CARE AND ADOPTION

**BULLETIN FOR PROFESSIONALS**

June 2019



Sibling Issues in Foster Care and Adoption

Sibling relationships can provide positive support and improved outcomes for children involved with child welfare as well as for those in the general population (Richardson & Yates, 2014). Connections with siblings can serve as a protective factor for children who have been removed from their birth homes, but for a variety of reasons, siblings may not be placed together or may not have regular contact. Child welfare professionals can support children's well-being by attempting to preserve their connections to any brothers and sisters while in foster care or any subsequent permanent placements. This bulletin explores relevant research, strategies, and resources to assist child welfare professionals in preserving connections among siblings.

WHAT'S INSIDE

 Importance of sibling relationships

 Legal framework for protecting sibling connections

 Defining a sibling relationship

 Challenges to placing siblings together

 Practices to maintain sibling connections

 Conclusion

 Additional resources

 References

Importance of Sibling Relationships

Having a brother or sister provides children with a peer partner with whom they can explore their environments, navigate social and cognitive challenges, and learn skills (Richardson & Yates, 2014). Sibling relationships can provide a source of continuity throughout a child's lifetime and can be the longest relationships that people experience. Unfortunately, though, many siblings may be separated upon removal and not have frequent contact while in care (Wojciak, McWey, & Helfrich, 2013). However, for some siblings in care, their separation or infrequent visiting can cause those relationships to wither, sometimes to the point of permanent estrangement. The following sections describe the benefits sibling connections have on the well-being and permanency outcomes of children involved with foster care.

Well-Being Outcomes

Experiencing maltreatment and being removed from their homes are traumatic experiences for children. They can cause children to suffer from feelings of worry and confusion as well as loss of identity, self-esteem, and a sense of belonging, which can be exasperated by separation from a sibling (Wojciak, McWey, & Waid, 2018). Preserving ties with siblings, however, can help buffer children from the negative effects of maltreatment and removal from the home (Aguiniga & Madden, 2018).

The following are examples of positive well-being outcomes that can arise from supporting sibling relationships or copacements:

- Children who have positive relationships with their siblings are less likely to exhibit internalizing behaviors (i.e., behavior problems, such as anxiety or depression, that are directed inward or "kept inside") after experiencing a traumatic event (Gass, Jenkins, & Dunn, 2007; Wojciak, McWey, & Helfrich, 2013).
- Being placed with siblings or maintaining sibling connections while in care serves as a protective factor for children's mental health (Jones, 2016; McBeath et al., 2014).
- Being placed with all their siblings may improve children's school performance (Hegar & Rosenthal, 2011).

- When siblings who are all placed together were compared with those in "splintered" placements,¹ those placed together tend to show more closeness to their foster caregivers and like living in the foster home more than those not placed with a sibling (Hegar and Rosenthal, 2011).
- Separating siblings can hinder adjustment and adaptation to the new home. This is in part due to children worrying about their siblings in other foster homes or those remaining with their birth families (Affronti, Rittner, & Semanchin Jones, 2015).

Siblings can also provide support to youth after they have emancipated or otherwise exited from foster care. Based on a small convening of youth formerly in foster care, FosterClub—which helps connect youth in foster care with tools, resources, and peer support—noted that siblings can help by providing emotional and spiritual support, guidance about college or other opportunities, assistance required due to physical and developmental disabilities, and information about health concerns or history (C. Teague, personal communication, April 22, 2019).

Permanency Outcomes

Joint sibling placements can increase the likelihood of achieving permanency and stability. Studies have found that placing siblings in the same foster home is associated with higher rates of reunification, adoption, and guardianship (Jones, 2016; Akin, 2011). Additionally, siblings placed together are more likely to exit to adoption and guardianship than if they are placed apart (Jones, 2016). Some studies find that children placed with their siblings also experience at least as much placement stability—if not more—than those who were separated from their siblings (Jones, 2016). A large study of placement disruptions in Texas found that placements of all siblings together led to a lower risk of disruptions due to incompatibility between the child and caregiver or child-initiated disruptions (e.g., the child ran away or refused to stay) compared with placements of siblings placed apart (Sattler, Font, & Gershoff, 2018).

¹ A "splintered" placement is one in which a child is placed with at least one sibling but is also not placed with at least one sibling.

Legal Framework for Protecting Sibling Connections

Even when professionals believe that maintaining sibling relationships is in children's best interests, laws and policies must be in place to support these connections, both in foster care and when permanency is achieved. At the Federal level, the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 (Fostering Connections Act) was the first Federal law to address the importance of keeping siblings together. The law mandates that, to receive Federal funding, States must make reasonable efforts to maintain sibling connections. This means that States must seek to place siblings in the same home or, if the children are not placed in the same home, provide for frequent visitation or ongoing contact, unless either of these actions would be contrary to the safety or well-being of any of the siblings.

As of January 2018, approximately 37 States, the District of Columbia, and Guam have statutes requiring child-placing agencies to make reasonable efforts to place siblings in the same home when they are in need of out-of-home care, except when there are documented reasons why a joint placement would not be in the best interests of any of the siblings. Additionally, approximately 35 States and Puerto Rico have statutes requiring that siblings who cannot be placed together be given opportunities for visits and/or other contact or communication (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2018).² State statutes regarding siblings may vary. For more information, refer to Information Gateway's *Placement of Children With Relatives*, which provides State-specific legislative text, at <https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/systemwide/laws-policies/statutes/placement/>.

As of August 2018, only 13 States specifically have statutes providing that visits between siblings who have been separated by adoption may be included in a contact agreement (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2019).

² Although the Fostering Connections Act requires States to have policies and procedures in place to ensure reasonable efforts are being made to place siblings together or help them maintain contact, that does not—in most cases—necessarily require the State legislature to pass a law.

Adoptive parents have the right to decide, however, who may have contact with their adopted child, and they can allow any amount of contact with birth family members, which can be arranged without any formal agreement. State-by-State information on this topic can be found in Information Gateway's *Postadoption Contact Agreements Between Birth and Adoptive Families* at <https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/systemwide/laws-policies/statutes/cooperative/>.

In addition to the Fostering Connections Act, other recent Federal legislation has included provisions recognizing the importance of sibling connections. The Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act of 2014 amended title IV-E State plan provisions to require that the parents of siblings be included as persons to be notified when a child needs placement. The Family First Prevention Services Act of 2018 permits a State to allow the number of children in foster care who may be cared for in a home to exceed the numerical limitation specified in law in order to allow siblings to remain together.

Defining a Sibling Relationship

The identification of siblings can be challenging, especially when children have lived in more than one family. Additionally, children's definitions of their siblings may differ from laws and agency policies, which may have restrictive definitions of siblings that require children to have a biological parent in common. Children may have more expansive definitions of who their siblings are; they may include biological siblings, step siblings, foster siblings, or other close relatives or nonrelatives with whom they live or have lived. It is also possible they have siblings they have never met. Caseworkers should ask children about who they view as their siblings and strive to help them maintain connections even when some siblings may fall outside their jurisdiction's legal definition.

Challenges to Placing Siblings Together

Placing siblings in the same home should always be the priority. There may be situations, however, where placing siblings together is not advisable due to clinical considerations arising from the trauma the children have experienced. If there is concern about placing the siblings together, caseworkers should conduct an assessment of the sibling relationship and consult with the children's therapists and previous foster parents to determine if placing the siblings in separate homes is warranted. In the event that one of the siblings poses a risk to the other due to physical, sexual, and/or verbal abuse, the caseworker should determine if the risks can be managed if the siblings are placed in the same home. If so, the worker can put a plan in place to ensure the safety of the siblings. The entire child welfare team, including the foster parents, should be made aware of this plan.

There are sometimes logistical barriers that make it difficult to place siblings together. Although the following demographic and situational factors present challenges for agencies to placing siblings together, they should not be used by caseworkers as reasons *why* siblings should be placed apart (Wojciak, McWey, & Waid, 2018; Wojciak & Hough, 2018):

- Large sibling group size
- Differences in the needs of siblings
- Entrance into foster care at different times
- Lack of foster homes that can accommodate a sibling group

Other difficulties that could arise include caseworkers not being able to determine sibling connections or find siblings if they have different last names, live in a different jurisdiction, or are otherwise unknown to the agency. Another potential obstacle in some jurisdictions is that a termination of parental rights could also end the legal relationship between siblings, which would make the Fostering Connections Act requirement to place siblings together when possible irrelevant in those cases (White & Jernstrom, 2014).

If siblings have to be placed in different homes, it is essential that a visitation plan be put in place to ensure consistent contact between the siblings. Potential barriers to sibling visits while in foster care including long distances; high caseloads, which can prevent caseworkers from having enough time to coordinate and supervise visits; foster parent resistance; youth resistance; adoption of one or more siblings; and other resource issues (e.g., lacking funds to reimburse foster parents for mileage, visitation rooms) (Church & Moe, 2015; Joyce, 2009).

It is essential that child welfare agencies plan for these obstacles in advance. They should routinely review their policies and practices to find ways to mitigate any barriers to placing siblings together and ensuring consistent contact between siblings who are separated. Agencies may be able to adjust their resource family recruitment and retention methods, as well as their data-collection efforts, to be better situated to have a set of families willing and able to accommodate sibling groups of various sizes and needs.

Practices to Maintain Sibling Connections

Given the importance of sibling relationships and the positive outcomes they can generate, it is crucial for child welfare professionals to place siblings together or, if that is not possible, seek ways for them to remain connected while they are in foster care, postpermanency, or after they have aged out of care. Beginning at intake and continuing throughout a case, workers should determine and assess sibling relationships from the perspective of each child (as age appropriate) to help create strategies to place siblings together. The assessment should also include information from collateral sources, such as relatives, caregivers, and teachers (Waid, 2018). During this process, caseworkers should seek information about who the child considers to be a sibling—including those who are not included in your jurisdiction's legal definition of siblings and those who may not currently be living with the child. They should also ask the child about the actual and desired frequency of contact with each sibling.

The following are practices that can help caseworkers and agencies achieve both of those goals:

- Providing training for caseworkers and caregivers on the importance of preserving sibling connections—including with those siblings who have achieved permanence, aged out of care, were informally placed with relatives, or were not removed from the home—and the impact of sibling loss on children
- Having a system in place to track the location and status of all siblings, including those currently in separate placements, have achieved permanence, aged out of care, were informally placed with relatives, or were not removed from the home
- Assigning all siblings to the same caseworker, regardless of when they enter care
- Discussing sibling issues at regular intervals with all relevant individuals (e.g., children, birth families, resource families) throughout cases and incorporating sibling connections into postpermanency plans
- Including children and youth, as well as caregivers, in discussions and case planning regarding siblings

Additionally, there are programs designed to enhance the relationships of siblings in foster care, both for siblings placed together and those placed apart. For example, Supporting Siblings in Foster Care (SIBS-FC) is a 12-session program that provides sibling pairs with opportunities to learn and practice social skills, emotional regulation, problem solving, and other skills. In a randomized clinical trial, siblings participating in SIBS-FC had significant improvements in relationship quality (Kothari et al., 2017). Caseworkers should determine if similar programs are available in their communities and if children in their caseload would benefit from them.

The remainder of this section addresses strategies for placing siblings together and helping them maintain a relationship when coplacement is not possible.

Strategies That Support Placing Siblings Together

Agency practices, along with the individual circumstances of each sibling group and the availability of suitable placements, will affect whether siblings are placed together. The following are practice strategies designed to recruit and support families who can care for sibling groups (National Resource Center for Diligent Recruitment, 2017; Silverstein & Smith, 2009):

- Help families assess their capacity to care for a sibling group so they can be better prepared.
- Provide opportunities for foster and adoptive families who have cared for sibling groups to speak with families considering caring for sibling groups, either as a group or individually as a peer partner.
- Recruit families specifically to care for sibling groups through community outreach, the media, special events, faith-based organizations, photolistings, and websites.
- Have contracts with private agencies to offer a specialized foster care program designed specifically for sibling groups. For an example of this type of program, you can read about Neighbor to Family, which has several locations throughout the United States, at <http://neighbortofamily.org/>.
- If efforts are being made to recruit an adoptive family for a sibling group, list them as a group with a picture of the entire sibling group.
- Ensure families who care for sibling groups receive information and access to sufficient resources (e.g., family support groups, sibling camps, individual and family therapeutic services, respite care).
- Designate certain foster home resources for large sibling groups and offer incentives to hold them open for these placements.
- If siblings must be separated in an emergency placement, review the case within the first week to plan for how they can be placed with the same family.

Sibling Placement Decision Scenarios

Despite supportive policies or a caseworker's best efforts, several situations may lead to siblings being placed separately. This initial separation can lead to permanent separation if an agency does not make ongoing, concerted efforts to place the children together. Both policy and practice should promote ongoing efforts to reunite separated siblings. Common dilemmas regarding separated siblings include the following:

- An infant may come into care and be placed in a foster home before workers have determined that the infant has siblings already in foster care or in adoptive homes. The foster parents of the infant may then argue against the removal of the infant from their home. To avoid this dilemma, agencies should establish whether any child coming into care has siblings already in placement or who have achieved permanency. If so, strong efforts should be made to place the infant with siblings.
- In some cases of separated siblings, foster parents may want to adopt only the sibling placed with them. Workers are put in an untenable position—allowing the child to be adopted without his or her siblings or keeping the child in foster care until a family can be found who will adopt all of the siblings. To reduce the likelihood of this situation, foster parents should always be told at the time of placement that reuniting siblings is a top priority of the agency. Whatever decision is made, there should be provisions for maintaining connections with both the foster parents and siblings.
- A sibling group placement could disrupt because the foster parents cannot handle one of the sibling's behavior, but they want to continue parenting the others. The worker must decide whether to remove just the one child or the entire sibling group. An alternative would be to have a temporary specialized placement for the sibling with behavior problems if the foster parents are willing to work toward reintegrating this child into their family.

Strategies for Preserving Ties When Siblings Are Separated

When siblings cannot be placed together, facilitating regular contact is critical to maintaining their relationships. Caregivers play a crucial gatekeeping role in regulating contact between siblings, particularly after adoption or guardianship, and it is important for caseworkers to address any caregiver concerns and promote the benefits of sibling contact. Sometimes supporting and sustaining sibling visits require clinical interventions, including both sibling therapy and clinically supervised visits, to address dysfunctional patterns that have developed in their relationships.

The following are examples of practices that can help maintain or strengthen relationships among separated siblings:

- **Place siblings with kinship caregivers who have an established personal relationship.** Even when siblings cannot be placed in the same home, they are more apt to keep in close contact if they are each placed with a relative.
- **Place them nearby.** Placing siblings in the same neighborhood or school district makes it easier for them to see each other regularly.
- **Ensure regular visits occur.** Frequent visits help to preserve sibling bonds. Children's Bureau guidance on the Fostering Connections Act (<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/resource/pi1011>) designates that these visits should occur at least monthly and allows agencies to set standards for more frequent contact. Some communities may have local organizations

that can support sibling visits. For example, Project Visitation in Hawaii helps arrange monthly visits and special events for separated siblings.

- **Arrange other forms of contact.** If regular in-person meetings may not be possible or are not sufficient to meet the needs or desires of the siblings, workers should assist them in maintaining frequent contact through letters, email, social media, cards, and phone calls. Caseworkers should ensure siblings have full contact information for each other and have access to the proper technology, if needed. Although these alternative forms of communication are beneficial and can provide additional contact between in-person visits, they should not serve as a replacement for regular in-person contact, which may need to be arranged by the caseworker or caregivers.
- **Involve families in planning.** Caseworkers should partner with the adults in the siblings' families (e.g., birth, foster, adoptive, guardianship) to develop a plan for ongoing contact. This discussion should include working through any barriers to visits and how the plan will be reviewed and revised as needed.
- **Plan joint outings or camp experiences.** Siblings may be able to spend time together in a joint activity or at summer or weekend camps, including camps specifically designed for siblings in foster care (e.g., Camp to Belong [<http://cemptobelong.org/>]).
- **Arrange for joint respite care.** Families caring for separated siblings may be able to provide babysitting or respite care for each other, thus giving the siblings another opportunity to spend time together.
- **Help children with emotions.** Children may experience a wide range of emotions that are caused or affected by their separation from their siblings as well as the maltreatment they experienced and their removal from home. For example, children may feel guilty if they have been removed from an abusive home while other siblings were left behind or born later. Caseworkers and other adults in the children's lives can help them express and work through these feelings. If siblings are in therapy, it may be helpful for them to see the same therapist, with appointments perhaps scheduled jointly or back to back.

Postadoption Contact

Sibling relationships should still be facilitated and encouraged in cases when they are in separate homes due to adoption or guardianship. The earlier these relationships begin, the more children can use these opportunities to work through adoption identity and other issues that may arise and the sooner they can develop truly meaningful relationships with siblings. Caseworkers should ensure prospective and current adoptive parents understand the importance of sibling contact, encourage it to be included in any postadoption contact agreements, and seek ways the agency can support this contact.

Many States have adoption registries that can help adult siblings separated by foster care or adoption reestablish contact later in life. The caseworker should ensure that all pertinent information on each sibling is entered in the registry at the time of each child's adoption.

For more information, including State statutes on postadoption contact agreements, visit Information Gateway's Open Adoption and Contact With Birth Families in Adoption web section at <https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/adoption/adoptive/before-adoption/openness/>.

Social Media and Child Welfare

Facebook and other social media make it much easier for siblings to both find and communicate with one another, regardless of the adults' feelings or concerns. Caseworkers can work with both children and their families to explore expectations regarding social media and ensure that children know how to safely use it. For more information about the use of social media in child welfare, including tip sheets for youth in foster care and caseworkers, visit Child Welfare Information Gateway at <https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/management/workforce/tools/socialmedia/>.

Conclusion

Maintaining and strengthening sibling bonds is a key component to child well-being and permanency outcomes. It is also central to meeting the requirements of the Fostering Connections Act. Child welfare professionals can champion these efforts by developing their knowledge about the importance of sibling connections and relevant strategies to support them as well as encouraging birth, foster, and adoptive families to take steps to promote these connections.

Additional Resources

The following Child Welfare Information Gateway web sections offer additional resources about sibling connections in foster care and adoption:

- Considering Siblings in Permanency Planning <https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/permanency/planning/siblings/>
- Sibling Groups <https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/adoption/adoptive/who-are-the-children-waiting-for-families/sibling-groups/>

Other helpful resources for child welfare professionals include the following:

- *Working With Siblings in Foster Care: A Web-Based NCCWE Toolkit* (National Center for Child Welfare Excellence) <http://www.nccwe.org/toolkits/siblings/index.html>
- *Organizational Self Study on Parent-Child and Sibling Visits* (National Resource Center on Permanency and Family Connections) <http://centerforchildwelfare.org/kb/bpam/OrganizationalSelfStudyonVisiting2011.pdf>
- *Practice Principles for the Recruitment and Retention of Kinship, Foster, and Adoptive Families for Siblings* (National Resource Center for Diligent Recruitment) http://adoptuskids.org/_assets/files/NCRRRFAP/resources/practice-principles-and-seven-step-process-for-sibling-recruitment.pdf
- *Ten Myths and Realities of Sibling Adoption* (National Resource Center for Diligent Recruitment) https://www.adoptuskids.org/_assets/files/NCRRRFAP/resources/ten-myths-and-realities-of-sibling-adoptions.pdf
- "Positive Youth Development for Siblings in Foster Care" (webinar) (Center for Advanced Studies in Child Welfare) <https://casw.umn.edu/portfolio-items/pyd/>
- "Siblings in Foster Care: Assessment Considerations for Child Welfare Professionals" (webinar) (Center for Advanced Studies in Child Welfare) <https://casw.umn.edu/portfolio-items/siblings-in-foster-care-assessment-considerations-for-child-welfare-professionals-5-hr/>

Some States may have a sibling bill of rights that can guide your approach to sibling visitation and placement and that may be helpful to share with clients. The following are examples:

- Connecticut: <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/DCF/YAB/pdf/SiblingBillOfRightsFINALpdf.pdf?la=en>
- Minnesota: https://www.dhs.state.mn.us/main/groups/county_access/documents/pub/dhs-305844.pdf
- Oregon: <https://www.oregon.gov/DHS/ABOUTDHS/Documents/CF-0262-Posters.pdf>

References

- Affronti, M., Rittner, B., & Semanchin Jones, A. M. (2015). Functional adaptation to foster care: Foster care alumni speak out. *Journal of Public Child Welfare, 9*, 1–21. doi: 10.1080/15548732.2014.978930
- Aguiniga, D. M., & Madden, E. E. (2018). Foster care placement process and settings. In E. Trejos Castillo & N. Trevino-Schafer (Eds.), *Handbook of foster youth* (pp. 20–40). New York: Routledge.
- Akin, B. A. (2011). Predictors of foster care exits to permanency: A competing risks analysis of reunification, guardianship, and adoption. *Children and Youth Services Review, 33*, 999–1011. doi: 10.1016/j.chilyouth.2011.01.008
- Child Welfare Information Gateway. (2018). *Placement of children with relatives*. Retrieved from <https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/systemwide/laws-policies/statutes/placement/>
- Child Welfare Information Gateway. (2019). *Postadoption contact agreements between birth and adoptive families*. Retrieved from <https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/systemwide/laws-policies/statutes/cooperative/>
- Church, J. A., & Moe, A. M. (2015). Separation, visitation and reunification: Michigan child welfare reform and its implications for siblings. *Journal of Sociology & Social Welfare, 42*(4), 135–157.
- Gass, K., Jenkins, J., & Dunn, J. (2007). Are sibling relationships protective? A longitudinal study. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry, 48*(2), 167–175. doi: 10.1111/j.1469-7610.2006.01699.x
- Hegar, R. L., & Rosenthal, J. A. (2011). Foster children placed with or separated from siblings: Outcomes based on a national sample. *Children and Youth Services Review, 33*(7), 1245–1253. doi: 10.1016/j.chilyouth.2011.02.020
- Jones, C. (2016). Sibling relationships in adoptive and fostering families: A review of the international research literature. *Children & Society, 30*, 324–334. doi: 10.1111/chso.12146
- Joyce, K. S. (2009). *Siblings in care: An implementation evaluation of Maine's siblings policies*. Retrieved from https://sites.hks.harvard.edu/ocpa/pdf/Kristen_Joyce_PAE.pdf
- Kothari, B. H., McBeath, B., Sorenson, P., Bank, L., Waid, J., Jade Webb, S., & Stelle, J. (2017). An intervention to improve sibling relationship quality among youth in foster care: Results of a randomized clinical trial. *Child Abuse & Neglect, 63*, 19–29. doi: 10.1016/j.chiabu.2016.11.010
- McBeath, B., Kothari, B. H., Blakeslee, J., Lamson-Siu, E., Bank, L., Oriana Linares, L., . . . Shlonsky, A. (2014). Intervening to improve outcomes for siblings in foster care: Conceptual, substantive, and methodological dimensions of a prevention science framework. *Children and Youth Services Review, 39*, 1–10. doi: 10.1016/j.chilyouth.2013.12.004
- National Resource Center for Diligent Recruitment. (2017). *Engaging, developing, and supporting prospective families for siblings groups*. Retrieved from http://www.nrcdr.org/_assets/files/NRCDR-org/engaging-developing-supporting-prospective-families-for-sibling-groups.pdf
- Richardson, S. M., & Yates, T. M. (2014). Siblings in foster care: A relational path to resilience for emancipated foster youth. *Children and Youth Services Review, 47*, 378–388. doi: 10.1016/j.chilyouth.2014.10.015
- Sattler, K. M. P., Font, S. A., & Gershoff, E. T. (2018). Age-specific risk factors associated with placement instability among foster children. *Child Abuse & Neglect, 84*, 157–169. doi: 10.1016/j.chiabu.2018.07.024

Silverstein, D. N., & Smith, S. L. (2009). Practice strategies to preserve sibling relationships. In D. N. Silverstein and S. L. Smith (Eds.), *Siblings in adoption and foster care*, (pp. 123–137). Westport, CT: Praeger.

Waid, J. (2018). *Siblings in foster care: Assessment considerations for child welfare professionals* [Webinar]. Retrieved from <https://casw.umn.edu/portfolio-items/siblings-in-foster-care-assessment-considerations-for-child-welfare-professionals-5-hr/>

White, R., & Jernstrom, S. (2014). The importance of maintaining sibling connections in foster care. *Adoption Advocate*, 71. Retrieved from <https://www.adoptioncouncil.org/publications/2014/05/adoption-advocate-no-71>

Wojciak, A. S., & Hough, N. A. (2018). Youth in foster care relationships with biological, foster, and adoptive families. In E. Trejos Castillo & N. Trevino-Schafer (Eds.), *Handbook of foster youth* (pp. 190–207). New York: Routledge.

Wojciak, A. S., McWey, L. M., & Helfrich, C. M. (2013). Sibling relationships and internalizing symptoms of youth in foster care. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 35, 1071–1077. doi: 10.1016/j.chilyouth.2013.04.021

Wojciak, A. S., McWey, L. M., & Waid, J. (2018). Sibling relationships of youth in foster care: A predictor of resilience. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 84, 247–254. doi: 10.1016/j.chilyouth.2017.11.030

Suggested Citation:

Child Welfare Information Gateway. (2019). *Sibling issues in foster care and adoption*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Children's Bureau.



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families
Administration on Children, Youth and Families
Children's Bureau



SESSION 7

A New Suitcase of Parenting Knowledge and Skills

STATE:

Some important take-aways from this handout include:

- ▶ Arrange for regular visits. Frequent visits help to preserve sibling bonds.
- ▶ Arrange other forms of contact. Maintain frequent contacts through letters, email, social media, cards, and phone calls.
- ▶ Plan joint outings or camp experiences.
- ▶ Arrange for joint respite care.
- ▶ Help children and youth with emotions. Sometimes sibling visits stir up emotional issues in children, such as the intense feelings they may experience when visiting birth parents. Children need to be helped to express and work through these feelings; this does not mean visits should not occur.
- ▶ Visits should provide some opportunities for joint Lifebook work with siblings. Children may also need help with feelings of guilt if they have been removed from an abusive home while other siblings were left behind or born later.

[PPT #13]: RELATIONSHIPS WITH BIRTH FAMILY MEMBERS AND OTHER KEY INDIVIDUALS (CONT.)

Relationships with Birth Family Members and Other Key Individuals

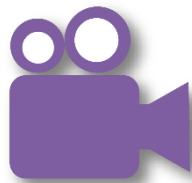


VIDEO:
Brothers and Sisters in Foster Care:
Keeping Siblings in Foster Care Connected



STATE:

Let’s watch a video of young people in foster care talking about the importance of their relationships with their brothers and sisters.



SHOW participants the video “**Brothers and Sisters in Foster Care: Keeping Siblings in Foster Care Connected.**”

NOTE: STOP VIDEO AT 2:36 MINUTES

2:36 MINUTES

STATE:

What are your thoughts about what these young people shared about their relationships with their siblings?

[PPT #14]: RELATIONSHIPS WITH BIRTH FAMILY MEMBERS AND OTHER KEY INDIVIDUALS (CONT.)

Relationships with Birth Family Members and Other Key Individuals

Connections With Former Foster Parents/Caregivers

- Phone calls, texts, emails, or letters and cards
- Social media
- Skype or FaceTime
- Invitations to the youth’s birthday party or graduation.
- Pictures and the open sharing of feelings



Resource: Relationships Between Past Foster Parents and Foster Children: Ideas for Reunited Birth



STATE:

When you become a foster parent, your primary parenting goal is to create a connection and relationship with the youth in your home.

Past foster parents may remain important to a child, even after the child moves into a new foster home or is adopted.

When a youth has had a healthy and happy experience with former caregivers, there are a number of ways that those connections can be supported and sustained, many of which apply to maintaining connections with birth parents and siblings.

Let’s list some ideas for supporting and sustaining connections.

SESSION 7

A New Suitcase of Parenting Knowledge and Skills

NOTE: Ask participants to brainstorm ideas and record them on a flip chart. Make sure the following items are included on the list:

- ▶ Phone calls, texts, emails, or letters and cards
- ▶ Social media
- ▶ Skype or FaceTime
- ▶ Invitations to the youth's birthday party or graduation
- ▶ Pictures and the open sharing of feelings; providing the youth with the opportunity to express feelings about their former caregivers

STATE:

Learn more about supporting youth's connections with former foster parents with whom they have meaningful relationships in

RESOURCE #7.3: Relationships between Past Foster Parents and Foster Children: Ideas for Reunited Birth Family, Adoptive Parents and Foster Parents.

SUMMARIZE any final points on this topic before moving to the next section.

SEGMENT III. REVIEW IMPACT OF TRAUMA AND TRAUMA-INFORMED PARENTING TECHNIQUES

SLIDES 15-18

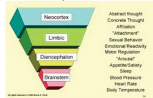
20 MINUTES

[PPT #15]: THE IMPACT OF TRAUMA ON THE BRAIN

Review of the Impact of Trauma and Trauma-Informed Parenting Techniques

The Impact of Trauma on the Brain

- The brain as a layer cake
- Healthy development: Remarkable capacity to smoothly orchestrate emotions, behavior, and thinking.
- Disrupted development or functioning of the brain: Physical, emotional, social, behavioral, and cognitive problems; attachment disruptions and trauma.
- Brain functioning: “State-dependent”
- Regulate, Relate, Reason



15

STATE:

Let’s take some time now to review the impact of trauma on our youth and recall the importance of trauma-informed parenting techniques.

Throughout our training, we have talked about the impact of trauma on the brain and learned that:

- ▶ Simpler functions are handled by the lower areas of the brain and more complex functions are handled by the higher areas of the brain.
- ▶ When a child’s development goes well, their emotions, behavior, and thinking work together remarkably smoothly.
- ▶ When something disrupts the development of a child’s brain (most often attachment disruptions and trauma), they likely will experience physical, emotional, social, behavioral, and/or cognitive problems.
- ▶ Brain functioning is “state-dependent”— meaning that cognition (or thinking) as well as emotional, social, and motor functioning change with the child’s internal state. A youth with a history of trauma may function as if he or she is continuously under threat.

A New Suitcase of Parenting Knowledge and Skills

- ▶ Youth create “associations” about their attachment experiences based on what they have experienced with previous caregivers. Youth with a history of unresponsive or hurtful caregiving expect create associations that caregivers and the world are dangerous and unpredictable, and they can develop a view of themselves as bad or unworthy of love and care.

[PPT #16]: TRAUMA-INFORMED PARENTING

Review of the Impact of Trauma and Trauma-Informed Parenting Techniques

Trauma Informed Parenting:

Trauma-informed parenting means that you, as the parent, are taking into account the early trauma that the youth has experienced, and you are adjusting your parenting to meet the youth's individual needs. Sometimes also called Therapeutic Parenting, it combines structure with nurturing to create a safe and supportive environment for the youth, creating the opportunity for trust-building and connectedness.

**STATE:**

Remember that trauma-informed parenting means that you are taking into account the early trauma that the youth has experienced, and you are adjusting your parenting to meet the youth's individual needs.

You learned about the importance of combining structure with nurturing to create a safe and supportive environment for the youth that will allow for trust-building and connectedness.

We also talked at great length about Dr. Perry's sequential engagement framework: “Regulate, Relate, Reason”.

Until a youth is regulated (i.e. feeling physically and emotionally safe), he is unlikely to be able to relate (i.e. connect) with you. Until a youth is related, he will not be able to reason with you (i.e. access the higher level thinking needed for problem-solving, predicting what might happen in the future, or considering multiple solutions).

Parents must first help their teens regulate their emotions and behavior before attempting to relate (or connect) with them, and then trying to reason with them.

[PPT #17]: TRAUMA-INFORMED PARENTING STRATEGIES: A BRIEF REVIEW

Review of Trauma-Informed Parenting Techniques

Handout #7.2
Trauma-Informed Parenting Strategies: A Brief Review

**STATE:**

Turn now to **HANDOUT #7.2: Trauma-Informed Parenting Strategies: A Brief Review.**

Take a few minutes now to review this handout and consider which of these new skills you have added to your suitcase.

NOTE: Allow participants a few minutes to individually review the items on the handout. This will prepare them for the activity that they will do next.



Handout #7.2: TRAUMA-INFORMED PARENTING STRATEGIES: A BRIEF REVIEW

Sessions #1 and #2

- Regulate, Relate, Reason
- Being aware of our own level of comfort in responding to different types of youth behaviors
- Regulating ourselves before engaging with the youth
- Having a firm understanding of the impact of trauma, including historical trauma, on the youth's social and emotional development, behavior, health, and academic development
- Attending to the youth's emotional age developmental status
- Looking beyond the behavior to the underlying cause of the behavior
- Reframing challenging behaviors as survival skills

Session #3

- Building a strong relationship and attachment with the youth
- Being attuned to the youth and not taking the youth's behavior personally
- Having a full understanding of the impact of grief and loss on youth's ability to attach and trust
- Helping the youth understand the connections between their past experiences and current behaviors
- Adjusting routines, expectations, and interpretations
- Flexibility: Balancing limit setting with the unique needs of youth
- The Four P's
 - Watch your proximity: Give about two feet more space to a youth than you would give to a youth who has not experienced trauma. American Indian children and youth may need even more space.
 - Be present: Have a quiet presence around the youth
 - Position yourself in parallel: Walk side-by-side, go for a ride in the car
 - Be patient: Give your youth time and space; be willing to wait
- Promoting felt safety
- Providing structure and nurture
- Supporting and promoting the youth's safe and healthy relationships with birth family members, especially siblings, and other important people in the youth's life

Session #4

- Fostering a youth's racial, cultural, and ethnic identity
- Fostering a youth's sense of connectedness and belonging to their family and cultures of origin
- Understanding explicit and implicit bias
- Promoting racial and ethnic pride
- Nurturing a youth's sexual orientation/gender identity
- Responding to microaggressions and bullying

Session #5

- Collaborative Problem-Solving
- Behavioral management strategies: Rewarding, Environmental Control, Modeling, Instructing, Ignoring, Natural Consequences

Session #6

- Strategies to parent youth with intellectual and developmental disabilities
- Responding to sexually reactive behavior and excessive sexual behaviors
- Intervening in Internet and social media usage that pose a danger to teens
- Supporting a teen who is experiencing self-harming behavior
- Strategies to respond to aggressive behaviors
- Responding to suicidal ideation
- Developing Safety Plans to support various high risk behaviors

Session #7

- Supporting and promoting the youth's safe and healthy relationships with birth family members, especially siblings, and other important people in the youth's life

[PPT #18]: CASE STUDY MAKAYLA

Review Trauma-Informed Parenting Techniques

Handout #7.3 Case Study: Makayla



18

**STATE:**

Let's read a case study and discuss how you would use the trauma-informed parenting strategies you have learned.

ACTIVITY



INSTRUCTIONS: Ask participants to divide into small groups of two or three to discuss **HANDOUT #7.3 Case Study: Makayla**. For larger groups, you may divide participants into three groups and assign each of them one of the three flip charts, having them write their responses to their assigned question on the flip chart and then having each group share their responses, allowing the other groups to add items that previous groups did not come up with. After the groups have reviewed the case study, ask participants to walk together around the room, making notes on the flip chart pages that you prepared for this activity. Explain the following:

On the page titled, Makayla's History of Trauma, list Makayla's trauma experiences and/or exposure.

On the page titled, Makayla's Behaviors of Concern, list the behaviors that you as a parent want to address.

On the page titled, Trauma-Informed Parenting Skills, use **HANDOUT #7.2** and list the skills that you might use in parenting Makayla.

Inform participants that each group can add to any comments from prior groups.



HANDOUT #7.3: CASE STUDY: MAKAYLA



Makayla, a 16-year-old African American girl, entered foster care at age 12. She witnessed the shooting death of her father outside their home. Her mother went into a deep depression after his death and began drinking heavily. Makayla, then age 11, and her two younger brothers, Wesley (age 8) and Royal (age 6), had to fend for themselves. The family was reported to the child welfare agency. The agency made the decision that the children needed to be removed from the home. An uncle came forward and offered to care for Wesley and Royal, which the child welfare agency approved. He did not wish to care for Makayla who entered foster care. Makayla was initially placed with a foster family, but the placement lasted only two months when the family moved out of state.

Makayla lived in an additional foster home and was living in a group home when you, a white single woman, met her at an event sponsored by the agency. She was 14 years old at the time and her mother's rights had been terminated. It was a slow process during which you and Makayla got to know one another. After spending time together and talking frequently over the course of 12 months, you and Makayla agreed that you would like the agency to approve an adoption. Eight months ago, Makayla moved in with you and the adoption was finalized two months ago.

Over the last several months, Makayla has been engaging in angry outbursts over minor matters (at least, they seem minor to you—such as you not having potato chips in the pantry when she wanted some). She is increasingly irritable with you and her new friends at school where she seems to be having trouble concentrating. She has become very secretive about her activities. She seems sad and has recently begun to talk about how afraid she is of dying. Over the last few weeks, she has had nightmares that wake her up screaming.

While de-briefing with the large group, ask the following questions:

- ▶ Why is this experience a possible source of trauma?
- ▶ Why is this behavior of concern?
- ▶ Why is the particular parenting strategy effective?

A New Suitcase of Parenting Knowledge and Skills

The following are items that can be added to the lists if needed:

Makayla's History of Trauma

- Witnessing the shooting death of her father
- Loss of her father
- Loss of her mother in terms of her ability to parent her
- Having to take responsibility of parenting her two younger brothers at age 11
- Rejection by her uncle
- Separation from her brothers
- Multiple foster care placements, and a group home placement
- Cultural differences

Makayla's Behaviors of Concern

- Angry outbursts
- Irritability
- Difficulty with peer relationships at school
- Problems with concentration
- Withdrawal and secretive behavior
- Sadness and/or depression
- Anxiety
- Preoccupation with death
- Screaming from nightmares

Trauma-Informed Parenting Skills

- Regulate, Relate, Reason
- Regulating ourselves before engaging with the youth
- Looking beyond the behavior to the underlying cause of the behavior
- Reframing challenging behaviors as survival skills
- Being attuned to the youth and not taking the youth's behavior personally
- Helping the youth understand the connections between her past experiences and current behaviors
- Adjusting routines, expectations, and interpretations

SUMMARIZE any final points on this topic before moving to the next section.



SEGMENT IV. SECONDARY TRAUMATIC STRESS

SLIDES 19-24

10 MINUTES

[PPT #19]: SECONDARY TRAUMATIC STRESS

Secondary Traumatic Stress

• *Recently, I've been sleeping on the couch. Truthfully, "sleeping" is not really an accurate description of what's happening. I've been lying awake staring at my outdated popcorn ceiling every night for a week. I lay there, eyes dry and bloodshot, wondering how in the world I'm going to get through the night. I've positioned the couch right outside my teenage son's door. We discovered a week ago that he's been sneaking out the window at night and going to a friend's house. My son experienced trauma before he was born. He was exposed to drugs, alcohol, violence and malnutrition. He doesn't understand the danger of sneaking out. He doesn't connect actions with consequences. He knows he is disobeying but lacks the impulse control to make a better choice.*

<https://confessionsofanaadoptivparent.com/secondary-trauma-how-your-childs-special-needs-may-be-affecting-you/>



STATE:

Let's turn now to an important topic: Secondary Traumatic Stress.

Consider the following description on the slide.

- ▶ Recently, I've been sleeping on the couch. Truthfully, "sleeping" is not really an accurate description of what's happening. I've been lying awake staring at my outdated popcorn ceiling every night for a week. I lay there, eyes dry and bloodshot, wondering how in the world I'm going to get through the night. I've positioned the couch right outside my teenage son's door. We discovered a week ago that he's been sneaking out the window at night and going to a friend's house. My son experienced trauma before he was born. He was exposed to drugs, alcohol, violence and malnutrition. He doesn't understand the danger of sneaking out. He doesn't connect actions with consequences. He knows he is disobeying but lacks the impulse control to make a better choice.

This adoptive parent's description of what is happening to her as she struggles to understand and parent her son is a strong example of secondary traumatic stress.

[PPT #20]: SECONDARY TRAUMATIC STRESS (CONTINUED)

Secondary Traumatic Stress

The symptoms of primary or secondary trauma can be exactly the same!

“The expectation that we can be immersed in suffering and loss daily and not be touched by it is as unrealistic as expecting to be able to walk through water without getting wet.”

Rachel Remen, *Kitchen Table Wisdom*

**STATE:**

Dr. Rachel Remen is a nationally recognized medical reformer and educator. Dr. Remen has said: “The expectation that we can be immersed in suffering and loss daily and not be touched by it is as unrealistic as expecting to be able to walk through water without getting wet.”

The only difference between post-traumatic stress disorder and secondary trauma is that with secondary trauma you are “a step away” from the trauma.

The symptoms of primary or secondary trauma can be exactly the same.

[PPT #21]: SECONDARY TRAUMATIC STRESS (CONTINUED)

Secondary Traumatic Stress

Parents’ Risk of Secondary Trauma

- Compassion
- Insufficient Recovery Time
- Unresolved Personal Trauma

What are your thoughts about secondary trauma and parents’ risks of developing secondary traumatic stress?

**STATE:**

Adoptive, foster, and guardianship parents of youth who have experienced trauma are at risk of developing secondary traumatic stress. Why is this? Let’s look at some reasons.

A youth’s blocked trust calls for deep compassion. We work to understand what is going on in the youth’s mind and to assess their potential needs, desires, feelings, and beliefs that drive the youth’s actions. Our compassion can place us at risk of taking on the youth’s trauma as our own.

Parents often listen to their youth describe some horrific events they have experienced, sometimes many times over. We often lack the “time off” we need to heal or get some distance from what we have heard. Secondary trauma adds up, so listening to these stories over and over again can have a negative effect on even the most compassionate and resilient parents.

Many parents have had some personal loss or even traumatic experience in their own life (e.g., loss of a family member, death of a close friend, physical or emotional abuse). To some extent, the pain of their own experiences can be “re-activated” when they hear the youth describe a traumatic situation similar to the one they experienced. Unless the parent has healed from their own trauma, they are at increased risk for taking on the trauma of their youth.

What are your thoughts about secondary trauma and parents’ risks of developing secondary traumatic stress?

[PPT #22]: DEVELOPING SECONDARY TRAUMATIC STRESS

Secondary Traumatic Stress

- Are there specific images or situations that keep coming into my head again and again?
- Are there situations with the youth that spark anxiety I am trying to avoid?
- Are there situations or people that remind me of a particularly distressing personal experience?



STATE:

Let’s look now at signs that we may be developing secondary traumatic stress.

A key sign is when you find yourself acting and feeling in ways that don’t seem normal to you. It is normal for all of us to have a range of emotions, which may include anger, sadness, depression, or anxiety. However, when these emotions become more extreme or last longer than usual, it could be a sign that you are in distress.

When you begin to see or feel emotional or physical signs of extreme distress in yourself, it is time to step back and evaluate yourself. Some questions to ask yourself are:

- ▶ Are there specific images or situations that keep coming into my head again and again?
- ▶ Are there situations with the youth that spark anxiety I am trying to avoid?
- ▶ Are there situations or people that remind me of a particularly distressing personal experience?

[PPT #23]: INDICATORS OF SECONDARY TRAUMATIC STRESS

Secondary Traumatic Stress

Indicators of Secondary Trauma

Emotional Indicators	Physical Indicators	Personal Indicators

Secondary Trauma and Foster Parents: Understanding Its Impact and Taking Steps to Protect Them. <https://muskie.usm.maine.edu/help/kids/rc/pdf/Sec-Trauma-foster.pdf>



STATE:

Let’s identify some indicators of secondary traumatic stress.

Look at the following chart and add indicators in each category.

FACILITATE A DISCUSSION and write down ideas in the appropriate column on the flip chart or white board that you prepared prior to the session.

Emotional Indicators	Physical Indicators	Personal Indicators
Anger Sadness Prolonged grief Anxiety Explosive anger Extreme crankiness	Headaches Stomachaches Backaches Exhaustion	Self-isolation Cynicism or sarcasm Mood swings Irritability

Secondary Traumatic Stress

Handout #7.4 Strategies for Combatting Secondary Trauma

24

STATE:

We need to be aware of strategies to prevent and combat secondary traumatic stress.

Look at **HANDOUT #7.4: Strategies for Combatting Secondary Trauma.**

HANDOUT #7.4: STRATEGIES FOR COMBATTING SECONDARY TRAUMA

Strategies for Combatting Secondary Trauma

Understand and respond to your own needs. Learn to recognize your body's signs of stress.

Set limits. You cannot be everything to everyone. Learn to say "no" to requests for your time or attention. Recognize the job of parenting children who have been traumatized requires a change in other priorities and other relationships.

Create time for rest and leisure. Small ways of taking care of yourself can include a morning cup of coffee, a special bubble bath, or a walk in the park. Focus on healthy ways to relax.

Maintain a positive view of the world. Bad things happen, but there is a lot of good in the world. Remember that you are part of the good that is happening in your child's life.

Seek out help for your own feelings. You are your child's lifeline. Taking care of you is taking care of your child. Find others who will listen without judgment—a friend, a sibling, a therapist, or a support group. (All of the above, if possible!)

Choose your battles. Ask yourself, "Does this really matter?" See what you can let go of. Realize that life will go on even if you are not perfect.

Keep hope alive. Focus on the glimmers of hope and change in your child and your relationship with your child.

Adapted from Children's Home Society of Missouri, n. d.

NOTE: Ask participants to give examples of how each strategy can be used, based on their own experiences.

SUMMARIZE any final points on this topic before moving to the next section.

SEGMENT V. SELF-CARE

SLIDES 25-37
45 MINUTES

[PPT #25]: SELF CARE

Self-Care

Deena McMahon



Self-care is crucial for foster and adoptive parents. The physical and emotional toll of caring for traumatized children can be overwhelming. Children can project hurt onto parents and, at the same time, blame parents for feelings of loss and despair. Parents must understand both the complexities of foster care and adoption, and their child's unique needs. With that knowledge and an ongoing commitment to self-care, parents can more easily remain effective and balanced.



STATE:

Let's turn now to the important topic of self-care. As we have talked about throughout our sessions, taking care of ourselves as we parent youth with emotional and behavioral challenges is a must.

Consider the words of Deena McMahon, a St. Paul, Minnesota-based social worker with a national reputation for excellence in child welfare issues, adoption dynamics and trauma:

- ▶ Self-care is crucial for foster and adoptive parents. The physical and emotional toll of caring for traumatized children can be overwhelming. Children can project hurt onto parents and, at the same time, blame parents for feelings of loss and despair. Parents must understand both the complexities of foster care and adoption, and their child's unique needs. With that knowledge and an ongoing commitment to self-care, parents can more easily remain effective and balanced.

[PPT # 26]: SELF CARE (CONTINUED)

Self-Care

- Parenting youth who have experienced trauma: Intense, stressful, frustrating, and extremely draining.
- Serious commitment to self-care
- Supporting youth requires us to care for self
- A win-win
- Self-care: Cornerstone of success for parenting
- Self-care is a skill



STATE:

Parenting youth who have experienced trauma can be intense, stressful, frustrating, and extremely draining.

If we do not make a serious commitment to self-care, we can quickly find ourselves overwhelmed and ineffective.

It is hard—some would say impossible—to support the recovery and healthy development of youth who have experienced trauma if we are not doing so well ourselves.

SESSION 7

A New Suitcase of Parenting Knowledge and Skills


Although sometimes it seems impossible to find time for self-care, once you do it, you will probably realize that you are able to do other things more quickly and effectively—so, it is a win-win!

Self-care is a cornerstone of success for parenting, the foundation on which all other successes depend.


It is important to keep in mind that self-care is a skill—something we can practice and get better at. We will make mistakes or slip up, but if we keep at it, it will become easier and a natural part of our daily life.

[PPT #27]: KEY AREAS OF SELF-CARE

Self-Care



What are the key areas of self-care for all of us?
Handout #7.5 Dimensions of Self-Care for Parents and Self-Care Wheel



STATE:

Let's look now at a few key areas of self-care.

ACTIVITY








INSTRUCTIONS: Pair each participant with a partner and ask them to work together to complete **HANDOUT #7.5: Dimensions of Self-Care for Parents and Self-Care Wheel**, filling in specifics under each self-care dimension. Point out that one example is provided for each dimension. Allow about 5 minutes for this work. Ask participants to call out their ideas for each dimension. Record their ideas on a flip chart page.

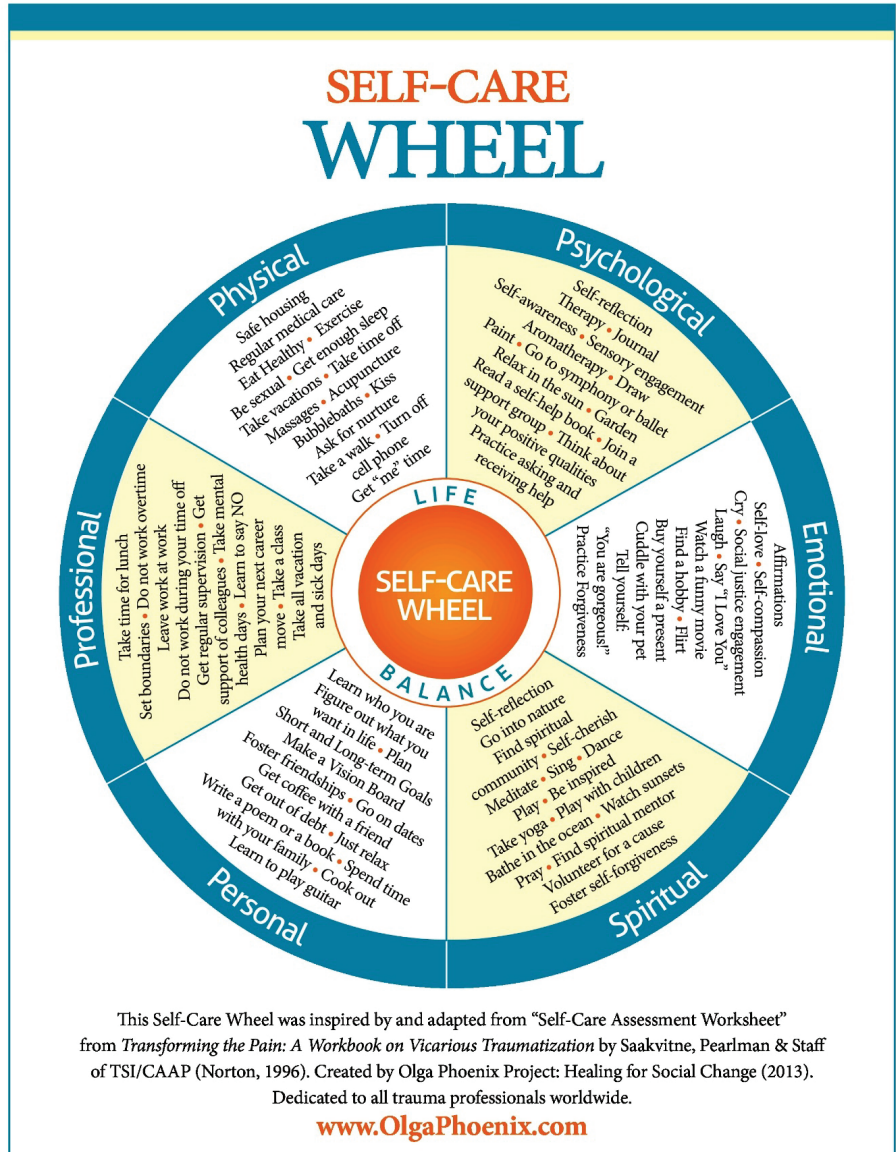


HANDOUT #7.5: DIMENSIONS OF SELF-CARE FOR PARENTS AND SELF-CARE WHEEL

Dimensions of Self-Care for Parents

Dimensions of Self-Care	How to Care for Myself in This Dimension
 <p>Physical Self-Care</p>	<p>Diet</p>
 <p>Psychological Self-Care</p>	<p>Reflection</p>
 <p>Emotional/Social Self-Care</p>	<p>Friends</p>
 <p>Spiritual Self-Care</p>	<p>Meditation</p>
 <p>Workplace Self-Care</p>	<p>Breaks</p>

Self-Care Wheel



[PPT #28]: BARRIERS TO SELF- CARE

Self-Care

Why is self-care so hard to do for so many of us?

Handout #7.6 Common Barriers to Self-Care
Check which of the common barriers you experience.

STATE:

Self-care is hard to do for so many of us, yet it can be a life line for parents and for the children they are caring for.

Look at **HANDOUT #7.6: Common Barriers to Self-Care** and check for yourself which common barriers you experience.



HANDOUT #7.6: COMMON BARRIERS TO SELF- CARE

Handout #7.6 Common Barriers to Self-Care: Which Are the Barriers for Me?

Check those that are barriers for you.

- _____ **1. Outward Focus.** Most days, foster and adoptive parents devote far more energy to others' needs than to their own well-being. In fact, many are uncomfortable being on the receiving end of other people's attention and assistance.
- _____ **2. Busyness.** Many caregivers really want to be there for others. They want to remember birthdays with a cake, they want to help out at church, or deliver a meal to a sick friend. So, they work harder and longer.
- _____ **3. Uncertainty.** Too many caregivers simply do not know what meaningful self-care looks like for them. They know something is missing but they can't quite put their finger on just what might make them feel better.
- _____ **4. Denial.** Too many caregivers believe they somehow don't or shouldn't need support.
- _____ **5. Minimizing/feelings of unworthiness.** Natural and man-made disasters and other terrible occurrences in the news remind us there are always other people who are worse off. We're taught as children to be happy with what we have, since other people have it much harder. As a result, we sometimes feel guilty because our stress and struggles pale in comparison.
- _____ **6. Inability to say no.** Caregivers, by nature or habit, are often the ones who volunteer in their communities, agree to take on duties no one else wants, and otherwise try to help out when they can. Although this is wonderful, it can also be taxing.

STATE:

How many of you checked all six barriers? How many had four or five?

FACILITATE A DISCUSSION among participants about the barriers they experience.

[PPT #29]: SELF CARE ELEMENTS

Self-Care

- Resilience and staying strong
- Social connections
- Concrete supports
- Self-care activities

**STATE:**

Let's focus now on what supports self-care and some specific self-care strategies. We will talk about:

- ▶ Resilience and staying strong
- ▶ Social connections
- ▶ Concrete supports
- ▶ Self-care activities

[PPT #30]: RESILIENCE

Self-Care

Resilience: Be Strong Even When You Are Stressed

- Resilience: The process of managing stress and functioning well even when things are difficult
- Being resilient as a parent or caregiver:
 - Taking care of and feeling good about yourself
 - Asking for help when you need it
 - Being hopeful and preparing for the future
 - Planning for what you will do in situations that are challenging for you and/or the youth
 - Not allowing stress to get in the way of providing loving care for the youth
 - Taking time to really enjoy the youth and doing things you like to do together

**STATE:**

So, what do we mean by resilience?

Resilience is the ability to manage stress and function well even when things are difficult.

Being resilient as a parent or caregiver means:

- ▶ Taking care of and feeling good about yourself
- ▶ Asking for help when you need it
- ▶ Being hopeful and preparing for the future
- ▶ Planning for what you will do in situations that are challenging for you and/or the youth
- ▶ Not allowing stress to get in the way of providing loving care for the youth
- ▶ Taking time to really enjoy the youth and doing things you like to do together

SESSION 7

A New Suitcase of Parenting Knowledge and Skills

[PPT #31]: THINKING ABOUT OUR OWN RESILIENCE

Self-Care



Handout #7.7 Part 1. Thinking About Our Own Resilience

- The desire for positive feedback
- You are doing your best in a difficult situation
- Keep a copy of your completed handout where you can regularly see it to remind yourself of your own strengths and resilience.



STATE:

Let's do a quick activity now to examine our resilience.

ACTIVITY



INSTRUCTIONS: Refer participants to **HANDOUT #7.7: PART 1 - Thinking about Our Own Resilience**. Ask participants to take a few minutes to review the handout and think about their responses to the three questions. Allow about 5 minutes for participants to do this work. Ask participants to contribute their thoughts as they feel comfortable. Suggest that participants keep a copy of the completed handout where they can regularly see it to remind themselves of their strengths and resilience.



HANDOUT #7.7: PART 1 - THINKING ABOUT OUR OWN RESILIENCE

Adapted from Taking Care of Yourself: Tips for Foster and Resource Parents

<https://www.cssp.org/reform/strengtheningfamilies/practice/body/Self-Care-for-Foster-Parents.pdf>

The following questions help you think about your own resilience and how you can stay strong:

1. What helps you feel calm when things are stressful in your everyday life? Please list three small actions you can take to help you feel strong and calm. Can you make time to do these things on a regular basis?

2. What things really get under your skin as a parent? Make a plan for the things that you know have been stressful and might happen again. Think about the things this youth might do differently from your other children and how you will respond.

3. Think back to other parenting or child care experiences you have had. What were some of the things you really enjoyed? Ask the youth in your care about things they enjoy doing or would like to try. Developing routines together around activities that you both enjoy is an important part of building a positive, nurturing relationship.

STATE:

It is easier to feel resilient in a parenting role when you get positive feedback from the youth that what you do matters. It may be hard for the youth in your care to give you that feedback.

Don't get discouraged. It is very important that we continue to provide loving care even when the youth cannot let us know that he or she wants it or when they cannot appreciate it.

Remember to take care of yourself and remind yourself that you are doing your best in a difficult situation.

[PPT #32]: SOCIAL CONNECTIONS

Self-Care

Social Connections: Get and Give Support

- Positive relationships with family, friends, and neighbors
- Strengthen your support network by:
 - Focusing on relationships where you feel respected and appreciated
 - Accepting help from others and looking for opportunities to help them back—for many of us it's much harder to accept help so this may be something you need to practice
 - Building your skills and comfort in reaching out to others, communicating, resolving conflict, and doing all the other things that help to keep a friendship strong
 - Building your network so you have multiple friends and connections to turn to in different situations and needs



32

**STATE:**

It's easier to handle parenting challenges when we have positive relationships with family, friends, and neighbors. Having a network of caring people in our lives helps us feel secure, confident, and empowered—and this helps us all become better parents.

Your social support network is an important resource, especially while you adjust to caring for this youth. You can strengthen it by:

- ▶ Focusing on relationships where you feel respected and appreciated
- ▶ Accepting help from others and looking for opportunities to help them back—for many of us it's much harder to accept help so this may be something you need to practice
- ▶ Building your skills and comfort in reaching out to others, communicating, resolving conflict, and doing all the other things that help to keep a friendship strong
- ▶ Building your network so you have multiple friends and connections to turn to in different situations and needs

[PPT #33]: SOCIAL SUPPORTS

Self-Care



Handout #7.7 Part 2. Thinking About Our Social Supports

33

**STATE:**

Let's do a quick activity now to examine your social supports.



INSTRUCTIONS: Instruct participants to look at **HANDOUT #7.7: PART 2 - Thinking about Our Social Supports**. Allow 3 to 4 minutes for participants to think through the questions and make notes for themselves. Ask participants to contribute their thoughts as they feel comfortable. Suggest that participants keep a copy of their completed handout where they can regularly see it to remind themselves of their social supports.



HANDOUT #7.7: PART 2 - THINKING ABOUT OUR SOCIAL SUPPORTS

Adapted from Taking Care of Yourself: Tips for Foster and Resource Parents

<https://www.cssp.org/reform/strengtheningfamilies/practice/body/Self-Care-for-Foster-Parents.pdf>

Take a few moments to think about your social connections:

1. Who can you turn to for emotional support? Who makes you laugh or makes you feel better about yourself?

2. Is there anyone who can provide back-up if you need help with your youth?

3. Do you know other parents (including other foster and adoptive parents) with a youth around the same age as your youth? If yes, how might you best connect with them? If not, how might you go about connecting with these parents?

4. Who gives you the best advice? Whose parenting do you admire?

Self-Care

Concrete Support: Get Help When You Need It

- Know what help is available, where to find it, and how to get it
- Ask for help when you need it—such as financial help, a break from work or home responsibilities, or therapy for yourself, a child, or another family member
- Get what you need to keep your family healthy and safe
- Help others when possible – for many of us, helping others is a great way to reinforce our own abilities and can help to fill our own “cup.”



34

STATE:

Now, let's consider the concrete supports we need.

All families go through tough times and will need help from their extended families, friends, faith community, or other community services. Knowing where to get help in the community can make things a lot easier. It is important to be able to:

- ▶ Know what help is available, where to find it, and how to get it
- ▶ Ask for help when you need it—such as financial help, a break from work or home responsibilities, or therapy for yourself, a child, or another family member
- ▶ Get what you need to keep your family healthy and safe
- ▶ Help others when possible – for many of us, helping others is a great way to reinforce our own abilities and can help to fill our own “cup.” Just be careful not to over-do it!

Self-Care



Handout #7.7 Part 3. Concrete Supports

35

STATE:

Let's do a quick activity now to examine your concrete supports.



INSTRUCTIONS: Instruct participants to review **HANDOUT #7.7: PART 3 - Concrete Supports**. Ask participants to take a few minutes to review the handout and think about their responses to the four questions. Allow 3 to 4 minutes for participants to think through the questions and make notes for themselves. Ask participants to contribute their thoughts as they feel comfortable.



HANDOUT #7.7: PART 3 - CONCRETE SUPPORTS

Adapted from Taking Care of Yourself: Tips for Foster and Resource Parents
<https://www.cssp.org/reform/strengtheningfamilies/practice/body/Self-Care-for-Foster-Parents.pdf>

In terms of concrete supports:

1. Are there local support groups or social groups for adoptive or foster families? List any other foster or adoptive families you know. Are there places where adoptive or foster families gather?

2. Are there things that are already placing a financial stress or burden on your family? Do you know of resources or supports that may be available? If you need information, do you know who you can talk with to get that information?

3. Does your youth need specific types of supports or services? If so, what are they?

4. Are you nervous about asking for help or support? Think about what you can do to feel comfortable asking for support, and how you will ask for what you need.

[PPT #36]: SELF CARE CHECKLIST

Self-Care

Handout #7.8 My Checklist



STATE:

Non-stop parenting can be stressful. Finding a way every day, to have at least a few minutes to yourself is important.

Some small ways that you can find some stress relief include: taking a relaxing bath, reading a book, sitting on the porch, listening to music, or having a cup of herbal tea.

A journal can be a helpful tool to assist you in expressing your emotions and venting your frustrations.

Let's look at a more complete list of self-care activities that are important to your health and well-being and important to parenting your youth.



INSTRUCTIONS: Refer participants to **HANDOUT #7.8: My Checklist**. Explain that as you read each item, you will asking them to rate themselves on each of the items on the checklist. Ask participants to share, as they feel comfortable, what they learned about their current self-care activities.



HANDOUT #7.8: MY CHECKLIST


Place a checkmark in the column that best describes how well you are currently engaging in this important self-care activity.

Self-Care Activity	Never do this	Rarely do this	Sometimes do this	Regularly do this
Get enough sleep most nights, usually between 7 and 8 hours.				
Eat a healthy, balanced diet, including breakfast. Avoid eating on the run, behind your desk, or in your car.				
Get some form of regular exercise.				
Visit your doctors and follow their recommendations.				
Use alcohol in moderation, or not at all.				
Take regular breaks from stressful activities.				
Laugh every day.				
Express yourself. If you're feeling frustrated, sad, or angry, be honest about your emotions.				
Make time to engage in something you love.				
Nurture your relationships with your partner, family, and friends.				
Have a hobby or take a class, get a massage, or have a regular night out.				
Let someone else do something to take care of you.				
Connect with your spiritual and/or religious beliefs.				


Source: <http://fosteringperspectives.org/fpv19n2/FPv19n2.pdf>

Self-Care

Handout #7.9



- Have a goal of maintaining a balance between work and relaxation, and between your commitments to others and to yourself.
- Include activities you do purely for fun.
- Include a regular stress management approach
- List things you plan to do either daily or weekly/monthly.
- Include things that are reasonable and that are just for you.
- Start small
- Saying “no” is also a good way to care for yourself
- The best plan in the world will only work if you actually follow through with it.
- Deliberately place your self-care plan somewhere you can see it


STATE:

You now have lots of great information to use in making a self-care plan for yourself. You have thought about your resilience, your social and concrete supports and your current self-care activities.

Fostering Perspectives is a newsletter by and for resource parents. A publication on the topic of self-care included the following pointers that you can consider for your self-care plan:

- ▶ Have a goal of maintaining a balance between work and relaxation, and between your commitments to others and to yourself.
- ▶ Include activities you do purely for fun.
- ▶ Include a regular stress management approach, such as a physical activity you enjoy, meditation, yoga, or prayer.
- ▶ List things you plan to do either daily or weekly/monthly.
- ▶ As you build your plan, be careful to include things that are reasonable—that you really can do—and that are just for you.
- ▶ Start small—easy wins are important to keep going.
- ▶ Know that saying “no” is also a good way to care for yourself.
- ▶ Remember, the best plan in the world will only work if you actually follow through with it.
- ▶ Deliberately place your self-care plan somewhere you can see it, and where it can serve as a reminder of your commitment to taking good care of yourself, as well as your children.



HANDOUT #7.9: SELF-CARE PLAN

's Self-Care Plan!

MIND

BODY

SUPPORTIVE PEOPLE IN MY LIFE

SPIRIT

I WANT TO ACCOMPLISH

SOCIAL
WORK
TECH

Self Care Plan by Social Work Tech | Ignacio Pacheco
 This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs 3.0 Unported License.
 Based on a work at socialworktech.com.
 Permissions beyond the scope of this license may be available at socialworktech.com/about

STATE:

Please use the template on **HANDOUT #7.9** or another format of your choice to develop a self-care plan as homework for yourself after this training.

RESOURCE #7.4: Self Care Tip Sheet, developed by SCAN of Northern Virginia, can be found in the Resource Handbook and may provide additional ideas for your plan.

SUMMARIZE any final points on this topic before moving to the next section.

SEGMENT VI. SUMMARY, CLOSING AND CELEBRATION OF COMPLETION OF TRAINING

SLIDES 38-40
10 MINUTES

[PPT #38]: SUMMARY

Summary

- Importance of supporting youth's important connections and a sense of connectedness.
- Review of the impact of trauma on the brain and review of trauma-informed parenting techniques to promote youth's healing and well-being.
- Demonstrated the impact of secondary trauma on parenting and identified the important elements to developing your individualized self-care plan.

38



STATE:

In this session, we considered ways that parents can support youth's important connections and a sense of connectedness.

We reviewed the impact of trauma on the brain and reviewed trauma-informed parenting techniques to promote youth's healing and well-being.

We demonstrated the impact of secondary trauma on parenting and identified the important elements to developing your individualized self-care plan.

[PPT #39]: CELEBRATION

Time to Celebrate!



39



STATE:

Now that we have come to the end of our sessions, we want to celebrate your successful completion of this training.

ACTIVITY



INSTRUCTIONS: Select one of the following or develop a celebratory activity of your own:

- ▶ Ask each participant to share a positive situation or outcome they have had with a youth in their care, or one that they hope for.
- ▶ Use a prize wheel, spin the wheel and have small prizes that relate to self-care.
- ▶ Take a group photo and distribute copies for each participant.
- ▶ Provide a small box of notecards for each participant to share positive thoughts with their youth.
- ▶ Provide grab bags (small gifts of equal value put into brown bags) and ask each person to take one from a basket/bucket.
- ▶ Provide a file folder of additional resources and information – be sure to include local resources, supports, and services – that were not included in the sessions but are important for them to have to assist their youth.
- ▶ Provide certificates acknowledging each participants attendance and completion of the program.

[PPT #40]: THANK YOU AND CLOSURE

**THANK
YOU**

40

**STATE:**

Please consider remaining in contact with one another to provide support for each other. You may wish to share phone numbers and email addresses.

THANK everyone for their participation and hard work.

CORE TEEN CURRICULUM



OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR AMERICAN INDIAN AND ALASKAN
NATIVE POPULATIONS

Please Note

Activities in this section have been designed to train potential Native American/Alaskan Native foster care parents. However, it is important to initiate prior contact with the representative of other tribal nations to discuss these exercises prior to implementation, to assure any minor changes that many need to be made for that nation's particular cultural traditions.

ACTIVITIES FOR AMERICAN INDIAN
AND ALASKAN NATIVE POPULATIONS

SESSION 1 OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

SESSION 1 - OPTIONAL ACTIVITY 1

Session 1: Introduction and Understanding the Impact of Trauma on Youth in Foster Care

Core Competency: Parents nurture and promote the well-being of their youth through trauma-informed parenting.

PURPOSE OF ACTIVITY

Allow participants to understand what youth frequently experience when they are unexpectedly and immediately removed from their home.

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

Copies of **OPTIONAL ACTIVITY HANDOUT #1.1: List of Items**

ACTIVITY



INSTRUCTIONS

This exercise is designed for a small group. For a large number of participants small groups of 3-5 is recommended to enhance the sharing of thoughts.

Step 1: Ask participants to individually create a list of 10 items they would take with them if they had to quickly leave their home without notice of why they had to leave the premises. Request they be thoughtful, but the list must be completed within 8 minutes. As soon as they complete the list, they are to turn the list facedown.

Step 2: When all have completed the task, have them to turn the list and quickly cross out 5 of the items. Give them 3 minutes for this task.

Step 3: From the remaining list of 5 items, have participants select only one item they can take with them. Give them 2 minutes to make their selection.

Step 4: Each individual is asked to share the item he or she selected and why it is most important (the items may include traditional regalia, eagle feathers, traditional medicines, etc.).

Step 5: Explain to the participants the goal of this exercise is for them to gain some understanding of what youth experience when they are removed from their homes. They may only be able to grab one item as they are escorted out the door by the protective service worker/police officer.



OPTIONAL ACTIVITY HANDOUT #1.1: LIST OF ITEMS

If you were told to leave your home immediately, list 10 separate items you would take with you.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

ACTIVITIES FOR AMERICAN INDIAN
AND ALASKAN NATIVE POPULATIONS

SESSION 2 OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

SESSION 2 - OPTIONAL ACTIVITY 1

Session 2: Parenting Youth Who Have Experienced Trauma

Core Competency: Parents nurture and promote the well-being of their youth through trauma-informed parenting.

PURPOSE OF ACTIVITY

Allow participants to understand what stages of psychosocial development youth may find themselves stuck at as they respond to the stress of trauma.

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

Copies of **OPTIONAL ACTIVITY HANDOUT #2.1: Erikson Worksheet**

ACTIVITY



INSTRUCTIONS

Step 1: Review the Erikson's Psychosocial Stages Summary Chart with participants. Remind participants that these stages are for Humans as they grow into maturity. Review the stress responses by Dr. Bruce Perry

Step 2: Answer the key questions proposed on the back of the Erikson Stage Sheet. Identify strategies that are needed to help the youth move forward.

Step 3: Discuss strategies in small groups of 3-5 participants.

Erikson's Psychosocial Stages Summary Chart

Stage	Basic Conflict	Important Events	Key Questions to be answered	Outcome
Infancy (0 to 18 months)	Trust vs. Mistrust	Feeding/ Comfort	Is my world safe?	Children develop a sense of trust when caregivers provide reliability, care and affection. A lack of this will lead to mistrust.
Early Childhood (2 to 3)	Autonomy vs. Shame and Doubt	Toilet Training/ Dressing	Can I do things by myself or need I always rely on others?	Children need to develop a sense of personal control over physical skills and a sense of independence. Success leads to feeling of autonomy, failure results in feelings of shame and doubt.
Preschool (3 to 5)	Initiative vs. Guilt	Exploration/ Play	Am I good or bad?	Children need to begin asserting control and power over the environment. Success in this state leads to a sense of purpose. Children who try to exert too much power experience disapproval, resulting in a sense of guilt.
School Age (6 to 11)	Industry vs. Inferiority	School/ Activities	How can I be good?	Children need to cope with new social and academic demands. Success leads to a sense of competence, while failure results in feeling of inferiority.
Adolescence (12 to 18)	Identity vs. Role Confusion	Social Relationships/ Identity	Who am I and where am I going?	Teens need to develop a sense of self and personal identity. Success leads to an ability to stay true to yourself, while failure leads to role confusion and a weak sense of self.
Young Adult (19 to 40)	Intimacy vs. Isolation	Intimate Relationships	Am I loved and wanted?	Young adults need to form intimate, loving relationships with other people. Success leads to strong relationships, while failure results in loneliness and isolation.
Middle Adulthood (40 to 65)	Generativity vs. Stagnation	Work and Parenthood	Will I provide something of real value?	Adults need to create or nurture things that will outlast them, often by having children or creating a positive change that benefits other people. Success leads to feelings of usefulness and accomplishment, while failure results in shallow involvement in the world.
Maturity (65 to death)	Ego Identity vs. Despair	Reflection on life	Have I lived a full life?	Older adults need to look back on life and feel a sense of fulfillment. Success at this state leads to a feeling of wisdom, while failure results in regret, bitterness, and despair.

Source: Erikson's Psychosocial Stages Summary Chart. (2019, June 14). Retrieved from StudyLib: <https://studylib.net/doc/8131732/erikson-s-psychosocial-stages-summary-chart>

DEVELOPMENTAL STAGE DISRUPTION

After reviewing the chart of Erikson's Psychosocial Stages, think about how each of these stages may have been disrupted by the trauma that the youth may have experienced the various stages of their life. Many times youth have been unable to move beyond their survival mode. What strategies are needed to assist the youth to move forward?

1. Is my world safe?

Strategies to help youth move from survival mode:

2. Who am I and where am I going?

Strategies to help youth move from survival mode:

3. Am I loved and wanted?

Strategies to help youth move from survival mode:

ACTIVITIES FOR AMERICAN INDIAN
AND ALASKAN NATIVE POPULATIONS

SESSION 3 OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

SESSION 3 - OPTIONAL ACTIVITY 1

Session 3: Developing and Sustaining Healthy and Supportive Relationships with Your Youth

Core Competency: Parents develop and sustain a healthy and supportive relationship with their youth.

PURPOSE OF ACTIVITY

Foster parents need to be aware of the act of bullying. Bullying is a relationship in which one person seeks to gain power and control over the life of another. Bullying can cause youth in to experience psychological distress, a state of anxiety, depression, and suicide. It is most important foster parents become aware of and able to identify and address these issues with foster youth. This is especially true given Native American/Alaskan Native youth's strikingly higher suicide rate (13% in some communities).

The purpose of bullying is to demean an individual on a personal or group level, communicate they are lesser human beings, suggest they do not belong with the majority group, or relegate them to inferior status and treatment. The acts of bullying can include verbal or nonverbal slights, snubs or insults communicated to a person. In many cases these acts are driven by a person being identified with a particular group (people of color, women, LGBTQS2, disabilities, and religious minorities). Also, there may be additional bullying by other youth who become knowledgeable of the youth's status in foster care. Their status may be evidence by worn and limited clothing, obvious lack of dental care, older age for grade level, or inability to spend overnights with friends without Social Service approval.

The recent news reports of Native American/Alaskan Native conflicts with the greater society in regard to mascots, preservation of water, attempts to prevent pipelines, child welfare laws, casinos, cultural pride, pow wows, and conversations over dress, hair length, etc. often result in stereotypes of Native people. Therefore, foster parents need to be aware of how the old and new stereotypes of the population impact foster youth.

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

Copies of **OPTIONAL ACTIVITY HANDOUT #3.1: The Definition of Bullying, the Act of, and Impact**

INSTRUCTIONS

Step 1. If necessary, clarify for the group any questions about the term bullying. Provide a few examples to assist the group in understanding the act of bullying and resultant behaviors.

Step 2. Divide in to small groups of 3-5 participants for a 5-minute discussion of various types of stereotypes both old and new. Then, discuss their thoughts as to why they think the stereotypes exist. One person can make a list of the comments from each group. The groups will then share their lists.

NOTE: Participants may list psychological distress, anxiety, depression and suicidal ideations. If they do not include these issues on their list, please bring to their attention.

Step 3. After a 10-minute discussion in the small group, the participants will share how they would best respond to a foster youth's feelings after they have experienced bullying. Then the group would create a list of actions and services (Tribal and non-Tribal) to assist in preventing additional bullying experiences. The lists will then be share with the group as a whole.

HOMEWORK

Allow participants to return next week with some ideas to share as to how they would respond to a youth who is experiencing bullying.



OPTIONAL ACTIVITY HANDOUT #3.1: THE DEFINITION OF BULLYING, THE ACT OF, AND IMPACT

BULLYING

The purpose of bullying is to demean an individual on a personal or group level, communicate they are lesser human beings, suggest they do not belong with the majority group, or relegate them to inferior status and treatment. The acts of bullying can include verbal or nonverbal slights, snubs or insults communicated to a person. In many cases these acts are driven by a person being identified with a particular group (people of color, women, LGBTQS2, disabilities, and religious minorities). Also, there may be additional bullying by other youth who become knowledgeable of the youth's status in foster care. Their status may be evidence by worn and limited clothing, obvious lack of dental care, older age for grade level, or inability to spend overnights with friends without Social Service approval.

SESSION 3 - OPTIONAL ACTIVITY 2

Session 3: Developing and Sustaining Healthy and Supportive Relationships with Your Youth

Core Competency: Parents develop and sustain a healthy and supportive relationship with their youth.

PURPOSE OF ACTIVITY

To increase the support system for youth in foster care and foster parents. The role of Elder in the Native American culture and community is important in the healthy raising of children in general. They are often the peace makers and support family needs when they are experiencing difficult times, especially with youth. Children and Elders are honored in the Native American culture as those who have most recently come from the Creator and those who are at the stage in life of returning to the Creator. Therefore, including the Elder-Youth relationship honors their roles in traditional belief and their well-being.

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

Copies of **OPTIONAL ACTIVITY HANDOUT #3.2: Case Study**

INSTRUCTIONS

Step 1: Encourage a discussion in small groups of 3-5 as to how they view the role of Elders. What role can Elders play in a foster youth's life? Allow 8 minutes for discussion in the groups. Have each group share their thoughts with the group as a whole.

Note: If the participants do not include in the discussion the role of Elders in the reduction of substance abuse, please share that 46% of youth with relationships with Elders are less likely to use alcohol. That an Elder is someone the youth can expect a "fair go" from. The Elder will stand up for the youth. They will help the youth see what he or she can overcome. The Elders keep family, language, cultural stories, and traditions alive.

Step 2: Next the small groups will read the case of Mikwa. Ask them to think about how an Elder, or more than one Elder, may be helpful in Mikwa's current situation. After reading the case have the group take 8 minutes to discuss what may be an Elder's role, and have one person from each group share highlights of their small group discussions.

HOMEWORK

Have the participants agree to talk with at least one Elder about the case and what the Elder would recommend or how he or she would interact with Mikwa to assist the foster parents.



OPTIONAL ACTIVITY HANDOUT #3.2: CASE STUDY

Mikwa is a 14-year-old male, who lived with his parents until recently. His unemployed father has been arrested for drunk driving for the third time. His mother has been taking back pain medication for two years and is unable to work. They were recently evicted and there were some reports of Mikwa being physically abused, but he denies it. Mikwa was removed from his parents when the school reported the family to the Department of Social Services. Mikwa thinks he is old enough to take care of himself and doesn't want to go into the foster care system. To his dismay, the courts order he be placed in a foster home.

Gloria and William Little Bear are members of the same tribal nation as Mikwa, but don't know him personally. They are new at being foster parents who originally wanted to care for an infant. However, they decided to take Mikwa into their home because he is a member of their tribe and he is in immediate need. He moved into their home in the suburbs and first he thought it was nice he had his own room. But he is changing his mind because he misses hanging out with his home boys. The relationship between Mikwa and the Little Bear's worked for a short time until Gloria and William invited him to go to church. He declined, they persisted, and he continued to decline. Instead, he stayed in his room and turned up the music on his stereo, every Sunday for the past three weeks.

The Little Bears decided to give him more space. They didn't realize Mikwa was not going to school, but catching a ride to the reservation where his friends and extended family lived. He asked around to see if he could live with anyone on the reservation. He had offers to stay for a few nights, but no long-term agreements. The adults told him he had to go back to the foster care family as they did not want him to get in trouble with Social Services or the Court.

When he returned to the Little Bear's home where they set down rules about going to school, not catching a ride to the reservation, and going to church with them, he just listened to them and went to his room. Now he spends most of his time in his room. Gloria asked him about his recent behavior, but Mikwa would not respond. The couple took away his phone and limited his hours on the computer, which resulted in him becoming angrier.

Later that evening, the neighbors called the police to report Mikwa walking around in their backyard. When asked by the police what he was doing; he responded "I was talking with the Elders on the other side". He told Gloria and William "don't worry about me, I am a grown man and besides I know you really don't want me because I am not a baby." Angerly he stated, "You think I don't know you wanted a baby instead of me? I saw all that baby stuff in the basement."

ACTIVITIES FOR AMERICAN INDIAN
AND ALASKAN NATIVE POPULATIONS

SESSION 4 OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

SESSION 4 - OPTIONAL ACTIVITY 1

Session 4: Nurturing Youth's Cultural/Racial/Ethnic Needs and Sexual Orientation/Gender Identity and Expression

Core Competency: Parents honor their child's cultural, racial, and ethnic needs and sexual orientation/gender identity and expression with acceptance, nurturing, and support.

Youth who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, and two spirit (LGBTQ2S) are disproportionately represented in the foster care population and often face discrimination.

Once in care, many young people who identify as LGBTQ2S continue to face the same hostility, rejection, and harassment from their peers, their families of origin, and the greater community where they live. Therefore, safety concerns based on anti-LGBTQ2S discrimination due to the youth's identity is a realistic concern for increased risk of verbal and/or physical abuse.

PURPOSE OF ACTIVITY

Assist in the development and understanding of a youth who identifies as gay (two spirit) person and is from a Tribal Nation that is different from the foster parents' Tribal Nation. This exercise will need to address the Tribal Nation differences, impact on the youth's orientation, and safety issues.

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

Copies of **OPTIONAL ACTIVITY HANDOUT #1.1: Vignette**

INSTRUCTIONS

Step 1: Participants will divide into small groups of 3-5 individuals and focus on tribal differences in culture and perception of LGBTQ2S.

Step 2: The groups will discuss for 8 minutes the Tribal Nation's viewpoint on the topic of two spirit youths. The participants will write a list of how David's Tribal Nation culture perceives two spirit people and how that might differ from the Smith's cultural Tribal Nation viewpoint. Each group will write down their thoughts.

Step 3: The groups will then discuss for 10 minutes the issue of the youth wanting to wear traditional regalia for what is typically worn by female dancers. What are their thoughts about this situation? Can the foster parents assist in making it possible for him to dance as a female? How could the Smith's prepare their community to support David's decision? Who could they talk to (pow wow organizer, Elder, Tribal Chairperson, etc.)?

Step 4: If the youth decides to go forward with dancing at the pow wow as a female, how can the foster parents provide protection for his emotional and physical well-being? Allow the groups 10 minutes to create a list of the options the foster parents could do to provide safety for the youth.



OPTIONAL ACTIVITY HANDOUT #4.1: VIGNETTE

VIGNETTE

The Smiths are foster parents and are aware David, a 16-year-old foster youth who is living in their home, identifies as gay. David favors the term two spirit. He has become aware of a pow wow that is happening on the foster parents' tribal reservation. He shares with the foster parents his desire to participate in the event by dancing dressed as a female. This is a bit of a surprise for the foster parents and they do not want to appear negative, but they are concerned as to whether he will be accepted and the treatment he will receive.

Suggested examples of questions for group discussion

- ▶ List of how David's Tribal Nation culture perceives two spirit people and how that might differ from the Smith's cultural Tribal Nation's viewpoint.
- ▶ What are your thoughts about this situation?
- ▶ Can the foster parents assist in making it possible for him to dance as a female?
- ▶ How could the Smiths prepare their community to support David's decision?
- ▶ Who could they talk to (pow wow organizer, elder, Tribal Chairperson, etc.)?
- ▶ If David decided to go forward with dancing at the pow wow as a female, how can the foster parents provide protection for his emotional and physical well-being?

ACTIVITIES FOR AMERICAN INDIAN
AND ALASKAN NATIVE POPULATIONS

SESSION 5 OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

SESSION 5 - OPTIONAL ACTIVITY 1

Session 5: Understanding and Managing Youth's Challenging Behaviors, Part 1

Core Competency: Parents safely and effectively understand and manage their youth's challenging behaviors.

PURPOSE OF ACTIVITY

This activity highlights a culturally appropriate approach to addressing the issue of challenging behaviors. The Seven Grandfather Teachings are based in part on traditional ways of parenting. Participants are provided with an opportunity to explore ways to consider these teachings help create a safe space for youth.

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

Copies of **OPTIONAL ACTIVITY HANDOUT #5.1: 7 Nokomis/Grandmother Teachings**

INSTRUCTIONS

Step 1: Have all participants take 5 minutes to read through the Seven-Grandfather Teachings as a reference (See Optional Activity Handout #5.1). Most participants will be familiar with these cultural teachings.

Step 2: After the participants have reviewed the handout, they will divide into groups of 3-5 participants. Ask them to take 8 minutes to list culturally relevant ways in which to engage the youth to calm down and/or provide a safe environment for both parents and youth to discuss, develop, and promote open communication in the relationship. If the youth is a member of another Tribal Nation, efforts should be made to gain knowledge of his/her Tribal Nation's cultural ways that may differ to some degree.

Step 3: Each small group take 8 minutes to make a list of their thoughts and report to the group as a whole.

Listed below are examples of thoughts the participants may share to assist in creating safe space for both youth and foster parents.

- ▶ Sit outdoors in a quiet and safe space (weather dependent) to think of alternative ways to address a situation from the youth's cultural perspective.
- ▶ Talk with a Tribal Medicine Person and/or an Elder.
- ▶ Using tobacco for prayer.
- ▶ Participate in a cleansing ceremony (smudging, sweat lodge, prayer, etc.).
- ▶ Participate in a talking circle.
- ▶ Participate in other cultural activities (Draw, paint, beadwork, basketry, work on regalia, singing traditional songs, etc.).
- ▶ Share time with a pet and provide care for the animal (traditionally take care of plant or animal first, before self).
- ▶ Play sports (lacrosse, running, snow shoeing, etc.).
- ▶ Write a story or apology to self (not on the Internet).
- ▶ Read positive accounts (historical tribal leaders, current leaders, etc. of the youth's particular Tribal Nation).
- ▶ Pre-authorized respite care provider or informal support person approved by the agency that the child and foster parents trust to call so the youth will be able to spend time a short time at another location/home.

Step 4: Have the small groups take 10 minutes to list how they would integrate these actions in the relationship with a youth. Each group report to the larger group.



7 Nokomis/Grandmother Teachings



Humility

"As we enter our space to be in union with our Creator and Mother Earth we open our inner doorway to our own sacredness which is even beyond our understanding. It is to be touched by God."



Love

"Who better to teach us about love than a child. With their hand reaching out to us, they accept us in their unconditional love."



Respect

"The fire teaches us respect. We can cook our food. It lights up our night. But fire can also destroy if proper care is not given."



Wisdom

"The turtle teaches us wisdom. We seek wisdom from our elders but yet sometimes wisdom comes through a child if we remain open to hear the voice of our youth."



Honesty

"The butterfly teaches us life is a continuous metamorphosis. If we are honest with ourselves removing our own caterpillar guise, we too can become free, free as the butterfly."



Truth

"The Eagle has become for the Anishnabec a symbol of truth and strength. Therefore holding an eagle feather in our hand gives us a huge responsibility for our voice."



Bravery

"The hummingbird teaches us of bravery. She will go up against a bear if the bear is threatening her babies. The hummingbird will attack the bear with her long needle like beak until the bear retreats."

Copyright - Artwork & Writings are the intellectual property of Zoey Wood-Salomon 2002-2003

ACTIVITIES FOR AMERICAN INDIAN
AND ALASKAN NATIVE POPULATIONS

SESSION 6 OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

SESSION 6 - OPTIONAL ACTIVITY 1

Session 6: Understanding and Managing Youth's Challenging Behaviors, Part 2

Core Competency: Parents safely and effectively understand and manage their youth's challenging behaviors.

PURPOSE OF ACTIVITY

This exercise will assist participants in the implementation of skills they have learned to provide care for foster youth who are experiencing bullying, sexual identification concerns, cutting, substance abuse, physical abuse, and possibly sexual assault.

NOTE: It is important for the foster parents to be knowledgeable of the services provided by the reservation in particular, for they are integrated treatments with social and cultural support structures. Several have inclusion of culturally based care and traditional practices coupled with Western models. The Native American clients can benefit from these culturally relevant interventions. They may include spiritual dances, talking circles, smudging with sweet grass or sage, naming ceremonies, assisting in the care of Elders, etc.

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

Copies of **OPTIONAL ACTIVITY HANDOUT #6.1: Case Examples**

INSTRUCTIONS

Step 1: Organize the participants in small groups to focus on one case for each group. Allow 10 minutes for the groups to develop a list of resources, support systems and actions to assist the youth.

Step 2: Allow each group 8 minutes to develop a plan of action to find assistance for the youth in the community which they live.

Step 3: Allow for 8 minutes to develop a 'practice' conversation with each other; one participant in the role of the parent and one being the youth. What would this conversation entail? How would the parent do to get the youth to listen? How would the youth be included in the discussion?

Step 4: Ask each of the small groups to share with the larger group their response to the case they selected to focus on in the smaller group. Allow about 8 minutes for this sharing.

HOMEWORK

Encourage each group to take some time to seek out services that exist on the reservation and/or in the community to assist the foster parent and youth. Plan for a brief recap at the next meeting.



OPTIONAL ACTIVITY HANDOUT #6.1: CASE EXAMPLES

Case #1 Emily

Emily is 15 years old, her mother left her with her grandmother and started a life of travel with a new “boyfriend” who is a 23-year-old male. She has court ordered visitation rights, but has not seen Emily for three years since she has been living out of state. Emily was living with a former foster family for a year prior to coming to your home. Unfortunately, the foster mother developed breast cancer and felt she could not provide care for Emily. Emily lived on the reservation as a child, but moved to the city when she went into foster care. However, she has learned from the youth who are bused in from the “rez”, that two of her former friends have died one; from an overdose and one from suicide.

She stays in her room most of the time and eats little amounts of her meals. When asked if she is hungry, she indicates she will have something later. She has been wearing clothes that cover her arms and legs even though the weather is extremely warm. You ask Emily if she feels cold, she shares “no, it is just my style.”

One day after taking a shower, Emily found she had forgotten to get a towel, so she calls out to you and asks for a towel. She stretches her arm out from the bathroom door to get the towel and you then notice several diagonal cuts on her arm. Some have turned to scars and some are fresh. You are surprised and wonder what has happened.

What steps would you take to help Emily?

Case #2 Victor

Victor is 16 years old; he has been placed in your home because Mike, his father, could not care for him properly. He is a long distance truck driver and Victor is left home alone several nights a week. Mike indicated "I could not find another job." His mother left when he was 8 years old. She went to the store to buy ice cream and never returned. He still remembers her smile and wave as she drove away. Victor wants to be independent and live with his dad because he had been at home alone for many nights.

He is angry about his removal and also being enrolled in a different school where there are no "Indians". There were a couple of youths in the neighborhood who reached out to him, but he soon decided he did not like them. He shared he has new friends at school, but they live on the reservation and they take the "rez bus" to school. The last three days, Victor has been late coming home from school. His eyes look glazed over and he walks past you without a word. He stays in his room for most of the evening. He doesn't want to join the family for dinner, he yells through the bedroom door that he is not hungry.

What approach would you take with Victor?

Case #3 May

May is 15 years old and comes to you from the city to the reservation to live with you. Both parents are involved in drug use, likely heroin, and cannot provide supervision or support her in any way. She states “it’s ok, I have Stevie, he is my boyfriend and when I get out of school, we are going to get married and go to California.” She shares with you that Stevie is wonderful and she has been with him since she was 13 years old. May is delightful and shares the “good times” she has had with her parents. And when they “got sick” she would help them. She doesn’t understand why she was removed because “her parents are together and love each other.”

May’s clothes were limited to one trash bag, so you think it would be a good idea to take her shopping and have some time to bond with her during this time. At the store she selected some items and was so happy to have a dress. She shared she has not had a dress since she was a little girl. She wanted to wear it home from the store. So, after it was paid for and gained permission from the sales person, you cut the tags off and she changed into dress. As she was getting into the car, the wind blew the dress up off her legs, and you saw her thighs. Her thighs had massive bruising and it startled you. You quickly responded, “What happened to your legs?” May shared, “Oh Stevie and me like to fight a lot, it’s fun.”

What are your next steps to help May?

ACTIVITIES FOR AMERICAN INDIAN
AND ALASKAN NATIVE POPULATIONS

SESSION 7 OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

SESSION 7 - OPTIONAL ACTIVITY 1

Session 7: Developing and Sustaining a Healthy and Supportive Relationship with Your Youth

Core Competency: Parents develop and sustain a healthy and supportive relationship with their youth.

PURPOSE OF ACTIVITY

This exercise is based on a Native American traditional belief. The circle is an important symbol for it represents the medicine wheel, the cycles of the seasons, and the cycle of life from death to rebirth. This metaphor was selected as it is a belief system the participants may relate to for this exercise. Also, included in the development of this exercise is a diagram which is based in part on the ecomap that indicates the social and personal relationships of an individual within his or her environment. In this exercise the large circle represents the foster parents' environment and the small circles represent services that are available in the community. The squares represent unmet needs and services.

NOTE: It is important for the foster parents to be knowledgeable of the services provided by the reservation in particular, for they are integrated treatments with social and cultural support structures. Several have inclusion of culturally based care and traditional practices coupled with Western models. The Native American clients can benefit from these culturally relevant interventions. They may include spiritual dances, talking circles, smudging with sweet grass or sage, naming ceremonies, assisting in the care of elders, etc.

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

Small round and square sticky notes

Markers

Copies of **OPTIONAL ACTIVITY HANDOUT #7.1: Circle of Community Support**

INSTRUCTIONS

The participants may need a brief explanation of the exercise indicating that the large circle includes smaller circles that represent services available in their community. The squares will represent the services needed for the development of the foster youth but do not current exist or the foster parent is unaware of how to access the service.

Step 1: The participants will complete the worksheet individually by filling in the diagram. Once they have completed the task in 8 minutes, they divide into small groups.

Step 2: Participants in groups of 3 or 5 will share on a large sheet of flip-chart paper. Pre-draw a large circle in the center with space allowed around the circle to place small sticky notes. The participant will write down on small round sticky notes all the viable support systems they have access to both tribal and non-tribal. The amount of time to be allotted is 8 minutes. They will use their individual diagrams to assist in completing this task (see Optional Activity Handout #7.1).

Step 3: The participants with then write on the small square sticky notes the services that are needed but not available to sustain a healthy and supportive relationship with the youth. Allow 6 minutes for the participants to put these on the small square sticky notes on the outside of the larger circle (see Optional Activity Handout #7.1).

Step 4: Allow 10 minutes for participants to brainstorm a list of services that may be needed and are not readily available, and how particular needs may be met. This may include services that are offered by tribal or non-tribal agencies.

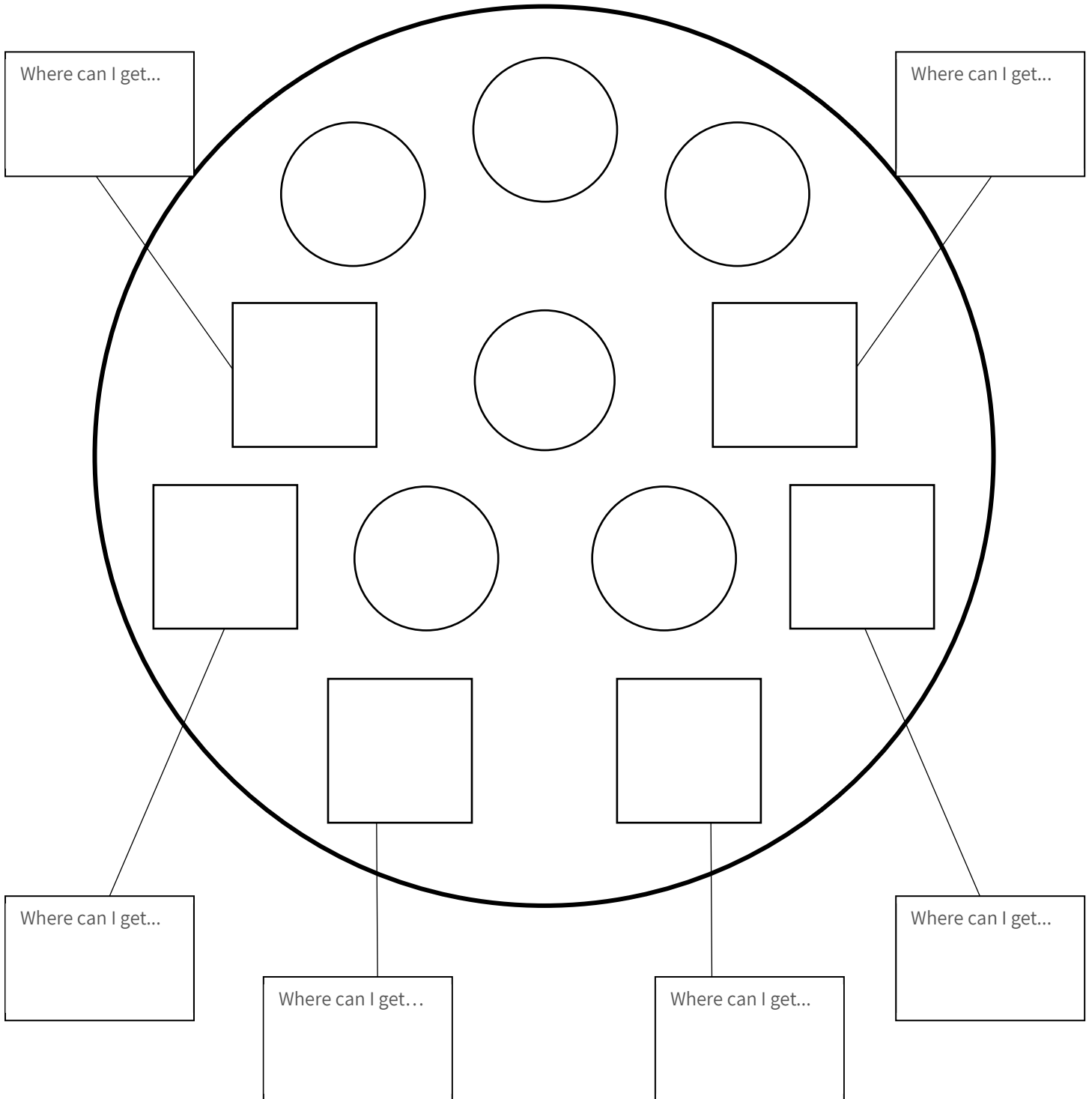
HOMEWORK

Request the participants jot down a few additional ideas of how to meet the needs of the foster child to share for the next session. Schedule time for a brief sharing of their thoughts. The participants may want to create a group of leaders who can plan activities for the unmet needs.



OPTIONAL ACTIVITY HANDOUT #7.1: CIRCLE OF COMMUNITY SUPPORT

The circle represents the community support system that will help your new family. Fill in the circles with services that you are aware of and are available to you now. Fill in the squares with services you may need to support the foster youth in your family.



SESSION 7 - OPTIONAL ACTIVITY 2

Session 7: Developing and Sustaining a Healthy and Supportive Relationship with Your Youth

Core Competency: Parents develop and sustain a healthy and supportive relationship with their youth.

PURPOSE OF ACTIVITY

To increase the foster parents' skills to promote the well-being of the foster youths through trauma-informed parenting. The participants need to review what they have learned and share in small groups examples of actions they have taken or will take to improve the well-being of the foster youths in their homes. Verbally sharing with others may increase their confidence and ability to take action by receiving support and approval from group members. This exercise will focus on sexual orientation and/or racial/ethnic identity, and safety.

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

Copies of **OPTIONAL ACTIVITY HANDOUT #7.2: Case Studies**



ACTIVITY

INSTRUCTIONS

Step 1: Request the participants gather in small groups of 3-5 to share and discuss examples of how they would implement and support a relationship with a foster youth in their home. Allow for 10 minutes of discussion. The participants will write down the processes they have or would implement and share with the group in one of the three case examples (see Optional Activity Handout #7.2). For time management, each group may be asked to have one participant share the groups' response to the case example they have selected.

Step 2: In the small groups, parents will share how they would provide or will provide a supportive relationship with a foster youth by being open in discussing of sexual orientation and allow the youth to express him/herself. A second topic in the youth's life is their ethnicity. They may be bi-racial or multi-racial and have concerns in regard to their identity. Both topics needs to be open for discussion if the youth is to move forward with his/her personal identity and self-worth. The participants will take 8 minutes to share how they discussed or will discuss with the foster youth his or her sexual orientation and/or ethnicity in reference to the case examples.

Step 3: Safety is a must for youth who are in foster care. The participants in the small groups will share how they plan to keep the youth safe. Some of the youth need additional focus on safety because they have been vulnerable to violence from abusive family members, bullying, physical attacks due to LBGTQ2S identities, and/or relationships they had from the streets before coming into foster care. Also, how would the foster parents provide supervision of social medial sites to prevent sex trafficking, which has become a major issue for youth? In addition, there needs to be caution for those who self-harm and have suicidal ideations. Allow the participants to make a list of how they would address these issues and share with the group as a whole.

Step 4: Allow time for the group as a whole to express how they felt about this experience.



OPTIONAL ACTIVITY HANDOUT #7.2: CASE STUDIES

Case #1 Michael

Michael is a 16-year-old Native American male who self-identifies as a two spirit individual. He is handsome and has long dark brown hair. He keeps to himself and responds to questions with a nod of the head or shrug of his shoulders. He has been in your home for three weeks with little conversation. Within the last two weeks he has come home with some bruise about the face. When asked what happened, he provides his usual shrug of shoulders or may utter, “don’t worry about it.” As a foster parent you think he is being bullied and physical assaulted at school.

With your knowledge of the Native American culture, what action would you take to resolve this issue?

Case #2 Vicky

Vicky is a 14-year-old bi-racial youth who strongly identifies as Native American. This is evidenced by her clothing and her braided hair which she accents by wearing a small feather clip in it every day. She tells you “I am glad to be tall and look Indian even though my dad was a white guy.” She uses the word ‘was’, because she has never known her biological father. She thinks she doesn’t need school because she is going to be a model and many of them have dropped out of school to earn a lot of money because they are famous. You have purchased a computer for her school work, but as you have walked by you notice on the screen some photos of young girls and the words “Sugar Babes”.

How would you address this situation with the services offered by the Tribal Nation? Non-Tribal Services?

Case #3 Johnny

Johnny is a 13-year-old Multi-racial youth (Native American, African American, and Mexican American). He is dark complected, and has very curly hair which he doesn't like, because he states, "I am Indian and it should be straight like Chief Joseph's." He is loud when he speaks and shouts when he becomes angry. He has been in your home for two months so you are aware he is short to anger when he doesn't get his way. He says, "You don't like the way I look, that is why you won't allow me to have my way, which I deserve." He has stated, "I hate school because other students pick on me." He shares "they laughed when I told them I was Indian." He is also two years older than his classmates because he was held back for missing so many school days when he lived with his biological mother (the Native American parent).

As a foster parent how can you help Johnny with his self-identity and adjustment to school? What services would you seek both tribal and non-tribal?

SESSION 7 - OPTIONAL ACTIVITY 3

Session 7: Developing and Sustaining a Healthy and Supportive Relationship with Your Youth

Core Competency: Parents honor their child’s cultural, racial, and ethnic needs and sexual orientation/gender identity and expression with acceptance, nurturing and support.

PURPOSE OF ACTIVITY

This exercise is based on the medicine wheel. The creation of the bracelet will provide the participants with the opportunity to review the lessons they have learned throughout this training.

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

Enough Red, Yellow, Black, and White plastic or glass pony beads for each participant to have four of each color

Hemp, leather lace, or another type of cord to be cut in lengths for bracelets for each participant

Copies of **OPTIONAL ACTIVITY HANDOUT #7.3: Medicine Wheel**

ACTIVITY



INSTRUCTIONS

Step 1: The Medicine Wheel, sometimes known as the Sacred Hoop, has been used by generations of various Native American tribes for health and healing. It embodies the Four Directions, as well as Father Sky, Mother Earth, and Spirit Tree—all of which symbolize dimensions of health and the cycles of life. The Medicine Wheel is a major symbol of peaceful interaction among all living beings on Mother Earth – it represents harmony, balance and connections. Medicine Wheels are represented by a collection of varied colors, animal totems, and uses. A description of the parts of the Medicine wheel is presented using the handout.

Step 2: Participants collect the bracelet cord, and 4 beads of each of the colors.

Step 3: Participants will begin putting their bracelet together depending on how they choose to put the beads on the bracelet. As they add a bead, they should think about the lessons learned during CORE Teen sessions, and consider how these lessons relate to the Four Directions, Father Sky, Mother Earth, and Spirit Tree the training.



OPTIONAL ACTIVITY HANDOUT #7.3: THE MEDICINE WHEEL

The Medicine Wheel is a tool that is used in ceremonies and teachings by Native Americans. It is a representation of the connectedness between humans and nature, it represents the cycles of life and colors of man. A balance of the 4 quadrants of the wheel, can lead to a balance in life between the Creator and self.

Using the materials provide, you will create a representation of the medicine wheel that can be a reminder of the lessons learned during this session. Each bead will represent a lesson learned from this training experience. As you put your beads on your bracelet, think about how you will use the things you learned with your foster teen. Your bracelet should end with an even number of beads. When times get tough, look at your bracelet and see how they colors of the medicine wheel can be the reminder you may need during the difficult times.

