



Focus on Module 6: TRAUMA'S IMPACT ON CHILD MENTAL HEALTH



Myths & Misconceptions

- Common myths and misconceptions about the impact of traumatic experiences persist today despite scientific evidence to the contrary.

True or False:

1. Children under 3 are often impacted by trauma
2. Children need more than love to heal from trauma
3. Trauma impacts the actual physical development of the brain
4. If a child doesn't talk about it, it isn't a problem

True or False answers: 1-T, 2-T, 3-T, 4-F

- Watch the video in Module 6 Lesson 1, "Chronic Adverse Experiences" to explore the basics of early traumatic experiences and then review Handout 6.1.2 The Impact of Early Adversity on Child Development. What was most interesting or surprising to you? How might this knowledge change the way you interact with children?

ACE Study

- The Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) study looked at the association between childhood experiences and lifelong health. Some experiences are so stressful that they can alter brain development as well as the immune system, increasing the risk of lifelong health and social problems. Those with higher ACEs scores are at significantly higher risk for poor outcomes compared with someone with no ACEs, including substance abuse, heart disease and cancer, and mental illness.



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Trauma's Impact (cont'd)

- View the video in Module 6 Lesson 1, "The ACES," and brainstorm with colleagues ways to promote resilience through positive experiences. What might you do as a caseworker? What suggestions could you give foster and adoptive parents?

TBRI

- Module 6 Lesson 2 builds on Module 3's goals and strategies for attunement and attachment, utilizing principles from Trust-Based Relational Intervention (TBRI). Use group supervision for the following activity:



Draw this triangle on newsprint and tape to a wall. Hand out multi-colored sticky notes and instruct each person write one phrase per sticky ways in which one demonstrates positive behavior in each of these domains. Handout TBRI Correcting Principles offers a few suggestions for this activity, as well as other useful strategies such as "scaffolding" and the "IDEAL" response. Distribute handout 6.4.1 Understanding Your Child's Behavior to foster and adoptive families to help them better understand the behaviors of children from hard places, to more effectively address negative behaviors, and to learn to more effective coping skills so they feel more confident and competent in their parenting approach.

Helping Families Find a Therapist

- Encourage your staff to print and use the questions provided in [handout 2.5.1](#) to help families find an adoption competent therapist.
- Ask staff to proactively reach out to therapists to ask about their adoption and foster care specific training. Start a resource list of local therapists to refer families.
- Utilize the [Child Welfare Information Gateway Foster Care and Adoption Directory](#) or the [State Foster/ Adoptive Coalitions](#) to search for local resources.
- Begin talking to therapists in your area about the opportunity to participate in NTI for Mental Health professionals. Refer them to your Implementation Specialist or the NTI website: adoptionssupport.org/nti.

[See More Tip Sheets from NTI](#)

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