Resource Family Connection

News, Events and Information Benefiting the Children of Waukesha County

July 2015

Parenting a Child Who Has Experienced Trauma, Part 1 of 3

By: Child Welfare Information Gateway

What Is Trauma?

Trauma is an emotional response to an intense event that threatens or causes harm. The harm can be physical or emotional, real or perceived, and it can threaten the child or someone close to him or her. Trauma can be the result of a single event, or it can result from exposure to multiple events over time.

Potentially traumatic events may include:

- Abuse (physical, sexual, or emotional)
- Neglect
- Effects of poverty (such as homelessness or not having enough to eat)
- Being separated from loved ones
- Bullying
- Witnessing harm to a loved one or pet (e.g., domestic or community violence)
- Natural disasters or accidents
- Unpredictable parental behavior due to addiction or mental illness

For many children, being in the child welfare system becomes another traumatic event. This is true of the child's first separation from his or her home and family, as well as any additional placements.

The Impact of Untreated Trauma

Children are resilient. Some stress in their lives (e.g., leaving caregivers for a day at school, riding a bike for the first time, feeling nervous before a game or performance) helps their brains to grow and new skills to develop. However, by definition, trauma occurs when a stressful experience (such as being abused, neglected, or bullied) overwhelms the child's natural ability to cope. These events cause a "fight, flight, or freeze" response, resulting in changes in the body—such as faster heart rate and higher blood pressure—as well as changes in how the brain perceives and responds to the world.

In many cases, a child's body and brain recover quickly from a potentially traumatic experience with no lasting harm. However, for other children, trauma interferes with normal development and can have long-lasting effects.

Factors that determine the impact of traumatic events include the following:

- **Age.** Younger children are more vulnerable. Even infants and toddlers who are too young to talk about what happened retain lasting "sense memories" of traumatic events that can affect their well-being into adulthood.
- **Frequency.** Experiencing the same type of traumatic event multiple times, or multiple types of traumatic events, is more harmful than a single event.
- **Relationships.** Children with positive relationships with healthy caregivers are more likely to recover.
- **Coping skills.** Intelligence, physical health, and self-esteem help children cope.
- **Perception.** How much danger the child thinks he or she is in, or the amount of fear the child feels at the time, is a significant factor.
- **Sensitivity.** Every child is different—some are naturally more sensitive than others.

The effects of trauma vary depending on the child and type of traumatic events experienced. Table 1 (see page 3) shows some of the ways that trauma can affect children. This list of potential consequences shows why it is so important for parents to understand trauma. The right kind of help can reduce or even eliminate many of these negative consequences.

Understanding Your Child's Behavior

When children have experienced trauma, particularly multiple traumatic events over an extended period of time, their bodies, brains, and nervous systems adapt in an effort to protect them. This might result in behaviors such as increased aggression, distrusting or disobeying adults, or even dissociation (feeling disconnected from reality). When children are in danger, these behaviors may be important for their survival. However, once children are moved to a safer environment, their brains and bodies may not recognize that the danger has passed. These protective behaviors, or habits, have grown strong from frequent use (just as a muscle that is used regularly grows bigger and stronger). It takes time and retraining to help those "survival muscles" learn that they are not needed in their new situation (your home), and that they can relax.

It might be helpful to remember that your child's troublesome behavior may be a learned response to stress—it may even be what kept your child alive in a very unsafe situation. It will take time and patience for your child's body and brain to learn to respond in ways that are more appropriate for his or her current, safe environment.

Trauma Triggers

When your child is behaving in a way that is unexpected and seems irrational or extreme, he or she may be experiencing a trauma trigger. A trigger is some aspect of a traumatic event that occurs in a completely different situation but reminds the child of the original event. Examples may be sounds, smells, feelings, places, postures, tones of voice, or even emotions.

Youth who have experienced traumatic events may reenact past patterns when they feel unsafe or encounter a trigger. Depending on whether the child has a "fight," "flight," or "freeze" response, the child may appear to be throwing a tantrum, willfully not listening, or defying you. However, responses to triggers are best thought of as reflexes—they are not deliberate or planned. When children's bodies and brains are overwhelmed by a traumatic memory, they are not able to consider the consequences of their behavior or its effect on others.

Symptoms by Age

Table 2 (see page 3) shows symptoms and behaviors that children who have experienced trauma might exhibit at different stages of development. The age ranges are merely guidelines. For many children who have experienced trauma, their development lags behind their age in calendar years. It may be normal for your child to exhibit behaviors that are more common in younger children.

These signs alone do not necessarily indicate that your child has experienced trauma. However, if symptoms are more severe or longer lasting than is typical for children the same age, or if they interfere with your child's ability to succeed at home or in school, it is important to seek help.

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http://www.childwelfare.gov

Parts 2 & 3 continued in upcoming newsletters!

FAMILY HIGHLIGHT

Roseanne McGuire

This month we would like to introduce you to Roseanne McGuire. Roseanne was a Waukesha County Level One foster parent from 2010-2012. Roseanne received placement of her 2 year old granddaughter in 2010. While Roseanne was not expecting to be a Relative Foster Parent, she welcomed the opportunity to help her granddaughter, as well as her son and his fiancé'. Roseanne played an integral role in the biological parents achieving reunification. Roseanne embraced shared parenting and served as a role model to her son and his fiancé'.

Roseanne was actively involved in the Court proceedings, Family Team Meetings and she supervised visitation. In addition, Roseanne was an active participant in the Relative Caregiver Support Group and is now a co-facilitator for that group.

Roseanne is also actively involved in the community, giving of her time and knowledge to others. Roseanne is on the Board Of Directors for the National Alliance On Mental Illness in Waukesha County.

She is also on the Board Of Directors for the Mukwonago Area Public Schools Education Foundation, as well as TEMPO Waukesha. Tempo Waukesha is a non-profit organization for executive and professional persons in the Waukesha County area. Most recently, Roseanne was asked to participate in the FAST program. FAST is a program for parents, baby and grandparents to learn new ways to connect with baby and toddlers. In addition to all of her volunteer work, Roseanne works full-time as the Director of Membership for the Girl Scouts of Southeast Wisconsin.

We truly appreciate Roseanne's commitment to children and families in our community.

Royal Family Kids Camp

We would like to extend an invitation to your child to attend this summer's Royal Family Kids Camp!!! Our 2015 Hartland camp will be Monday, August 17, 2015 – Friday, August 22, 2015.

Royal Family Kids Camp, located in a beautiful wooded campground in Waukesha County, is a unique camp program designed for elementary aged children in the foster care system, and other at-risk children. We offer many opportunities in creating wonderful childhood memories, which can become positive life-changing moments in the lives of these at-risk children. We are called Royal Family Kids Camp, because we believe every child is as important as royalty. They have value, they matter.

At Royal Family Kids Camp, we have camp "family figures" giving campers affirmation and affection in a wholesome, positive role-modeling, non-threatening atmosphere. We have a camp Grandma & Grandpa, giving safe hugs & camp mail. Our camp counselors are assigned to a maximum 2 campers each, helping ensure this camp remain a safe camp. The beauty of nature enables us to have many activities planned at camp including swimming, horse-trail riding, costume circle, fun games and programs emphasizing wholesome relationships, self esteem, and creating positive memories. To help preserve the positive memories created, each child returns home with their very own photo album to remind them of their week at camp and the new friends made.

Please complete the camper application and return it no later than 7/15 please. You may need to contact your child's case worker to obtain necessary signatures. We have LOTS of fun plans to make! Space is limited to the first 36 applicants. Your cost for the camp is covered by individuals & companies who believe in the value of your child & Royal Family Kids' Camp. Once we receive your signed application, including a copy of your child's insurance I.D. card, we will send you a letter confirming your child's place and a list of suggested items to bring to camp.

Questions? Call us at (262)369-8153 or rfkchartland@yahoo.com

Tips to Keep Safe in Hot Weather

1. **Never leave children, disabled persons, or pets in a parked car - even briefly.** Temperatures in a car can become life threatening within minutes. On an 80-degree day with sunshine, the temperature inside a car even with the windows cracked slightly can rise 20-30 degrees above the outside temperature in 10-20 minutes. There have been cases where the inside temperature rose 40 degrees!
2. **Keep your living space cool.** If you have an air conditioner, use it. Cover windows to keep the sun from shining in. If you don't have an air conditioner, you should consider going to a community cooling center. If you stay at home, open windows to let air circulate. At extreme high temperatures, a fan loses its ability to effectively reduce heat-related illness. When it's hotter than 95 degrees, use fans to blow hot air out of the window rather than to blow hot air on your body.
3. **Slow down and limit physical activity.** Plan outings or exertion for the early morning or after dark when temperatures are cooler.
4. **Drink plenty of water and eat lightly.** Don't wait for thirst, but instead drink plenty of water throughout the day. Avoid alcohol or caffeine and stay away from hot, heavy meals.
5. **Wear lightweight, loose-fitting, light-colored clothing.** Add a hat or umbrella to keep your head cool… and don't forget the sunscreen!
6. **Don't stop taking medication unless your doctor says you should.** Take extra care to stay cool and ask your doctor or pharmacist for any special heat advice.
7. **Taking a cool shower or bath will cool you down.** A shower or bath will actually work faster than an air conditioner. Applying cold wet rags to the neck, head, and limbs also cools down the body quickly.

Waukesha County Foster Parents Judy & Chuck Koenings Receive 2015 Foster Care Award

From left, state Sen. Alberta Darling, R-River Hills, state Secretary of The Department of Children and Families Eloise Anderson, Wisconsin first lady Tonette Walker, and Judy and Chuck Koenings at the state Capital on Wed., May 27th where the Koenings were honored as recipients of the 2015 Governor's Foster Care Award.

Random Act of Kindness

We would like to thank the non-profit program called OneHope27, Inc. for their generous donation of 25 bags containing PJ's and an outfit for children of various ages. The organization's president, Charrone Ganiere is also a licensed foster parent and identifies their mission to help kids transition through their first day and night in a new foster home. The items are not only helpful and encouraging to children, but also provide foster parents with the basic necessities they may not have on hand in an emergency situation.

OneHope27, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) non-profit agency working with the local Christian Community to help them engage with kids and families involved in foster care through recruitment and support, service projects and special events. You can check them out at onehope27.org or on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram onehope27

Fireworks in Waukesha County

Brookfield
Date: July 4, 2015 at 9:15pm
Where: Mitchell Park
19900 River Road
Brookfield, Wisconsin 53045

Delafield
Date: July 3, 2015 at Dusk
Where: Over Nagawicka Lake
Genesee Street
Delafield, Wisconsin 53018

Elm Grove Family Fun Fest
Date: July 4, 2015 at Dusk
Where: Elm Grove Village Park
13600 Juneau Blvd
Elm Grove, Wisconsin 53122

Menomonee Falls
Date: July 3, 2015 at Dusk
Where: Menomonee Falls High School
Football Field
W142 N8101 Merrimac Dr
Menomonee Falls, Wisconsin 53051

New Berlin
Date: July 4, 2015 at 10:00pm
Where: Malone Park
New Berlin, Wisconsin 53151

Okauchee Lake (Venetian Night)
Date: July 4, 2015 at Dusk
Where: Okauchee Lake
Lacys Lane
Okauchee, Wisconsin 53069

Sussex
Date: July 4, 2015 at 9:20pm
Where: Sussex Village Park
Maple Ave
Sussex, Wisconsin 53089

Waukesha (City)
Date: July 4, 2015 at Dusk
Where: Waukesha County Expo
1000 Northview Road
Waukesha, Wisconsin 53188

Sussex Lion Daze
Date: July 10, 2015 at Dusk
Where: Sussex Village Park
Maple Ave
Sussex, Wisconsin 53089

Oconomowoc Boat Parade and Fireworks
Date: August 15, 2015 at 9:30pm
Where: City Beach
324 W. Wisconsin Ave
Oconomowoc, Wisconsin 53066

Clothing Closet Corner

The Foster Care Clothing Closet is a resource established to help meet the clothing needs of children placed in foster care and is available to all resource families. If you have a child placed in your home, please contact your social worker to make arrangements to visit the clothing closet.

We have had a steady stream of donations coming in particularly for younger children and are running out of room. We are currently looking for donations of clothing for older children/teens. If you have a donation you would like to make for this population, please contact Susan Peck at 262-896-8574.

Tables From Page 1: Parenting a Child Who Has Experienced Trauma

Table 1. Effects of Trauma on Children

Trauma may affect children's…	In the following ways
Bodies	☼ Inability to control physical responses to stress ☼ Chronic illness, even into adulthood (heart disease, obesity)
Brains (thinking)	☼ Difficulty thinking, learning, and concentrating ☼ Impaired memory ☼ Difficulty switching from one thought or activity to another
Emotions (feeling)	☼ Low self-esteem ☼ Feeling unsafe ☼ Inability to regulate emotions ☼ Difficulty forming attachments to caregivers ☼ Trouble with friendships ☼ Trust issues ☼ Depression, anxiety
Behavior	☼ Lack of impulse control ☼ Fighting, aggression, running away ☼ Substance abuse ☼ Suicide

Table 2. Signs of Trauma in Children of Different Ages

Youth Children (Ages 0-5)	School-Age Children (Ages 6-12)	Teens (Ages 13-18)
☼ Irritability, "fussiness" ☼ Startling easily or being difficult to calm ☼ Frequent tantrums ☼ Clinginess, reluctance to explore the world ☼ Activity levels that are much higher or lower than peers ☼ Repeating traumatic events over and over in dramatic play or conversation ☼ Delays in reaching physical, language, or other milestones	☼ Difficulty paying attention ☼ Being quiet or withdrawn ☼ Frequent tears or sadness ☼ Talking often about scary feelings and ideas ☼ Difficulty transitioning from one activity to the next ☼ Fighting with peers or adults ☼ Changes in school performance ☼ Wanting to be left alone ☼ Eating much more or less than peers ☼ Getting into trouble at home or school ☼ Frequent headaches or stomachaches with no apparent cause ☼ Behaviors common to younger children (thumb sucking, bed wetting, fear of the dark)	☼ Talking about the trauma constantly, or denying that it happened ☼ Refusal to follow rules, or talking back frequently ☼ Being tired all the time, sleeping much more (or less) than peers, nightmares ☼ Risky behaviors ☼ Fighting ☼ Not wanting to spend time with friends ☼ Using drugs or alcohol, running away from home, or getting into trouble with the law

Training and Events

Training Offered By Waukesha County

Parent Café

Parent Café's are an educational opportunity for parents to come together and deal with the stressors, worries and challenges of parenting in a supportive environment.

October 6, 2015; and December 1, 2015
5:30 PM to 8:00 PM
Center for Excellence, N4W22000 Bluemound Road, Waukesha
To register for childcare, RSVP or for questions call, 262-521-0317.

Waukesha County Foster Parent Orientation

Waukesha Department of Health and Human Services invites you to attend a foster parent orientation meeting. These meetings are open to anyone who is interested in learning about our foster care program. **If you are currently in the process of becoming a licensed foster parent, you are required to attend an orientation session prior to approval of your foster care license.**

We encourage you to complete the online foster parent pre-placement training prior to attending this information session. The training can be found online at http://wcwpds.wisc.edu/foster-parent-training/. Please save the certificates after you have completed each module. These are required to become licensed.

When:
July 14, 2015; August 11, 2015; September 8, 2015; October 13, 2015; November 10, 2015; and December 8, 2015
All orientation sessions occur from 6:00 - 8:00 PM

Where: Human Services Center, 514 Riverview Ave., Waukesha, WI 53188

To register for an orientation session, contact your foster care coordinator.

New Facebook Group

Two of our Waukesha County foster parents, Angie Maniaci and Kelly Knapp have developed a Facebook page for Waukesha County foster parents! This is a great resource for networking and support. You can access the group by searching "FPWC" on Facebook. Thanks to Angie and Kelly for creating this valuable outlet for foster parents!

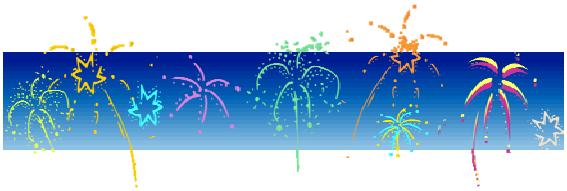
Resource Family Recognition Picnic
Saturday, July 25, 2015
11:00 AM to 2:00 PM
Minooka Park

RSVP to Libby Sinclair at 262-548-7277 by July 7

Foster Parent Support Group

First Wednesday of each month, beginning August 5, 2015
6:00 PM to 7:30 PM
Parents Place
1570 E. Moreland Blvd., Waukesha, WI
262-549-5575

On-sight daycare is available, but you must register in advance to secure a slot as there may be a cut-off depending on the number of children.



Training

Parents Place Programs
262-549-5575 www.ppacinc.org

- **Cook With Your Kids And Learn About Healthy Eating (parent & child class)**
  Thursdays, June 18 - July 9 from 1:00 - 2:00 PM
- **Co-Parenting**
  Mondays, July 6 - 20 from 6:00 - 7:30 PM
- **Tools and Techniques for Parents**
  Tuesdays, July 7 - 28 from 6:00 - 7:30 PM
- **Adult Anger**
  Mondays, July 13 & 20 from 5:30 - 7:30 PM
- **Pampering The Parent**
  Tuesday, July 21 from 5:30 - 7:00 PM
  (Free dinner included with this class)
- **Mindfulness**
  Wednesdays, July 22 & 29 from 5:30 - 7:00 PM

Coalition for Children
www.coalitionforcyf.org
For other training opportunities, see the Coalition for Children, Youth & Families website: www.coalitionforcyf.org. They offer interactive webinars that count toward the required face to face training hours.

Contact Numbers:

Waukesha County Health & Human Services
262-548-7212

Eve Altizer, Supervisor
262-548-7272

Rebecca Hollister, Supervisor
262-548-7271

Kathy Mullooly, Supervisor
262-896-6832

Janis Ramos, Foster Care Coord.
262-548-7267

Susan Peck, Foster Care Coord.
262-896-8574

Libby Sinclair, Relative Licensing
262-548-7277

Social Workers:

Tracy Clark.....262-548-7270
Megan Fishler 262-896-8570
Laura Jahnke.....262-548-7359
Becca Kuester.....262-896-6857
Jessica Larsen.....262-548-7346
Melissa Lipovsek.....262-548-7348
Maria Maurer.....262-548-7345
Chelsey Nisbet.....262-896-6896
Rachel O'Sullivan.....262-548-7262
Stacy Pawlak 262-548-7262
Michael Reed.....262-548-7347
Elizabeth Russo 262-548-7349
Kim Sampson.....262-548-7273
Linda Senger 262-548-7698

Kinship Workers:

Linda Finn.....262-548-7254
Jessica Morris.....262-548-7256

Children's Mental Health Outreach
262-548-7666

Medical Emergency: 911
Family Emergency: 211

Foster Parent Mentor
Jen Mersfelder.....262-542-2926
David Mersfelder.....262-542-2926

If an Allegation of Abuse or Neglect has been made against you, please call:

FASPP
Norma Schoenberg
920-922-9627

Jack Safro
Toyota•Ford•Lincoln•Mercury
Lexus•Infiniti•Scion

May 2015 Placements

Waukesha County Licensed Homes	Waukesha County Children in Out of Home Placement			
Relative/Kinship/Level 1 Placements:	Juvenile Corrections:	2 Children	Group Homes:	0 Children
36 Children	Residential Care Facilities:	10 Children	Shelter Care	0 Children
	Relative/Kinship Level 1 Foster Homes:	47 Children	Treatment Foster Homes:	11 Children
Level 2 Placements:	Level 2 Foster Homes:	32 Children	Inpatient Hospital:	0 Children
96 Children			Total Children in OHC:	102 Children