

# **The Impact of Trauma on the Developing Child**

## **Ten Things About Child Trauma Everyone Needs to Know**

1. Kids who have experienced trauma aren't trying to push your buttons.
2. Kids who have been through trauma worry about what's going to happen next.
3. Even if the situation doesn't seem that bad to you, it's how the child feels that matters.
4. Trauma isn't always about violence.
5. You don't need to know exactly what caused the trauma to be able to help.
6. Kids who experience trauma need to feel they're good at something and can influence the world/
7. There's a direct connection between stress and learning.
8. Self-regulation can be a major challenge for children suffering from trauma.
9. It's OK to ask kids point-blank what you can do to help them make it through the day.
10. You can support kids with trauma even when they're outside your area of influence.

## **What to Do**

- Safety comes first
- Relationship-based approach
- Understand the child, their gap between chronological and developmental age
- Non-verbal and body language speak louder than words!
- Manage your own reactions-slow down!
- Maintain self-regulation
- Structure and Consistency
- Time in, not time out
- Connect
- Consequences, not punishment
- Structure choices to remain in control
- Model desired behaviors
- Acknowledge good decisions and choices
- Support parents and caregivers
- Maintain your role
- Self-care: Reflection, Regulation, Relaxation
- Teamwork!

## **Examples of Interventions**

- Sleep – make sure child is getting enough sleep
- Hygiene
- Music and movement
- Walking and running
- Gardening
- Creative art
- Martial Arts
- Rocking and swinging
- Healing touch/massage