Communicating With Children In A Trauma Informed Way

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Trauma Informed Communication: Building Resilience

Any fool can know.
The point is to understand.

Albert Einstein
Factors that Enhance Resilience

### Protective Factors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individual characteristics:</th>
<th>Family characteristics:¹</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive ability</td>
<td>Family cohesion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Self-efficacy</td>
<td>Supportive parent-child</td>
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<tr>
<td>Internal locus of control (a sense of having control over one’s life and destiny)</td>
<td>interaction</td>
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<tr>
<td>Temperament</td>
<td>Social support (e.g., extended family support)</td>
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<td>Social skills</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community characteristics:²</th>
<th>Cultural protective factors:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Positive school experiences</td>
<td>Strong sense of cultural identity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community resources</td>
<td>Spirituality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supportive peers and/or me</td>
<td>Connection to cultural community</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Protective beliefs and values</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Cultural talents and skills</td>
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</tbody>
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Building Resilience

• Work with the Parent and Child
• Obstacles in us
  – Identify them
  – Honor them

• A Regulated Approach
  – Regulate
  – Relate
  – Reason

• Stuart Ablon, Ph.D., Think:Kids
• Bruce Perry, Ph.D., M.D., ChildTrauma Academy
Regulate - Self

• Ourselves ~ first
  – Airline wisdom

• Others ~ next
  – “Only a regulated person can bring a dysregulated ANS system back into balance” (Sunderland)

• Self-Regulation ~ Self Care
  – Short Term
  – Long Term
Regulate the Child: Developmentally Sensitive Strategies

- Soothe, calm, establish safety
- Increase interest/exploration and control
- Connect and cooperate with others
- Promote decision making/agency/effort
Relate - Attune

- Working with the Child
- Child in the lead
- What is the child asking?
- How am I coming across?
- Remember grief
- Soothe
- Avoid isolation
Reason - Intervene

- Empathy!
- Language
- What do I want to convey?
- Pause . . . again . . . again . . .
- Set the context
- Tell everyone together
- Briefly summarize . . . again . . . again . . .
- Accompanied Play and Movement
Summary

- Model empathy – “experience”
- Be consistent and predictable – hallmarks of safety
- Create a sanctuary
- Reduce focus on behavior
- Developmental problems and neglect affect the lower regions of the brain – go there to regulate
- “Repetitious, patterned, rhythmic” activities (Perry)
- Correctly, concretely identify strengths
- Identify and use support in network
- READ and encourage reading
- Share presence and knowledge with others
A Universal Approach

• Every new interaction becomes another source of meaning and potential influence for change.

• Trauma Informed approach is for everyone
“Trauma Informed”

“The intuitive mind is a sacred gift and the rational mind is a faithful servant. We have created a society that honors the servant and has forgotten the gift.”

Attributed to Albert Einstein