



# TALKING ABOUT TRAUMA:

## Trauma Coaching Blurbs

**Dawn Blacker, PhD**  
**Brandi Liles, PhD**

Developed by the UC Davis PCIT Training Center in  
collaboration with Elizabeth Reichert, Ph.D., Stanford  
University School of Medicine

**UC DAVIS**  
**CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL**



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Champions For Our Children  
[www.First5LA.org](http://www.First5LA.org)

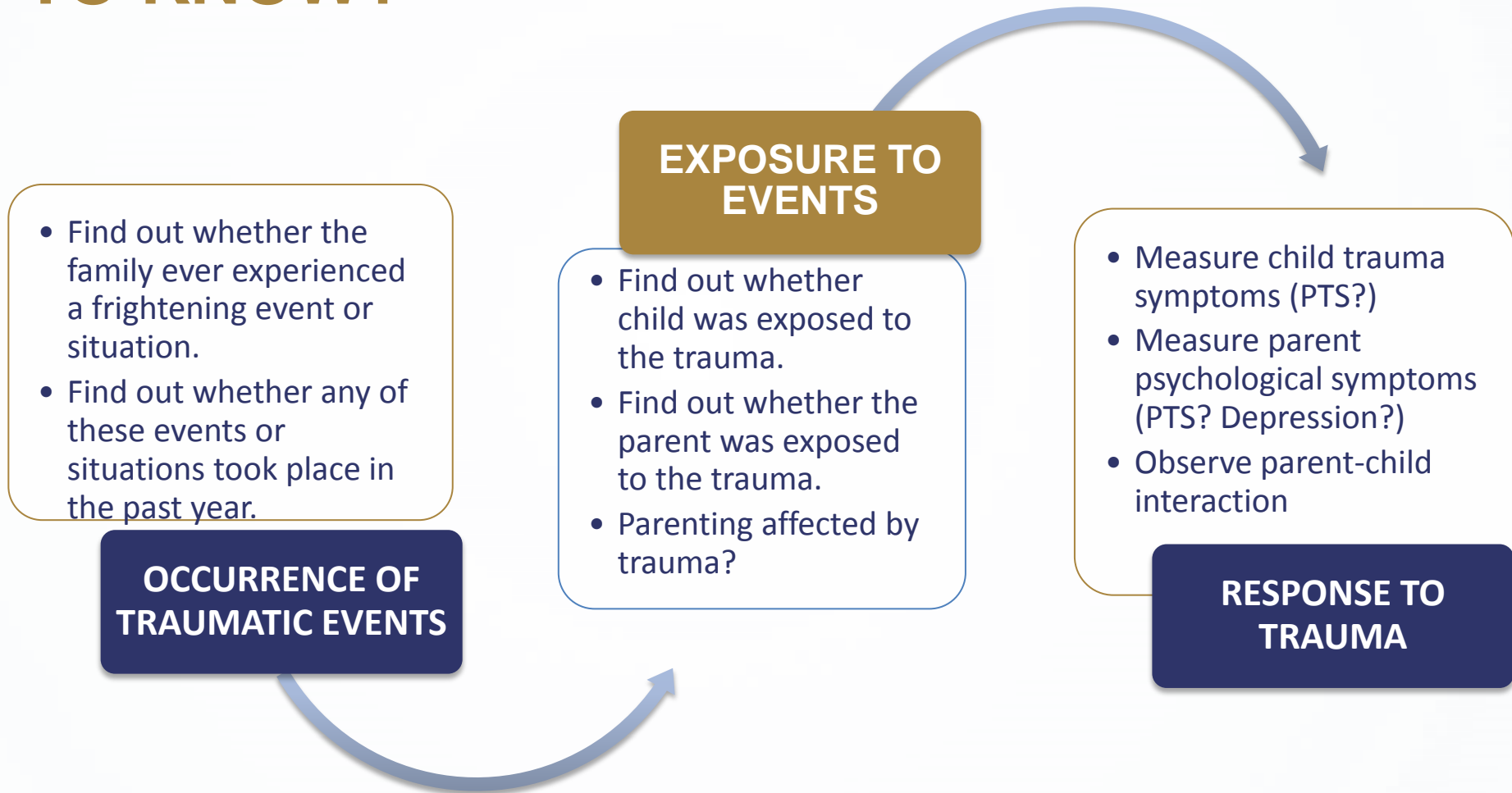


A PARTNER IN  
**NCTSN**  
The National Child  
Traumatic Stress Network

# OBJECTIVES

1. Learn how to integrate trauma-informed psychoeducation into CDI and PDI
2. Learn specific coaching strategies to address child and/or caregivers' trauma

# TRAUMA: WHAT DO WE NEED TO KNOW?



# Trauma Symptoms

## Trauma Exposed Young Children

### Trauma Symptoms

Anxiety  
Nightmares

### Behavioral Disturbance

Noncompliance  
Aggression

### Affect Dysregulation

Temper tantrums  
Crying/whining



## Trauma Exposed Parents

### Trauma Symptoms

Anxiety  
Intrusions  
Dissociation  
Depressed Mood

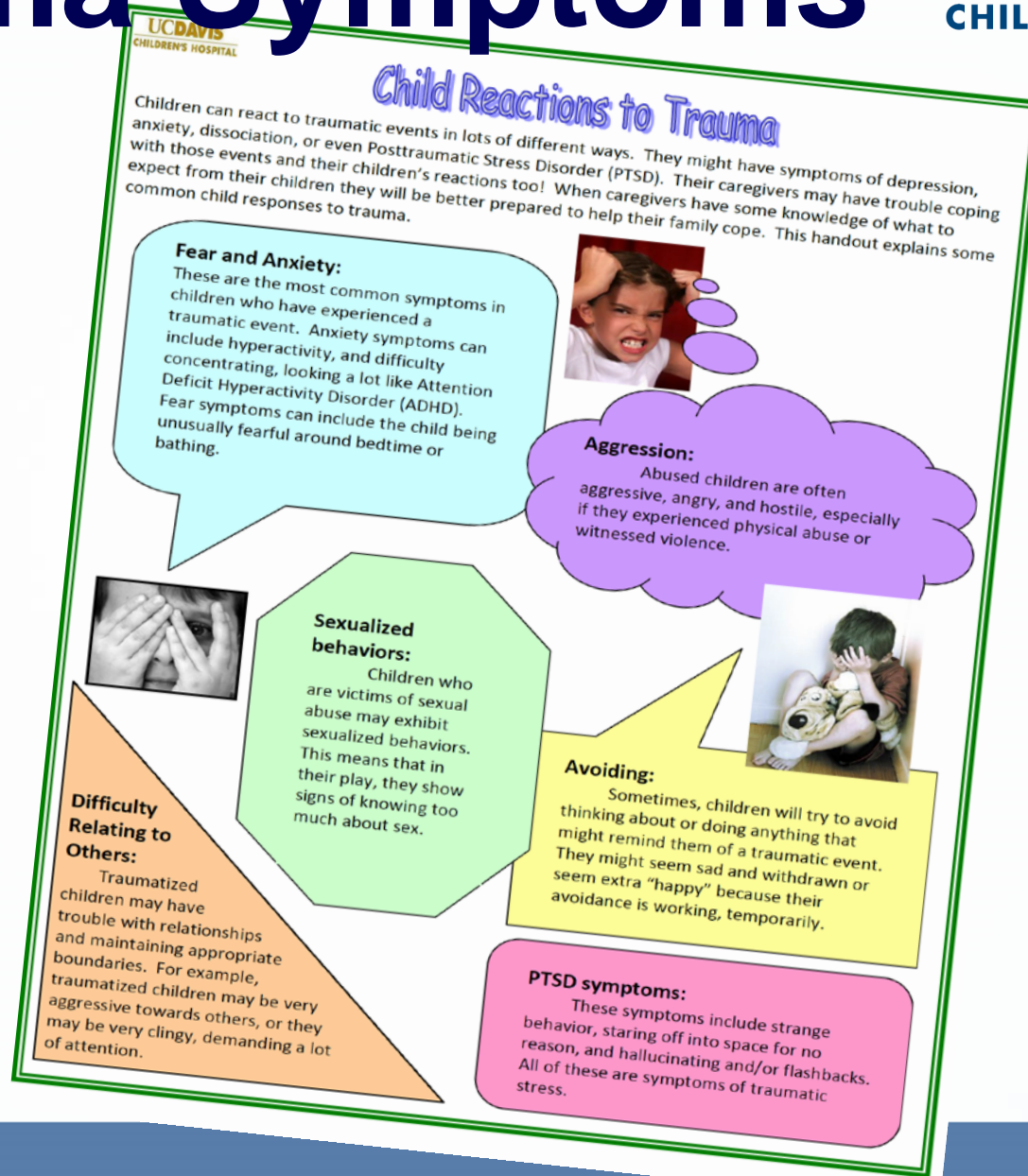
### Behavioral Disturbance

Substance Abuse  
Aggression  
Avoidance  
Sleep disturbance

### Affect Dysregulation

Hypervigilance  
Irritable

# Trauma Symptoms



# Trauma Symptoms & Parenting

**UCDAVIS**  
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Judgment &  
Safety

Vulnerable  
to Other Life  
Stressors

Security &  
Trust



Trauma  
Triggers

Emotional  
Dysregulation

Maladaptive  
Coping  
Strategies

**TALKING ABOUT TRAUMA**

**INTAKE  
ASSESSMENT**

# Caregiver trauma: Improving assessment questions

- If you suspect the caregiver may have experienced trauma...
  - Spend some time asking some specific questions regarding their childhood and possible trauma exposure
  - Make sure to give a solid rationale!!

## **Sample Introduction:**

One of the main ways we learn how to be a parent is from our own experience-- from the people who parented us. Some things you may want to do the same as your parents and some you may want to do differently. It helps me to understand how you want to parent if I know about your childhood experiences. Do you mind if I ask you a few questions about when you were growing up?



# Caregiver trauma: Assessment questions

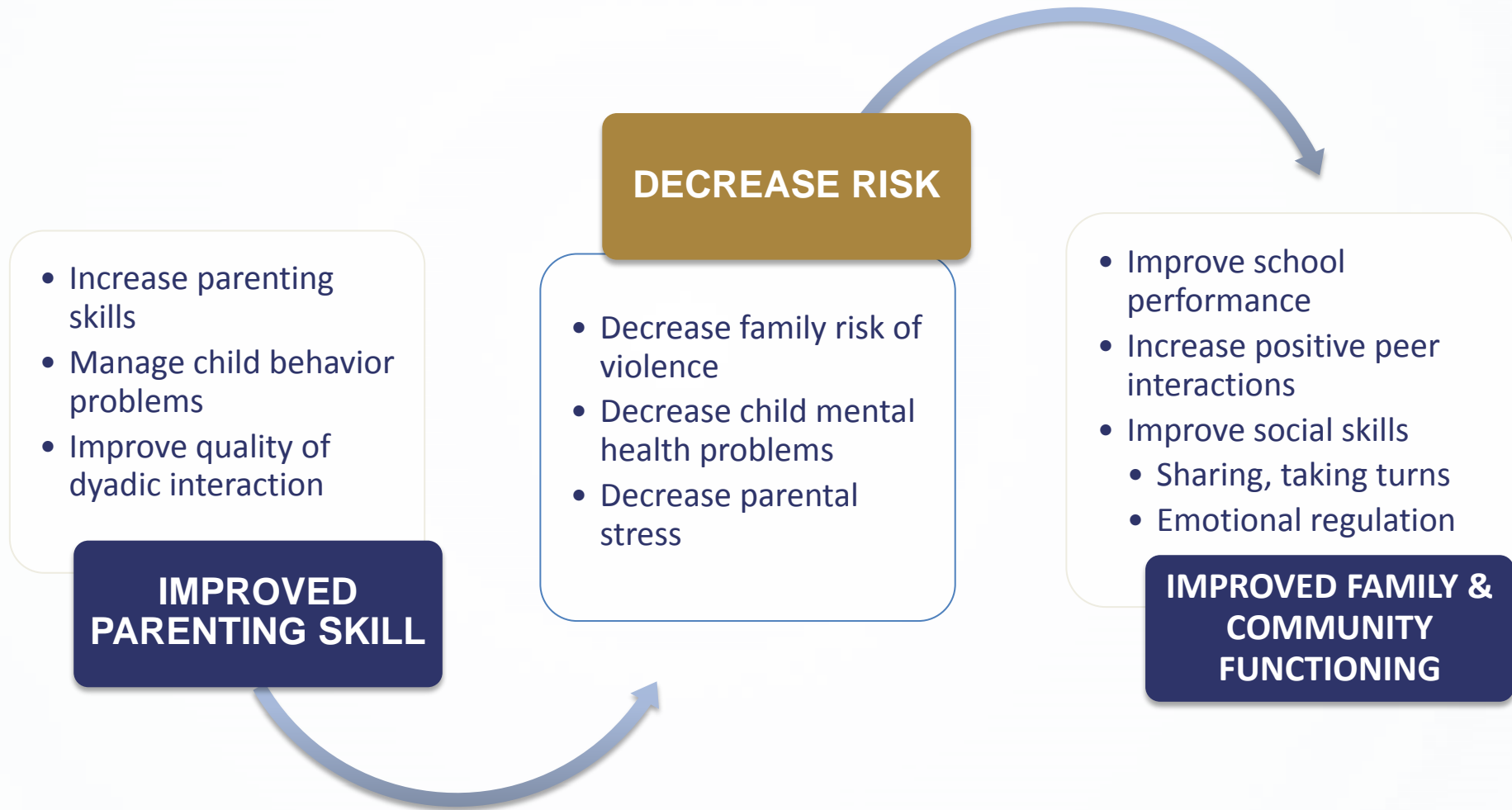
## Sample Questions

- How did your parents spend time with you when you were growing up? What made you feel special as a kid?
- Did you receive feedback when you did really good things? What about when you did things wrong or made mistakes?
- What happened when you got in trouble?
- What do you wish was different about your childhood?
- Do you think your childhood experiences influence your parenting?
- What things would you like pass down to [Child]?
- What things would you like to be different for [Child's] childhood?

**TALKING ABOUT TRAUMA**

**CDI TEACHING  
& COACHING**

# MECHANISMS OF CHANGE IN PCIT



# TRAUMA-INFORMED CDI

## PRIDE SKILLS

**PRAISE:** INCREASES VIEW OF SELF

**REFLECTION:** GIVES CHILD A VOICE

**IMITATION:** MODELS APPROPRIATE RELATIONSHIPS

**DESCRIPTION:** PRESENT, SAFE, PROTECTED. RIGHT THERE WITH HIM/HER

**ENJOY:** POSITIVE EMOTIONS MODELED

**ACTIVE IGNORE-** CAN BE DIFFICULT; REINFORCEMENT OF APPROPRIATE EXPRESSION OF DISTRESS

**Avoid Skills-** RELAX, PLAY, DECREASES DEMANDS

## TEACH SESSION/COACHING TARGETS

- TRAUMA INFORMED PSYCHOEDUCATION
- INCREASED POSITIVE INTERACTIONS
  - WAY PARENTS LISTEN, TALK TO, INTERACT WITH THEIR CHILD
  - SAFETY, TRAUMATIC EVENT
- CHILD EMOTIONAL REGULATION
  - TEACH COPING STRATEGIES (E.G., BREATHING, RELAXATION)
- DEVELOPMENTAL EXPECTATIONS
  - WHAT IS EXPECTED FOR A CHILD HIS/HER AGE
- CHILD LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT
  - REFLECTIONS
- REDUCED NEGATIVE ATTRIBUTIONS ABOUT THE CHILD
  - IMPROVES RELATIONSHIP
  - INCREASES SECURITY/STABILITY

# Trauma-informed CDI: Practical strategies

- Have caregiver model coping skill during session:
  - If something frustrating happens (block falls, train track doesn't fit, etc.)
  - After clean up transition
  - Other times??
- Instead of allowing avoidance, coach caregiver to provide validation and/or reassurance
  - If the child brings it up
- Use Coaching blurbs to reinforce trauma informed concepts
  - Examples on handout



## CHILD TRAUMA

### Trauma-Informed CDI Coaching

Think about how trauma can influence a child's view of themselves, others, and the world. Use what you know about PCIT skills to help the caregiver begin to give their child messages that can repair trauma.

#### FEAR/ANXIETY

When you are right here in the moment with him using the skills you tell him that you are a safe and available person.

When you are *consistent with special playtime* during which she was experiencing trauma, you can expect which is different than when she was experiencing trauma. This allows her to adjust her view of the world as safe.

Playing like this with [Child] allows her to experience the world as safe.

#### INAPPROPRIATE TOUCHING

Sexual abuse can make kids feel really unsafe and unsure. When you show affection and positive attention, she knows that someone loves and cares about her in an *appropriate* way.

Praising [Child] for *gentle safe hands* will help reduce the likelihood that they will inappropriately touch other kids.

#### TRAUMATIC PLAY

Go ahead and tell [Child] that you are not scared. He is talking about the scary car accident. Pretend you have an ambulance and tell him that you are *coming to take care of his scared feelings*. Say, "mommy will help kids when they are scared."

## CAREGIVER TRAUMA

### Trauma-Informed CDI Coaching Blurbs

Think about how trauma can influence a child's view of themselves, others, and the world. Use what you know about PCIT skills to help the caregiver begin to give their child messages that can repair trauma.

#### NEGATIVE, HARSH, or ABUSIVE CHILDHOOD

I know it can feel uncomfortable praising her since you didn't have that growing up. This is a chance to show [Child] *something different!*

[Child] feels so good when you praise him. You are *breaking the cycle of harsh criticism*. Children who are praised grow up feeling more *confident*.

You know what it is like to not have a voice when you were a child. I am so pleased you are giving [Child] the *opportunity to have a voice*.

#### AVOIDANCE

I know it can be uncomfortable when [Child] brings up the fighting. Your brain wants to shut down. But when you are responsive to him now, you tell him *it's okay to talk about hard things*, and model for him how to *cope*.

#### DISSOCIATION

I seem to have lost you for a second. Nod if you are here with me. That is common for trauma-exposed people. Take a deep breath and tell me what you see [Child] doing.

Good job for coming back to this *present moment* and being there for [Child], *even when it is hard*.

#### FEAR OR ANXIETY

Trauma can make us really keyed up and on edge. When you slow down the play, you model for [Child] that this is a safe place and he can *slow down too*.

You froze when he hit you. That is a *survival response*. You are okay. Remind him that you will leave the room if he hits you again.

#### RE-EXPERIENCING

It seems like [Child's] loud voice triggered you. I want you to tell yourself: "*I am safe right now.*"

It is okay to...

# TALKING ABOUT TRAUMA

- **ROLE PLAY**
- **VIDEO**
- **ANALYSIS**
- **DISCUSSION**



**TALKING ABOUT TRAUMA**

**PDI TEACHING  
& COACHING**

# TRAUMA-INFORMED PDI

## TEACHING/COACHING TARGETS

- TRAUMA-INFORMED PSYCHOEDUCATION
- HELP PARENTS TO INCREASE CONSISTENCY & USE LESS CORPORAL PUNISHMENT/PHYSICAL COERCION
  - INCREASE POSITIVE RESPONSE TO APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR
- CHANGES IN PARENTAL PERCEPTION OF CHILD
  - MORE POSITIVE ATTRIBUTIONS OF BEHAVIOR
  - LESS STRESS
- PREDICTABLE DISCIPLINE STRATEGIES FOR NONCOMPLIANCE/DEFIANCE
  - TIME OUT
- PARENTAL REINFORCEMENT FOR APPROPRIATE EXPRESSION OF DISTRESS
- MANAGEMENT OF DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIORS *MAY* BE TREATING TRAUMA SYMPTOMS

# TRAUMA-INFORMED PDI

## PRACTICAL STRATEGIES

- ANGER MANAGEMENT
- TAILORED TIME OUT
  - SWOOP & GO
  - LOSS OF PRIVILEGE
- ROLE PLAY, ROLE PLAY, ROLE PLAY
  - DISSOCIATION OR FREEZE RESPONSE
  - AVOIDANCE/PASSIVITY
- REMIND CHILD TO UTILIZE COPING SKILLS
- REPAIR WITH CDI AND OTHER POSITIVE INTERACTIONS



## **CAREGIVER TRAUMA** **Trauma-Informed PDI Coaching Blurbs**

Think about how trauma can influence a parent's view of themselves, others, and the world. Use what you know about PCIT skills to help the caregiver get the messages that consistent, predictable consequences can be effective and they can feel confident in their ability to parent despite their trauma.

### **NEGATIVE, HARSH, or ABUSIVE CHILDHOOD**

If you were yelled at as a child, it can be a hard habit to break with your child. Remember, you use a neutral tone of voice while giving commands, it tells [Child] that you are in control of your emotions and business and totally in control of your emotions.

You have shared with me that you didn't feel good about using spanking because it so often lead to physical abuse in your home. Remember, training. When you give her a time out, you are training her to be respectful.

### **AVOIDANCE**

It might seem easier now just to avoid the time out sequence but we want [child] to learn about following the rules when the consequences are small instead of much more dangerous.

### **DISSOCIATION**

You seem frozen right now because of [child's] yelling. That can be common for people who experience domestic violence like you. I am right here with you. Name 3 things in the room under your breath. Take a long deep breath then give him the warning.

## **CHILD TRAUMA** **Trauma-Informed PDI Coaching Blurbs**

Think about how trauma can influence a child's view of themselves, others, and the world. Use what you know about PCIT skills to help the caregiver begin to give their child messages that can repair trauma.

### **FEAR/ANXIETY**

It can feel hard to discipline [child] because she has been through so much. But kids want to know there parents can take care of them. So he knows that the world is a predictable place where when you break the rules, someone will help you learn to keep them. That is what you are doing with time out.

[Child] doesn't like it when you leave the room but this is different than her feeling traumatized. You will let her know with your words that when she is in the chair, you will return. It's a perfect balance of limit setting while still letting her know you are still close.

Great job staying calm through the sequence. The world can be a scary place for a kid who has experienced trauma. She is learning that your behavior is no longer scary even when she messes up.

### **AGGRESSION**

Giving her a time out for hitting using the same sequence helps her feel safe even when she is angry.

This will reduce the likelihood that his aggression will get worse as he gets older.

### **CONTROLLING BEHAVIOR**

Traumatized children often want to take control of something and sometimes this comes out when you want her to do something [comply, sit in the chair, etc.]. You will give him back control through play when he is ready to mind you.

### **AFFECTIONATE REPAIR**

Now that she has listened to the follow up command and she knows you are the boss, you can tell her, "I wonder if you want a hug now." Daddy will always love you even when you make the wrong choice. Time outs help you learn and grow.

Now you can show him your relationship is still the same by using all those PRIDE skills for CDI recovery.

You can address him flinching when you took him to time out now. Say something like, I use to hit to get you to listen but I know better ways now to help you learn. You are safe.

# TRAUMA-INFORMED PDI

- Should we leave a young child alone in a room if she has a history of being locked in closets or left alone for long periods?
- Can time-outs re-traumatize abused or neglected children?



- **ROLE PLAY**
- **VIDEO**
- **ANALYSIS**
- **DISCUSSION**

# WRAP UP &

# QUESTIONS

# Resources

**WEB COURSE:** [PCIT.UCDAVIS.EDU/PCIT-WEB-COURSE](http://PCIT.UCDAVIS.EDU/PCIT-WEB-COURSE)

- [WWW.PCIT.UCDAVIS.EDU](http://WWW.PCIT.UCDAVIS.EDU)
- [WWW.PCIT.ORG/](http://WWW.PCIT.ORG/)
- [WWW.PCIT.PHHP.UFL.EDU/](http://WWW.PCIT.PHHP.UFL.EDU/)
  
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