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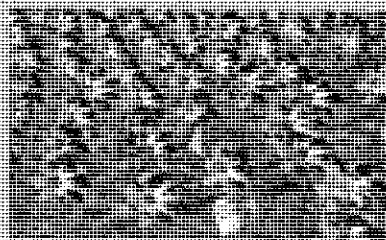
Child abuse and neglect is a serious matter and it happens all the time right here in our own community and it is the reason that foster parents are needed for children of all ages. Child and Family Charities continue to seek foster families who are able to provide a safe and loving home for sibling groups, minority children and teenagers. Children enter foster care for a variety of reasons including home life, domestic violence, parental substance abuse, physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, untreated mental illness, poor parenting skills and many other reasons. All types of child abuse and neglect leave lasting scars. Some of these scars might be physical, but emotional scarring has long lasting effects throughout life, damaging a child's sense of self, ability to have healthy relationships, and ability to function at home, at work and at school.

Tips for talking to an abused child:

- **Avoid denial and remain calm.** A common reaction to news of unpleasant and shocking or disgusting child abuse is denial. However, if you display denial to a child, or show shock or disgust at what they are saying, the child may be afraid to continue and will shut down. As hard as it may be, remain as calm and reassuring as you can.
- **Don't interrogate.** Let the child explain to you in his or her own words what happened, but don't interrogate the child or ask leading questions. This may confuse and fluster the child and make it harder for them to continue their story.
- **Reassure the child that they did nothing wrong.** It takes a lot for a child to come forward about abuse. Reassure him or her that you take what is said seriously, and that it is not the child's fault.
- **Safety comes first.** If you feel that your safety or the safety of the child would be threatened if you try to intervene, leave it to the professionals. You may be able to provide more support later after the initial professional intervention.

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CHILD ABUSE
PREVENTION MONTH



What is really going on? What Traumatized Children are really trying to say:

Have you heard the term **FIGHT** or **FLIGHT**? Trauma programs the brain (and body) to react with fear to any perceived danger, regardless of whether or not there is a real threat. Traumatized children cannot control this automatic response - when they feel threatened they are faced with three choices:

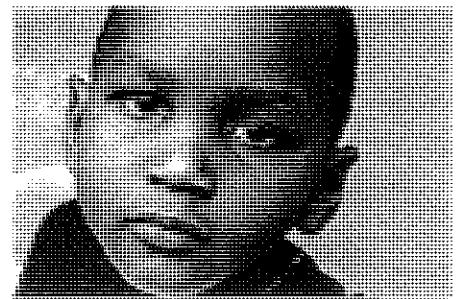
- Flight—avoidance is a common response from children who can't deal with stress
- Fight—tantrums, anger, aggressive behavior are spontaneous reactions to threats
- Freeze—many children simply shut down to protect themselves ("playing dead")

Some children explode if they are simply told "no" or if anything goes wrong. However underlying their anger is frustration or fear - they do not know how else to respond. Parents who can remain calm and reassuring in these situations will have the best chance of eventually altering the child's response (teaching moments should occur after the child has his emotions under control).

Children in foster care have experienced many types of trauma. Some of the more common types of trauma experienced include prenatal drug exposure, lack of attachment due to early neglect, chronic physical and emotional neglect, physical, mental and sexual abuse, separation and loss, multiple moves and caregivers. These traumas have typically occurred during early childhood, a critical time for physical, neurological, cognitive and emotional development. Ninety percent of a child's brain development occurs in the first four years of life. Therefore the impact of trauma during this critical period of development is much more profound than if it occurred in adulthood. Their minds and bodies have been programmed to react defensively to any stimulus in order to insure survival. They are too busy being hyper-vigilant to focus on anything else, including a parent's directions or schoolwork. They have difficulty identifying their own emotions or regulating their behavior. Trauma can also interfere with their ability to attach - at least until they can learn to trust an adult. These children often have significant developmental delays. All of these factors result in emotional and behavioral issues that parents mistakenly attribute to the child just wanting their own way instead of seeing that they lack the skills to handle situations.

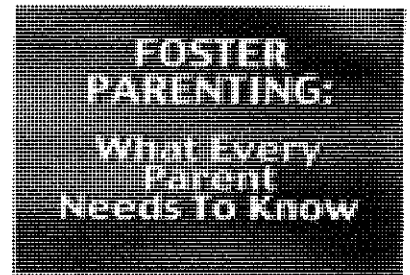


Trauma



DISCIPLINE-A DIFFERENT APPROACH FOR CHILDREN IN CARE

Working with traumatized children, which includes all children who come into care, requires a unique approach to parenting. Traditional methods of discipline simply don't work very well with children who are in "survival mode". Their fear and anxiety causes them to overreact constantly - which in turn causes the parents to over-respond. This only results in escalating situations that further distress both the parent and the child. The adult needs to stand back and remain calm. Instead of focusing on controlling behavior, parents need to focus on the child's emotional needs that are the root cause of the behavior.



DISCIPLINE OFTEN NOT EFFECTIVE WITH THESE CHILDREN:

- Traditional (e.g. spanking, grounding, losing privileges, etc.) based on connection with parents (foundation from infancy), usually only effective if child is conforming, not if child is struggling with control issues due to trauma and anxiety
- Talking, consequences, choices, rewards, time outs, etc. - these methods assume child is conscious of his/her motivation and has the ability to regulate his/her actions (might work with some children for some behaviors)
- Yelling, nagging, ignoring are not really discipline
- Boot camp tactics

EFFECTIVE DISCIPLINE METHODS:

#1: Help the child to feel safe: Physically-keep close, provide structure, routine, predictable (no surprises) emotionally-love, acceptance, realistic expectations, patience, empathy

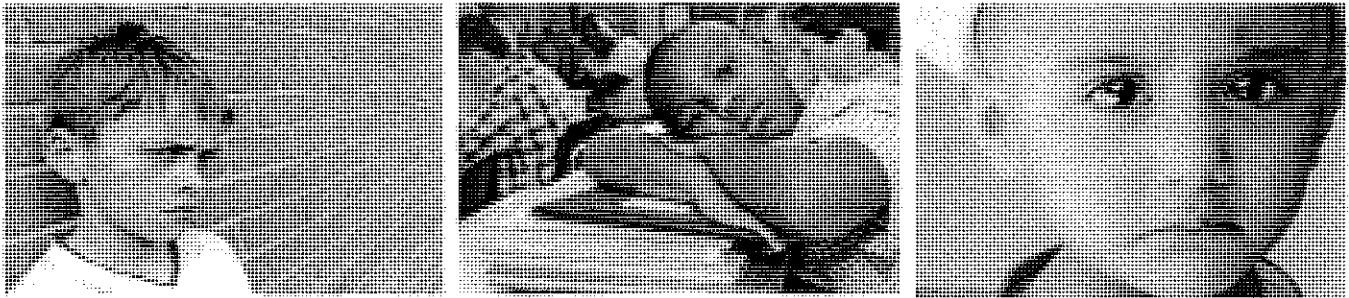
#2: Create a therapeutic environment: Reduce stimuli (TV, computers, rough-housing, going to public places, etc.) listen to the child, encourage open communication, show lots of affection *use rhythmic movements dancing, drumming, etc.*, *soft music, massages*

#3: Use prevention whenever possible (*be proactive*): containment-keep in same room, hold hands in public if necessary use redirection like you would if younger (often the child's emotional age) when child appears to be on the verge of losing control, keep close to you separate children before they fight, have zero tolerance for teasing, hitting reduce stress, don't overload, watch out for stress reactions remember lying, stealing, masturbating occur at times of high stress help child identify why he is acting out (stress, fear, frustration, etc.) explain trauma reactions to child, teach relaxation techniques.

#4: Use intervention when necessary remember that discipline means "to teach", punishment only teaches fear while under stress, consequences can't teach a child (they are "numb" to it) they don't know how to regulate themselves so they need repeated reminders fear results in need to soothe=stealing, masturbating (identify feelings and give them a substitute-e.g. rocking them, massage, music, dancing) fear leads to lying-ignore the lie but not the liar (talk to the child afterwards) Reflect, Relate and Regulate- Stop yourself. Deep breathes (or count). Ask yourself "how am I feeling" (upset, angry, sad, frightened)? Express your feelings to the child. Ask child how he might be feeling. "Tell me more". Communicating feelings will help everyone to control their behavior.

...Continued from page 2 (What Traumatized Children are really trying to say)

How individual children respond to trauma depends on a number of factors, including genetic predisposition, natural resiliency, developmental phase, severity of the trauma, prior history of trauma and the amount of social support available. Prolonged trauma can lead to the behaviors cited below. Parents must understand that these reactions are involuntary and unconscious on the part of the children. They are not aware of why they are doing them. They are not simply testing, manipulating or trying to "push someone's buttons". They are in "survival mode", an instinctive reaction to perceived threats. Parents need to understand this and remain calm so that they can assist the child to develop flexibility, frustration tolerance and problem solving skills. They also need to resist the tendency to take the children's words and actions personally. This only serves to drive a wedge between the parent and child. It is helpful to remember the emotions and limited coping skills underlying behaviors:



ANGER- often a cover for more painful emotions such as fear or sadness.

AGGRESSION- child has poor impulse control, sees others' actions as threats.

DESTRUCTIVE- frustrated, tense, confused, angry, can't express feelings.

HYPERACTIVE- child typically stressed out, tense, anxious, over-vigilant.

DISOBEYS- inattentive, avoidant, feeling threatened, sometimes trying to control.

WHINY- anxious, insecure, sad, helpless, desperately needs attention.

TUNES OUT- Low coping skills, feels overwhelmed, doesn't understand what to do.

INATTENTIVE- impulsive, poor memory, poor judgment, sensory overload.

INTROVERTED- poor social skills, lack of self-esteem, easily over stimulated.

WETTING/DEFECATING- anxiety, fear of being in trouble, disconnected to body.

LYING- fearful of rejection, being in trouble, parents being angry or disappointed.

STEALING- compulsive act or to help soothe self.

MASTURBATION- self-soothing, especially when anxious.


Become a Foster Parent

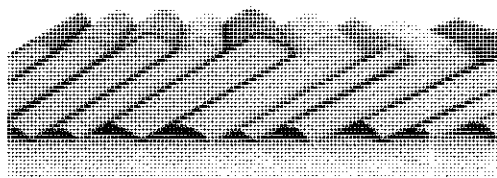
New Foster Parent Orientation

Do you know someone who is interested in becoming a foster parent? Child and Family Charities offers orientation meetings twice per month for individuals and/or families who are interested in becoming licensed. All orientation meetings are held at our main office: 4287 Five Oaks Drive Lansing, MI 48911 and they are FREE!!!

DATE	TIME
Thursday March 20	6:00pm to 8:00pm
Tuesday May 6	10:00am to 12:00pm
Thursday May 22	6:00pm to 8:00pm

Not only can you invite your friends and family to a new foster parent orientation to learn about foster care and adoption, if the individual or family you refer becomes licensed, you can receive \$300 as part of Child and Family Charities Referral Program!!!

**DID YOU
KNOW** 



Looking for information related to children, foster care, trauma or other related topics? Check out these resources and talk to your licensing worker about obtaining training credit for doing so!

Recommended Reading List

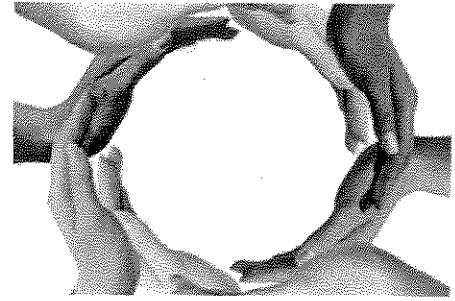
- Claudia Jewett Jarratt, MSW, "Helping Children Cope with Separation and Loss"
- Vera Fahlberg, M.D., "A Child's Journey through Placement"
- Deborah D. Gray, MSW, "Nurturing Adoptions: Creating Resilience after Neglect and Trauma"
- Ross W. Greene, Ph.D., "The Explosive Child"
- Judith Herman, M.D., "Trauma and Recovery"
- Sally G. Hoyle, Ph.D., "The Sexualized Child in Foster Care"
- Karyn Purvis and David Cross, "The Connected Child"
- William Sears, M.D. and Lynda Thompson, Ph.D., "The A.D.D. Book"
- Lenore Terr, M.D., "Too Scared Too Cry": Psychic Trauma in Childhood"

Fostering Support!

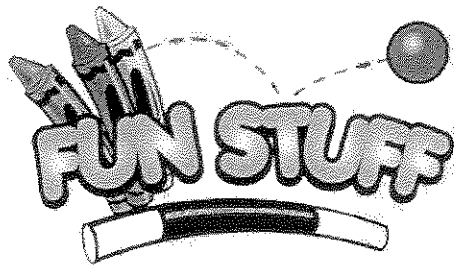
Fostering Support is a **SUPPORT GROUP** of Child and Family Charities foster and adoptive parents that offers parents a safe place to exchange stories and ideas as well as an opportunity to spend quality time with others who understand what it's like to be a foster parent.

The group meets the first Thursday of each month beginning at 6:00pm.

There will be door prizes and training credit given for your attendance!



Please RSVP to
Sue@childandfamily.org
Or call 517-882-4000 ext) 141



The Breslin Takeover III Carnival and Resource Fair (Spring Carnival)

Event includes the Animal Oasis petting zoo, karaoke, bounce houses, MSU bug house, clowns, lazer tag, dunk tank and MUCH MORE! Admission is \$2/Adults and \$1/child under 12 years. The event takes place on SATURDAY, April 19, 2014 from 1-5pm.



Flashlight Easter Egg Hunt

Takes place on April 17th at Gier Park 2809 N. East St. starting at 8:30pm.

The cost is \$5/child.



Refer an individual or family to become a licensed foster family home. Once they become licensed, you will earn **\$300** for making the referral!!!

Our MISSION...

To strengthen and support children, families, and individuals as they evolve and grow in a changing community.

Our VISION...

To be a leader in human services, recognized for excellence in practice, collaboration, and advocacy on behalf of vulnerable populations.

Our VALUES...

Sound ethics and best practices must guide all agency decisions, policies, and activities in recognition of our leadership role.

Child and Family Charities recruits families and homes willing to provide safe, nurturing, family like settings to children between the ages of 0- 17, of all races, ethnic backgrounds, and those with specific characteristics, including but not limited to victims of sexual abuse, physical abuse/neglect, HIV positive, medically fragile and children who have emotional/mental health needs. Child and Family Charities places high priority on recruiting families willing to accept children who are of Minority descent, sibling groups and children over the age of 10.