

Impact of Trauma and Loss on Children

Description

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<https://sparksfostering.org/wp-content/uploads/speaker/post-1111.mp3?cb=1704316342.mp3>

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Children who require foster care come from a range of different backgrounds and experiences. Some children (who shouldn't remain in foster care for a long time) haven't experienced abuse and are placed into foster care because concerns were raised, leading to a social work assessment. However, for the most part, children who require foster care have suffered abuse. Furthermore, all of the children in foster care have (at some point) been moved from a familiar environment to live with people who are either complete strangers or people who've they've only met a few times.

Some children experience the move as a positive move, some aren't happy with the move, but come to settle very quickly, and some children struggle with the move (and/or with their previous experiences) for a long time.

It isn't sufficient to know what a child has suffered in order to determine how the child has dealt with their experiences and/or how they will settle into the fostering home. Every child (like every adult) responds to trauma and changing circumstances in different ways. It is a significant part of the role of the children's social worker, the foster carer, the foster carer's social worker, and of the rest of the team around the child, to determine what the child's needs, wishes and feelings are.

Foster carers sometimes struggle to understand or accept that some children continue to love and miss family members who have abused them: In situations like this, the advice and support of the 'team around the child' is vital in helping the child to learn about healthy relationships and to move on to develop new healthy enduring relationships. Sparks Fostering provides support and training to foster carers so they may understand the child/ren better and take positive steps to help the child to heal.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES (OPTIONAL)

Adverse childhood experiences

[ACEs – Adverse Childhood Experiences Special Interest Group](#). Established by 'The Association of Child and Adolescent Mental Health' – Recordings provided for 'stress and mental health presentations

in secondary school-aged young people'; 'Mentalisation – MBT-F (Based treatment for families); 'Communication and assessment apps for use with children and young people'; and 'Working with unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people'.

Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) are potentially traumatic childhood events that occur in childhood (0 to 17 years old). ACEs are linked to chronic health problems, mental illness, and substance use problems in adolescence and adulthood. ACEs can also impact negatively on education, job opportunities, and earning potential. The Centers for Disease Control has produced a range of resources on the topic of ['adverse childhood experiences \(ACEs\)'](#).

[Adverse childhood experiences: What we know, what we don't know, and what should happen next.](#) A comprehensive document by the Early Intervention Foundation.

[Adverse Childhood Experiences.](#) 5 and half minute video by Dr. Gabor Mate.

[The adverse childhood experiences recovery workbook: Heal the hidden wounds from childhood affecting your adult mental and physical health.](#) Foster carers and social workers may find this workbook useful to reflect on their own experiences and to learn more about ACEs so you're better able to support the residents in our care.

[Mindful emotion coaching \(recording\).](#) Created by 'The Association for Child and Adolescent Mental Health' Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) Special Interest Group.

Attachment disorders

Attachment disorder is a broad term used to describe a series of emotional and behavioural problems that can develop in young children who struggle to form expected bonds with primary caregivers, usually their parents.

Some of the signs and symptoms that a child with attachment disorder may demonstrate include: Minimal comfort seeking when distressed; difficulty expressing anger; lack of eye contact; seeks affection from strangers; disorganised attachment (sometimes clingy, sometimes distant); lack of affection towards caregivers; or lack of response to affection when offered.

The Priory Group website provides information on a range of topics linked to emotional and mental health, including [attachment disorders](#).

PACE

PACE stands for 'playfulness, acceptance, curiosity, empathy'. The aim of the model is to guide adults to build safe, trusting and meaningful relationships with children and young people who have experienced trauma. The approach focuses on building trusting relationships, emotional connections, containment of emotions and a sense of security. For further information see [PACE: A trauma-informed approach to supporting children and young people](#) (produced by the Mental Health Foundation and others).

Trauma

[Childhood trauma and the brain](#). 5 minute video by the UK Trauma Council (and Anna Freud)

[CBT toolbox for children and adolescents](#): Over 200 worksheets and exercises for trauma, ADHD, autism, anxiety, depression and conduct disorders.

[Helping a child create coherent memories](#). 5 minute video by the UK Trauma Council (and Anna Freud)

[In conflict: child triangulation](#). 12 minute video by Anna Freud about how children can become involved in parent/carer conflict.

[Overcoming a difficult past: 4 key strengths](#). An article in Psychology Today, summarising the lessons of research with adults who had experienced trauma in childhood (some of whom had spent time in foster care).

[Tackling adverse childhood experiences \(ACEs\): State Of The Art and Options for Action](#). A useful summary of ACEs by The World Health Organisation and others.

[The 7 impacts of trauma](#). 7 minute video by Dr. Gabor Mate.

[The 7 surprising ways to heal trauma without medication](#). 1 and half hour YouTube video by Dr Ragan Chatterjee with Dr. Bessel Van Der Kolk – author of ‘The Body Keeps The Score’.

[The impact of parental conflict on children](#). 7 min video by Anna Freud.

[The trauma of abandonment](#). 11 minute video by Dr. Gabor Mate.

[Trauma and insecure attachment behaviour 7 page resource](#). Free resource from ‘Teaching Positive Connections’.

[Traumatic bereavement: Choosing activities to support children and young people therapeutically](#). 7 min video by Anna Freud.

Misc

[Goole woman who forced daughter to use wheelchair in benefit scam jailed](#). An article about a girl who was abused by her mother and went on to thrive in a fostering home.

[Memories of Fear](#) by Bruce Perry

[Parenting Matters](#) is based on the latest research and is an interactive, fun, and highly effective online parenting course and community. Suitable for carers of children ages 2 to 10.

[Social relationships are key to well-being](#). 8 minute video by the UK Trauma Council (and Anna Freud)

[Somatic therapy coping skill cards: Vagus nerve coping cards for anxiety and trauma](#)

[Supporting a child in care through Christmas](#). By ‘Teaching Positive Connections’

[The importance of staying connected to a child's experience.](#) UK Trauma Council (Anna Freud). 4 minute video.

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