

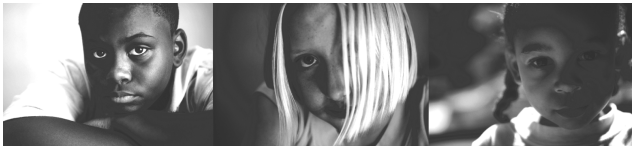
Healing a Wound: a Trauma Analogy

“It is very hard to talk about painful things, and often children and parents try to avoid doing this. In fact, they say things like, *let sleeping dogs lie*, and wonder if it is a good thing to bring back memories of sad things. We tell kids and parents that if they had been able to put those memories behind them, children would not be having any problems.

It's like when you fall off a bicycle and skin your knee on the sidewalk, and all the germs get into the wound. You have two choices about what to do with that wound. You can leave it alone, not wash it off or put any medicine on it, and hope it gets better all by itself. Sometimes that works fine. But other times, if you do that it will get infected. Infections don't usually go away by leaving them alone; they get worse and worse.

Your other choice is to wash the wound out real carefully, getting all the dirt and germs out of there. That stings, it hurts at first, but then the pain goes away, and it doesn't get infected, and can heal quickly... Talking about the traumatic situation or loss is like cleaning a wound. It might be a little painful at first, but it hurts less and less as you go on, and then the wound can heal.”

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Traumatic Bereavement in Children Treatment Manual, Center for Traumatic Stress in Children and Adolescents, Department of Psychiatry Allegheny General Hospital, Pittsburgh, PA



Parent Resources

YWCA Domestic Violence Hotline:
Richmond - (804)643-0888

Greater Richmond SCAN:
The SCAN Child Advocacy center provides services for children who have experienced sexual assault. (804)643-7226

Alcoholics Anonymous:
Richmond - (804)355-1212

Al-Anon:
Richmond - (804)353-4855

Parent Trauma Resource Center:
www.tlcinstitute.org/PTRC.html

Trauma Response is a service of:

ChildSavers

Helping Greater Richmond's Children Since 1924

www.childsavers.org

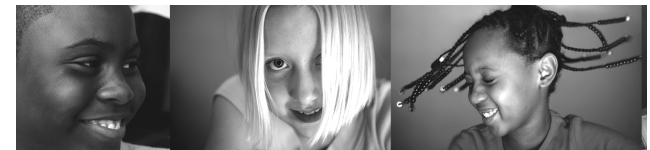
200 North 22nd Street
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Hope after Trauma Information for Parents



 **ChildSavers**
Trauma Response



www.childsavers.org



(804) 644-9590

What is Trauma Response?

Trauma Response is the City of Richmond's only program devoted to immediate response and trauma counseling services for children who have experienced trauma. The majority of children who participate in Trauma Response have witnessed or experienced a violent event. Our clinicians are often contacted by the Richmond Police Department, Richmond Ambulance Authority, schools and other community agencies to provide immediate assistance. Our services are free of charge to any child or adolescent between the ages of 2-17 who has experienced a recent traumatic event.

What is trauma?

A trauma is a painful emotional experience caused by an event or events that challenge a person's sense of safety. These events are often sudden or unexpected. Children and adolescents who witness or experience violent situations are likely to have traumatic reactions. While such events are often not preventable, traumatic reactions can be reduced through early intervention and counseling.

Like adults, children are affected by traumatic events. Although they may not express their feelings similarly to adults, it is important to recognize the impact the event can have on children's emotional and physical well being and behavior. A list of symptoms or reactions to trauma can be found on the right side of this page.

How can Trauma Response help my child or teenager?

24/7 Immediate Response

When a Trauma Response clinician is contacted by Police, Ambulance, or other professionals they arrive at the traumatic event to assist children and families. They assess the emotional and physical safety from the perspective of the child. Clinicians attend to the emotional needs of children at the scene, often engaging them in symptom soothing activities.

24 Hour Follow-Up

The clinician who responds to the traumatic event schedules a time for follow-up with the family. Typically 24 hours after the event, the clinician will visit the family to reassess the child's reaction to the event, educate parents about symptoms of trauma, and schedule a time to begin counseling services. In some cases, referrals are made weeks or months after the traumatic event. Clinicians will contact families for follow-up within 24 hours in these cases as well.

Trauma Counseling Services

Children are engaged in counseling services over the course of 10-12 sessions. All services are free of charge regardless of ability to pay. Ongoing counseling services are provided by our Guidance Clinic when needed.

What are the symptoms of trauma?

Children who have experienced trauma may:

- Withdraw from others
- Avoid fun activities or activities that remind them of the trauma
- Have difficulty falling or staying asleep
- Be unable to concentrate
- Startle more easily
- Have dreams about the trauma or people involved in the traumatic event
- Be irritable or angry
- Experience headaches, stomach aches or unusual sweating
- Begin acting younger than their age (for example, they may return to behaviors such as sucking their thumb, bedwetting or asking to sleep in their parents' bed)
- Seem numb to what is happening around them

For more parent resources to help your child, visit our website at www.childsavers.org.