



# Parenting Through Trauma



# What is trauma?

A deeply **distressing** or **disturbing** experience; **emotional shock** following a stressful event or a **physical injury**, which may be associated with physical shock and sometimes leads to long-term neurosis; physical injury.

Yes, stubbing one's toes is an example of trauma. Other examples of trauma that we may not be mindful of are: auto accidents, severe weather, and violence.






Trauma can go  
unrecognized or  
addressed for years.





Trauma often results  
in negative  
behaviors in kids and  
adults.





Many individuals experience trauma and may not recall the specifics, especially if it happened when they were a young child. But just because someone does not recall it, it does not mean that it did not happen.





# ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES – ACES

What are Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)?  
ACEs are potentially traumatic events that occur in a child's life:



Physical Abuse



Emotional Abuse



Sexual Abuse



Domestic Violence



Parental Substance Abuse



Mental Illness



Suicide or Death



Crime or Imprisoned Family

Causing lifelong medical, mental & social suffering



Trauma effects the whole person, mentally, physically, and socially.



BUT, negative impacts of trauma do not have to continue throughout an individual's whole life. A child can be positively impacted by consistent, caring relationships from adults.



What are alternative ways to  
discipline my child?





# Let's start with 2 definitions

Punishment

VS

Discipline



# Punishment



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Punishment focuses on compliance and can involve spanking, hitting, shame and isolation. Punishment can erode the parent-child relationship, causing there to be tension in the relationship.

Often times, punishment teaches little or nothing, especially if the consequence does not fit the behavior.

-Adapted from PAXIS Institute



# Discipline



Discipline focuses on expectations and can include catching kids behaving appropriately, modeling expected behavior, and offering encouragement.

Discipline improves the child's self-control, confidence, and responsibility. Discipline teaches what is okay and what is not okay.

-Adapted from PAXIS Institute



What behaviors should I demonstrate for my child?



When angry (because everyone becomes angry), practice taking deep breaths or other forms of positive self-care such as going for a walk.



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breathe  
everything will be  
o k a y

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# Timeout



Take a 5-10 minute break away from your child to de-escalate the situation.

After calming down, talk with your child about the expectations that were not met.



# APOLOGIZE



Apologizing is not just for children. Admitting when we as the adult have done something wrong teaches children that mistakes happen.

When we hurt a child (physically or emotionally) we as the adult have an opportunity to mend the relationship with an apology, while also teaching a valuable lesson.



Parenting through trauma is  
recognizing that there is  
trauma.



Creating nurturing environments that are not triggering can help a child's behavior, ultimately helping the adults in their lives.



# Nurturing Environment vs. Non-Nurturing Environment



Talking to a child vs. yelling at a child



Setting clear expectations vs. having a child guess what the expectations are.





Talking with children about what they are feeling in their body when they are scared, sad, angry, or any emotion, is a great way to help children communicate with you when there is something wrong.

Some children may experience stomachaches when they are scared.

Some children may bite on things when they are nervous or anxious.

A child may throw things when they are mad.





If you are interested in a workshop that will help parents and caregivers with children who have experienced trauma, sign up for PAX Tools!

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