

How Do You Care for a Wild Child

Presenter

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Things I have learned along the way;

- ❖ Children are **resilient** and **can heal** with flexible, knowledgeable intervention.
- ❖ Foster/adoptive parents are often unprepared for the damage that is uncovered.
- ❖ **Families hold onto HOPE** that the child can heal...it is the promise that things can be better. It is the promise that things can be better. It is what sustains us thru the bumpy treatment road that plays out over time. Without HOPE there are disrupted placements and adoption set asides.
- ❖ **HOPE** is found thru coordinated expert intervention and support from our families, friends and professionals.
- ❖ **HOPE** is found by learning “**I am teachable**” and I can be powerful in the life of my child.
- ❖ **This is a journey you cannot take by yourself!**
- ❖ A truly valuable team member has the ability to know when a consult or referral is in the best interest of the child.
- ❖ **Trauma informed Care** is a very specific treatment that requires specialized training and knowledge.
- ❖ Experts must understand—
 - Normal child development
 - Trauma is pervasive throughout all aspects of the child’s intellectual, emotional, interpersonal and physical systems.
 - Effective plans of treatment must include **the family and other treating professionals.**
 - Some things must be believed to be seen. If professionals are to effectively intervene with a child of trauma, they must believe **people can change, heal and be resilient.**

- ❖ **To form a “Healing Team” you must have a team leader.**
- ❖ **I am teachable.** With expert support motivated parents can learn to mediate in the lives of their traumatized children.
- ❖ You need to know the experts and what skills they bring to the plan. Some families and friends can give very bad advice.
- ❖ With expert guidance parents can learn to recognize and intervene during **“teachable moments”**.
- ❖ **There are no quick fixes.**
- ❖ What you see now in the child is not what has to define them in the future. **Children are truly plastic.**
- ❖ **When we know better, we do better.**
- ❖ To forward we may have to safely re-visit the past.
- ❖ Understand there is **a myth**, widely accepted, that suggests that the child could do better if he tried harder.
- ❖ We can use medical issues and treatments as attachment exercises.
- ❖ You can make a mistake without being one!
- ❖ Asking a child why they did something is **not helpful. Asking what solutions, they have is helpful.**
- ❖ With knowledgeable intervention, children can learn to be powerful in their own lives.
- ❖ **The damage model focuses on the injury and leaves people feeling “unable” and damaged. The Challenge model says – “Are you a disabled kid or a kid who happens to have a disability or past trauma? Don’t choose to be a victim!**
- ❖ **We ask these children to be resilient, change, be flexible, be open to new ideas and hang in there for the long haul. THEN why don’t we ask it of ourselves?**