CHRISTIAN FAMILY SOLUTIONS

Counseling Care & Services

CHILDREN AND TRAUMA:

RESPONDING WITH LOVE AND EFFECTIVE TREATMENT

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STRONG

CHILD & ADOLESCENT DAY TREATMENT

ARMOR

DAY TREATMENT
FOR TEENS

About Christian Family Solutions (CFS)

- Social services agency since 1965
- We want to make excellent, evidence-based mental health care accessible to anyone
- Special compassion for those who are underserved or left behind

“As we have opportunity, let us do good to all people…”

- Galatians 6:10

Think about what our children have been through, are going through:

- **Isolation**
- **Challenges in the home environment**
  - *Parents dealing with their own stress*
  - *Parents asked to do things they aren't trained to do; everyone feels like they are failing*
- **Constant uncertain transitions:**
  - *In-person to virtual, virtual to in-person*
  - *Summer transition*
  - *What will fall 2021 look like, etc.*

“This period, like a war, will end. And like a war, its effects will linger, too.”

“Children of Quarantine:
What does a year of isolation and anxiety do to the developing brain?”

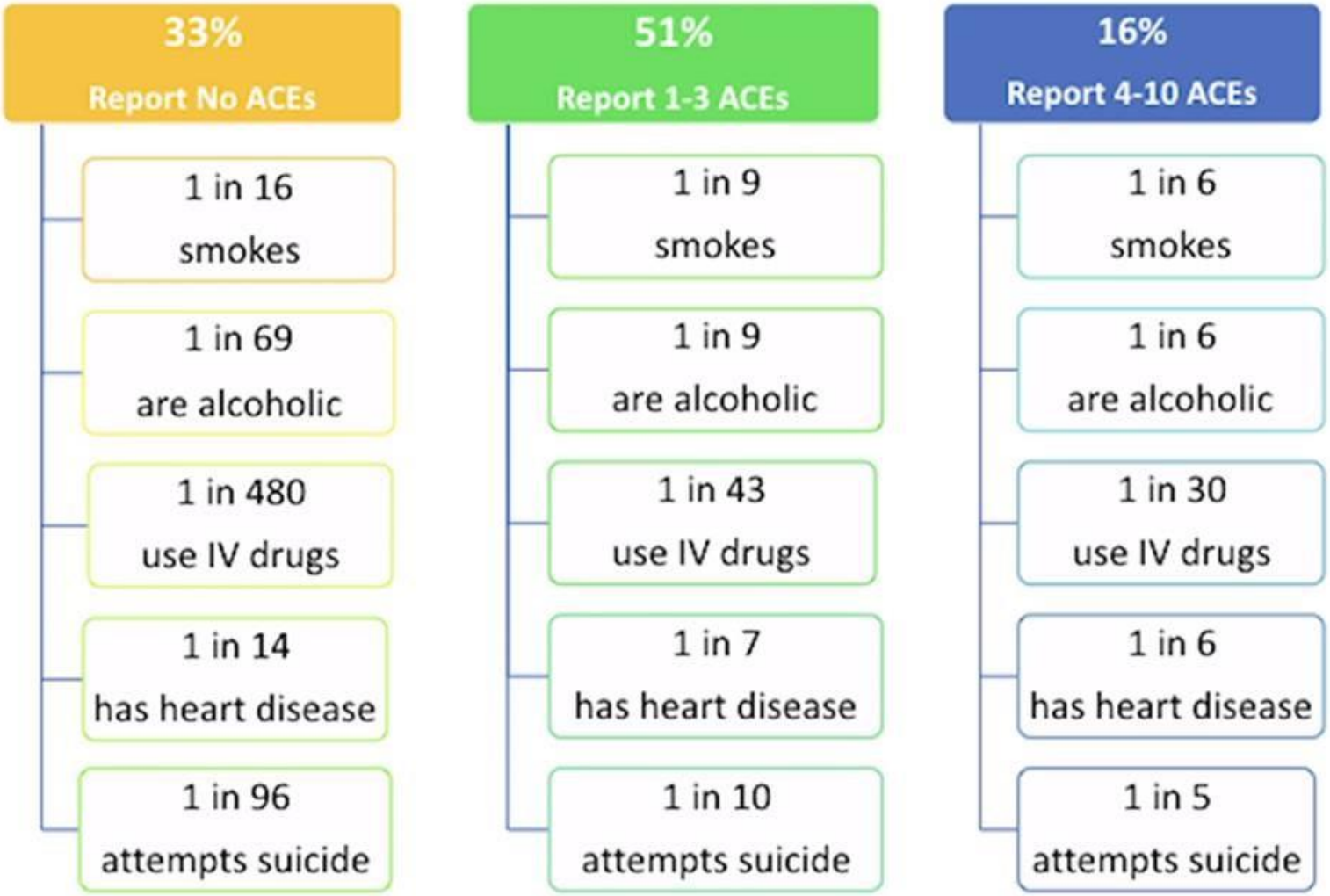
Lisa Miller, *New York Magazine*, November 23, 2020

Photo credit:
Imperial War Museum, United Kingdom

The lingering effects

Isolation	"Social isolation and loneliness increased the risk of depression up to 9 years later." Loades ME, Chatburn E, Higson-Sweeney N, et al. Rapid Systematic Review: The Impact of Social Isolation and Loneliness on the Mental Health of Children and Adolescents in the Context of COVID-19
Detachment	"Physical and emotional detachment is the equivalent of trauma for a child." (Trust-based Relational Intervention Model)
Loss of social and emotional skills	1143 parents of children aged 3 to 18 in Italy and Spain: 85.7% of parents reported changes in their children's emotions and behaviors during the quarantine: • difficulty concentrating (76.6%) • boredom (52%) • irritability (39%) • restlessness (38.8%) • nervousness (38%) • loneliness (31.3%) • uneasiness (30.4%) • worries (30.1%) Orgilés M, Morales A, Delvecchio E, et al. Immediate psychological effects of the COVID-19 quarantine in youth from Italy and Spain.
Increased anxiety, depression	Youth ages 11-17 report the highest rates of anxiety, depression, and suicidal ideation of any age group. Mental Health America self-screening results in 2020

The lingering effects



ACEs research:
COVID could be an additional ACE.

"About half of kids will do just fine. Another 20 percent will have high symptoms of distress that recede over time.

But in 15 to 30 percent of kids, those symptoms will persist.

The scale of the pandemic means that as many as 22 million could bear scars."

- Harvard research on the COVID-19 pandemic

Photo credit:
Imperial War Museum,
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Evidence-based treatment for trauma

How we approach this at CFS

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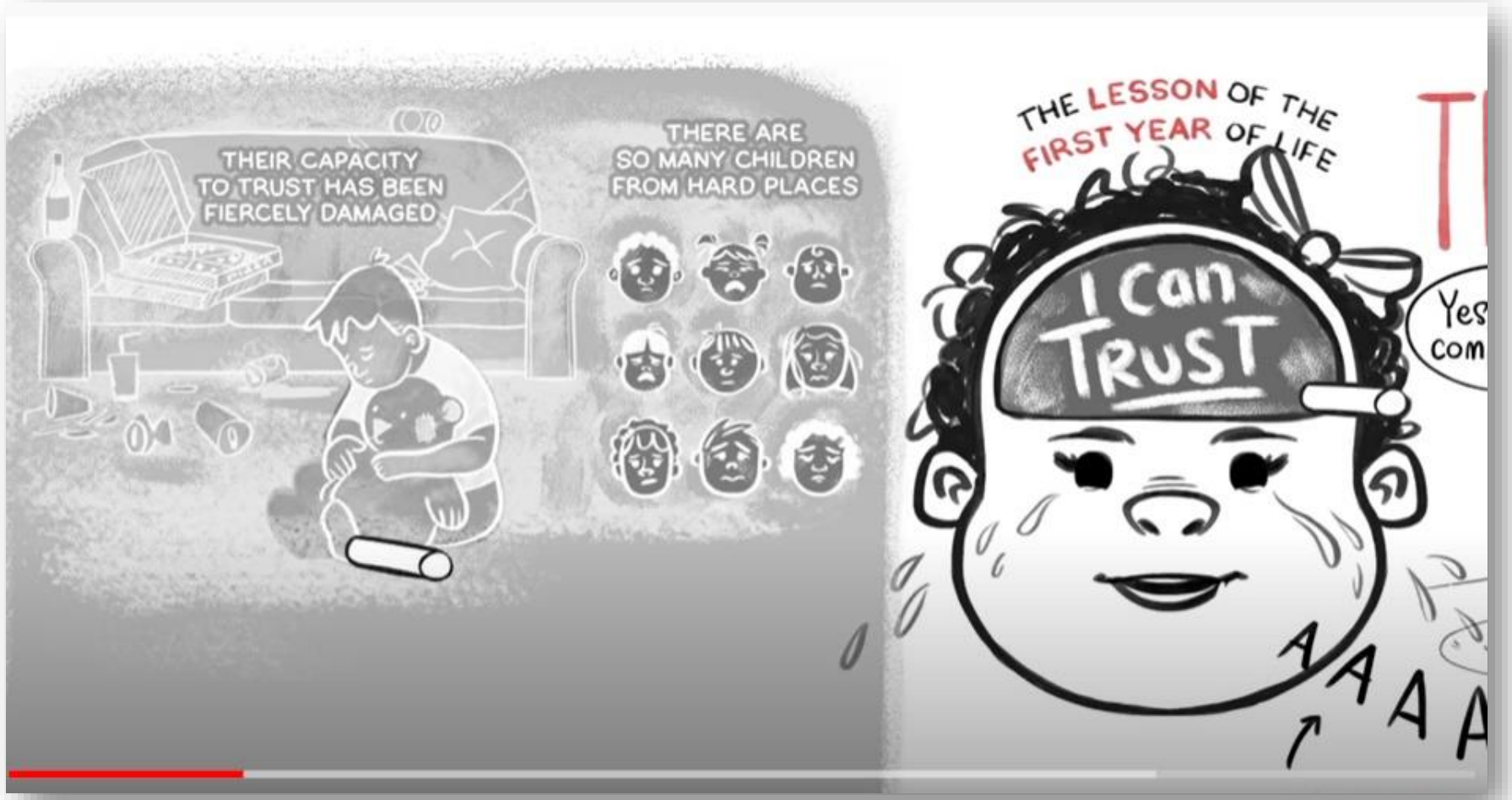
Trust Based Relational Intervention (TBRI)



3-minute video: https://youtu.be/FWScSJKjn1A

TBRI PRINCIPLES

CONNECTING

Create connections that disarm fear, gain trust, and enhance learning

EMPOWERING

Strengthen learning and regulation by meeting a child's physical and environmental needs

CORRECTING

Shape beliefs and behaviors effectively, so children feel safe, protected and empowered

TBRI Connecting

“Build trusting relationships that help children and youth feel valued, cared for, safe and connected. Disarming fear and building trust greatly increase the capacity for connection, growth, and learning.”

Self-Awareness Strategies

- *Identify the thoughts, beliefs, and behaviors YOU bring to the relationship*
- *Identify personal triggers*
- *Practice regulating yourself during times of stress*
  - Pray
  - Take deeps breaths
  - Go for a walk
  - Remind yourself, *it is my job to help this child regulate*
- *Stay calm and emotionally present during the child/teen’s distress*

TBRI Connecting

Attunement Strategies

- *Be flexible in responding – adjust based on the child's needs*
- *Be aware of the child's perception of YOUR voice/presence/interactions*
- *See the need, meet the need*

Engagement Strategies

- *Eye contact*
- *Match the child's body position, posture, voice*
- *Incorporate health touch*
- *Interact playfully*

TBRI Empowering

“To prepare bodies and brains for success by meeting environmental and physical needs of children and youth.”

Physiological Strategies

- *Physical needs met?*
- *Sleep, hydration, blood sugar*
- *Nutritional needs?*
- *Sensory needs*
- *Teach regulation strategies by modeling and practicing regulation skills in physical and nurturing activities (balloon game)*

TBRI Empowering

Ecological Strategies

- *How is the environment helping the youth?*
- *Use daily rituals that are predictable*
- *Foster and model predictability in transitions*
- *Awareness about levels of sensory input*
  - Loud noises, smell, temperature

TBRI Correcting

“To help children learn appropriate strategies for getting their needs met and to learn to navigate successful interactions throughout their day.”

IDEAL Response

- *Immediate*
- *Direct*
- *Efficient*
- *Action-Based*
- *Leveled*

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cuDH85R3rtc

TBRI Correcting

Level 1 – Playful Engagement

- *Low level challenge youth is disrespectful or is dysregulated in some way*
- *No threat of physical harm or danger*
- *70-80% of challenging behaviors can be solved at this level*
- *Give an opportunity for a redo*
  - Motor memory is formed through active participation, deep learning occurs

TBRI Correcting

Level 2: Structured Engagement

- *Higher level challenge in which playful engagement did not yield results*
- *No real danger or threat*
- *If mishandled there is high probability of escalation*
- *Adult should provide additional attention and structure*
- *Provide choices to give a sense of safety and active participation in the resolution*
- *Also provides the opportunity for a redo*

TBRI Correcting

Level 3: Calming Engagement

- *Challenge is accelerated and the youth may be at risk of becoming violent*
- *Adult must remain laser focused and attentive in order to help the youth de-escalate*
- *Support the current need AND prevent a full-blown crisis*

Level 4: Protective Engagement

- *Active threat of danger and/or physical harm*
- *Adult must provide protection for the youth and others nearby*
- *Powerful message during protective phase – communicate that he/she is safe*

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l2sRKTiyGyI

TBRI and a holistic view of the child

Core of who we are: We exist with a deep desire to be connected!

- **It is part of our culture:**
  - *"If we have no peace, it is because we have forgotten that we belong to each other."* – Mother Theresa
  - *"I long, as does every human being, to be at home wherever I find myself."* – Maya Angelou
- **For those who are Christian or spiritual, it is part of faith walk:**
  - Seeking God, seeking peace
  - Resource: *Created to Connect: A Christian's Guide to The Connected Child*

“Children from hard places”

“The past affects the future…but it does not have to determine it.”

- Karyn Purvis

Resource: www.empoweredtoconnect.org

Hope and healing

- The WHOLE picture
- The WHOLE child

Adults then need to be mindful of the child's heart, mind, soul – learning to fully embrace the child's past, present, and future.

Where did the child begin?

Histories – Known or unknown?

Genuine love and compassion:
Structure and correcting
expressed compassionately

What would this look like?

- Belief issues?
- Neural issues?
- Sensory issues?

Solving the puzzle of difficult behavior

See beyond behavior

Fundamental question – **What is my primary goal?**

- Achieve good or right behavior?
- Build strong and healthy relationships?

Disarming the fear response

- Afraid of not being afraid – *what leads to this feeling?*
- “Felt-safety”

Teaching life values

- Does this mean long lectures and lessons?
- Short teaching scripts – role plays
- Playful engagement
- You get what you give

Dealing with defiance

Connecting even when correcting

- *IDEAL response*
  - **I – Immediate**
  - **D – Direct**
  - **E – Efficient**
  - **A – Action-based**
  - **L – Leveled at the behavior (not the child)**
- *Do not ignore defiance*

Supporting healthy brain chemistry

- Balanced or not?
- Holistic needs of the child
- Feed children spiritually but also remember to address unique physical needs (HALT)
  - *“The spirit is willing but the body is weak” – may lead children to start the day with irritability, volatility, whining and much more.*

Handling setbacks

This takes a great deal of patience.

Draw from your deep reserves of love and grace.

Being intentional to remember

Week 1: BABBBBB
Week 2: BBBBBAB
Week 3: BAABABB
Week 4: BBBBBBB
Week 5: BBBBBBB
Week 6: AABBBAA
Week 7: ABAAAAB
Week 8: AAABABA
Week 9: AABABAA
Week 10: BAAAAAA
Week 11: BAAABAA
Week 12: ABBAABA
Week 13: AAABABA
Week 14: AAAABAA

Heal yourself to heal the child

SELF CARE

Behavior is communication.

Our job is to figure out the need, meet the need, help the child live his or her best life.

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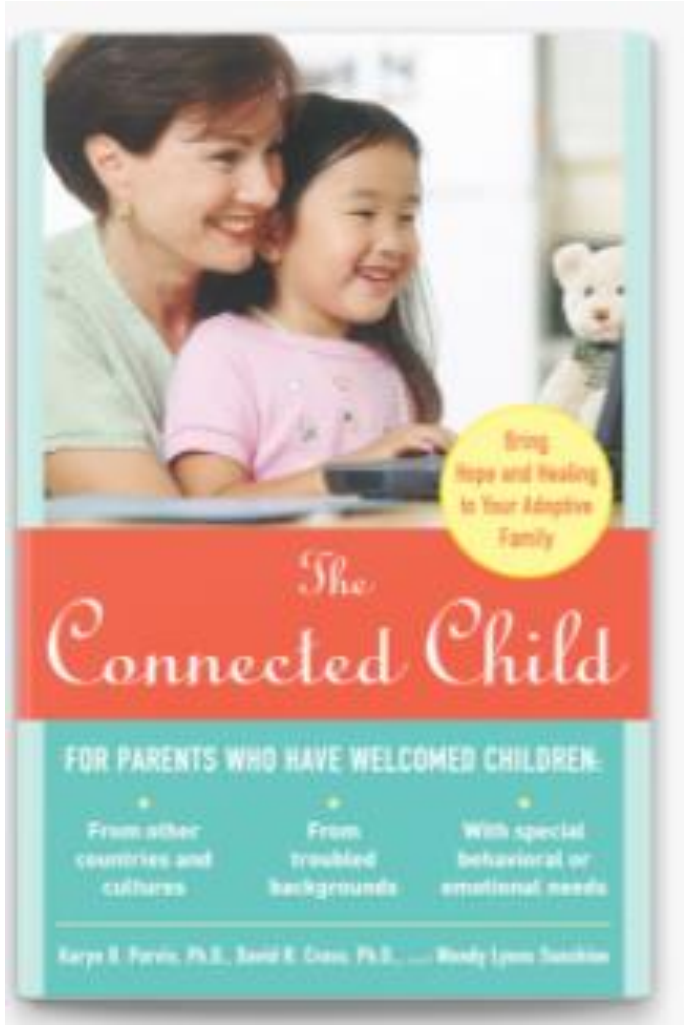
Read it!

The Connected Child. David R. Cross, Karyn B. Purvis, and Wendy Lyons Sunshine



Insert “clinician” for every “parent” reference

QUESTIONS?

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