

Parent's Guide to Trauma

- There are long-term effects of trauma.
- A child may forget the trauma that they experienced; however, the body and brain remembers.
- Fight/flight mode is the “body’s alarm system.”
- Children may stay in fight/flight mode even when they are safe.
- Memories of trauma cause hyperarousal.
 - Hyperarousal responses may include:
 - Being easily startled
 - Anger outbursts
 - Irritability
 - Feelings of panic and anxiety
 - Insomnia
 - Low pain tolerance
 - Tiredness
 - Poor concentration
 - Constantly being “on guard”
- Long-term trauma may lead to a “collapse response”.
 - A “collapse response” includes:
 - Isolation
 - Withdrawal
 - Daydreaming
 - Disconnection from reality
 - Feelings of boredom
- Trauma causes problems with attachment of child and caregiver.
- Problems with attachment are seen in 3 different ways:
 - Avoidant attachment responses include:
 - Avoids eye contact
 - Withholds physical contact
 - Sabotaging positive interactions
 - Over-activated attachment responses include:
 - Clinginess
 - Need for attention
 - Separation anxiety
 - Jealousy towards siblings
 - Disorganized attachment responses include:
 - Lack of sensitivity toward others
 - Poor regulation of mood and behavior

Adapted from: Ana Gomez. EMDR Therapy and Adjunct Approaches With Children, New York: Springer Publishing Company, 2013