

# Counseling News

January, 2017



*"Trauma survivors have symptoms instead of memories" [Harvey, 1990]*

Adapted from Bremner & Marmer, 1998

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## Trauma in Children

Symptoms of trauma, like those listed on the left, can often look like other problems. Some behavioral problems exist due to the brain's way of responding to an environment that feels unsafe or unpredictable.

*Trauma can be any deeply distressing or disturbing event that a person has difficulty coping with.*

*When someone is distressed to the point of being traumatized, their brain gets rewired to respond differently because to them, the world is now different.*

*Adverse childhood experiences, which may be traumatizing, can include an unexpected death, a family member becoming incarcerated, depression, violence, abuse, or drug use in the home, or homelessness. (Bornstein, 2014)*

## How to Help:

- Understand that all behavior serves a purpose and communicates a need.
- When a child is acting out, their primary need is often to feel a sense of connection. This is different than "seeking attention".
- Tune into their experience- when they are upset, tell them you might also feel mad, sad, or frustrated if that same thing happened to you.
- Work with the child to develop calming strategies- deep breaths, counting, walking away, having a safe spot to go to. Practice these when the child is calm, so they may call upon them when agitated.
- Speak and approach calmly. But know your own limits. Ask for help if you're frustrated.
- Be patient, both with yourself and the child.

(The full article by David Bornstein is available on [www.nytimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com))

## WHAT'S HAPPENING THIS MONTH

- High School Counselors will be coming to present about the high school magnet programs.
- Coffee With Counselors (see flier)