Learning at Home in a Trauma Sensitive Environment

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FORMED FAMILIES FORWARD
Who we are...

- Formed Families Forward, a family-led resource center in No Va
- Provide training and direct support to foster, adoptive and kinship families who are raising children and youth with special educational needs, and professionals who work with our families.
- We offer free training, Stronger Together peer support groups, consultations to families, events, resources, classes, and systems navigation. New Respite program!
- Family partner to Virginia Tiered Systems of Supports (VTSS)

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Learning Intentions

- Define trauma and explain how it impacts brain development in children
- Examine the neurobiological events that occur in the brain when it is triggered by trauma
- Discuss how trauma impacts a child’s ability to learn and access higher level thinking
- Discuss these topics within the context of the caregiver/child relationship during virtual learning at home
Poll - How are you feeling about virtual learning in fall?

- Easy-Peasy
- Dreading it
- Changes daily
Trauma Defined

Trauma refers to experiences that cause intense physical and psychological stress reactions. It can refer to a single event, multiple events, or a set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as physically and emotionally harmful or threatening and that has lasting adverse effects on the individual's physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being.

The individual's experience of these events or circumstances helps to determine whether it is a traumatic event.
Understanding Brain Development

at birth | 6 years old | 14 years old

[Images showing neural development at different ages]

NEURONS THAT FIRE TOGETHER WIRE TOGETHER
The Brain’s Response to Trauma

Dr. Dan Siegel - Hand Model of the Brain
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gm9CIJ74Oxw
The Brain’s Response to Trauma

STARR Commonwealth – Meerkat, Tiger and Owl
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o3pYZ06DHQ

Link to Alison Sampson Jackson’s video on explaining brain to children and adolescents -
https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=207&v=py8deTlxNco&feature=emb_logo
Impact of Trauma and Arousal on Readiness to Learn

Distressing Event or Triggers

Hyperactivity
Hypervigilance
Mania
Anxiety & Panic
Irritability
Rage
Pain

Depression
Disconnection
Exhaustion/Fatigue
Numbness/freeze

Source: Leitch, 2017
Window of Tolerance

Hyper-Arousal
Emotional overwhelm, panic, feeling unsafe, angry, racing thoughts, anxiety, etc.

Window of Tolerance
Optimal Arousal Zone
Carrying on with daily life in the river of well-being

Smooth Sailing

Hypo-Arousal
Numb, no feelings or energy, can’t think, shut down, ashamed, disconnected, depression, etc.
Parents and Caregivers Know Their Children Best!

- Caregivers are best able to gauge the Window of Tolerance for the children in their care.
- Set realistic expectations for schoolwork that are dependent on ability and not chronological age or grade.
- Show children one or both videos when they are calm and receptive to new ideas.
- Use developmentally appropriate brain science terminology with children.
- Collaborate with educators and others who are supporting your child’s learning at home so all are using same language, approaches, etc.
Strategies to Widen the Window of Tolerance
Discussion Time!

- Chat your question or comment in.
- Kelly will call on you and unmute you if possible.
- We have limited time so please keep the question or comment brief and succinct!

- Remember to Like us on Facebook- https://www.facebook.com/FormedFamiliesForward and follow us on Insta and Twitter
- Please complete the BRIEF evaluation at end. Recording of this and previous two in Pandemic Learning series are under Resources tab and then Webinars on FormedFamiliesForward.org