

“How to Help Hurting Children”

Main Points and definitions:

1. **Trauma**: “Our body and brain’s experience of a negative event, overwhelming our ability to cope and leading to short or long term effects” – Brianna Edwards, LMHC, RPT
2. **Trauma Lens**: “The Trauma Lens is the distorted way we see ourselves, God, and relationships with others because of the meaning we’ve made of our trauma. (this often happens subconsciously, at a “felt” level)” – Brianna Edwards, LMHC, RPT
3. **Attunement**: “The physical and emotional responsiveness we have toward another person – noticing what’s being verbally and nonverbally communicated by observing facial expressions, tone of voice, body posture, and demeanor. And then gently acknowledging it – not ignoring it!” – Brianna Edwards, LMHC, RPT
4. **Ways to Attune to Kids**
 - a. Get on the child’s level
 - b. Make eye contact
 - c. Have soft, kind eyes and vocal tone
 - d. Use reflective listening
5. **Kids are looking for ways to be SEEN and HEARD.**
 - a. Attunement helps us show them that they are seen, heard, valued & loved.
 - b. Consistent attunement & predictability builds a safe & trusting relationship, which helps kids feel safe
6. **What is the need behind the child’s behavior?**
 - a. Sensory: is the environment over or under stimulating? (noises, lights, temp)
 - b. Emotional: does the child need attunement & empathy
 - c. Physical: does the child need a snack, water, or movement
 - d. Spiritual: does the child need encouragement through prayer/scripture?
7. Meeting the Child’s Need
 - a. Create a calming corner – with calming basket filled with supplies

- b. Separate room or area with no breakables – only pillows or beanbags that can be kicked or punched or thrown.
- c. Create a target and safely let them release their anger
 - i. Square of tape on wall and soft squishy ball to throw at the target
 - ii. Bubble wrap to stomp on
 - iii. Paper to tear up
- d. A safe place for them to hide/close themselves in for a moment
 - i. Tent or blanket fort
- e. Use a feelings/emotions chart – this helps them be able to identify how they are feeling and communicate when they can't use words
- f. Sticky dots List
 - i. List with words or pictures of what they need at that moment

More Tools For Meeting Needs

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|--------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| ~ Schedules | ~ Countdown Clocks | ~ Engine Plate |
| ~ Chewing gum | ~ Count colors | ~ Water |
| ~ Sour/Spicy candy | ~ Jumping Jacks | ~ Snack |
| ~ 10 sec. dance Party | ~ Trampoline | ~ Magic mustache |
| ~ Blowing Bubbles | ~ Sensory Play | ~ Quiet Place |
| ~ Weighted Blanket | ~ Wall Push | ~ Burrito Wrap |
| ~ Balloon Breaths | ~ Cookie Breaths | ~ Floor Push |
| ~ Game/UNO | ~ Mind Jar | ~ Walk |
| ~ Act like a slow animal | ~ Count colors | ~ Notice the 5 senses |