



CHILDREN RESPONDING TO TRAUMA

Why Early Recognition Matters

Common Reactions

- Headaches
 - Stomachaches
 - Nightmares or refusal to go to bed
 - Trouble concentrating
 - Loss of interest in activities
 - Feel guilt or blame themselves
 - React strongly to reminders of the event
- Trauma impacts:
 - attachment
 - emotions
 - behavior
 - learning
 - self-concept
 - May look like:
 - Clinginess or anxiety
 - Acting out
 - Withdrawal
 - Emotional shutdown
 - Always consider the child's age, environment, and history.

BEHAVIOR IS OFTEN A SIGN OF DISTRESS, NOT DEFIANCE.

Protective Factors and Resilience

- Not all children exposed to trauma experience long term harm
- A consistent, caring adult is one of the strongest protective factors
- Safe, supportive relationships help children:
 - Regulate emotions
 - Process experiences
 - Rebuild a sense of safety
- Support can reduce symptoms and promote healing, including:
 - Early identification
 - Trauma informed practices
 - Trauma focused therapy when needed