

How parents of children with DTD develop PTSD

DTD = developmental trauma disorder (a.k.a. reactive attachment disorder)

PTSD = post-traumatic stress disorder



Causes

- Need for constant self-control in the midst of incessant arguing, temper tantrums and rages on behalf of child
- Repeated rejections from child after multiple attempts to attach emotionally
- Changes within self & family that are out of one's control



Primary Symptoms

- Psychological/physical distress and trauma triggers
- Decreased affect and display of feelings and sense of being detached or estranged from others
- Avoidance of thoughts and feelings and decreased interest and participation in significant events



Secondary Effects

- Increased arousal, sleep problems, irritability, hyper-vigilance and high startle response
- Helplessness, rage, hopelessness and anger
- Selectivity in perceptions, victim identity, fatigue, depression and loss of security
- Feeling different than others, damaged sense of self-worth and feeling out of control emotionally

Sources:



Institute for Attachment & Child Development
Families strengthening families



Those raising children struggling from the effects of early trauma need support and resources to secure permanency. It is imperative that families receive professional help from clinicians specializing in DTD.