

What Every Parent Needs to Know – Trauma & Dysregulation

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FOCUSED FOLLOW-THROUGH

Guide parents using these reminders:

- Be as predictable as can be in your routines at home while your child is present. Consistency helps create a sense of safety.
- Do not show your fears and worries to your child, as this will frighten them. Talk about your fears to your spouse, friends, or trauma specialist. Bring laughter into your home. If your child sees you laugh, they will feel so much more at ease.
- Read books to your child about others who have survived. Brave Bart is a great place to start. For teens, leave the book lying around where they can see it. If they need to, they will read it.
- Unconditional love and acceptance is the best medicine. This is not always easy to give your child when you are angry, upset, or terrified yourself. Sometimes traumatized children simply need to release the stress created by their fears and they do this by fighting or verbally attacking. As a parent, your initial response to fighting needs to be to insure that your child is not hurt nor hurts others. Words, of course, do not cause bodily harm, even though they can be difficult to hear at times.
- If this outburst is trauma-driven, often after this release your child will be calm and in control. This is not about a physical or verbal release, but a release of the intense stress of trauma, of trauma residue.

This is when your child needs you the most. Your child needs you to stay in control. Do not lose control, scream, or overreact. This may not be easy, but it is so important!