



EARLY CHILDHOOD MENTAL HEALTH CONNECTION

MOVING LIVES FORWARD

WHAT IS THIS THING CALLED TRAUMA?

Lately, we hear so much about trauma: the trauma of social isolation, of wars, and all types of social unrest. What does this all really mean and how is it effecting our children? Remember, they are little sponges and they DO absorb our feelings.

Merriam-Webster dictionary defines trauma as “an injury; a disordered psychic or behavioral state resulting from severe mental or emotional stress or physical injury; an emotional upset.” But when it comes to mental health we look at trauma very subjectively; it is viewed as the person’s response to the trauma or traumatic events.

So, two children in the same family may respond to their house on fire as not a big deal while the other finds it very scary. So, with this reality, what does that mean for us as caregivers? We need to support the kiddos in our care in whatever ways they respond to trauma by:

1. Allowing them to express their feelings around the situation,
2. Empathize with them,
3. Reassure them they are safe for now,
4. Restate that the situation was scary but they are okay,
5. Give permission to discuss and ask open ended questions, e.g:

How did that make you feel, What did you do, Then what?

We have to remember that children’s brains are developing and are impacted by both good and bad experiences. Children may not have the ability to make sense

of the situation, but it leaves a lasting impact. With trauma and other experiences it can be a smell, a sound, a thing or a vocal tone that can pull them back into the emotional state they were in at the time. As caregivers we need to understand and be able to support them in dealing with their feelings.

Helping them overcome those flooding emotions can be difficult, but as long as you are present and nonjudgmental it will help them. We as the adults need to be aware that sometimes the items that trigger the children can trigger us. We are not immune to the trauma we have been exposed to just because we are older. So, be aware of your feelings in the situation as well:

1. Sweating
2. Feeling warm
3. Irritable
4. Knot in stomach
5. Nervousness

These are signs of the trauma response that we all feel. So, you might need a coworker or another adult to take care of the child while you take a break. Caring for self ensures we can care for others. During these stressful times, self-care is even more vital for our mental health.

Cheryl's Corner of Caring

“You can recognize survivors by their creativity. In soulful, insightful, gentle, and nurturing creations, they often express the inner beauty they brought out of their childhood storms.” (Jeanne McElvaney)

MEET CENTENNIAL'S EARLY CHILDHOOD CONSULTATION TEAM



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Ages 0-5

Covers the following
counties:
Logan, Morgan

LAUNCHING ZOOM SECURE TELEHEALTH SERVICES!

Our ECMH team is excited to announce that consultation services are now available using Zoom Secure Telehealth Services. These services are available to client families, schools, childcare centers and community partners with group and individual meetings available. All services will be provided using this private, secure video platform, and can be accessed using most electronic devices. For more information or to set up a consultation appointment, please contact our ECMH team or your local Centennial Mental Health Center office.



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Covers the following
counties:
Morgan, Washington
& Yuma

For additional support during
the COVID-19 Pandemic you
can call Centennial's
**COMMUNITY
SUPPORT LINE**

You can do this by calling your
nearest Centennial office:

Akron - 970.345.2254

Burlington - 719.346.8183

Cheyenne Wells - 719.346.8183

Elizabeth - 303.646.4519

Fort Morgan - 970.867.4924

Holyoke - 970.854.2114

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Limon - 719.775.2313

Sterling - 970.522.4392

Wray - 970.332.3133

Yuma - 970.848.5412



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Cheyenne, Elbert, Kit Carson,
Lincoln & Yuma

Contact your local Centennial Mental Health Center for assistance with any Early Childhood need.

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