What can I do to help my child?

We all want the best for our children. You have the biggest impact on your child's health and well-being.

You are not alone.

Many people face hardship and distress during their childhood. Things can happen to our children and us that we can't control and may not be our fault.

✔ Look for help from a trauma-trained therapist.

✔ Find your own support as a parent/caregiver.

✔ Talk to your child's school counselor, teacher, doctor and therapist about trauma.

✔ To learn ways to start healing today, visit: **https://positiveexperience.org/about/**

You can start the healing process and strengthen your family for the future.

Did you know?

ACEs are stressful events known as **Adverse Childhood Experiences**. A study showed that these experiences can actually have an impact on adult health. There's a lot that can be done to help people heal from ACEs. These include healthy and positive experiences and relationships.

To learn more about ACEs, go to: **https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/acestudy**

Not sure what to do?

To get help, call or email the Parent/Professional Advocacy League (PPAL)

Toll-Free: **1-866-815-8122**

Email: **info@ppal.net**

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To find a therapist who treats trauma, call the UMass Medical School Child Trauma Center or visit their website

Toll-Free: **1-855-LINK KID (1-855-546-5543)**

www.umassmed.edu/cttc

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For help advocating for school and other supports, call the Federation for Children with Special Needs

Toll-Free: **1-800-331-0688**

fcsn.org/rtsc/trauma-trainings

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Learn more at the National Child Traumatic Stress Network website:

www.nctsn.org

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Visit the Family Resource Center Network website:

www.frcma.org

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Understanding Childhood Trauma and Your Family

Here is how you can help

Trauma-Informed Resources for Parents and Caregivers

What is trauma?

When a person feels unsafe, due to the stress or threat of intense, painful, or scary events, we call this trauma. Even though trauma can have a major effect on a person's well-being, people can heal and grow stronger with support.

A traumatic event can include:

- Physical, emotional, or sexual abuse
- Homelessness and poverty
- Racism
- Discrimination based on gender, sexual orientation, disability, religion, ethnicity, etc.
- Bullying
- Natural disasters and public health crises
- Living through community or family violence, war, or terrorism
- Parental/caregiver substance use, mental illness, or neglect
- Loss or separation from a parent or caregiver, or a family member in prison
- Accidents, injuries, or serious illness

What you may see in children:

These are some examples of behaviors after a traumatic event. Not all children will react in these ways. *Everything is based upon a child's age, history, and experience.*

- Being easily startled and constantly looking for danger
- Losing interest in friends and activities
- Acting younger than their age: bed-wetting, using baby talk, fearing separation
- Self-harm, risky behavior
- In teens, use of substances
- Physical symptoms: headaches, stomachaches, aches and pains

- Problems with sleep and appetite
- Restlessness and agitation
- Change in school behavior
- Difficulty concentrating and learning
- Worry, panic, and fear for the safety of others
- Irritability, anger and defiant behavior
- Avoiding people, places, or things
- Feeling guilt or shame
- Emotional numbness

Look for more support: Trauma-Informed Care

You took the first step by reading this. You now know more about trauma. Here's what you can do next:

- **Call** the Parent/Professional Advocacy League (PPAL). Ask for a family support specialist, who is also a parent, to help you and your family.
- **Learn** more about trauma and new types of trauma-informed care and treatments at the **National Child Traumatic Stress** website: **www.nctsn.org**

Parents & Caregivers Need Support too!

Many parents and caregivers have faced trauma in their past. Sometimes these experiences can impact how they react to their children. Asking for help and finding ways to take care of yourself can set a good example for your child.