

TRAUMA-LAYERING

Additional layers of trauma, including social isolation, worsening of pre-existing mental health challenges, the absence of developmental milestones, the disruption of school, and other general anxieties, worsens mental health and causes traumatic stress in children. Children involved with child welfare - especially those in care - are particularly vulnerable to experiencing trauma-layering and long-term mental health impacts. Building relationships through trauma-informed care and introducing mindfulness may increase protective factors and support positive coping mechanisms.

To ensure children thrive during times of stress, practice may be needed to focus on the safety and resilience-building components of trauma informed care:

Listen

Practice deep reflective listening.

Non-Clinical Relational Activities (INCRAs)

Focus on somatic INCRAs chosen and led by the child, such as sports, yoga, or walking. This supports the calming of emotions if a child goes outside of their window of tolerance.

Self-Disclosure

Where appropriate, participate in self-disclosure with the child.

Teaching Trauma-Informed Mindfulness

- Respectfully provide the definition of mindfulness. Show how it can be applied to everyday life.
- Support children in choosing and practicing a mindfulness technique that is right for them.
- Do not put too much stress on logistics.
- Be aware of cultural differences and trauma that may be present or triggered by some mindfulness techniques.

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