



THE BAKER CENTER
FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

May Is Trauma Awareness Month



Learn More About Trauma **Part 2**

The Stress Response

Our bodies have an alarm system that activates when we feel stress or a sense of danger.

This is one of the incredible ways our bodies communicate to us, so we know how to respond.

When faced with danger, our heart rate goes up, we breathe faster, and we may feel a sense of fear.

Under normal stress, once the threat is gone, our body calms down.

What Is Traumatic Stress?

When experiencing a traumatic event, our stress response involves both physical and emotional sensations that are so strong we feel “frozen” and too overwhelmed to re-establish a sense of calm.

We become so affected by these stress responses that our body shuts down even when there is no threat of danger.

Common Signs And Symptoms

Preschool Children

- Fear of separating from caregivers
- Crying or screaming a lot
- Eating poorly or losing weight
- Having nightmares
- Sexualized or aggressive behavior
- Irritability

Elementary School Children

- Becoming anxious or fearful
- Feeling guilt or shame
- Difficulty concentrating
- Difficulty sleeping
- Sexualized or aggressive behavior
- Social problems with peers
- Irritability

Middle/High School Children

- Feeling depressed or alone
- Developing eating disorders
- Self-harm behaviors
- Abusing alcohol or drugs
- Risky sexual behavior
- Social problems with peers

How Can I Get Help?



To schedule a phone screen with one of our Program Assistants, follow the QR code, or visit our website.