

Parent Talk

MAY 2026

What is Trauma?

Trauma is the experience of an event where a person experiences a threat to their life, their sense of safety, or a threat to the life of a caregiver or a family member. This can trigger intense stress or cause an inability to regulate emotions and feelings, particularly in younger kids.

What Causes Trauma?

There are multiple different events that can cause trauma in kids or teens. Some more common examples are domestic violence, physical or sexual abuse, neglect, serious accidents or illness, the loss of a loved one, or witnessing any of these things. Less common but still impactful causes of trauma can be experiencing natural disasters, war, community violence, and school shootings.

What Are Warning Signs of Trauma?

Not all children will display outward signs of trauma, but there are more common behaviors depending on the age group. Very young children tend to have increased instances of screaming and/or crying, loss of appetite, sleep problems, irritability, and sexualized or aggressive behaviors. Older kids may develop social issues with peers, have difficulty concentrating in school, and have intense feelings of guilt and shame. Teenagers experiencing trauma may outwardly be more depressed and engage in risky behaviors like drug and alcohol use or self-harm.

How Can I Prevent Trauma?

While it's impossible to control every instance of what your child may be exposed to, there are ways caregivers can help minimize risk for trauma. Establishing a sense of trust with your child will help them approach you naturally if something is making them uncomfortable. Teaching open communication and honesty will help deepen your connection with your child as well. It's also important to build relationships with other members of your community like neighbors, teachers, or even other family members so that way you know your child is being cared for even when you may not be there.

Need more help?

Resources at The Baker Center are just a click away



Therapy & Treatment Services

CENTER FOR EFFECTIVE THERAPY →



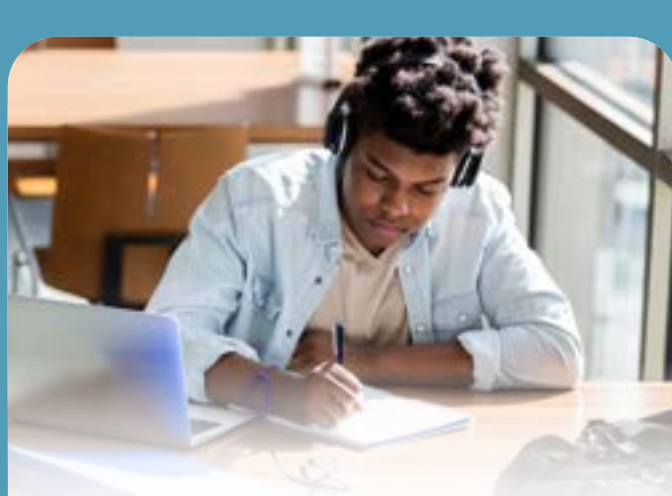
Special Education

MANVILLE SCHOOL →



Therapeutic Summer Camp

CAMP BAKER →



College Preparation

NEXT STEP →

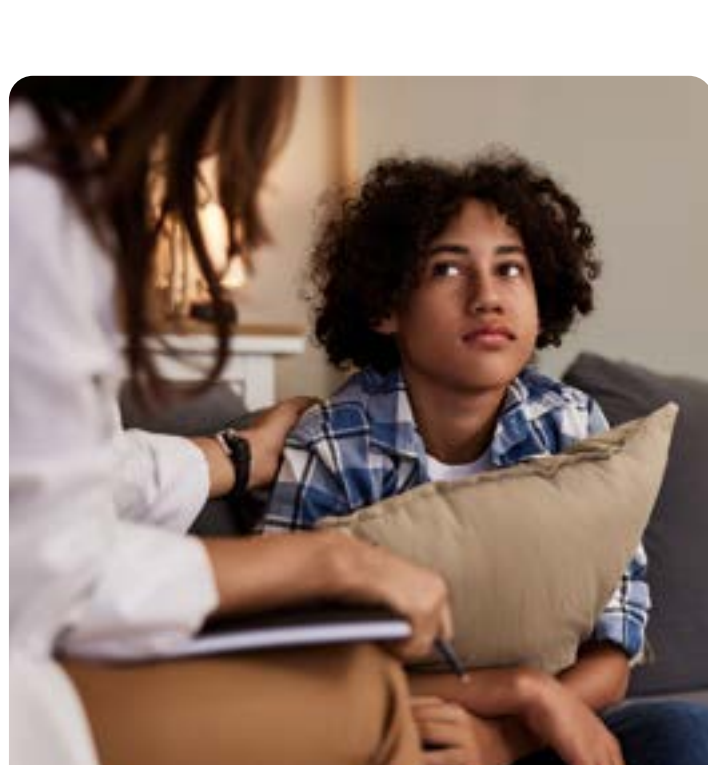
Featured Resources



Trauma Awareness: About Traumatic Stress and Evidence-Based Treatments for Kids & Teens

In this seminar, we will discuss different types of traumatic stress, the traumatic stress response, evidence-based practices and what those treatments look like, and some ways that parents can support kids who have experienced traumatic stress.

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Protecting Childhood: Accessing Trauma-Informed Care and Supporting Your Child After A Traumatic Event

If you suspect, or know, that your child is struggling with symptoms of traumatic stress or has experienced a traumatic event, engaging with an evidence-based assessment can help you and your support team identify the ways in which your child is struggling and the best ways to support them moving forward.

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Protecting Childhood: Understanding Traumatic Stress and its Impact on Children's Mental Health

The safety of children and teens is of the utmost importance to parents, caregivers, and community members. Caregivers often take extraordinary measures to ensure the security of kids in their care and do the best they can to protect children and teens from experiencing stressful events. Regardless of caregivers' best intentions, and greatest efforts, it's impossible to guarantee that those they care for will always be out of harm's way.

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Child Abuse & Neglect Prevention

In this seminar, we discuss risk and protective factors for childhood abuse and neglect, what actions you can take if you suspect child abuse or neglect, and some ways that we can work as a community of caregivers and providers to protect kids and set them up for success.

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