The Three Core Trauma-Related Needs – Red Deer
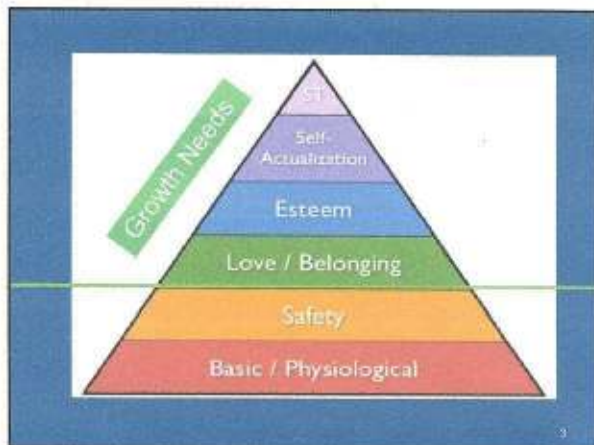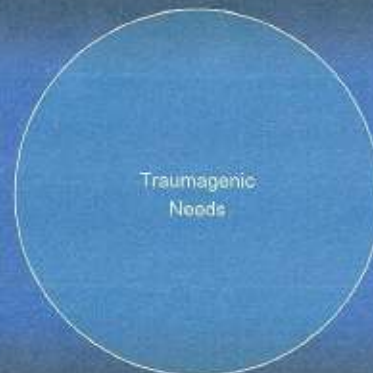
The Three Core Trauma-Related Needs

Howard Bath

Alberta, January/February 2017

Traumagenic Needs

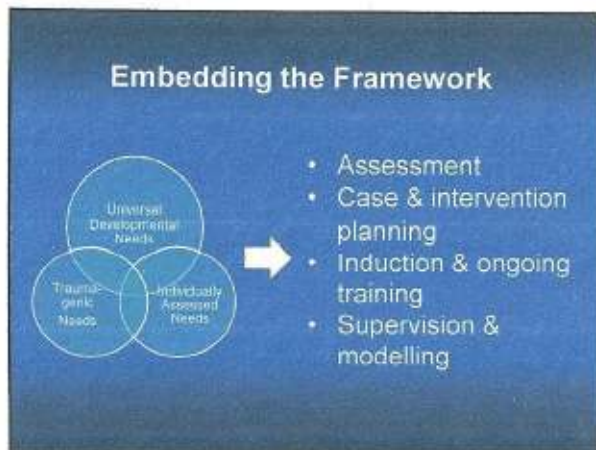Growth Needs

- ST
- Self-Actualization
- Esteem
- Love / Belonging
- Safety
- Basic / Physiological

Universal Developmental Needs

Purpose
Generosity

Autonomy
Independence

Belonging
Attachment

Mastery
Achievement

Adapted from the Circle of Courage framework
Brendtro, Brokenleg & van Bockern, 2002

Universal developmental Needs

Traumagenic Needs

Universal Developmental Needs

Traumagenic Needs

Individually Assessed Needs

Howard Bath

Embedding the Framework

- Assessment
- Case & intervention planning
- Induction & ongoing training
- Supervision & modelling

(Universal Developmental Needs, Trauma-genic Needs, Individually Assessed Needs)

Chronic stress and trauma compromises...

◊ The **communication pathways** between the brain's hemispheres

◊ **Memory** integration centers

◊ Areas involved in **attention, emotion management , impulse control**

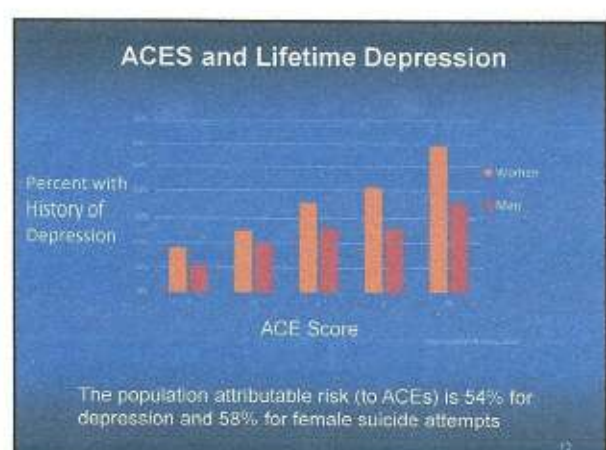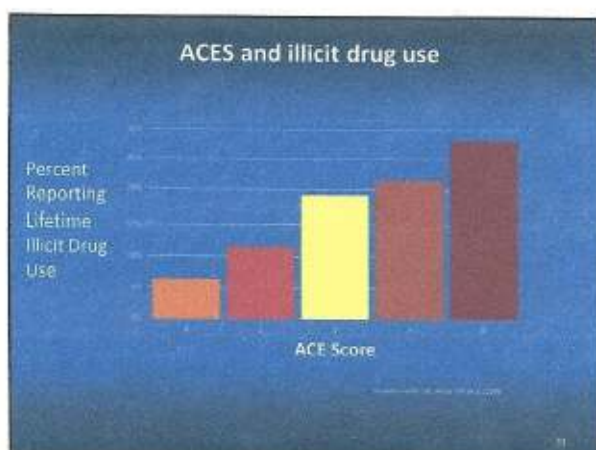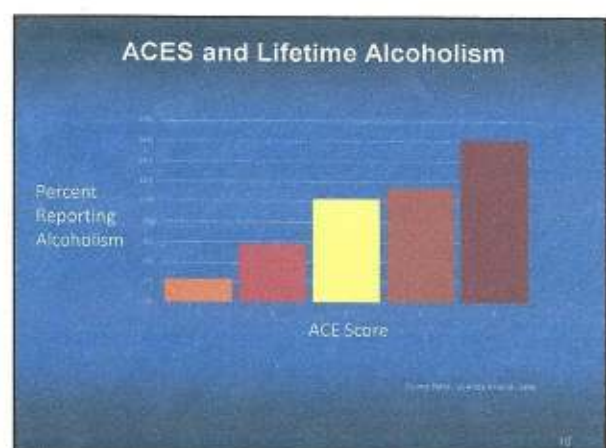## Adverse Childhood Experiences

Household Dysfunction
Substance abuse
Parental separation/divorce
Mental illness
Domestic violence
Criminal Behavior

Abuse
Psychological
Physical
Sexual

Neglect
Emotional
Physical

ACES and Lifetime Alcoholism

Percent Reporting Alcoholism

ACE Score

ACES and illicit drug use

Percent Reporting Lifetime Illicit Drug Use

ACE Score

ACES and Lifetime Depression

Percent with History of Depression

Women
Men

ACE Score

The population attributable risk (to ACEs) is 54% for depression and 58% for female suicide attempts

Howard Bath

If we could eliminate the common childhood adversities, there would be a **reduction** of:

50% in illicit drug use
78% in IV drug use
54% in current depression
65% in alcoholism
67% in suicide attempts

Dube, Felitti et al.

The ACEs 'exert a powerful cumulative effect on human development' ... ' the co-occurrence and cumulative effect of those experiences necessitates their examination as a collective composite, as opposed to the historical approach of examining one or only a few adverse exposures, which missed the broader context in which they occur'.

Baglivio et al

Trauma

A psychologically distressing event that is outside the range of usual human experience, often involving a sense of intense fear, terror or helplessness

Bruce Perry

Type 1 - Simple Trauma
Experiencing one overwhelming event

Type 2 - Complex Trauma
Ongoing exposure to fear and helplessness

Developmental Trauma and **Relational Trauma** are other names for complex trauma.

These result from multiple, chronic, and prolonged, adverse events
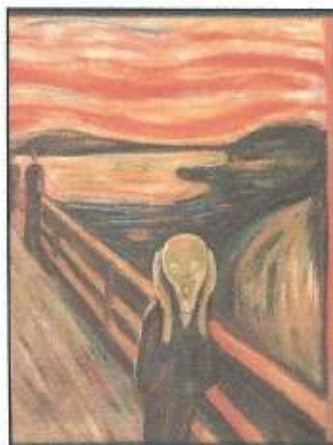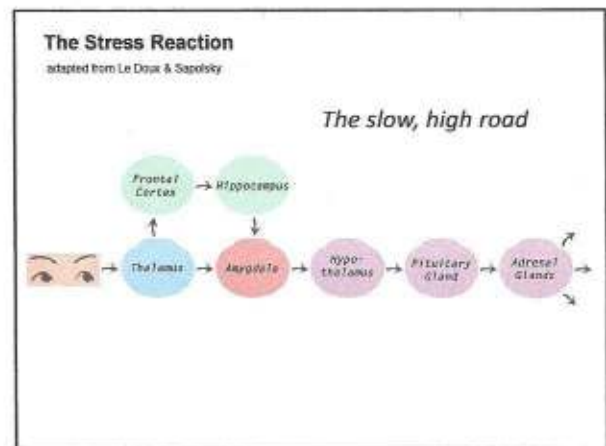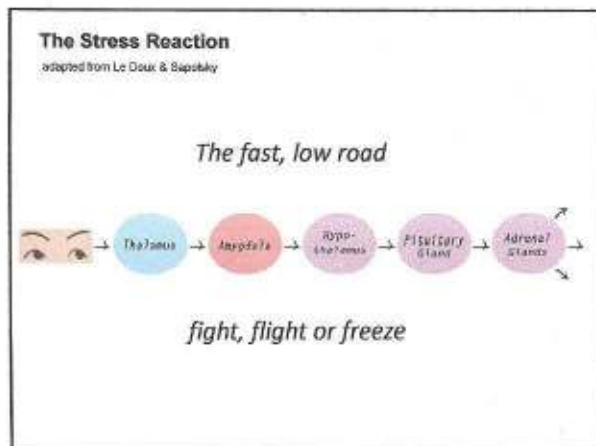
Bessel van der Kolk

The Stress Reaction
adapted from Le Doux & Sapolsky

Howard Bath

The Three Core Trauma-Related Needs – Red Deer

The Stress Reaction
adapted from Le Doux & Sapolsky

The fast, low road

Thalamus → Amygdala → Hypo-thalamus → Pituitary Gland → Adrenal Glands

fight, flight or freeze

The Stress Reaction
adapted from Le Doux & Sapolsky

The slow, high road

Frontal Cortex → Hippocampus

Thalamus → Amygdala → Hypo-thalamus → Pituitary Gland → Adrenal Glands

Trauma involves the repeated, involuntary triggering of the traumatic stress reaction with feelings of fear, rage, helplessness and shame

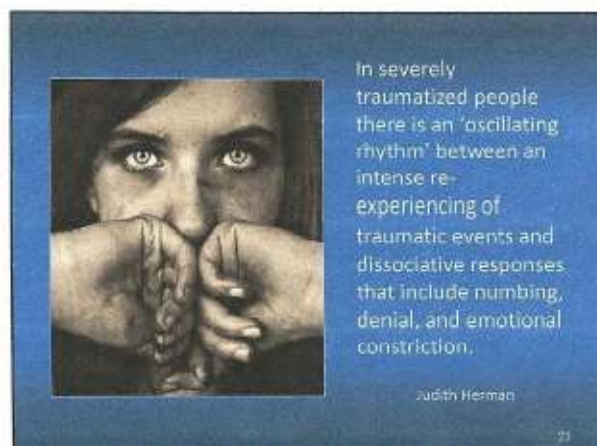It also involves concerted efforts to avoid this re-experiencing

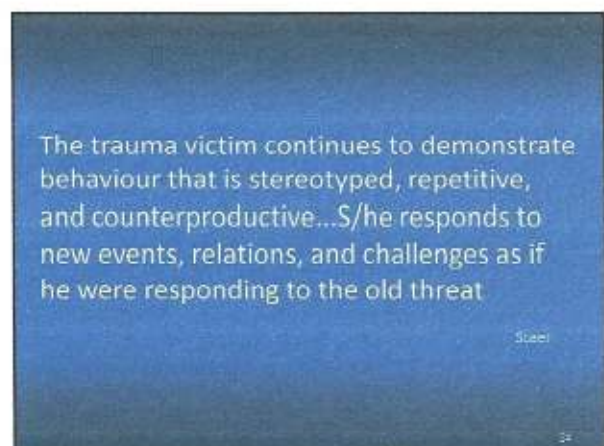**Dissociation**

numbing
avoidance
blocked emotions

The escape when there is no escape

Putnam

In severely traumatized people there is an 'oscillating rhythm' between an intense re-experiencing of traumatic events and dissociative responses that include numbing, denial, and emotional constriction.

Judith Herman

The trauma victim continues to demonstrate behaviour that is stereotyped, repetitive, and counterproductive...S/he responds to new events, relations, and challenges as if he were responding to the old threat
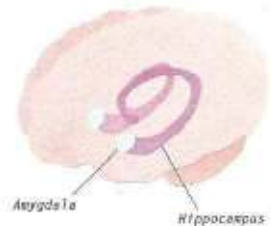
Steel

Howard Bath

4

Explicit memories include facts, events and images that we can consciously recall.

Implicit memories are unconscious and include associations, sensations, mindsets, values, and habits.

The **amygdala** stores memories of threatening events. *Fear conditioning* tags certain cues as dangerous

Amygdala   Hippocampus

The role of the amygdala is to remember a threat, generalize it to other threats, and carry it into the future

Traumatized children reset their normal level of arousal. Even when no external threats exist, they are in a persistent state of alarm.

Bruce Perry

I think I have a different cognitive map...I am really on guard all of the time and I have to watch out for people's motives. I am always on edge.

Young graduate from the care system

Trauma affects ...

- attachment
- social skills
- physical health
- control of emotions and impulses
- control of behaviours
- thinking skills
- self-concept, shame and guilt
- hopes for the future

The most significant consequence of early relational trauma is the child's failure to develop the capacity to self-regulate the intensity and duration of emotional states
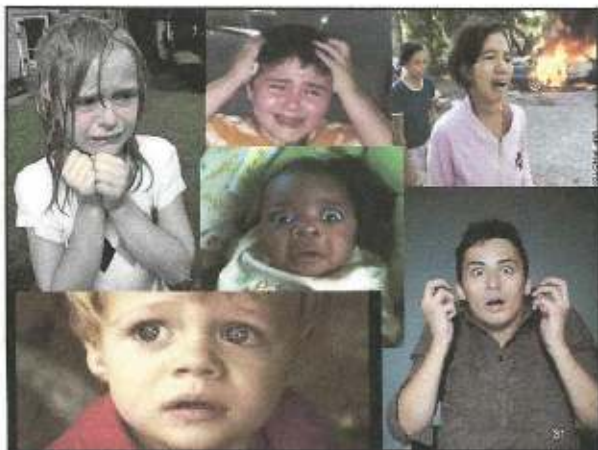
Allan Schore

At the core of traumatic stress is a breakdown in the capacity to regulate internal states.

Bessel van der Kolk

The Three Core Trauma-Related Needs – Red Deer

Pain Based Emotions

- *grief* at loss and abandonment
- *anxiety* about self and life circumstances
- *fear or terror* about a hopeless future
- *depression* at a lack of purpose in life
- *numbness* and withdrawal   James Anglin

I always felt I was different. Not good different; not unique-in-a-positive-way different; not proud different as in marching to my own drum; but shameful different. I felt as if I was somehow less in nearly every way than my peers.

Young adult formerly in care

Shame

The intensely painful feeling or experience of believing that we are flawed and therefore unworthy of love and belonging   Brene Brown

Common Consequences of Shame

Psychological consequences – depression, low self-esteem, self-blame, anger, hostility, envy, blaming others

Interpersonal consequences – conflict avoidance, compulsive apologising, superficial overconfidence, intermittent rage

School performance – perfectionism, reduced pride in response to success, fear of negative evaluation, intense shame in failure

Adapted from Louis Cozolino

Howard Bath

I was leaving my brother, my friend and had no chance to say goodbye to the foster parents...it was like being moved to a foreign country

The suddenness of it. No preparations. All of a sudden you pack your bags, you're leaving. No time to mentally prepare to get all of your things...wondering what you did wrong

Young people in care

Family Privilege

Without a family, I expected no phone calls from home, because there was no home. There were no requests for 'care packages', for who would prepare and send them? There was no one to ask for money, and there was no one to help me navigate the confusing and Byzantine world of college. I had no on to cheer me on, or if necessary, to kick me in the rear as I faced the challenges of college.

Young Graduate from Care

Children's lives are saturated with losses which are unacknowledged and unmourned.

Ken Hardy

Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

Intrusive Symptoms – Intrusive memories; traumatic nightmares; dissociative symptoms such as flashbacks

Negative alterations in cognitions or mood memory failure; distorted beliefs, self-image; blame of self or others; persistent trauma-related emotions (fear, horror, guilt, shame); diminished interest in significant activities; feeling alienated; constricted affect

Alterations in arousal and reactivity irritability, aggression, hypervigilance; exaggerated startle response; poor concentration; sleep disturbance

Avoidance – Persistent efforts to avoid trauma-related thoughts or feelings and external reminders of trauma

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The traumatised young person is drowning in a sea of fragmented and overwhelming emotions, sensations, and frightening thoughts

Louis Cozolino

Finger grasp
Moro reflex
reflex smile
babbling
crying

Howard Bath

Erik Erikson

*A sense of **trust** requires a feeling of physical comfort and a minimum experience of fear...*

Mistrust arises from unsatisfactory physical and psychological experiences and leads to fearful apprehension

Abraham Maslow

Maslow's Revised Hierarchy of Human Needs

Self-Actualization
Esteem
Love / Belonging
Safety
Basic / Physiological

The traumatised young person's primary concern is **SAFETY**

SAFETY

Physical
Emotional
Social/relational
Cultural

*Being **emotionally safe** is knowing that your feelings, thoughts and wishes – your inner world, is acknowledged, respected, and taken into account by others.*

The Three Core Trauma-Related Needs – Red Deer

Safety involves kindness, consistency, honesty, reliability, inclusion, knowledge, appropriate power.

Troubled children are in some kind of pain – and pain makes people irritable, anxious, and aggressive.

Perry & Szalavitz

Faced with challenging behaviors, caregivers deal with their frustration by retaliating in ways that often uncannily repeat the children's early trauma

Bessel van der Kolk

The *Central Challenge* for all who interact with traumatised children:

*Dealing with **primary pain** without unnecessarily inflicting **secondary pain** through punitive or controlling reactions*

James Anglin

Being able to *feel safe* with other people is the single most important aspect of mental health

Van Der Kolk

THE BODY KEEPS THE SCORE

Mind, Brain and Body in the Transformation of Trauma

BESSEL VAN DER KOLK

The removal of threat is not the same as the creation of safety

Steven Porges

Howard Bath

The Three Core *Trauma-Related* Needs

The need to **feel safe**

I turn to the spot where I last saw Mum, hoping she's changed her mind, but there is no trace of her...My new home is filled with boys about my age. They're everywhere. Oh geez. Oh geez. **I'm so alone – so all alone.** Even my own parents do not want me.

Young person remembering his first placement

The essence of trauma is feeling godforsaken, cut-off from the human race

van der Kolk

I learned never to trust anybody but myself. You know I purposefully detached from any caretaker that I ever had cause that was my survival technique

If I could find someone to talk with or trust, I think my life would be easier, but history teaches me not to trust

Young adults formerly in care

Connecting

- Connecting with the normal ecology
- Connecting for healing and growth

Once I began to realise what normal people do and compare myself to them I learned to lie to myself and others about who and what I was

Everyone wants to be normal – whatever that means

I felt really different from the other students...I felt like a freak at times

Young people formerly in care

Promoting Connections

- Meeting needs – the distress-calming cycle
- Initiating positive interactions
- Responding positively to bids for attachment
- Inclusion and claiming
- Rhythmicity

John R. Seita   Larry K. Brendtro

KIDS
WHO OUTWIT ADULTS

Foreword by Matt Damon

FIGHT	FLIGHT	FOOL	FOLLOW
Hurt or be Hurt Threat display, power tactics, payback	**Hide or be Hurt** Isolation, retreat, escape, compliance	**Outsmart Them** Deception, diversion, Mind games	**Band Together** Peer power, follow the alpha, contagion
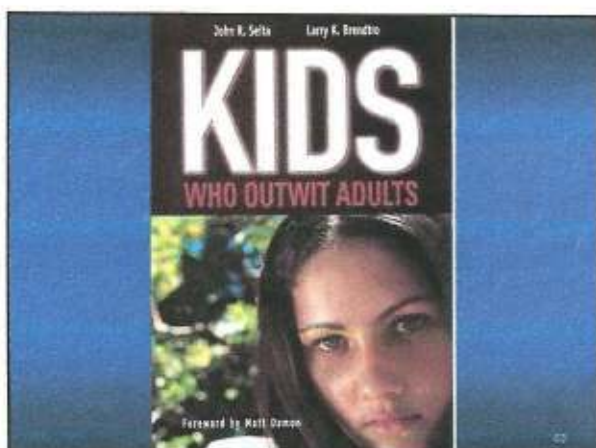
It is not programs that change people, it is people.

Bruce Perry

The Three Core *Trauma-related* Needs

The need to **feel safe**

The need for **healthy connections** and 'normal' engagement with the community

Howard Bath

- *...you don't want to come apart around strangers, so you just put up a thick skin, it starts to make you numb*
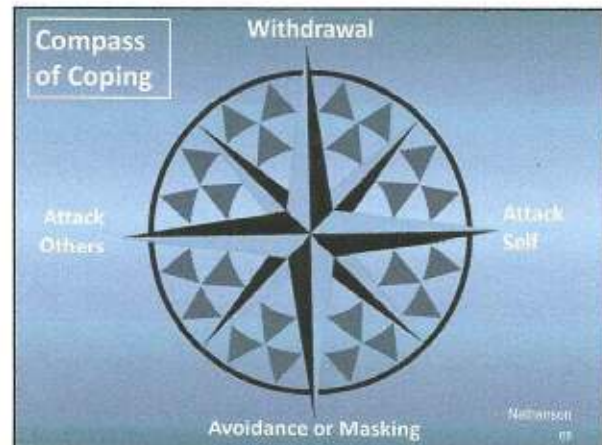- *I beat up others just to feel good about myself*
- *I was prickly and people were put off by that...through the lens of survival it worked pretty well ...but it doesn't work now*
- *I'm not sure how I came up with the idea to act crazy. I began hiding under my bed, sobbing and pretending to hear voices in my head... you have to act out to get attention...*

Graduates of care system

Compass of Coping

Withdrawal

Attack Others

Attack Self

Avoidance or Masking

Nathanson

Coping

The things we call 'symptoms' or 'behavioural problems' are the best solutions our clients have been able to come up with to help them manage **unendurable feelings**

Whatever they are doing, it is, or at least it originally was, **a useful coping skill** that, over time and with overuse, became maladaptive and then became a habit

Bloom & Farragher 2013 173-176

Unless caregivers understand the nature of such re-enactments, they are likely to label the child as oppositional, rebellious, unmotivated, or antisocial.

Bessel van der Kolk

Managing Emotion

The *orbito-frontal cortex*... plays a central role in affect regulation

...The regulating pre-frontal cortex remains plastic throughout life

Siegel

Trauma & Language

Speechless
Unspeakable
Dumbfounded
Mute terror
Indescribable
Dumbstruck
Beyond words

Howard Bath

The Three Core Trauma-Related Needs – Red Deer

While trauma keeps us dumbfounded, the path out of it is paved with words...

A critical element in healing traumatized children is helping them find words for emotional states. Naming feelings gives a sense of mastery.

Van der Kolk

Words and Trauma

Brain imaging reveals that the conscious naming of emotions reduces their intensity and calms amygdala activity.

Burklind et al., 2014

People in stress create in us their feelings and, if not trained, we will mirror their behavior

Long & Fecser

The Conflict Cycle

Nicholas Long

Without...soothing by reliable and consistent caregivers, the traumatised person is unable to regulate his or her mental state and restore emotional equilibrium

Molca

Coercive Control versus Co-Regulation

Coercive Control	Co-Regulation
One-way reaction	Two-way engagement
No awareness of own feelings	Awareness of own feelings
Focus on person's behaviours	Focus on person's emotions
Harsh, aggressive tone	Soothing, assertive tone
Retaliating to person's hostility	Absorbing person's hostility
Ignoring support needs	Meeting support needs

Howard Bath

The Three Core Trauma-Related Needs – Red Deer

The primary function of parents can be thought of as teaching their children skills that will help them manage their emotional arousal.

van der Kolk

What then is the primary function of care workers and other mentors in out of home care programs?

The first order of business is to find ways to cope with feeling overwhelmed by sensations and emotions associated with the past

van der Kolk

The Three Core *Trauma-related* Needs

The need to **feel safe**

The need for **healthy connections** and 'normal' engagement with the community

The need for **adaptive coping strategies** for managing turbulent thoughts and emotions

The other 23 hours

Parents, counselors, teachers, coaches, direct-care workers, case managers, and others are all in a position to help a child heal.

Greenwald