

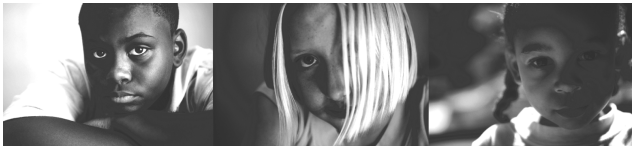
Healing a Wound: a Trauma Analogy

“It is very hard to talk about painful things, and often children and parents try to avoid doing this. In fact, they say things like, *let sleeping dogs lie*, and wonder if it is a good thing to bring back memories of sad things. We tell kids and parents that if they had been able to put those memories behind them, children would not be having any problems.

It's like when you fall off a bicycle and skin your knee on the sidewalk, and all the germs get into the wound. You have two choices about what to do with that wound. You can leave it alone, not wash it off or put any medicine on it, and hope it gets better all by itself. Sometimes that works fine. But other times, if you do that it will get infected. Infections don't usually go away by leaving them alone; they get worse and worse.

Your other choice is to wash the wound out real carefully, getting all the dirt and germs out of there. That stings, it hurts at first, but then the pain goes away, and it doesn't get infected, and can heal quickly... Talking about the traumatic situation or loss is like cleaning a wound. It might be a little painful at first, but it hurts less and less as you go on, and then the wound can heal.”

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Traumatic Bereavement in Children Treatment Manual, Center for Traumatic Stress in Children and Adolescents, Department of Psychiatry Allegheny General Hospital, Pittsburgh, PA



Contact ChildSavers Trauma Response when a child or adolescent is exposed to violence or other psychological trauma. We provide:

- 24/7 immediate response
- Follow-up with families after the initial response
- Trauma counseling services for children & adolescents (2-17 years of age)

804-644-9590

Trauma Response is a service of:

ChildSavers

Helping Greater Richmond's Children Since 1924

www.childsavers.org

200 North 22nd Street
Richmond, VA 23223

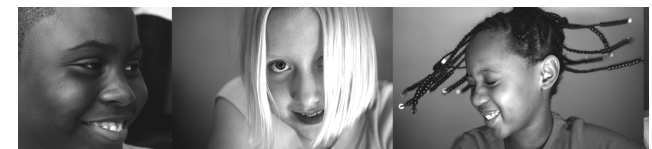
Phone: 804-644-9590 • Fax: 804-644-9596

Hope after Trauma

Information for professionals
who work with children



 **ChildSavers**
Trauma Response



www.childsavers.org



(804) 644-9590

What is Trauma Response?

Trauma Response is the city of Richmond’s only program devoted to immediate response and trauma counseling services for children who have experienced trauma. The majority of children who participate in Trauma Response have witnessed or experienced a violent event. Our clinicians are often contacted by the Richmond Police Department, Richmond Ambulance Authority, schools and other community agencies to provide immediate assistance. Our services are free of charge to any child or adolescent between the ages of 2-17 who has experienced a recent traumatic event.

Making a referral

Professionals who work with children are a vital link between families and the Trauma Response program. Children who have experienced a traumatic event within the last year are eligible for Trauma Response services at no cost to families. With permission from the parent or guardian, professionals can call ChildSavers and provide initial intake information. A Trauma Response clinician will contact the family immediately in order to schedule initial follow-up.

To make a referral please call:

804-644-9590

Please indicate that you are making a Trauma Response referral.

How does Trauma Response help children and adolescents?

24/7 Immediate Response

When a Trauma Response clinician is contacted by Police, Ambulance, or other professionals they arrive at the traumatic event to assist children and families. They assess the emotional and physical safety from the perspective of the child. Clinicians attend to the emotional needs of children at the scene, often engaging them in symptom soothing activities.

24 Hour Follow-Up

The clinician who responds to the traumatic event schedules a time for follow-up with the family. Typically 24 hours after the event, the clinician will visit the family to reassess the child’s reaction to the event, educate parents about symptoms of trauma, and schedule a time to begin counseling services. In some cases, referrals are made weeks or months after the traumatic event. Clinicians will contact families for follow-up within 24 hours in these cases as well.

Trauma Counseling Services

Children are engaged in counseling services over the course of 10-12 sessions. Counseling services are trauma treatment focused, aimed at establishing safety, developing emotional regulation skills, identifying resources and enhancing resiliency. Ongoing counseling services are provided by our Guidance Clinic when needed.

Symptoms of trauma

Children who have experienced trauma may:

- Withdraw from others
- Avoid fun activities or activities that remind them of the trauma
- Have difficulty falling or staying asleep
- Be unable to concentrate
- Startle more easily
- Have dreams about the trauma or people involved in the traumatic event
- Be irritable or angry
- Experience headaches, stomach aches or unusual sweating
- Begin acting younger than their age (for example, they may return to behaviors such as sucking their thumb, bedwetting or asking to sleep in their parents’ bed)
- Seem numb to what is happening around them