

POST ADOPTION RESOURCE CENTER

Newsletter

Trauma Informed Caregiving Support

Join us for an opportunity to get together virtually and help one another with caregiving. This is a space for any foster, adoptive, kinship, or guardianship parent to attend and work towards problem solving baffling behaviors together.

Third Monday of each month

7 p.m.

Join Zoom Meeting:

Meeting ID: 853 766 4433

Join other current or prospective foster, adoptive and guardian parents.

All information shared will be kept confidential.

For more information and/or to RSVP, contact

Alysa Sutinen at alysa@upkids.com or 906-250-0393

Dana Munn at dana@upkids.com or 906-281-3998

Eve Giraud-Prosser at eve@upkids.com or 906-281-9091

Shifra Cooper at shifra@upkids.com or 906-748-0022

Volume 5 Issue 2

IN THIS ISSUE:

Support Group	Page 1
Self-Care	Pages 2-3
Confrontation made easier	Page 4
What is Trauma?	Page 5
Caring Connection Support Group Flyer	Page 6
Upcoming Events	Pages 7-9

UPkids.com

Contact a PARC Specialist

Escanaba 906-748-0022

Houghton 906-281-3998

Marquette 906-281-9091

Chippewa 906-250-0393

Check out upcoming events, webinars and resources on our Facebook page:

U.P. Post Adoption Resource Center



The Post Adoption Resource Center is a program of U.P. KIDS and is funded by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services.

Self-Care

Eve Giraud-Prosser, Post Adoption Specialist

Self-care can mean different things to different people. One definition for self-care is the ability to care for oneself through awareness, self-control, and self-reliance in order to achieve, maintain, or promote optimal health and well-being. Another definition of self-care is the ability of individuals, families, and communities to promote health, prevent disease, maintain health, and to cope with illness and disability with or without the support of a healthcare provider.

Self-care can be difficult for some people. There can be many barriers that make it hard for self-care, some examples include: time, guilt, financial limitations, negative self-talk, and lack of support. Time is definitely one this day and age especially if you work full time and have a family. Guilt can also be a major barrier because sometimes taking the time for self-care is time away from other responsibilities you may have. Financial limitations can be a huge barrier for self-care especially if you need to have multiple jobs to make ends meet. Negative self-talk is also a barrier, telling yourself you don't have enough time to apply self-care because there are so many different responsibilities to take care of first. Lastly. The lack of support can be a huge obstacle. If there are others in your life that depend on you they may not support you when you try to apply self-care because it is time away from them.

Below are some examples of Self-care:

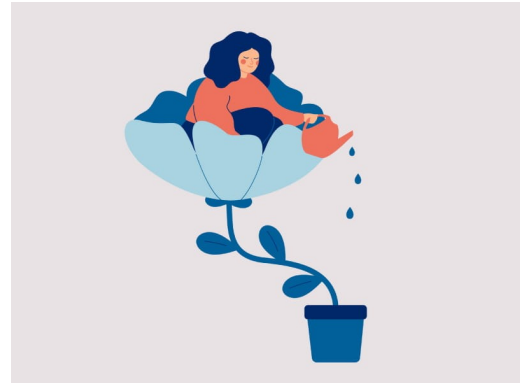
- Mental and Emotional
 - Exercise (join a gym, go for a walk or hike, dance, ski, bike rides, stretching, or swimming).
 - Relaxation techniques (yoga, meditation, deep breathing, massage or stretching).
 - Getting enough sleep
 - Healthy brain food (salmon, beans, blueberries, or dark leafy greens).
 - Social support networks (family, friends, teachers, or co-workers).
 - Creating a daily and weekly routine.
 - Breathing exercises.
 - Seek help if needed.



Self-Care

Eve Giraud-Prosser, Post Adoption Specialist

- Physical
 - Exercise (join a gym, go for a walk or hike, dance, skiing, bike riding, stretching, or swimming).
 - Eat healthy food.
 - Drink plenty of water.
 - Get enough sleep.
- Environmental
 - Taking care of your surroundings
 - Creating a comfortable workspace (plants, pleasant lighting, soft carpet, or a comfy chair).
 - Declutter (donate your extra items).
 - Go outdoors (jog, walk, hike, ski, snowshoe, or ice skate).
- Spiritual
 - Meditation/yoga/breathing.
 - Spend time in nature (go for a walk or go hiking, go spend time near water, and enjoy a sunrise or a sunset).
 - Find a common spiritual community.
 - Volunteering.
- Recreational and Social
 - Join a group (YMCA or other gym, book club, dance class, choir or theatre group).
 - Play in a sport (basketball, tennis, hockey, football, or baseball).
 - Take time for hobbies (photography, painting, gardening, reading, music, cooking, woodwork, or writing).
 - Take time to relax (watch a movie, read a book, or meditate).
 - Play your favorite board games (Monopoly, Checkers, Yahtzee, or cards).
 - Help garden in your community.



As you can see there are many different ideas to help you utilize self-care. Try utilizing one or two at a time to see what works for you. It is important to know that self-care is not selfish and that it is a life long journey. Finding out what self-care means to you can take time. Be gentle with yourself as you explore this part of your life. Start building a self-care plan at your own pace and change it when you need to.

Confrontation made easier

Dana Munn, Post Adoption Specialist

Communication is nonstop occasion in our homes, at our jobs, and at most places in between. Having the skills to communicate with others is important for our own relationships and as examples for our children. When we can effectively communicate our emotions, wants, and needs, we are more likely to have better relationships and encounters with other people. Effective communication also increases the chances for encouraging behaviors and providing examples to our children, which can also help them increase their communication skills.

How we express things is as important as what we choose to express. Speaking and acting with empathy can decrease potential hurt or discomfort between those involved. Empathy is generally described as the ability to think about another person's perspective and be able to share that perspective, or *putting yourself in their shoes*, as the expression states. Empathy is an important part of healthy confrontation.

Confrontation involves each party being respectful while addressing a specific issue that needs resolution.

The issue discussed should be specific, presently relevant, actively listening, and language that encourages all parties to own their feelings. A great way to encourage owning our feelings is to use language that involves "I" statements instead of "you" statements. For example, expressing *I feel upset when you do that*, versus *you make me angry when you do that*. This language deters placing blame on another and allows ownership of emotions. Kind language is also important for healthy confrontation, which uses empathy to consider the other person's feelings. Healthy confrontation has the goal of reaching a solution that is good for both parties.

Healthy confrontation should also have a limited time frame for the confrontation to be completed so that the argument does not last too long or occur at times when a resolution cannot be readily reached. Going to bed angry or having to attend an event right after a confrontation could increase negative feelings and hamper emotional regulation and processing. Developing effective confrontation and communication skills takes practice and time.

You can practice "I" statements while talking with friends and family, at work, and at social events. Try using healthy confrontation with your kids to allow them to better express their feelings and actively listen to others about their feelings.



What is Trauma?

Trauma is exposure to an event or multiple events that is frightening, dangerous, violence that is a threat to life, bodily injury, or safety. It can also be traumatic to witness a loved one experience a traumatic event. Traumatic events can cause a strong emotional reaction including feelings of fear, terror, helplessness as well as physiological reactions including vomiting, increased heart rate, and a loss of control over bodily functions.

Understanding Behaviors

In terms of trauma, we need to use an empathetic lens to understand that what we are seeing as "misbehaviors" can be directly related to the feelings below the surface and our children are acting on their feelings. Below the surface is where the invisible beliefs and fears are kept. It is also where the experiences are and what they have taken from those experiences exist. The behaviors above are the physical reactions. Thus, we need to understand what is below the surface before we can strategize and support our children. Remember that trauma shape's children's beliefs and expectations about themselves, adults, and the world. These beliefs help shape the way they see themselves, others, and the world around them.

Impacts of Untreated Trauma

Physical

- Difficulty controlling physical responses to stress.
- Chronic illnesses, into adult life.

Logic

- Struggle with learning, thinking, and concentration.
- Impaired memory.
- Difficulty with transitions, thoughts or activities.

Emotional

- Low self-esteem.
- Low self-worth.
- Feelings of being unsafe.
- Difficulty with emotional regulation.
- Difficulty forming attachments.
- Difficulty forming friendships.
- Difficulty developing trust in others.
- Depressive and anxiety disorders.

Behavior

- Difficulty with or lack of impulse control.
- Aggressive behavior, fighting, or running away.
- Substance misuse.
- Suicide Ideation.



Trauma Can Come From

Bullying	Sexual Abuse
Community Violence	Neglect
Complex Trauma	Refugee Trauma
Disasters	Sex Trafficking
Early Childhood Trauma	Terrorism and Violence
Intimate Partner Violence	Traumatic Grief
Domestic Violence	Substance Misuse
Medical Trauma	Parental Substance Misuse
Physical Abuse	Emotional Abuse

Explore Baffling Behaviors

If you notice consistent difficult behaviors occur, try these steps:

1. **Recognize** behaviors and how they may be linked to trauma? You may find them hard to understand, maybe even confusing!
2. **Get curious:** What is causing this issue? What is behind the behavior? Is it a fear response? Is it normal child development? Is it an invisible (below the surface) held belief or fear?
3. **Guess and test:** Try a strategy! How did they respond? If that doesn't work, adjust the response to the behavior.
4. **Repeat:** We have to adjust the ways we deal with our children who have experienced trauma. The first tool may not be the right tool. **Try, try again.**

Parent Strategies

- Notice the impacts trauma has had on your child
- Help your child to feel safe and secure
- Help your child understand their emotions
- Help your child manage emotions
- Help your child understand difficult behaviors
- Help your child manage difficult behaviors
- Be respectful and supportive of positive and strong relationships in your child's life
- Help your child to understand their story through a strength-based lens
- Be your child's advocate
- Seek assessments and treatments for trauma
- Practice self-care as a caregiver
- Help your child learn to problem solve
- Help your child develop positive relationships
- Engage with other parents to develop and understand different strategies



CARING CONNECTIONS

U . P . K I D S &
C O P P E R I S L A N D A C A D E M Y

Join us at monthly adoption/guardianship
family support gatherings to build
connections, support, and share information.

JANUARY 15

All Ages &
Parents/Guardians
4:00-5:30 p.m.

FEBRUARY 12

All Ages &
Parents/Guardians
4:00-5:30 p.m.

MARCH 18

All Ages &
Parents/Guardians
4:00-5:30 p.m.

APRIL 15

All Ages &
Parents/Guardians
4:00-5:30 p.m.

MAY 20

All Ages &
Parents/Guardians
4:00-5:30 p.m.

JUNE 10

Summer Party
All Ages
4:00-6:00 p.m.

52125 INDUSTRIAL PARK N.,
CALUMET MI 49913

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT DANA
DANA@UPKIDS.COM (906)281-3998

We Are Here For You!

Let us know:

- What activities would you like to see us host?
- How can we help you through our support groups?
- Do you have any other ideas or suggestions?
- Contact us through email, phone or our Facebook page.



Trauma Informed Caregiving Training

Chris Foreman, MSSW, a liaison for the National Traumatic Stress Network will be joining us and discussing some trauma informed strategies. This is a space for any foster, adoptive, kinship or guardianship parent to attend and work towards problem solving baffling behaviors together.

Date: 03/18/2024

Time: 7 pm ET

Location: Virtually via ZOOM

Link: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/8537664433>

To receive more information please contact Alysa Sutinen at alysa@upkids.com or 906-250-0393. RSVPs are appreciated but not required.

SUPPORT GROUP

FOR

Adoptive, Foster, Kinship and
Guardianship parents

Join others who are current or prospective foster parents, in a guardianship, in the adoption process or have adopted children. We will build a community of support, together.

Dates: 03/14/2024

04/04/2024

05/02/2024

Time: 5:30-6:30 EST

Where: The Ishpeming Library
317 North Main St, Ishpeming MI

If you have any questions, contact Eve Giraud-Prosser at eve@upkids.com or 906-281-9091 text or call

Adoptive, Foster, Guardianship and
Kinship Families
2024 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Save
the Date

April 20 in Negaunee

Please join us for our annual conference. We have a full day of learning opportunities.

Additional details and an electronic RSVP will be available soon and sent via email. Please be sure to respond as breakfast and lunch will be provided. Virtual participants will receive a link to join.



Adoptive, Foster and Kinship Families 2024 ANNUAL BANQUET

Save the Date

April 26 in Sault Ste. Marie

Psychologist A.J. O'Sickey, PhD will be returning to provide a full day of learning opportunities!

Additional details and an electronic RSVP will be available soon and sent via email. Please be sure to respond as breakfast and lunch will be provided. Virtual participants will receive a link.