

2025 [Rady's Mental Health Webinar Series](#)

Facilitator Guide for Parents/Caregivers

Reflection Questions and Answers

March 4, 2026

[How Trauma Impacts Children and Youth and What You Can Do About It](#)

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Short description of webinar: Trauma and chronic stress can shape how children think, feel, and behave long after an event has passed. This session helps parents understand how adversity impacts the developing brain, recognize signs of distress, and respond with trauma-informed strategies that promote safety, resilience, and prevention.

Pre-Webinar **Sample** Activity:

1. Have you ever observed behaviors in a child or adolescent that made you wonder whether they may have experienced a traumatic event or other adverse experience? If so, which behaviors stood out to you?

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Post Webinar **Sample** Questions:

1. Prior to this webinar, how many of the seven listed circumstances would you have identified as traumatic experiences?

Example answers:

- Someone broke the privates part rule
- Grown-up hit or hurt kids
- Kid didn't have food, hugs, clothes and things kids need
- Grown-ups in the family hit each other, or yell, or hurt
- Moving to a new home
- Someone you love leaving or dying
- Scary things happening with the weather



2. Which Emotional Impacts of trauma have you observed in a youth who may have experienced circumstances associated with trauma?

Example answers:

- Anger
- Shame
- Fear
- Sadness
- Anxiety
- Numbing



3. Have you noticed any of the Behavioral Impacts associated with trauma in a youth you know? If so, which behaviors have you observed?

Example answers:

- Avoidance
- Hypervigilance
- Re-experiencing



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4. Which **Common Beliefs Impacted by Trauma** have you observed in a youth who may have experienced one or more potentially traumatic circumstances? Which beliefs do you notice most often?

Example answers:

- Trust
- Control/Power
- Esteem
- Intimacy
- Safety



Common Beliefs Impacted by Trauma

	Self	Others
Trust	I make bad decisions. I can't trust my own judgment.	People can't be trusted. They will hurt me.
Control/Power	Nothing is under my control. I have no power.	People are in control. They can hurt me.
Esteem	I am stupid. I am worthless. I am a failure.	People are better than me. They are smarter.
Intimacy	I can't get close to people. I am alone.	People will leave me. I am alone.
Safety	I am unsafe. Something bad will happen to me.	People can't be trusted. They will hurt me.

5. When you think about a youth who may have experienced trauma, what **potential Relational Impacts** have you noticed in their interactions with others?

Example answers:

- Isolation
- Trouble developing healthy relationships
- Violence/aggression



6. When supporting youth who may have experienced trauma, which **Common 'Misunderstandings' of Child Behavior** do you believe can make it most challenging to provide effective support?

Example answers:

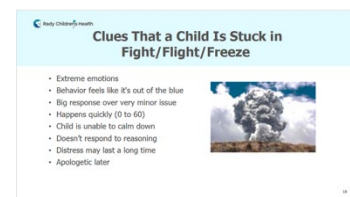
- Developmentally inappropriate expectations
- Over-personalizing misbehavior
- Pathologizing child behavior



7. Which **Clues That a Child Is Stuck in Fight/Flight/Freeze** have you observed in a youth who may have experienced trauma?

Example answers:

- Extreme emotions
- Behavior feels like it's out of the blue
- Big response over very minor issue
- Happens quickly (0 to 60)
- Child is unable to calm down
- Doesn't respond to reasoning
- Distress may last a long time
- Apologetic later



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8. Which strategies for supporting a youth in **Fight or Flight** response would you use, and why do you believe those strategies would be effective?

Example answers:

- Create a sense of safety
- Briefly reflect emotion
- Offer to do a favorite coping skill together
- Allow the child time to calm



9. When considering the use of **Labeled Praise** to build positive relationships with youth, which behaviors do you think would be most beneficial to the youth in your life?

Example answers:

- Opposition/Anger
- Hyperactive/Destructive/Careless
- Inattention
- Attention Seeking/Interrupting

Labeled Praise	
Opposition/Anger	• Notice doing as well being praised • Use as proof of you for connecting • Not all using your words
Hyperactive/Destructive/Careless	• I like the way you're being gentle • That's awesome sitting still • How to keep your hands for yourself • Excellent job sitting in your seat
Inattention	• Great job listening to directions • I love how you're listening, great job • Notice doing as well taking your time
Attention Seeking/Interrupting	• Thanks for waiting patiently • I like the way you're taking turns • Thanks for letting me finish this

10. Thinking about your support to youth, which of the three strategies for **Breaking the Cycle** are you already implementing? What positive impact have you observed?

Example answers:

- **Selective Attention**
- **Consequences**
- **Behavioral Systems**

Breaking the Cycle	
Selective Attention	• Watch closely, busy yourself with an activity • There will be a "turn" in the behavior – stay consistent • Immediately praise "the opposite" (wanted) behavior
Consequences	• Natural Consequences • Removal of Privileges • Time-out
Behavioral System	