

Building Resilience Against Toxic Stress & Trauma in Children.



Why is Starfish Addressing Childhood Trauma?

Childhood trauma is one of today's most serious public health threats. Prolonged exposure to trauma causes toxic stress, which can lead to chronic illnesses and self-destructive behaviors into adulthood.

Research shows that when children are repeatedly exposed to trauma—including violence, abuse, neglect, growing up in poverty and household dysfunction—**their brain development and physiology is negatively affected.** Often leading to life-long trouble learning and controlling their emotions.

Studies show 1 in 4 children experience trauma by preschool, and that a positive, supportive relationship with an adult is the best defense to adverse experiences.

Key adults in a child's life can be trained to help buffer trauma and negate the long-term effects. Starfish's staff is ready to do just that and to train parents to effectively support their children.

Help us create a resilient community that is trauma AWARE, INFORMED and EQUIPPED!

Please visit bit.ly/Starfish-trauma to learn how you and your organization can become Trauma Aware and Informed or email our trauma experts at cgrim@sfish.org.

Poverty and Toxic Stress

Any family can experience toxic stress. But growing up in poverty presents the type of chronic adversity that often leads to it.

Low-income families are more likely to face high stress situations like food insecurity and living in neighborhoods with high rates of crime, drug abuse, and failing schools.

Stress Continuum

POSITIVE

Brief increases in heart rate, mild elevations in stress hormone levels.

TOLERABLE

Serious, temporary stress responses, buffered by supportive relationships.

TOXIC!!

Prolonged activation of stress response systems in the absence of protective relationships.

When children experience chronic or toxic stress without the buffer of supportive adults their brain undergoes unhealthy changes leaving them even more vulnerable to stressors and more likely to face major health impacts.