

# Children affected by parents' behavior following trauma

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A new study in the *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy* examines the role that specific parenting practices may play in children's adjustment after trauma. The study suggests that the quality of parenting practices following trauma can mediate the relationship between trauma exposure and child adjustment. The study finds that certain parenting behaviors have the potential to significantly improve children's outcomes.

Effective parenting practices provide a protective environment surrounding children and the authors have proposed a framework that draws on positive parenting practices that promote healthy child development.

The goals of parenting following trauma would be to provide structure, security, emotional warmth, and an environment that addresses the traumatic event. Skill encouragement, monitoring, interpersonal problem-solving, and positive involvement would support these goals and enable parents to provide an environment to promote their children's resilience after trauma.

Led by Abigail Gewirtz, PhD, of the University of Minnesota, researchers reviewed the existing literature on trauma and subsequently propose a prevention research framework to inspect the ways in which parents can affect children's recovery in the aftermath of trauma.

Strengthening parenting and a focus on interpersonal relationships would serve as an effective population-based approach to promoting children's recovery and functioning following trauma. "By providing an overview of the evidence to-date, and a proposed prevention research framework, it is our hope that others will see and respond to the need to advance this field," the authors conclude.

Source: Wiley

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