

BC Children's Hospital

Kelty Mental Health Resource Centre

Supporting Children and Youth Who Have Experienced Trauma

Dr. Julia Gibson, MD FRCPC
FEBRUARY 2022

Welcomel We will begin the presentation shortly.
Please note that your microphones have been muted and your cameras are turned off.

All photo credits: Pexels.com

Kelty Mental Health Resource Centre

We help families across the province by:

- Helping with understanding and navigating the mental health system
- Listening and offering peer support, and
- Connecting families to resources and tools.

kelty mental health

resource centre

BC's Information Source for Children, Youth & Families

1.800.485.1832

keltymentalhealth.ca

Housekeeping

- Attendees are automatically muted and cameras are turned off.
- Please submit questions for the speakers through the "Q&A" function. There has been an option enabled where you can vote for questions that you want answered.
- Please submit technical questions or comments through the "Chat" function
- At the end of the webinar, a survey will pop up that we invite you to complete
- The webinar will be recorded and made available after March 4th at <https://bit.ly/keltywebinars>
- This information applies to the context in British Columbia. If you are in another jurisdiction please consult local health and school authorities for further information.

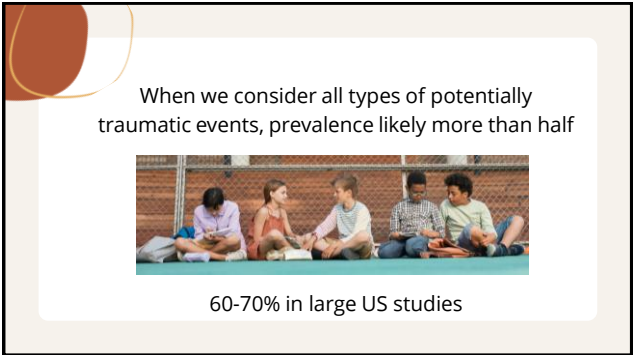
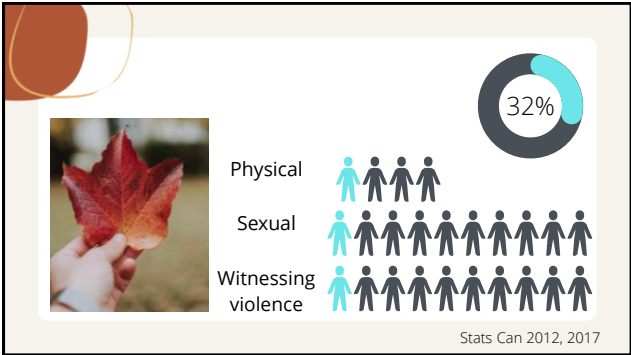
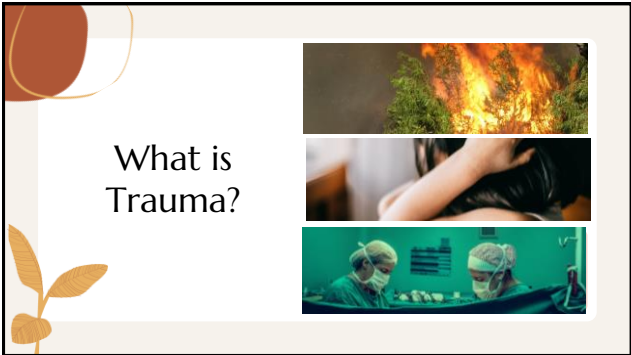
Thank You for Your Questions

Speaker

Dr. Julia Gibson, MD FRCPC
Psychiatrist
Child and Adolescent Psychiatry
BC Children's Hospital

Agenda

What is trauma?
What can the impact be?
How can you support your child?



There are subgroups with higher prevalence

- Ex:
- Intellectually or Developmentally Disabled
 - Street involved youth
 - Youth in Care
 - Communities experiencing systemic racism

The good news:
Children and Youth
are Resilient



Most do not develop
persistent trauma symptoms



Of those that do, ~half will
spontaneously resolve *



- Nature of Trauma
- Developmental Level
- Inherent Resiliency
- Learned Resiliency
- Support



Cohen et al, 2017

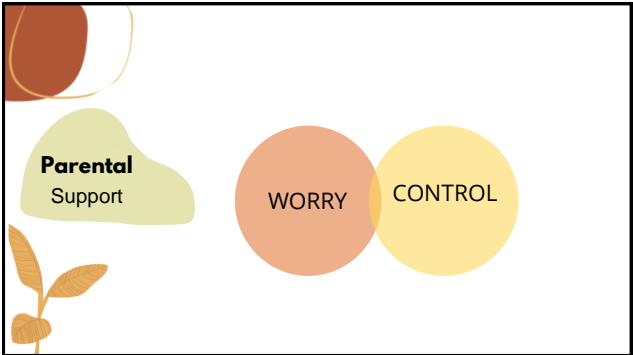
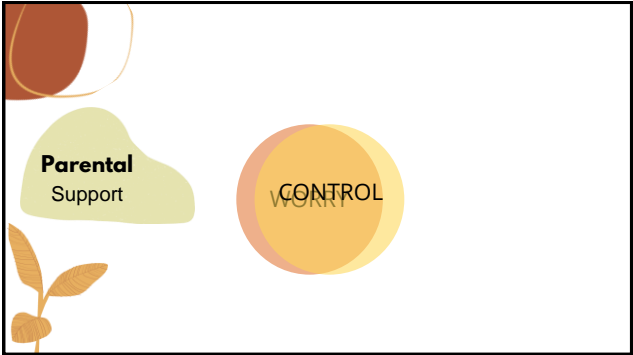
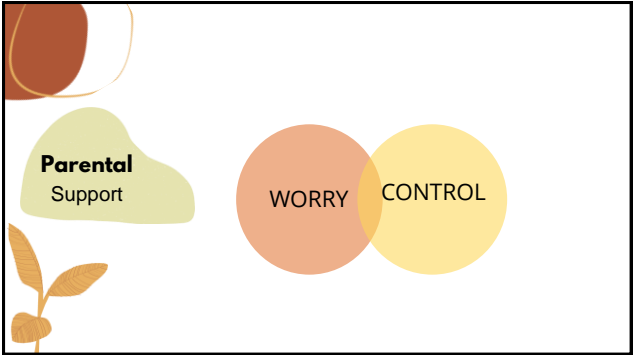
- Nature of Trauma
- Developmental Level
- Inherent Resiliency
- Learned Resiliency
- **Support**



Parental
Support

Parental
Wellbeing

**Better
Outcome**
FOR CHILD




Parent - Child Relationship

Am I lovable, valued?

What should I expect in relationships?

Open communication


Validation:
The power of "being with"



The image shows a man and a young child jumping in the air against a white brick wall. The man is on the right, wearing a white long-sleeved shirt and dark pants. The child is on the left, wearing a white shirt and dark pants. They are both smiling and have their arms raised.

What Does Trauma Look like ?


Parental Support



The image shows a coin-operated binocular viewer with a face. The face has a mustache and a small hat. The viewer is set against a background of a city skyline.

Trauma Impact

- emotional
- behavioural
- cognitive
- relationship
- biologic



The image shows a circular arrangement of small, dried flowers and leaves on a white background. The flowers are in various colors, including purple, orange, and white.

Emotional Impact


- anger
- anxiety
- sadness
- numbness
- volatile



Inside Out (Disney, 2015)


Behavioural Impact

- substance use
- self injury
- recklessness
- aggression
- avoid
- overfunctioning



Cognitive Impact

- harder to learn, perform academically
- Untrue and unhelpful thoughts
 - self *"It's my fault"*
 - others *"no one can be trusted"*
 - world *"not safe"*




Relationship Impact

- isolate from friends, activities
- associate with troubled peers
 - "only they would understand me"*
- Establish unhealthy relationship patterns




Biological Impact

- physical symptoms or panic attacks
- brain development and growth
- hormonal, neurotransmitter
- brain functioning (ie threat response)



Trauma Impact

- emotional
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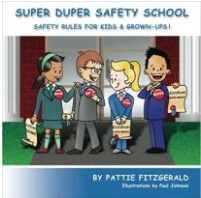


What to Do?

Safety

- ensure no ongoing risk
- Reassure child of safety
- Establishing a plan


"No! Go, Tell"



What to Do?

Stability

- routine
- sleep, exercise, nutrition
- calm and consistent approach
- connection to friends, family
- School support




What to Do?

Communicate

- positive relationship, more information
- Invite sharing (without pressure)

" I learned that more than half of kids have a scary experience at some point. I just want you to know that I'm here and would always want to know, and to help"




What to Do?

Communicate

- open, validating (not critical, questioning)
- Keep messages truthful, healthy , age appropriate
- You don't need to know all the answers

"Thank you for sharing this with me, I'm so glad we can talk about this together"

"This is a really important question, so I'm going to give it some thought and we'll talk about this tomorrow"




What to Do?

Communicate

- Emotions: identify them, validate them, coping skills
- Resources like books , websites can be helpful
- Letting your child know :


It's not their fault
They're not alone



What to Do?

Connect to care

- Family Doctor
- Child and Youth Mental Health Team (6-19y)
- Foundry Clinics FoundryBC.ca (12 - 24y)
- PEACE program for witnessed violence (3-18y)
- Crime Victim Assistance Program
- MCFD, VACFSS
- Privately (psychologists.bc.ca, TFCBT.org, other)
- Kelty Mental Health




What to Do?

Connect to care


Therapy

- TF-CBT (3-21y)
- EMDR
- Play Therapy
- Child-Parent (0-5)



Parental Support


Parental Wellbeing



Better Outcome

FOR CHILD

Parental Wellbeing



Parental Wellbeing

Kids do better when their parents are doing better

- Protective
- Faster Recovery
- Healthy Example
 - self care
 - regulating emotions
 - social connection
 - seeking support when needed



Parental Wellbeing

Intergenerational trauma


“Pain travels through family lines until someone is ready to heal it in themselves. By going through the agony of healing, you no longer pass the poison chalice onto the generations that follow. It's incredibly important and sacred work.”

Author Unknown

Parental Wellbeing

Self Care

1. Focused breathing
2. Progressive muscle relaxation
3. Guided meditation
4. Music
5. Art
6. Yoga/stretching
7. Exercise/sports/dance
8. Relaxation apps
9. Soothing activities
 - (taking a warm bath, putting on lotion, wrapping up in a blanket)
10. Talking to a friend
11. Reading



Key Points

Traumatic events are **common**, but kids are **resilient**
Trauma **hurts**, but kids can **heal**
Parents are a powerful source of **healing**

Resources

- Emotion Focused Caregiving (validation): www.mentalhealthfoundations.ca/parent-coaching
- A Terrible Thing Happened (Book); Margret M. Holmes
- Other trauma-specific books - OdinBooks.com
- Super Duper Safety School (Book) - Pattie Fitzgerald
- kidsgrief.ca
- The National Child Traumatic Stress Network - www.nctsn.org
- BC Children's Kelty Mental Health Resource Centre - keltymentalhealth.ca

Questions for our speaker?

Submit via
Zoom Q&A icon



Thank-you for joining.

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