



Los Angeles County DMH, Continuum of Care Reform Division

Trauma / Resilience Tip of the Week: Neurobiology of Trauma - Regulation

Childhood maltreatment, particularly repeated trauma, disrupts the acquisition of appropriate emotional regulation and interpersonal skills. Affect dysregulation is the diminished capacity to regulate or tolerate negative emotional states and has been linked to trauma and post-traumatic stress. Childhood dysregulation may have detrimental effects throughout the lifespan by increasing the risk of emotional dysregulation in adulthood.



Interventions for Emotional Dysregulation:

- A child's internal safety resumes when their distress is acknowledged, validated and modulated by a caregiver. Once this process is internalized, it leads to an enhanced capacity for effective self-regulation over time.
- Preventive measures and targeted therapeutic interventions, both psychotherapeutic and pharmacologic may improve our capacity to more optimally respond to emotional dysregulation.

Dvir, Y., Ford, Julian D., Hill, M and Frazier, J A, (2014) Childhood Maltreatment, Emotional Dysregulation, and Psychiatric Comorbidities)