

RUTGERS CHILDREN'S CENTER FOR RESILIENCE & TRAUMA RECOVERY

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER
MAY 2018

Why Caregivers are Essential to the Therapeutic Process

by Schenike Massie-Lambert, Ph.D.

Over the years there has been a shift in therapeutic interventions for children, with the focus transitioning from “child-only” therapy to parent-child and parent-only skill building interventions. Recent studies have shown that the field of child psychology is moving in this direction because rates of recidivism and return to therapy were far too high to prove that child only interventions were truly effective (Jennifer W. Kaminski & Angelika H. Claussen, 2017).

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Caregivers are our MVPs! Increasingly there has become a need to focus on the child's caregiving system because they are an essential part of the child's life. The caregivers typically have unlimited access to the child and are the backbone of the home. The child's primary has the ability to set the tone for the family's routines and rituals, culture, expectations, and tone in the home. In other words, they ultimately have the power to impact the effectiveness of a therapist's interventions with their collaboration and cooperation. However, the caregiver's impact doesn't end there, we often find that caregivers themselves are heavily affected by the children who are under their care. Caring for any child can be a challenge because they naturally test limits which can be developmentally appropriate; however when we add in numerous factors like history of trauma, other mental health concerns, history of adoption, etc. the picture becomes more complicated. Caregivers are likely to be impacted by the youth in their home emotionally, physically, financially, etc.

"Caregivers are our MVPs!"

Consequently, it is imperative to provide support and interventions for caregivers so that they become more aware of their own needs, state of mind, etc. and are better able to intervene, de-escalate, and implement fair and consistent responses and/or strategies to address the child's behavior (Blaustein & Kinniburgh, 2010; Kinniburgh & Blaustein, 2005). Additionally, engagement in therapy provides an opportunity for psychoeducation about child development and the mental health concerns, which in turn should shift the

parents attitudes, expectations, and interactions with the youth. Having a platform such as this can be reassuring and destigmatizing. Furthermore, having the parent and child in therapy together presents a unique opportunity to directly observe parent-child interactions with opportunities to provide live feedback and coaching through challenging moments (Jennifer W. Kaminski & Angelika H. Claussen, 2017).

In any therapeutic relationship, our goal is never to be with the family forever. Instead, the focus is to educate the family and engage in an exchange of information so that the caregiver then becomes the expert! Once the caregiver is fluent in the language and skills that are needed support their child's unique needs they will be better equipped to coach the child through challenging moments in the future. Hence, strengthening the family from the top down.

Reference

Jennifer W. Kaminski & Angelika H. Claussen (2017) Evidence Base Update for Psychosocial Treatments for Disruptive Behaviors in Children, Journal of Clinical Child & Adolescent Psychology, 46:4, 477-499, DOI: 10.1080/15374416.2017.1310044

Request for Applications!!!

The Rutgers Children's Center for Resilience and Trauma Recovery (CCRTR), in collaboration with the New Jersey Children's System of Care (CSOC), and the Trauma Center at the Justice Resource Institute (JRI), is excited to announce the opportunity for In-Home Therapy (IHT) and Intensive Care Coordination (ICC) providers for families/caregivers of children ages 0-10 years old , to apply to participate in the GROW: Adaptation of the ARC Framework as a Caregiver Skill Building Intervention learning community. Grow is a caregiver skill building intervention designed to enhance resilient outcomes for families who are impacted by chronic adversity or stress (Kinniburgh et al. 2011). This parenting support program is delivered as a 12 session home visiting service by parent support workers or clinical staff providing safety and stabilization support.

For more info about training and commitment to the 12-month learning and consultation community please contact:

*Dr. Massie-Lambert at
massiess@rutgers.edu*

**Our website has
officially launched!**

**To get the latest
information about our
partners, developments in
the field of child trauma,
and professional
development
opportunities please visit
our website below:
www.rukidsrresilient.org**



Disrupt Trauma Conference!

University Behavioral Health Care
Behavioral Research & Training Institute
in collaboration with UBHC Children's Services
presents
DIS{RU}PT
Trauma Conference

Thursday, May 31st, 2018

9:00am – 3:45pm

Radisson Hotel, 21 Kingsbridge Rd., Piscataway, NJ 08854

\$115 – General Admission

\$95 – Rutgers Discount

\$95 – Student Discount

Keynote Speaker

Donna Jackson Nakazawa Donna Jackson Nakazawa is an award-winning science journalist interested in exploring the intersection between neuroscience, immunology, and the deepest inner workings of the human heart. Her most recent book, *Childhood Disrupted: How Your Biography Becomes Your Biology, and How You Can Heal*, examines the lifelong consequences—both emotional and physical—of adverse childhood experiences and offers readers suffering from chronic conditions a window to healing. Donna's other works include *The Autoimmune Epidemic* (Touchstone, Simon & Schuster, 2008, 2009), which investigates the causes of a growing environmental health crisis, and *The Last Best Cure* (Hudson Street Press / Penguin, 2013), which chronicles a year-long journey to test a variety of mind-body therapies in order to unlock the restorative powers of the brain. She is also the author of *Does Anybody Else Look Like Me?: A Parent's Guide to Raising Multicultural Children* (Perseus, 2003).



Disrupt Trauma Conference!

Other Speakers:

George Scott, Ed.S., LMFT After more than 30 years as a special education administrator in three New Jersey public school districts, George's career is now focused on the mental health needs of children and their families. He is currently the Coordinator of the Middlesex County and Monmouth County Traumatic Loss Coalition, and an adjunct instructor at The College of New Jersey in the Counselor Education Department. George is a credentialed Disaster Response Crisis Counselor for the State of New Jersey, offering professional development training statewide, and is a licensed Marriage and Family Therapist with The Counseling Center at Scotch Road in Ewing, NJ.

Isaiah B. Pickens, Ph.D. Dr. Isaiah Pickens is a licensed clinical psychologist who specializes in consulting, counseling, and educational services for families, teens, and young adults. Dr. Pickens is currently Assistant Director of the Service Systems Program at the UCLA-Duke National Center for Child Traumatic Stress (NCCTS), the coordinating site of the National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN). In this role he is responsible for supporting diverse national, cross-disciplinary, and collaborative efforts to make child- and family service systems more trauma informed.

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<https://ce-catalog.rutgers.edu/coursedisplay.cfm?schID=68749>