



# **TRAUMA-PROOFING THE REVIEW**

# Acute Trauma Response

## **SYMPATHETIC NERVOUS SYSTEM IS ACTIVATED INSTANTANEOUSLY**

Stressor

**Danger!**

**Real or perceived  
threat/fear**



- Heart rate increases
- Liver releases glucose
- Bronchioles are dilated  
(Oxygen increases)
- Pupils dilate
- Adrenal glands secrete epinephrine and norepinephrine
- Digestion is inhibited
- Non-emergency bodily functions suppressed
- Non-essential thinking decreases
- Muscles tense

# TRAUMA-PROOFING THE REVIEW

Prepared for Action!

Fight

Flight

Freeze

Give in/submit



Danger  
passes





# **TRAUMA-PROOFING THE REVIEW**

**PARA-SYMPATHETIC NERVOUS SYSTEM IS ACTIVATED  
(MAY TAKE SOME TIME DEPENDING ON INTENSITY OF TRAUMA)**

**Returns body to “default” position  
(homeostasis)**

**Rest and Recovery**

- **Heart rate decreases**
- **Liver produces bile (eliminate toxins)**
- **Bronchioles are dilated constricted  
(Oxygen returns to normal)**
- **Pupils constrict**
- **Adrenal glands stop secreting epinephrine and  
norepinephrine**
- **Digestion is stimulated**
- **Body functions return to normal**
- **Thinking returns**
- **Muscles relax**
- **Memory stored**



# **TRAUMA-PROOFING THE REVIEW**

**But...  
what if the stressor  
is not resolved  
and/or the threat is  
ongoing?  
(Chronic Trauma)**

# TRAUMA-PROOFING THE REVIEW

## Chronic Trauma Response

# Danger!

ALWAYS Prepared for  
Action!  
Fight  
Flight  
Freeze  
Give in/submit



Danger is  
never over!  
Panic/Anxiety  
is constant!



**Pervasive**  
**real or perceived**  
**threat/fear**

But...  
what if the stressor  
is not resolved  
and/or the threat  
is ongoing?  
(Chronic Trauma)



# TRAUMA-PROOFING THE REVIEW

**Danger!**

## **SYMPATHETIC NERVOUS SYSTEM STAYS ACTIVATED**

- **Triggers (respond to similar stimuli of stressor)**
- **Constant influx of toxic chemicals: cortisol, adrenaline, etc.**
- **Hypervigilance**
- **Hyperalert**
- **Involuntary fight/flight/freeze/give in responses**
- **Over/under reactive**
- **Body cannot relax**

# TRAUMA-PROOFING THE REVIEW

# IMPACT OF TRAUMA

- Cannot trust self, others, environment
- Intrusive thoughts/feelings/memories/symptoms
- Addictions attempt to numb out unwanted thoughts/feelings/memories/symptoms

Codependency  
Pseudo-maturity (parentified)  
Unable to focus  
Chronic Fatigue  
Sadness  
Relationship Instability  
Suicidal attempts  
Guilt  
Burned bridges  
Compulsive behaviors  
Low self-esteem  
Anger  
Learned helplessness

Multiple Addictions  
Depression  
Numb: "Checked Out"  
Unemployment  
Thought problems  
Emotional dysregulation  
Hyperactive  
Hypersensitive  
Hypervigilant  
Hopelessness  
Violence

Nightmares  
Attempts to Control  
Anxiety  
Sleep problems  
Avoidance  
Negativity  
Overwhelmed  
Domestic violence  
Health Problems

Panic Attacks  
Criminal Thinking  
Pain  
Isolation  
Defensive  
Self-Harm  
Multiple sex partners  
Risky behaviors  
Enuresis/Encopresis





## TRAUMA-PROOFING THE REVIEW

# IMPACT OF TRAUMA

- Cannot trust self, others, environment
- Intrusive thoughts/feelings/memories/symptoms
- Addictions attempt to numb out unwanted thoughts/feelings/memories/symptoms

### Relationships

Relationship Instability  
Codependency  
Domestic violence  
Multiple sex partners  
Burned bridges

### Thinking

Low self-esteem  
Learned helplessness  
Hopelessness  
Unable to focus  
Thought problems  
Negativity  
Criminal thinking

### Emotions

Anxiety  
Anger  
Panic Attacks  
Emotional dysregulation  
Defensive  
Numb:  
“Checked Out”  
Depression  
Sadness  
Hypersensitive  
Guilt  
Overwhelmed

### Behavior

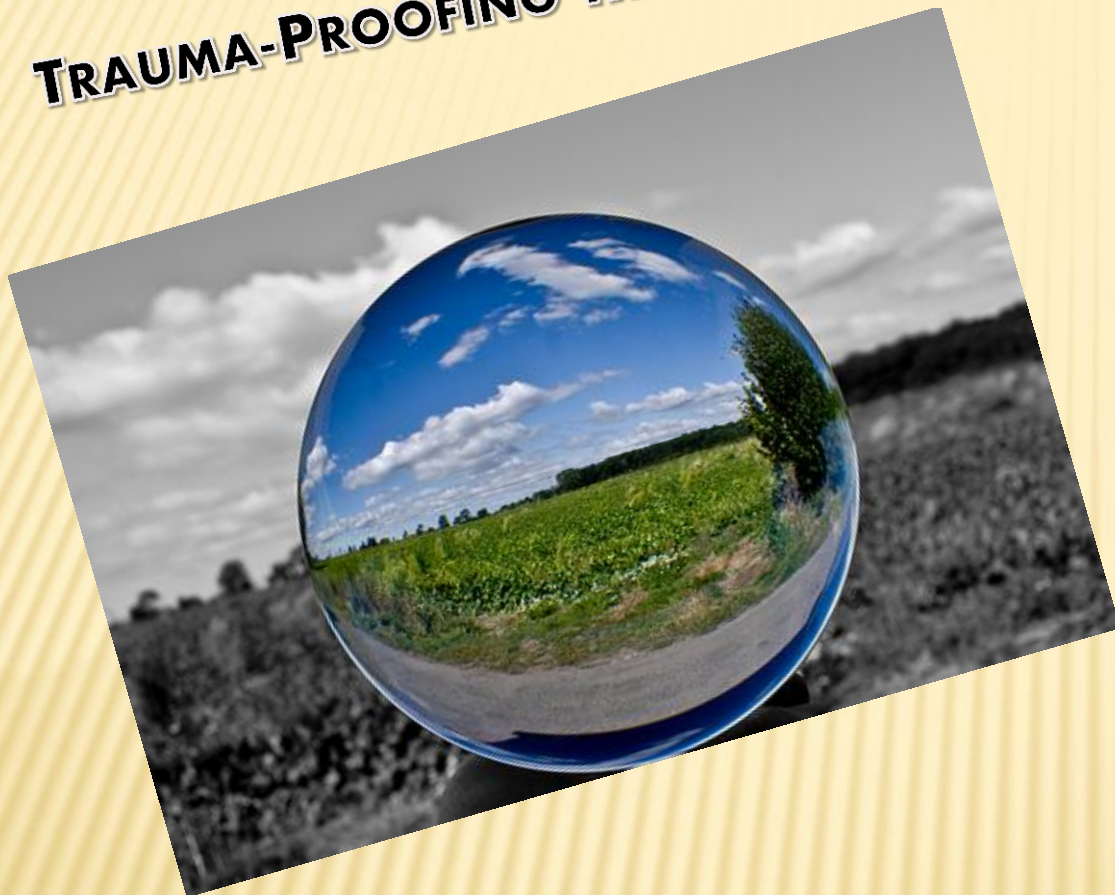
Multiple Addictions  
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Risky behaviors  
Suicidal attempts  
Hyperactive  
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Hypervigilant  
Pseudo-maturity (parentified)  
Violence  
Attempts to Control

### Physical

Chronic Fatigue  
Pain  
Sleep problems  
Health Problems  
Enuresis/Encopresis  
Nightmares

**TRAUMA-PROOFING THE REVIEW**

**IMPACT OF TRAUMA**



**Looking through another lense...**



# Adverse Childhood Experiences



## **Adverse Childhood Experiences**

- ***Abuse:*** physical, sexual, psychological
- ***Neglect:*** emotional, physical
- ***Exposure to other traumatic stressors:*** substance abuse, divorce, mental illness, domestic violence, criminal behavior

# ACES Study method

17,421 members of the Kaiser Health Plan in San Diego County from 1995-1997

Confidential survey asking questions about childhood trauma and current health status and behaviors combined with physical examination

## Demographics:

- primary care setting
- educated
- middle class
- predominantly white



**Finding Your ACE Score**

**While you were growing up, during your first 18 years of life:**

1. Did a parent or other adult in the household often or very often...  
Swear at you, insult you, put you down, or humiliate you?  
or  
Act in a way that made you afraid that you might be physically hurt?  
Yes No if yes enter 1 \_\_\_\_\_
2. Did a parent or other adult in the household often or very often...  
Push, grab, slap, or throw something at you?  
or  
Ever hit you so hard that you had marks or were injured?  
Yes No if yes enter 1 \_\_\_\_\_
3. Did an adult or person at least 5 years older than you ever...  
Touch or fondle you or have you touch their body in a sexual way?  
or  
Attempt or actually have oral, anal, or vaginal intercourse with you?  
Yes No if yes enter 1 \_\_\_\_\_
4. Did you often or very often feel that ...  
No one in your family loved you or thought you were important or special?  
or  
Your family didn't look out for each other, feel close to each other, or support each other?  
Yes No if yes enter 1 \_\_\_\_\_
5. Did you often or very often feel that ...  
You didn't have enough to eat, had to wear dirty clothes, and had no one to protect you?  
or  
Your parents were too drunk or high to take care of you or take you to the doctor if you needed it?  
Yes No if yes enter 1 \_\_\_\_\_
6. Were your parents ever separated or divorced?  
Yes No if yes enter 1 \_\_\_\_\_
7. Was your mother or stepmother:  
Often or very often pushed, grabbed, slapped, or had something thrown at her?  
or  
Sometimes, often, or very often kicked, bitten, hit with a fist, or hit with something hard?  
or  
Ever repeatedly hit at least a few minutes or threatened with a gun or knife?  
Yes No if yes enter 1 \_\_\_\_\_
8. Did you live with anyone who was a problem drinker or alcoholic or who used street drugs?  
Yes No if yes enter 1 \_\_\_\_\_
9. Was a household member depressed or mentally ill, or did a household member attempt suicide?  
Yes No if yes enter 1 \_\_\_\_\_
10. Did a household member go to prison?  
Yes No if yes enter 1 \_\_\_\_\_

Now add up your "Yes" answers: \_\_\_\_\_ **This is your ACE Score.**

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**Childhood experiences can  
be powerful determinants  
of who we become as  
adults.**



# What it found

As the number of ACEs increases, so does the risk of the following health issues:

- Alcoholism and alcohol abuse
- Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)
- Depression
- Suicide attempts
- Illicit drug use
- Ischemic heart disease (IHD)
- Liver disease
- Smoking
- Early initiation of smoking
- Early initiation of sexual activity
- Risk for intimate partner violence
- Multiple sexual partners
- Sexually transmitted diseases (STDs)
- Adolescent pregnancy
- Fetal death
- Health-related quality of life

# What it found

People with 4 or more ACEs  
compared to those with 0 ACEs:

RISK FACTOR	% INCREASE
Smoking	242%
Obesity	222%
Depression	357%
Illicit drug use	443%
Injected drug use	1,133%
STD	298%
Attempted suicide	1,525%
Alcoholism	555%

As the number of ACEs increases, so does the level of risk for each health issue

# Young children (0-5)

## Key Developmental Tasks

- Development of visual and auditory perception
- Recognition of and response to emotional cues
- Attachment to primary caregiver

## Trauma's Impact

- Sensitivity to noise
- Avoidance of contact
- Heightened startle response
- Confusion about what's dangerous and who to go to for protection
- Fear of being separated from familiar people/places





# School-aged children (6-12)

## Key Developmental Tasks

- Manage fears, anxieties and aggression
- Sustain attention for learning and problem solving
- Control impulses and manage physical responses to danger

## Trauma's Impact

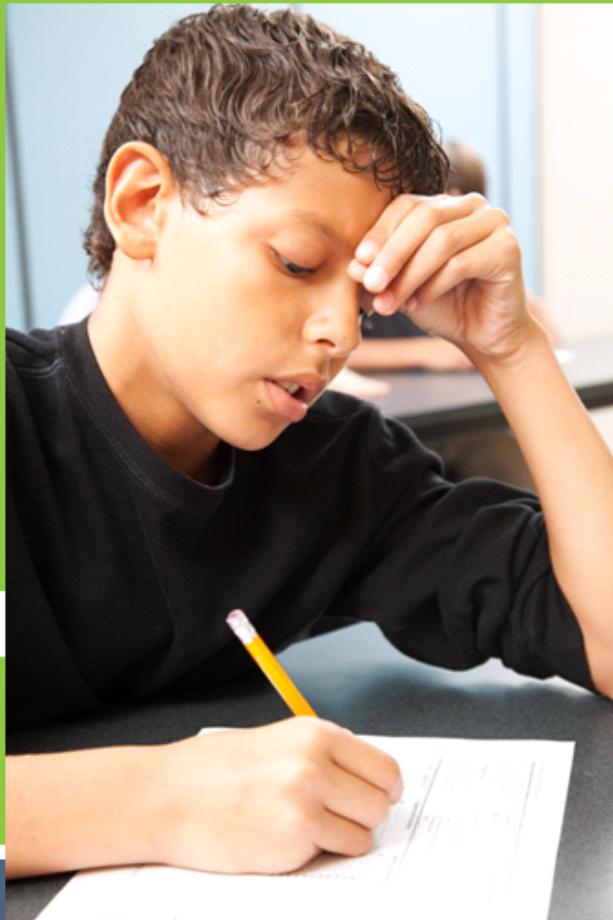
- Emotional swings
- Learning problems
- Specific anxieties and fears
- Attention seeking
- Reversion to younger behaviors



Key Developmental Tasks	Trauma's Impact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Think abstractly</li> <li>• Anticipate and consider the consequences of behavior</li> <li>• Accurately judge danger and safety</li> <li>• Modify and control behavior to meet long-term goals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Difficulty imagining or planning for the future</li> <li>• Over- or underestimating danger</li> <li>• Inappropriate aggression</li> <li>• Reckless and/or self-destructive behaviors</li> </ul>



# Students with higher number of ACEs are more likely to:



- Be designated to special education
- Score lower on standardized tests
  - Have language difficulties
  - Be suspended or expelled
    - Have poorer health
    - Fail a grade



## **Never forget Cultural Trauma:**

- ❖ **Native American population**
- ❖ **Latino population**
- ❖ **Africa American history of oppression**
- ❖ **LGBTQ history of oppression**
- ❖ **Others?**

## **TRAUMA-PROOFING THE REVIEW**

**Be Mindful** of those at the review who may have experienced trauma:

- **Parents**
- **Children**
- **Caseworkers**
- **Other parties**

## **TRAUMA-PROOFING THE REVIEW**

**We do not know which symptoms they may be experiencing.**



## **TRAUMA-PROOFING THE REVIEW**

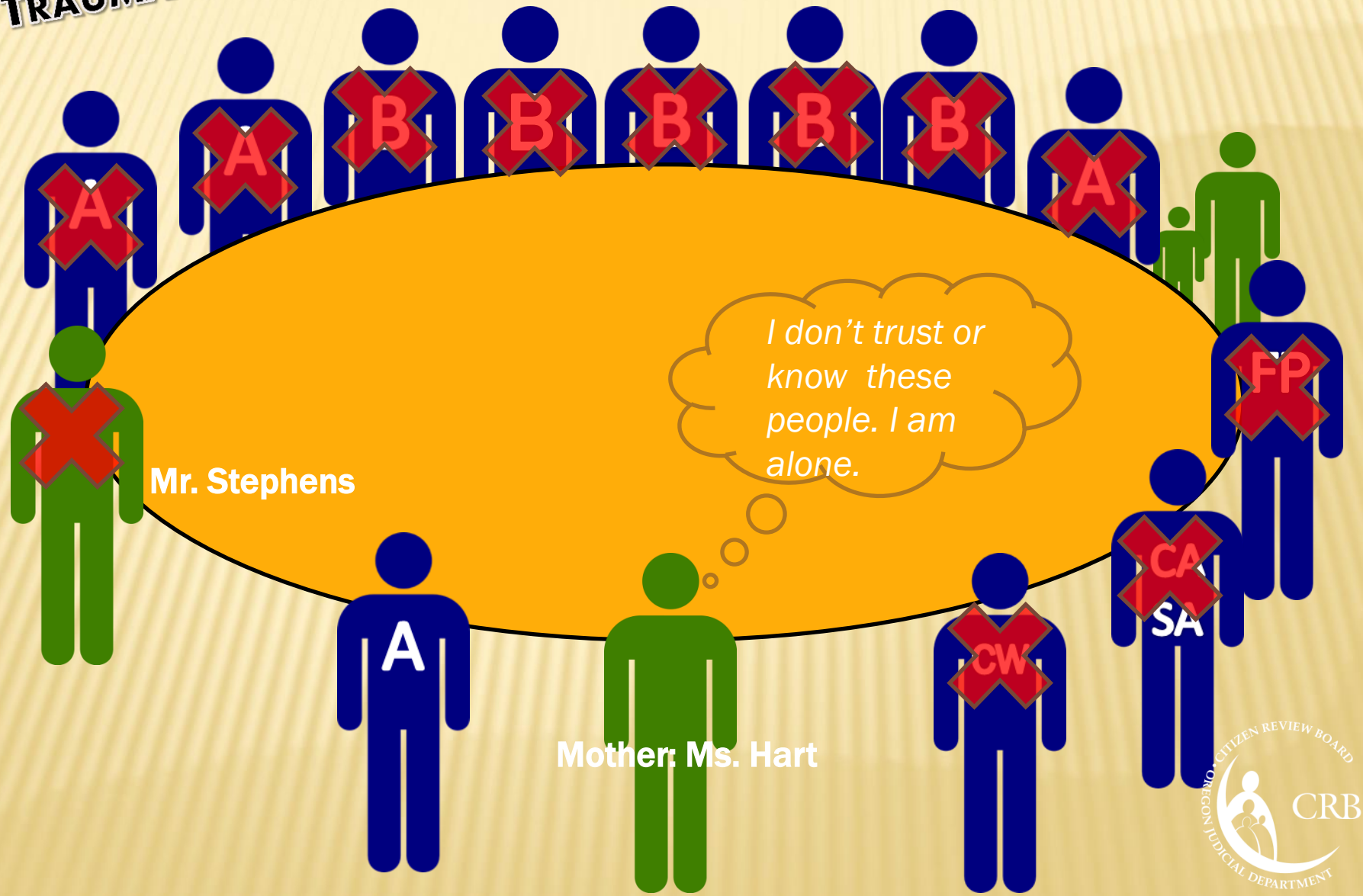
**We have a choice:**

**We can contribute to their  
stress,  
or we can promote physical  
and emotional safety.**



# TRAUMA-PROOFING THE REVIEW

Put yourself in the mother's place. How would you feel?



Mr. Stephens

*I don't trust or know these people. I am alone.*

Mother: Ms. Hart



## **TRAUMA-PROOFING THE REVIEW**

**Children and youth that have been removed from their families, even for a short period of time, experience a range of trauma and stress. Children and youth are often scared and confused and have incomplete understandings of what is happening to their families and what their future will hold. A recent study characterizes this uncertainty as “ambiguity” and provides evidence that ambiguity (this not knowing where he or she will live or what will happen to him or her) is a tremendous source of trauma.**

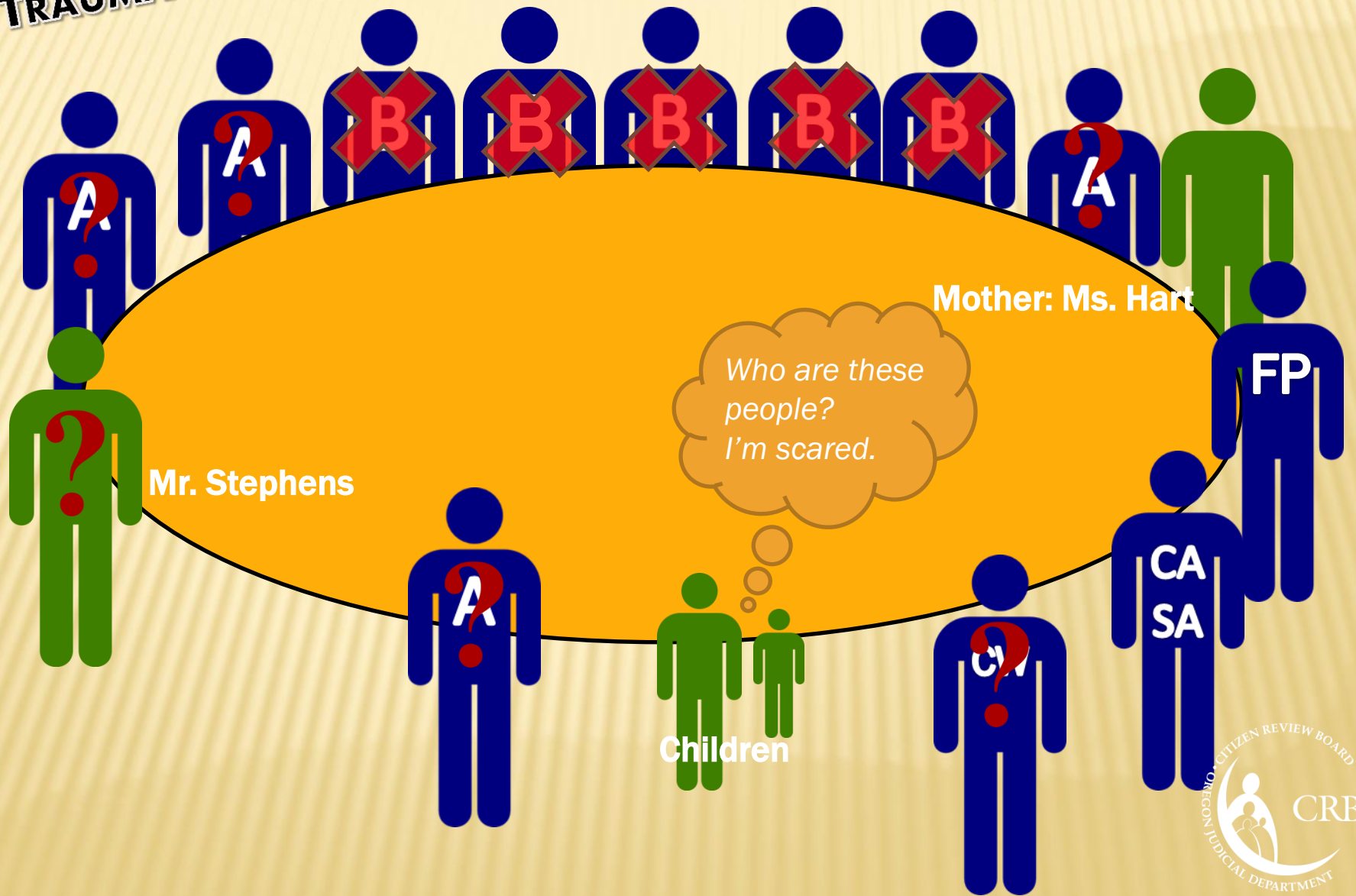
from “High Quality Legal Representation for All Parties in Child Welfare Proceedings,”  
2017, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, Administration on Children,  
Youth and Families





# TRAUMA-PROOFING THE REVIEW

Put yourself in the children's place. How would you feel?



# TRAUMA-PROOFING THE REVIEW

**Stress is the #1 Trigger for Trauma Responses!**

RECIPE FOR STRESS	
THREAT	EXPERIENCE
<b>N</b> OVELTY	Something new and you have not experienced before
<b>U</b> NPREDICTABILITY	You don't know what is going to happen
<b>T</b> HREAT TO THE SENSE OF SELF	Your competence as a person is called into question
<b>S</b> ENSE OF CONTROL	You feel as if you have little or no control over the situation

## WHAT HURTS? WHAT HELPS?

- **When not being treated with respect and dignity.**
- **Convey respect, greet in a friendly way, use their name, say “please” and “thank you,” etc.**
- **Noisy, chaotic, everyone talking at once.**
- **Calm, orderly, and 1 person talks at a time.**
- **When people don’t listen.**
- **Reflective listening, do not interrupt, politely ask to move on, if necessary.**
- **Asking questions that convey the idea that “something is wrong with you.”**
- **Asking questions for the purpose of understanding and clarifying.**



*(Adapted from “National Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare”)*



## **WHAT HURTS? WHAT HELPS?**

- **Regarding a person's difficulties as personality defects, defiance or being obstinate.**
- **Recognizing that symptoms may be a person's way of adapting or coping with trauma.**
- **Interactions that are humiliating, harsh, impersonal, disrespectful, critical, demanding, judgmental.**
- **Interactions that express kindness, patience, reassurance, calm, and acceptance without necessarily agreeing.**
- **When they try to coerce/manipulate/guilt me to cooperate.**
- **Ask what they are willing to do, etc.**

