Every Day Counts…
in the Life of a Child in Foster Care
ANNUAL CRB Conference
MAY 4, 2018

Fostering Resilience & Improving Outcomes for Children Exposed to Domestic Violence

Z. Ruby White Starr
WHAT IS REQUIRED?

Secure, reasonably healthy adults,
With good emotional management skills,
With intellectual and emotional intelligence,
Able to actively teach and be a role model,
Are consistently empathetic and patient,
Able to endure intense emotional labor,
Are self-disciplined, self-controlled and never abuse power
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abusive Behavior</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Psychological abuse (Parents)</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical abuse (parents)</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexually abused</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional neglect</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical neglect</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substance abuser in household</td>
<td>40%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Separated from one/both parents</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Witnessed DV</td>
<td>21%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Imprisoned household member</td>
<td>10%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

“harmful physical and emotional responses that occur when the requirements of the job do not match the capabilities, resources, or needs of the worker”:


**JOB STRESS**

The Sanctuary Model
TREADMILL SYNDROME
TOP WORKPLACE STRESSORS

Too much to do
Unnecessary, useless paperwork
Random interruptions, such as telephone calls, walk-in visits,
Demands from supervisors
Pervasive uncertainty as a result of organizational problems
Unsatisfactorily explained and unannounced change
Decreased funding

TREADMILL SYNDROME
TOP WORKPLACE STRESSORS

Mistrust, unfairness, and vicious office politics
Unclear policies and no sense of direction in the organization
Career and job ambiguity resulting in feelings of helplessness and lack of control
No feedback, good or bad
No appreciation; lack of communication up and down the chain of command
WORKPLACE CRISIS

- Turnover rates extremely high – addictions and child welfare programs – 50%
- High workload, high complexity, little training
- Ambiguous role definitions
- Inadequate to completely absent management training
- Lack of racial and cultural diversity
- Ambiguity of regulations that govern service delivery, and which sometimes conflict with one another
- Lack of mission clarity
- Lack of innovation, creativity
- Ethical dilemmas, moral distress

The Sanctuary Model

Caregivers

- Problems with cognition
- Communication problems
- Problems with authority
- Confused sense of justice
- Inability to grieve and anticipate future

The Sanctuary Model

Loss of emotional management

Lack of basic safety/trust
Organizations, like individuals, are living, complex, adaptive systems and that being alive, they are vulnerable to stress, particularly chronic and repetitive stress.

Organizations, like individuals, can be traumatized and the result of traumatic experience can be as devastating for organizations as it is for individuals.

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The Sanctuary Model

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CHRONIC STRESS → CHRONIC CRISIS

CHRONIC CRISIS = ORGANIZATIONAL HYPERAROUSAL

LACK OF SAFETY AND BASIC TRUST

LOSS OF EMOTIONAL MANAGEMENT

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The Sanctuary Model
COMMUNICATION BREAKS DOWN (ORGANIZATIONAL ALEXITHYMIA)
CONFLICT INCREASES
INCREASED SILOS (ORGANIZATIONAL DISSOCIATION)
LOSS OF MEMORY (ORGANIZATIONAL AMNESIA)

REPETITION OF FAILED STRATEGIES (ORGANIZATIONAL REENACTMENT)
LOSS OF PARTICIPATION
LEARNED HELPLESSNESS
LOSS OF CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS
As a result, our systems frequently recapitulate the very experiences that have proven to be so toxic for the people we are supposed to help.

Paradigm

A map inlaid in the mind which determines the way you see the world
Changing paradigms requires a transformation in our hearts and minds that reframes our mental map.
How could she just run off and leave you there?

Why didn’t your mother protect you?

Why didn’t she just leave him?

Did she get help?

More Appropriate Community and Societal Responses

Did he get help?

How could he and why would he hurt his family?

How was he made to understand that he can’t do that?

What did he do to make it better?
Asking the Right Questions

Does each party have a separate case plan that provides services that are:
• Safe?
• Tied to an identified need?
• Available?
• Accessible?
• Provided by those with knowledge of DV
• Culturally & linguistically appropriate?
Wisdom
Interdependence
Natural Rights
Grace
Strength
A bird doesn't sing because it has an answer; it sings because it has a song.

Maya Angelou