

Nurturing Strong Families Newsletter from...



Beyond Consequences Support Group

This **Thursday, March 20th, 6:30 -8:30** and every 3rd Thursday, held at Jewish Community Center, 1333 North Front Street, Harrisburg. No fee for this group but please call or e-mail Pam to register if you have not already pam@attachmentandhealing.com #717-856-1750. See www.beyondconsequences.com for further information on this transformational parenting model developed by Dr. Bryan Post. The group is loosely set up in the following manner: First half hour is an introduction to a chapter from the book, followed by 30 minute discussion of the chapter, a short experiential activity, and the last 45 minutes for parents to offer support to one another in using the model. Please feel free to attend whether you have yet purchased the book or not. It would be a great way to get an idea of the model.

"I did what I KNEW....and when I knew better, I DID better." Maya Angelou

Upcoming Seminars

Pam Moran, LSW, will be presenting next **Thursday, March 27th** for the South Central Coalition of Foster Care Providers. The morning seminar from 9:15 – 12:00 is entitled, **"Stress, Trauma and the Secret Life of Your Child: Working with Children from a New Understanding"**. The afternoon session from 1:15 to 4:00 is entitled, **"Rx for Healing: Creating the 24/7 Therapeutic Environment to Meet the Emotional Needs of Foster and Adoptive Children"**. There is no charge to those who are part of the coalition and a 10.00 charge (whole day) for those who are not part of the coalition. It is being held at the Cardinal Keeler Diocesan Center, 4800 Union Deposit Rd., Harrisburg. See the attached brochures (one of two depending on whether you are part of the coalition and will register at no cost or not part of the coalition and will pay a nominal fee of 10.00) for further information.

Thoughts from a Love- Based, Regulatory Parenting Model.....

Critical Elements to Parenting a Child with Severe Behaviors

There are three things critical to parenting children with behavioral issues, whose early life history includes maltreatment and/or attachment challenges:

Attunement- tuning in to a child's underlying needs, instead of reacting to what is on the surface (usually the behavior). Just as with a newborn baby or toddler, this is a process in which the

caretaker senses the needs underneath the cries or whimpers or gestures (or severe behaviors)....and meets those needs.

Sensitive Responsiveness – responding with understanding of where your child has been, how his/her experience has influenced where s/he is now, and with the deepest respect for the child in your response to them. In your response, using reflective and empathetic listening and non-verbal communication to express your empathy and understanding.

Emotional Connection – connecting with a child on an emotional level, often non-verbally. Remember that attachment is built through non-verbal communication (eye contact, touch, tone of voice, gesture, and timing and intensity of response). This takes time, and should never be forced. Instead it must grow with lots of repetition. Repetition is what builds new neural wiring in the brain that is so needed for children with trauma and attachment challenged histories.

As parents, we must look under the behavior to the emotions, and provide a “Corrective Emotional Experience” according to Daniel Siegel, foremost trauma and brain specialist who wrote, Parenting from the Inside Out and The Developing Mind. This means that in the midst of our children’s severe behaviors, we must first breathe and breathe some more...until we can RESPOND to our children in a way that role models the kind of behavior that we want to see from them in the future. Remember, when WE as Parents Stress, We Regress..... We must respond with the empathy and understanding that we want for them to learn and emulate themselves. Remember, that children do not learn from consequences, control, separation, isolation, and other harsh methods of punishment. They learn from **experiencing...** and we, as parents must be that Experience. It is difficult in the midst of severe behaviors, but it is not impossible. Try putting on new glasses when you see your child. With these glasses, see them at the developmental level that they are functioning at, not at their chronological age. There is often a big difference between chronological and emotional age. Your child may be 8, 10, 14 or even 18 years old, yet functioning at the emotional age of a 2 or 3 year old. You would respond much differently to a 2 or 3 year old than you would an older child. Remember that you as the caregiver, whether permanent or temporary, have more influence than anyone else in the child’s life.

And remember that you WILL make mistakes. You will REACT and wish you had handled things differently... or later think of a way that you could have responded better. That is part of the process. Forgive yourself. You are doing the very best you can. And... also remember, you can always go back to your child and apologize, respond in the way you would have liked to, or provide what you would have liked to. It is not too late. In fact, this, in itself, is a great “Corrective Experience”.

"TRADITIONAL THERAPY IS USELESS FOR SEVERELY TRAUMATIZED PEOPLE, BUT ESPECIALLY CHILDREN BECAUSE IT DOES NOT REACH THE PARTS OF THE BRAIN THAT WERE MOST IMPACTED BY TRAUMA" Bessel van der Kolk MD

ATTENTION: Possible Resource for families who would like to receive services from Pam Moran

All families who have adopted a child at any time in the past (both Domestic and International) and who live in Pennsylvania, are **entitled to 5 months of Intensive Post Adoptive Support Services**. Pam Moran is now contracting with Jewish Family Services to provide families with these intensive in-home services. If you are interested in receiving these services, you would need to contact Kathleen Swain at Jewish Family Services (717-233-1681), who will direct you through a fairly short process which includes an intake/assessment, or you can contact SWAN directly to begin this process. After the intake/assessment, which takes about 2 weeks, you can begin intensive in-home services.

Pam Moran has been trained directly by Dr. Bryan Post over the last 3 years, and to the highest level that he offers. She uses his Parent Model of Regulatory Parenting and various models of therapy that are effective with children with attachment challenges and severe behaviors including Dr. Post's Family-Centered Regulatory Therapy, as well as Multisensory Experiential Therapy, EMDR, Narrative Therapy, Theraplay Activities, Cognitive Behavioral Tools such as homework assignments and journaling, Cognitive Negative Awareness, etc... To Learn more about Dr. Post's Family-Centered Regulatory Therapy and Regulatory Parenting go to www.postinstitute.com and www.beyondconseques.com

Peace and Healing,

Pam



A Healing Place for Hurting Families