



IMPACTS OF TRAUMA IN CHILD

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TRAUMA IMPACT 0-12 MONTHS

- Neurobiology of brain and central nervous system altered by switch on alarm response
- Behavioural changes
- Regression in recently acquired developmental gains
- Hyperarousal, hypervigilance and hyperactivity



TRAUMA IMPACT 0-12 MONTHS

- Sleep disruption
- Loss of acquired motor skills
- Lowered stress threshold
- Lowered immune system
- Fear response to reminders of trauma
- Mood and personality changes



TRAUMA IMPACT 0-12 MONTHS

- Loss of, or reduced capacity to attune with caregiver
- Loss of, or reduced capacity to manage emotional states or self-soothe
- Insecure, anxious or disorganised attachment behaviour
- Heightened anxiety when separated from primary parent/carer



TRAUMA IMPACT 0-12 MONTHS

- Indiscriminate relating
- Reduced capacity to feel emotions – can appear ‘numb’
- Cognitive delays and memory difficulties
- Loss of acquired communication skills



TRAUMA IMPACT 12 MONTHS – 3 YEARS

- As for 0 – 12 months
- Increased resistance to parental direction
- Memory for trauma may be evident in behaviour, language or play



TRAUMA IMPACT 3 – 5 YEARS

- Behavioural changes
- Hyperarousal, hypervigilance, hyperactivity
- Loss of toileting
- Regression in recently acquired developmental gains e.g. eating skills
- Sleep disturbances, night terrors



TRAUMA IMPACT 3 – 5 YEARS

- Enuresis and encopresis
- Delayed gross motor and visual-perceptual skills
- Fear of trauma recurring
- Mood and personality changes
- Loss of, or reduced capacity to manage emotional states or self-soothe



TRAUMA IMPACT 3 – 5 YEARS

- Increased need for control
- Fear of separation
- Loss of self-esteem and self-confidence
- Confusion about trauma evident in play ...
magical explanations and unclear understanding
of causes of bad events
- Speech, cognitive and auditory processing delays



TRAUMA IMPACT 3 – 5 YEARS

- Vulnerable to anniversary reactions set off by seasonal reminders, holidays and other events
- Memory of intrusive visual images from traumatic event may be demonstrated/recalled in words and play
- At the older end of this range, children are more likely to have lasting, accurate verbal and pictorial memory for central events of the trauma



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