

# Trauma

Stress is a normal part of everyone's life. No person or family is stress free, but some people and families are more stressed by the daily hassles and survival challenges in their lives.

## What is Personal Trauma?

Personal traumas are dangerous, frightening and sometimes violent experiences that can happen to any or all members of the family. Some types of trauma that families experience are: community violence, accidents, loss of a loved one and maltreatment in the family.

## How Does Trauma Impact Children?

Children who have experienced ongoing stress and trauma may have many different reactions.

### Children may:

- ★ Develop an expectation that bad things will happen to them.
- ★ Have difficulty developing a positive sense of themselves (they may feel damaged, powerless, ashamed, or even unlovable).
- ★ Have a hard time forming relationships with other people.
- ★ Have difficulty managing feelings and behavior.
- ★ Try to manage stress and their feelings through behaviors (such as being silly, getting in fights, or they may rely on more dangerous methods such as substance abuse or self-injury).

*"You can't change the past but you can do something with the present and prepare for the future. And this is what really kept me going." \**

-Quote from grandmother raising grandchildren



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Star View Adolescent Center  
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**ATTACHMENT,  
REGULATION  
AND COMPETENCY**  
(The ARC Model)



*Our model is a hopeful approach that offers tools to create a life with attachment, regulation and competency.*

# The ARC Model – Attachment, Regulation and Competency

The ARC framework helps improve partnerships with parents towards understanding connections and skills to help youngsters grow.



## Attachment

**Attachment** is the capacity to form and maintain a healthy personal connection.

In relationships and in families, people take cues from each others' emotional expressions. As children, we all learn to interpret the world through these reactions. Parents and other caregivers can best help a youngster tolerate and cope with feelings and behavior when they are aware of and in charge of their own emotional reactions.

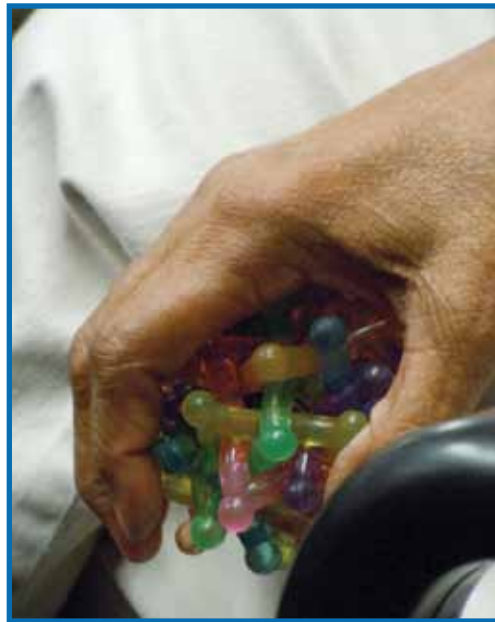
### Attachment Questions:

- ★ What may have interfered with our early experience of safety, protection, and connection with others?
- ★ How comfortable and close are the relationships we form with peers?
- ★ How successful are our relationships with adults, authority figures, teachers, and other helpers?

## Regulation

**Regulation** is the ability to identify and manage feelings, such as frustration, anger, pain, fear, happiness, joy, and attraction.

The inability to notice and balance emotions can lead to physical problems (stomach aches, headaches, and trouble sleeping) as well as ineffective behaviors (disorganization, impulsivity, poor decision making, aggression, and withdrawal). All of these hurt our sense of belonging.



Through ARC, we build an accurate vocabulary for emotions and tie them to experience. With practice, we can identify emotional triggers and then make a strategy for coping with them.

### Regulation Questions:

- ★ What triggers our pleasant and unpleasant feelings?
- ★ How do we respond to those feelings?
- ★ What methods do we use to manage our feelings?

## Competency

**Competency** is the ability to master the developmental tasks of adolescence and adulthood and develop the capacity to plan and organize for the future.

Areas of competency include some of the following:

- ★ Judgment
- ★ Positive Self-Concept
- ★ Identifying and Building upon Strengths
- ★ Problem-Solving & Decision Making
- ★ Learning and Mastering Everyday Tasks

Competency allows us to be active players in our own lives. It provides a sense of control instead of simply reacting to what life throws at us.



### Competency Questions:

- ★ How clear and realistic is our thinking?
- ★ How do we feel about our past, present and future goals?
- ★ How do we solve problems?
- ★ What strengths do we use?