



Action **4** Child Protection

Making **Quality** Child Welfare
Practice **Possible**

WEBINAR TITLE:

Navigating Uncertainty and Supporting Our Children Through the COVID-19 Crisis:
Increasing Emotional Caregiver Protective Capacities To Support Children

DESCRIPTION:

The COVID-19 pandemic has touched all of our lives. But, imagine the impact of this uncertain world on the life of a child – a child who has already experienced abuse and neglect and/or other trauma. Child welfare agency frontline workers, parents/caregivers, educators, and many others involved with critical social safety systems interact with children and must be able to deliver honest, developmentally appropriate, and transparent communication about the COVID-19 crisis, while maintaining awareness of the impact of the child's previous traumas.

This webinar examines how increased Emotional Caregiver Protective Capacities can not only support children during this uncertain time, but also help maintain safety in the home. Caregiver resilience, alignment, and empathy will be explored and contextualized to help parents/caregivers more fully meet the needs of children during this difficult time. Specific strategies and resources for case workers to support parents/caregivers and others caring for children who experienced trauma will be explored.

RESOURCES:

- Navigating Uncertainty and Supporting Our Children Through the COVID-19 Crisis: Information and Practical Application

Contact Us:



704.845.2121



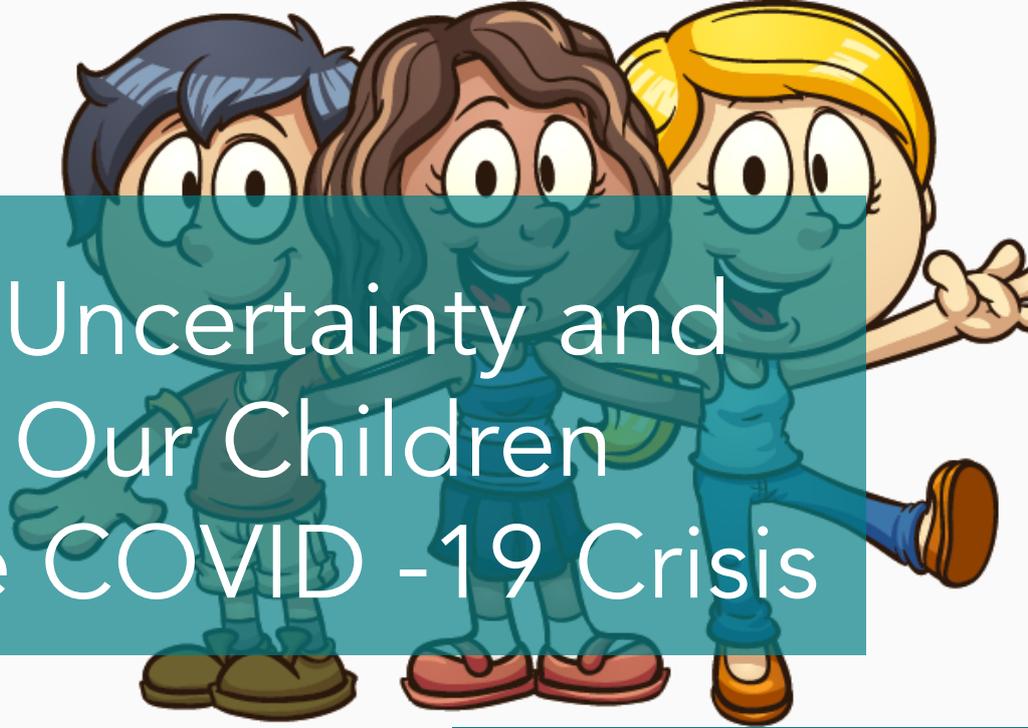
inquiries@action4cp.org



www.action4cp.org

JUNE 2020

Navigating Uncertainty and Supporting Our Children through the COVID -19 Crisis



The COVID-19 pandemic has touched all of our lives. But, imagine the impact of this uncertain world on the life of a child – a child who has already experienced abuse and neglect and/or other trauma.

Child welfare agency frontline workers, parents/caregivers, educators, and many others involved with critical social safety systems interact with children and must be able to deliver honest, developmentally appropriate, and transparent communication about the COVID-19 crisis, while maintaining awareness of the impact of the child's previous trauma

Through a series of micro-learnings and webinars, we partner to share information that is both relevant and helpful to all those caring adults doing the best they can to support and strengthen the children and young people in their lives.

To discuss these materials or any of our learning sessions, please contact:

Lisa Ruiz-Lee, MS, Sr. Project Director

✉ Lisa.Ruiz-Lee@actionchildprotection.org

Lauren Wagner-Ortiz, LCSW, Sr. Staff Associate

✉ Lauren.Wagner-Ortiz@actionchildprotection.org

Lisa Durette, MD, DFAPA, DFAACAP

✉ Lisa.Durette@gmail.com

BASIC DEFINITIONS

Childhood Resilience: The ability to "bounce back" from stress, adversity, failure, challenges, or even trauma.

Emotional Dysregulation: Inability to control or regulate emotional responses to provocative stimuli.

Felt Safety: Arranging the environment and adjusting behaviors so children can feel they are safe in their home.

Hypervigilance: Continuously scanning the environment, searching for anything that could mean danger or pose a threat.

Stress: A status of mental or emotional strain or tension resulting from adverse or demanding circumstances.

Trauma Response: The response to a deeply distressing or disturbing event that overwhelms an individual's ability to cope.

Increasing Emotional Caregiver Protective Capacities to Support Children



CAREGIVER RESILIENCE AND SELF-CARE

Caring for children who have experienced trauma is challenging, even more so during difficult times. The act of caring for children who have experienced trauma impacts the caregiver's well-being.

Caregivers may forego their own mental health or healthcare, experience sleep deprivation, have poor eating habits, and are at increased risk for depression--all of which reduces personal resilience.

Many caregivers also do not have a plan for self-care and are apprehensive to ask for help. The act of self-care gives caregivers the opportunity to meet their own needs and manage stress.

CAREGIVER TIPS FOR SELF-CARE

- Identify what you can and cannot change. Take action on what you can change.
- Set boundaries. Boundaries, such as recognizing it is not your job to fix others, knowing it is ok to say no, and recognizing you have a right to your own feelings, are forms of self-care.
- Engage in activities you enjoy such as walking, reading, bingeing on a good television series, or talking and/or video chatting with your friends.
- Give yourself permission to need something. Acknowledging you need help is a strength. People want to help, but it is your responsibility to tell them how.
- Maintain your social connections. Having an emotionally supportive network, who is willing to empathically listen, validate your feelings, and offer to help makes daily stressors more manageable.
- Acknowledge and process your feelings. Engage in therapy, write in a journal, or join a support group to help you process the many emotions you feel, all of which are valid.

Emotional Caregiver Protective Capacities

The caregiver meets own emotional needs.

This refers to a person who uses healthy internal and external means to meet their innate need for feeling safe, supported, acceptance and having general life satisfaction. Needs are met in ways that are not dependent on or take advantage of children.

The caregiver is resilient.

This refers to a person who withstands periods of stress, challenging situations, and significant life events without losing the ability to manage daily life and responsiveness to the needs of children.

The caregiver is tolerant.

This refers a person maintaining their composure with the household, in particular with parenting situations that they perceive as disruptive, including having a level of acceptance for the child's opinions and/or behavior that is disagreeable.

The caregiver is emotionally stable.

This refers to stabilized mental and emotional health, which enables a person to maintain consistency in their temperament, their parenting and daily functioning.

The caregiver is emotionally aligned, sensitive and empathetic toward the child's experience, perspective, and feelings.

This refers to valuing the relationship with a child, which leads to connectedness, affection and responsiveness to a child's feelings, needs, and wants; has a comparable emotional response to what the child has experienced.

Psychoeducation Resource List

BOOKS

- "The Connected Child," David R. Cross, Karyn B. Purvis, and Wendy Lyons Sunshine
- "The Whole-Brain Child: 12 Revolutionary Strategies to Nurture Your Child's Developing Mind," Daniel J. Siegel and Tina Payne Bryson
- "The Science of Parenting Adopted Children: A Brain-Based, Trauma-Informed Approach to Cultivating Your Child's Social, Emotional, and Moral Development," Arleta James
- "The A-Z of Therapeutic Parenting: Strategies and Solutions," Sarah Naish
- "Beyond Behaviors: Using Brain Science and Compassion to Understand and Solve Children's Behavioral Challenges," Mona Delahooke, PhD

ARTICLES AND WEBSITES

- "Parenting a Child Who Has Experienced Trauma"
<https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubPDFs/child-trauma.pdf>
- Deep Dives--Neglect:
<https://developingchild.harvard.edu/science/deep-dives/neglect/>
- The National Child Traumatic Stress Network:
<https://www.nctsn.org>
- Child Welfare Information Gateway:
<https://www.childwelfare.gov>