



Happy New Year REACH Families!

We hope you had a wonderful holiday season and are looking forward to new adventures in 2020!

The end of one year and the beginning of another year are traditional times to reflect on experiences and accomplishments and to create goals or resolutions. Over the course of 2019, REACH Kern County provided trainings for families and professionals, including a three part series on Becoming a Trauma Competent Healing Parent, a training on Trust Based Relational Interaction® (TBRI) and a training by Allison Maxon Davis, a well-known authority on The Seven Core Issues in adoption and permanency. REACH also hosted an event for families at Flight, Fit N Fun during the summer, with a great turnout and everyone had a fun time. In November, the Aspiranet adoption and REACH programs enjoyed the privilege of partnering with Kern County Department of Human Services and other community agencies in celebrating families who adopted children on National Adoption Day. We look forward to continuing to provide trainings and events for families and professionals in our community in 2020.

For the 2019 newsletter series, the REACH team focused on the Seven Core Issues in Adoption and shared information about each of these core issues throughout the year. For the 2020 newsletter series, our focus will be Trust Based Relational Interactions® (TBRI) and the TBRI principles of Empowering, Connecting and Correcting. We hope you enjoy this topic and our Winter newsletter. Please reach out to our team if you have any questions or concerns, or ideas you have about enhancing the REACH program in the coming year.

Sincerely,
The REACH team

Kern County
Winter 2020

Inside This Issue

1. Greetings
2. Trust Based Relational Intervention/Activity
3. Trauma and the Brain/Video Review
4. Trauma and the Brain Model
5. Calendar Events & Support Groups
6. REACH Services

Your REACH Support Team

Emma Ruiz

Resource Family Program Director
eruiz@aspiranet.org

Carrie Ontiveros

Adoption Supervisor
contiveros@aspiranet.org

Patti Kasper

REACH Social Worker
pkasper@aspiranet.org

Ana Morales

REACH Social Worker
amoralessanchez@aspiranet.org
1001 Tower Way, Ste. 250
Bakersfield, CA 93309
Ph: (661) 323-1233
Fax: (661) 323-8090

Overview of Trust Based Relational Intervention® (TBRI)

By Patti Kasper, MA, MTh, TBRI Practitioner

TBRI is a therapeutic caregiving model for children from hard places which was developed at the Karyn Purvis Institute of Child Development at Texas Christian University (KPIDC). It is effective because it is founded in research and theory, and how optimal development should have occurred. It can be used with children of all ages and from all risk levels, as well as with children with no history of trauma at all.

When learning about TBRI, one first learns the basics of brain development and the effects of trauma upon body and brain, as well as upon the attachment cycle between a parent and child. Many trauma experts, from Karyn Purvis and David Cross (the founders of TBRI) to Daniel Siegel to Bruce Perry, recognize that because complex developmental trauma is relationship-based, so must healing be relationship based. Just as trauma negatively impacts a child's ability to trust adults, and the world we live in, so too can a relationship with a healthy adult soothe those fears and reset a child's ability to trust and to feel, finally, that they have a voice in the world, someone will hear their need and lovingly meet it. Just as pervasive abuse "wires" a child to react to everything defensively, trauma informed approaches build healthy connections that had not previously existed, or that were so seldom used that the connections for the most part lay dormant.

TBRI® operates on a set of three interactive sets of principles: Connecting, Empowering and Correcting. Each of these principles has two sets of strategies. Connecting Principles, the bedrock of TBRI®, use either Engagement Strategies or Mindfulness Strategies. Engagement Strategies enhance connections non-verbally (think eye contact, gentle touch and tone of voice) and Mindfulness Strategies develop a caregiver's awareness of their contributions to each interaction. Empowering Principles use either Physiological Strategies or Ecological Strategies. Physiological Strategies focus on the child's internal needs, such as nutrition, hydration, sleep and sensory needs (think of "hanger", like in the Snickers commercials), while Ecological Strategies focus on the child's external environment and guide children toward being able to increasingly self-regulate their attention, mood and energy (think of transitions, routines and rituals). Correcting Principles use either Proactive Strategies or Responsive Strategies. Proactive Strategies teach social and regulatory skills during periods of calm, while Responsive Strategies are used with children in the moment of challenging behavior.

TBRI® is the theme for our 2020 REACH newsletters,

so stay tuned to learn more. You can also learn more information about TBRI® through reading the book, *The Connected Child*, by Drs. Purvis and Cross. If opportunity arises, you can attend a TBRI® training event, or an Empowered To Connect event, which is the faith-based sister program to TBRI®. You can visit the websites for TBRI® – <https://child.tcu.edu/> or <https://empoweredtoconnect.org/> TBRI® videos and books are also available for viewing and checkout with REACH. Additionally, you can access several of KPIDC's videos and animates on YouTube if you search the site for TBRI®.

Activity

One of the best tools to help you start implementing TBRI® is to begin tracking challenging behaviors. Doing so will help you determine the "Why". When we begin to understand the meaning behind our children's behaviors, we can start reacting to the need rather than the behavior.

Tracking Challenging Behaviors

What was the behavior?	Who is in the room/to Whom is the behavior directed? Where does it usually occur? When? (Weekly, daily, hourly)	What do you think is the possible meaning behind this behavior? (Why?)

Trauma and the Brain

By Carrie Ontiveros, M.A.

As most of us in the world of foster care and adoption are aware, trauma impacts brain development and functioning. Trauma in children can be the result of abuse, neglect, witnessing domestic violence or separation from loved ones. It can also be related to accidents and natural disasters. The negative impacts from trauma are more significant when an event happens multiple times, multiple stressors are involved, a child is young when the trauma occurs or a child has few healthy relationships or coping skills. Because the children we parent, work with, and love have likely experienced trauma in their history, it is important for us to understand how trauma affects the brain, the resulting effect on development and behavior and what parents can do to minimize the negative impact of trauma and facilitate healthy brain development.

Research has demonstrated that trauma, such as pre-natal exposure to substances, abuse, neglect and toxic stress, can alter the structure and physical development of the brain. For example, certain areas of the brain are smaller in those who have experienced trauma than in those who have not had such experiences. Additionally, other areas of the brain have increased or decreased activity, or impaired connections. To summarize, the brains of children who have experienced trauma are different than the brains of children who have not.

The result of this altered brain development is reflected in various ways in a child, from behavior, to learning, to social and emotional functioning. Children may not develop physically or emotionally at the same pace as their peers. A child who has experienced trauma may have a difficult time switching between tasks, have tantrums or want things done their way, all of which may be the result of hyperarousal or being “triggered” by an event, memory or emotion. Learning may be challenging for a child with a trauma history due to difficulty with attention and memory. Socially, altered brain development can make social interactions more difficult. For example, a child may misread social cues or facial expressions of a classmate and misinterpret the peer’s intentions, causing social challenges.

So, what can parents do to support a child who has experienced trauma? One of the first places to start is to be educated on the impact of trauma on brain development. Having an understanding of the physical changes in the brain can help a parent better understand and support a child. Another important step for a parent is to have realistic expectations for a child as their social, emotional and developmental age may not match

their chronological age. The behavior and abilities of a child may not be the same as their peers. Additionally, providing a child with an established routine and structured environment is key as predictability and stability allow for a sense of safety and security. Environment is an important influence on development and repeated experiences in a safe environment help a child develop a sense of trust and help them learn appropriate responses to various situations. Finally, consistent nurturing from a parent who has been educated on trauma-informed parenting may provide the best opportunity for a child with a trauma history. REACH offers parenting training and support in a variety of settings. Please contact your REACH office for additional information or any needed education and support.

Article source: Child Welfare Information Gateway. For more information and learning, please visit the Child Welfare Information Gateway website at <https://www.childwelfare.gov/>

Video Review

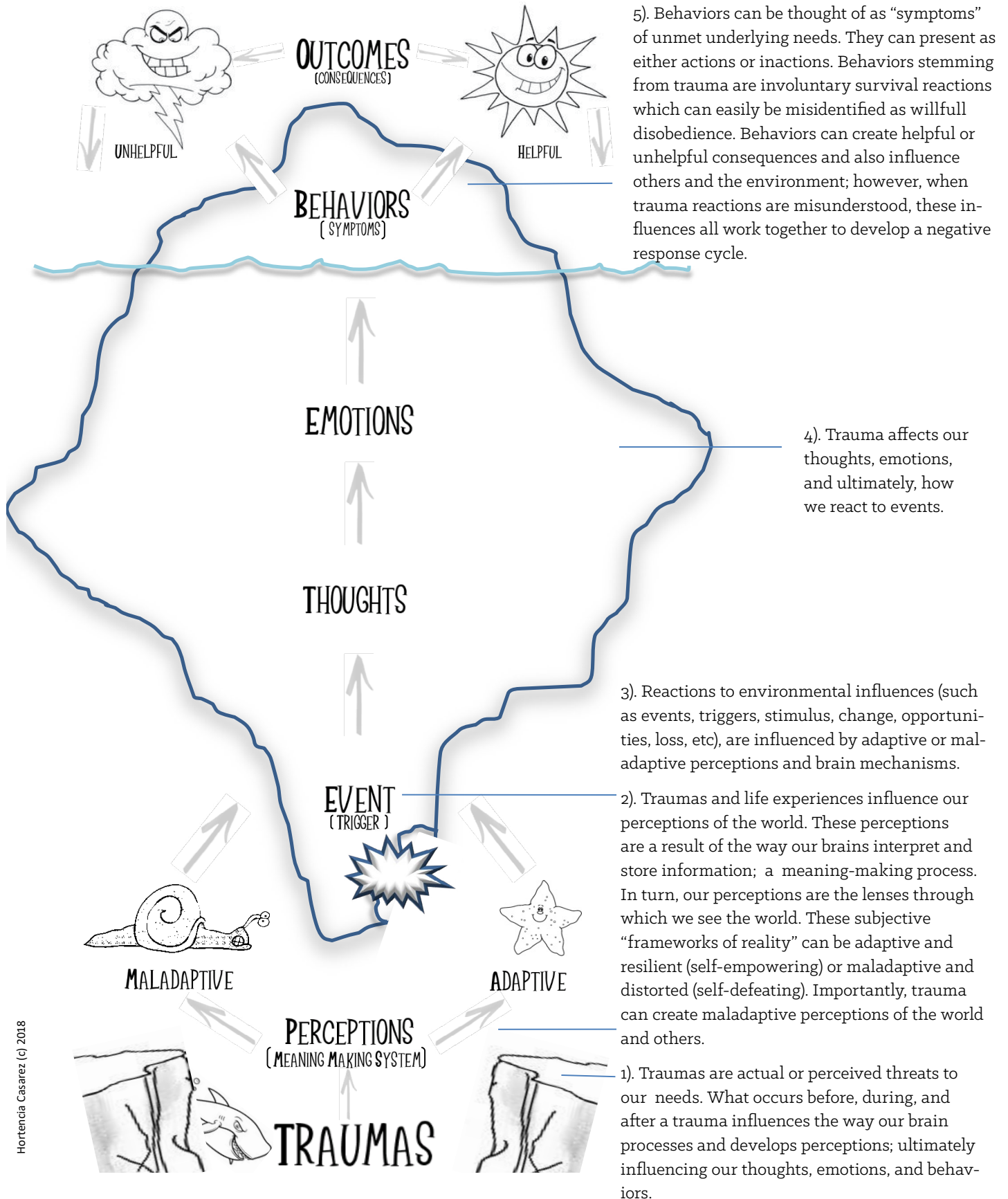
What is TBRI®? Want a quick overview in less than 4 minutes? TCU has a new video resource that quickly answers your question. This TBRI® Animate video can be used to inspire parents and professionals to bring deep healing to vulnerable children. Please click the following link and enjoy the animated video, or access it on the home page of the REACH Kern County website <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FWScS-JKjn1A>

Want a deeper understanding of TBRI®?

There is a 35 minute video on YouTube that explains the principles and concepts behind Trust-Based Relational Intervention®. The video discusses how trauma can impair language, sensory processing, and coping skills, and can lead to perplexing behaviors that are often mistaken for aggression or mental illness. This video features world-renowned experts who share research that documents how consistently positive experiences with loving caregivers can re-wire a child’s brain for lasting change. Watch more at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T43zJDgTNPA>

TRAUMA AND THE BRAIN

ICEBERG MODEL



5). Behaviors can be thought of as “symptoms” of unmet underlying needs. They can present as either actions or inactions. Behaviors stemming from trauma are involuntary survival reactions which can easily be misidentified as willfull disobedience. Behaviors can create helpful or unhelpful consequences and also influence others and the environment; however, when trauma reactions are misunderstood, these influences all work together to develop a negative response cycle.

4). Trauma affects our thoughts, emotions, and ultimately, how we react to events.

3). Reactions to environmental influences (such as events, triggers, stimulus, change, opportunities, loss, etc), are influenced by adaptive or maladaptive perceptions and brain mechanisms.

2). Traumas and life experiences influence our perceptions of the world. These perceptions are a result of the way our brains interpret and store information; a meaning-making process. In turn, our perceptions are the lenses through which we see the world. These subjective “frameworks of reality” can be adaptive and resilient (self-empowering) or maladaptive and distorted (self-defeating). Importantly, trauma can create maladaptive perceptions of the world and others.

1). Traumas are actual or perceived threats to our needs. What occurs before, during, and after a trauma influences the way our brain processes and develops perceptions; ultimately influencing our thoughts, emotions, and behaviors.

Support Groups & Events

January

- 21 TBRI Principle: Connecting**
6:30 PM to 8:00 PM
4900 California Ave, Suite 300-A,
Bakersfield, CA 93309
(Cal Twin Towers Buildings, Tower A)

February

- 18 TBRI Principle: Empowering**
6:30 PM to 8:00 PM
4900 California Ave, Suite 300-A,
Bakersfield, CA 93309
(Cal Twin Towers Buildings, Tower A)

March

- 17 TBRI Principle: Correcting**
6:30 PM to 8:00 PM
4900 California Ave, Suite 300-A,
Bakersfield, CA 93309
(Cal Twin Towers Buildings, Tower A)

REACH Adoption Support Group for Parents

REACH Parent Support Groups are designed for adults thinking about adoption, families awaiting adoptive placement, and new and experienced adoptive parents. Please join us to share your family's challenges and triumphs. Suggestions for topics are welcome. RSVP for childcare for toddlers and older children. Infants may join their parents.

Bakersfield College Foster & Kinship Care Program

Bakersfield College Foster and Kinship Care Program offers training of interest to foster and adoptive parents at no charge.

For a complete list of classes, visit the FKCE website at <https://www.bakersfieldcollege.edu/FKCE/schedules#rfat>

Register for classes by calling the registration line
661-319-1836 or BC Program Manager at 661-395-4737



Bakersfield Aspiranet

1001 Tower Way, Ste. 250
Bakersfield, CA 93309
Phone: (661) 323-1233
Fax: (661) 323-8090

NON PROFIT ORG
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Stockton, CA
PERMIT NO. 451



REACH and Kern County Adoption Support Services

Resource: We provide 1) telephone support and referral to local services 2) referral to local adoption related community trainings 3) linkage to local therapists with experience working with adoptive families 4) lending library and website access 5) quarterly newsletter which includes book reviews, and relevant adoption related information.

Education: Educational support groups and meetings are regularly held and offer a variety of topics pertinent to adoption. In addition, access to the lending library and website offer many opportunities to learn more about adoption and the impact of adoption on all members of the adoption constellation (adoptive parents, adoptees and birth family).

Advocacy: We are here to help navigate common issues facing adoptive families. We assist adoptive parents with advocating for the assistance needed in working with educational, legislative and community partners to best meet their children's needs.

Crisis Intervention/Case Management: Participants are eligible to receive short-term therapeutic services, free of charge, by master's level social workers who are trained and experienced in adoption-related issues. Families are also eligible to receive in-home case management services as needed.

Hope: We utilize our agency values of Respect, Integrity, Courage and Hope (RICH) to guide our work with adoptive families. Our goal is to promote safe, healthy and stable adoptive families through access to our services.