

APRIL 19, 2016

## Why Kids Blame and Lash Out and How to Help Them

By Dr Laura Markham - Aha! Parenting.com

*"My 7 year old daughter has started wanting to make other people (mainly her brother) hurt when she is emotionally hurt. So something happens that hurts her feelings and immediately she wants to lash out and try to make others feel like she does. She steps on a toy, her foot really hurts, she's crying and it was my fault or her brother's fault."*

Lashing out when we're upset and blaming others for our distress are completely normal human reactions. Most of us gain the ability to refrain from these almost automatic reactions as we get older, but we all know adults who seem to go through their lives with a "chip on their shoulder" blaming others, and reacting angrily to real or imagined slights.

What's this all about, and how can we help our children (and ourselves) grow out of it? All mammals, when they're in distress, go into fight, flight or freeze. So when your child steps on a toy and it hurts, she's plunged into distress, and she goes into "fight." She lashes out at whoever is closest, or even throws the toy. Or, something happens that hurts her feelings. Again, she's in distress, so she goes into "fight." She lashes out.

It isn't because she wants to make others feel as bad she does. At that moment, she isn't even considering others. In fact, when she's in "fight, flight or freeze" she can't think straight or access her empathy. She's lashing out because she can't bear her own feelings of hurt, fear and sadness. To fend them off, she gets angry. It's an instant, automatic, response. The best defense for her at the moment seems like a good offense.

**CONTINUE READING**

## DON'T SAVE MY CHILD!

By Kristin Berry - ConfessionsOfAnAdoptiveParent.com

One of the most difficult aspects of being an adoptive or foster parent is that the vast majority of the population around you believes your child is damaged and it's their responsibility to rescue them. Nothing could be further from the truth!

Please, for the love of all that is good and Holy, DON'T Save MY Child!

I know, I know- his eyes melt your heart, his cheeks beg to be pinched, her smile is stunning, her story is terrifying. My kids come from difficult places. I know you think you know them. I know you want to save them. I've overheard you marvel that they were "unwanted." I know you think you're privy to their story because you heard a rumor in the neighborhood.



Some of what you heard is probably true. Their lives were hard. They had obstacles to overcome that seemed impossible...they still do. I understand that it breaks your heart. Once upon a time, it broke mine too. I used to have pity for my children, then I learned that there is a better way to love them.

I know he came in to school this morning begging for food. Please don't feed my son breakfast, he had a healthy breakfast this morning at home. When he was a baby, he was hungry... a lot. I know you think it won't hurt. I know you may even believe that I neglected him this morning, based on what story he's telling you. **CONTINUE READING**

# BEYOND SEXUAL ABUSE

## FAMILIES CAN PROMOTE HEALING

*Adapted by Diane Riggs from Beyond Sexual Abuse: The Healing Power of Adoptive Families, published by Three Rivers Adoption Council in cooperation with Wayne Duehn, PhD, Sherry Anderson, MSW, and Kirsti Adkins, MPH.*

Parents teach preschoolers about good and bad touch to give them tools for avoiding and reporting sexual abuse. But foster and adoptive parents often don't have the luxury of trying to prevent initial abuse. When a sexually abused child joins their family, the challenge is to provide a safe, healing environment, and teach the child about ways to safely show affection and deal with sexuality.

Some child welfare researchers estimate that as many as 80 percent of children in foster care have experienced sexual abuse of some kind. Sexual abuse involves activity with or interaction between a child and an older person where the intent is to sexually arouse one or both of the parties or control the child sexually.

Children entering foster care or moving from care to adoption are most likely to have experienced systemic abuse. Commonly associated with chaotic homes where children are not protected, this type of sexual abuse often starts when children are very young and is perpetrated by a parent or other adults who move in and out of the home.

### Was My Child Sexually Abused?

If your child's worker does not mention sexual abuse, and records say nothing, did your child escape this form of abuse? Maybe. Maybe not. Sexual abuse often goes unnoticed and unrecorded. Children are often reluctant to talk about abuse due to feelings of guilt and shame, or fear that the abuser will punish them. Few abusers confess to their crimes when confronted by protection workers.

Initially, a sexually abused child's behavior may mirror that of children who have experienced physical abuse or neglect. Children who have been abused sexually may be angry, be confused about parental roles and responsibilities, mistrust adults, and be depressed or hyperactive. Symptoms specific to sexual abuse include

sensitivity to touch (avoiding touch or being seductively clingy); sensitivity to exposing one's body (being very opposed to exposure or eager to wear scant clothing); and sexual behavior or knowledge that is out of keeping with the child's age.

Bottom line, even if sexual abuse is not disclosed in the child's history, foster and adoptive parents must be prepared to deal with issues of sexuality and sexual abuse.

### CONTINUE READING FOR TIPS ON TALKING TO YOUR CHILD ABOUT PAST ABUSE

## IFAPA TRAINING

### Nurturing Healthy Sexual Development

This interactive workshop helps adults gain an understanding of the relationship between healthy sexuality and child sexual abuse prevention. Participants will learn to identify normal sexual behaviors of young children, respond to young children's sexual interactions, respond to young children's questions about sexuality, respond appropriately to children's disclosures of sexual abuse and identify and report suspected child sexual abuse. *(Worth 3 hours credit)*

**Trainer: Kristi Neumann**

#### Upcoming Dates

### COUNCIL BLUFFS

Saturday, May 7 (9am-12:15pm)

### CEDAR RAPIDS

Saturday, May 21 (1:15pm-4:30pm)

#### To Register

Call 800-277-8145 or [REGISTER ONLINE](#)