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ADVOCATING FOR YOUR TRAUMATIZED FOSTER CHILD AT SCHOOL

By Julie Beem, MBA, and Melissa Sadin, MAT, M. Ed.

The recent longitudinal research by the Institute for Family Studies shows that children who are adopted are more inclined to behavioral problems and poor reading and math skills as kindergarteners than their peers. By eighth grade, 50 percent of adopted children will be diagnosed with a disability, and 33 percent of them will be suspended (compared with around 12 percent of their peers). Genetics and maternal exposures have both been hypothesized, but, as many researchers have concluded, it's more likely that the environmental factors that made these children available for adoption — abuse, neglect, domestic violence, abandonment, multiple placements — have caused childhood trauma that impacts children's social, emotional and academic abilities. The National Child Traumatic Stress Network points out that one out of four children in all public school classrooms, regardless of poverty, race or other factors, have been exposed to trauma significant enough to impact their ability to learn. For children in foster care and those available for adoption, this number is significantly higher — as high as 80 percent in some studies.

Those of us parenting foster or adopted children recognize that our children have some unique challenges at school, even if we don't clearly understand why. In addition to parenting traumatized children, we must advocate for what they need in school, to an educational system that does not yet recognize the need for trauma-sensitive schools.

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PREPARING YOUR TEEN FOR A SECURE JOURNEY TO ADULTHOOD

IFAPA is offering four upcoming events for youth (age 14+) and foster parents. These events are free and have been approved for foster parent credit. A meal will be served and giveaways for teens will be provided.

BETTENDORF

Sat., April 22 (9am-4:30pm)

[SEE FLYER](#)

ANKENY

Sat., April 29 (9am-4:30pm)

[SEE FLYER](#)

COUNCIL BLUFFS

Thurs., June 8 (5pm-8pm)

[SEE FLYER](#)

BLOOMFIELD

Sat., June 24 (9am-4:30pm)

[SEE FLYER](#)



Do You Do THIS When Your Child Has a Meltdown?



By Penelope Webster,
Foster2Forever.com

For whatever reason, your child can't have something, can't get their way, etc. No matter how small the issue seems to be, it turns into a major blowup.

In this scenario, how would you react?

- Do you tell her that she's not getting her way until she uses her words?
- Do you try to ignore the tantrum (but inside your blood begins to boil)?
- Do you send her to her room or calm-down spot until she calms down?
- Do you try and bargain with her to calm her down?

I'm telling you honestly that I have tried all of these and none of them have worked with my traumatized children. But I've discovered something that does work & has amazingly transformed my relationship with my attachment-challenged child. I've become a peaceful parent who is intently child-focused during these tantrums.

What this may look like: I may pick up my child, put my child in my lap, begin rocking and let them cry it out in my arms. At first, my child may fight that closeness or try to demand their way. But I won't talk about the issue at all until my child stops crying, and is calm.

What this may look like to others: "You are rewarding your child for a tantrum."

I'm not giving in! I'm giving comfort to my hurting child. What others don't realize is that when a child is in a tantrum, there is no negotiation, no "thinking about what you did" because a child simply cannot think during a tantrum. During a tantrum, a child is in fear response and the thinking part of the brain is shut off by fear. Only AFTER the tantrum do we revisit the issue, if it's even needed, because my child may just have needed to know that I understand the disappointment.

Becoming a peaceful parent has totally transformed my relationship with my traumatized child! Tantrums are fewer and go away quicker. My child hugs me more & is happier.

MORE TIPS FROM FOSTER2FOREVER:

[31 Days of Parenting Techniques After Adoption](#)



Study Proves That Cuddling Babies Early (And Often) Has Huge Benefits

By Wendy Wisner, Babble.com

We've all had that annoying relative or friend who complains that we're holding our baby too much, warning that too much holding will spoil our little cherub, or make them stuck to us like glue for all eternity. Comments like that can definitely get under a parent's skin.

The good news is that study after study has proven that holding your baby is not harmful in the least, and is actually a vital part of caring for babies in the early days, with long-term impacts on health and development. (So, you can probably politely tell your nosy aunt to shut her trap, mmmkay?)

Just a few months ago, a study came out showing that early skin-to-skin contact leads to improved neurodevelopment, higher IQ, and lower rates of aggression. Skin-to-skin contact has also been shown to increase breastfeeding success, and can even make certain medical procedures less painful for infants.

And now you can add another fascinating bit of research to the list: Last week, a study was published in Current Biology that sheds further light on the importance of skin-to-skin and physical contact between babies and their caregivers. [READ MORE](#)