



Presentation Title: Attachment Toolbox: Strategies for Treating Attachment Disruption in Traumatized Youth

Presentation Time: 4:30 PM - 8:00 PM US Eastern Time

Content Level: Intermediate

Abstract: Disrupted attachment and traumatic impact are both components of complex trauma. New research in neurobiology provides insight into the impact of early trauma and disrupted attachment on brain development in the children and adolescents with whom we work. Niki Gomez-Perales, therapist and author provides hands on strategies, techniques and tools to treat these impacts, supporting neurological integration and post traumatic growth. From engaging child and caregiver, achieving stability, attachment, and co-regulation skills, through trauma processing and integration, and on to creating a childhood within their developmental trajectory, this workshop utilizes principles of attachment therapy, neurological integration and trauma treatment within a phase oriented framework to develop effective treatment for young clients with histories of complex trauma. Issues specific to the treatment of pre-verbal trauma, dissociative presentations and dissociative disorders will be addressed in a detailed way allowing for the application of this approach to the treatment of even the most complex and challenging traumatized young people.

Learning Objectives:

At the conclusion of this presentation, participants will be able to:

- Negotiate the engagement of both young clients and their caregivers when they perceive themselves as having competing needs and agendas
- Identify and use specific attachment focused techniques in order to build and improve the attachment relationship between the child or adolescent and their attachment figure in order to support and facilitate further treatment
- Identify and use specific neurologically based techniques in order to assist the child or adolescent in achieving improved neurological integration, coping skills and self-regulation
- Identify and use specific integrative techniques with children and adolescents in the exploration of traumatic memory within the support of enhanced attachment relationships
- Support children, adolescents, and their caregivers in returning to their developmental trajectory and creating a childhood beyond their complex trauma experiences

Presenter(s)

Niki Gomez-Perales, MSW, RSW

Niki Gomez-Perales, M.S.W., R.S.W., is an expert in the areas of children's mental health, complex trauma, attachment and dissociation. She has more than 25 years of experience in the fields of child welfare and children's mental health. For the past 20 years she has worked as a therapist in a Children's Mental Health clinic in Hamilton Ontario. Niki has lectured on Complex Trauma and Attachment with the ISST-D, the ESTD, the International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies, the European Society for Traumatic Stress Studies,

Association for Training on Trauma and Attachment in Children, Safeguards Training for Children and Adult Services and the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers. She is an active member and Fellow of the International Society for the Study of Trauma and Dissociation and a winner of the ISSTD 2016 written media award for her book, "Attachment-Focused Trauma Treatment for Children and Adolescents: Phase-Oriented Strategies for Addressing Complex Trauma Disorders," 2015. Routledge. Her second book, "The Attachment-Focused Toolbox: Phase-Oriented Techniques for Treating Complex Trauma in Children and Adolescents," is scheduled for release later this year.

Timed Outline

15 minutes - The role of attachment in complex trauma

25 minutes - Parenting, caregiving and relational issues

20 minutes - Systems issues

15 minutes - Interdependence vs independence

15 minutes - Treatment Phase 1 - Strategies and techniques for engagement, stabilisation and enhancing attachment

30 minutes - Break

45 minutes - Treatment Phase 1 - Strategies and techniques for engagement, stabilisation and enhancing attachment continued

30 minutes - Treatment Phase 2 - Strategies and techniques for trauma exploration and integration

15 minutes - Treatment Phase 3 - Strategies and techniques for "developing a childhood"

Continuing Education

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