Creating A Safe Space For Children Who Have Experienced Trauma

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Objectives

- Defining Childhood Trauma
- Developmental impact of Childhood Trauma
- Providing support
- The Safe Space Introduction
- Impact of the “Safe Space” and Childhood Trauma
- The role of the Occupational Therapist
Defining Childhood Trauma

- Childhood Trauma Definition
- Acute Trauma
  - Natural Disaster
  - Death of a family member
  - Divorce
- Chronic Interpersonal trauma
- Complex Trauma
Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE’S)

Quick questionnaire to help identify potentially traumatic events (CDC, 2020).

ACE scores and chronic health problems with older age

Prevention of Adverse Childhood Experiences
Developmental impact of childhood trauma

- Brain development
- The areas of development that impacts Childhood Trauma
- Childhood Trauma affects in the adult population
Providing Support

- Impact of life experiences on development
- Academic support
- Occupational therapy
The Safe Space
Model of Safe Space

- Length: Blue
- Width: Red
- Height: Green

Walls
- Pegboard
- Fabric Walls

Storage
- Toy storage bins

Lighting
- String lights

Seating Arrangements
- Beanbags (2)

Flooring Options
- Rug options
- Foam mats
- Interlocking wood flooring
What is the “Safe Space?”

- Sensory opportunities
  - Sight
  - Sound
  - Taste
  - Smell
  - Touch
- Collaboration of the child and professional
Where is the Safe Space going to be located?

- Classrooms
- Special Education rooms
- Quiet rooms
Who is Navigating The Safe Space?

- Teachers
- Paraprofessionals
- Occupational Therapy
- Intervention activities
- “Just right” challenges
- Goal setting
- Speech Therapy
Activities Provided

✗ Two to three activities provided per sense

✗ Fine motor activities

✗ Imaginative play

✗ Constructive play
Activities Provided: Sight

- Purpose
- Materials
- Directions on use
Activities Provided: Smell

✗ Purpose
✗ Materials
✗ Directions on use
Activities Provided: Taste
Activities Provided: Touch

✗ Purpose
✗ Materials
✗ Directions on use
Activities Provided: Sound

- Purpose
- Materials
- Directions on use
Children who’ve experienced trauma can all present differently and have different sensory needs.

The environment that the “Safe Space” provides will be conducive with a learning environment that addresses development and trauma centered care.
“Trauma is personal. It does not disappear if it is not validated. When it is ignored or invalidated the silent screams continue internally heard only by the one held captive. When someone enters the pain and hears the screams healing can begin.”

-Danielle Bernock
References

Publisher: F4 Media.


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References Cont.


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