

Trauma is an event or series of events that cause intense psychological and physical stress and has lasting negative effects on a person's well-being.

Traumatic events include physical and sexual abuse, emotional and physical neglect, natural disasters, and witnessing or experiencing violence in the home, community, or school. **Exposure to a traumatic event does not always lead to a traumatic stress disorder.**



It's estimated that **25%** of American children will experience at least **one** traumatic event by the age of **16**

Signs and symptoms are recurrent, involuntary, and intrusive. There are three main categories:

1. **Re-experiencing:** nightmares, memories, intrusive thoughts and flashbacks
2. **Hyperarousal/hypervigilance:** feeling unsafe, easily startled, always on edge, overly cautious and scared of others
3. **Avoidant:** withdrawing socially, staying away from people, places and things that remind them of trauma, engaging in activity to distract themselves

Early Childhood

- Fear
- Excessive crying
- Loss of appetite
- Nightmares
- Excessively clingy
- Difficulty separating from parent
- Sleep disturbance

School-Age

- Excessive fear
- Feelings of guilt
- Feelings of shame
- Difficulty focusing
- Sleep disturbance
- Difficulty separating from parent

Adolescence

- Feeling depressed
- Feeling misunderstood
- Irritability
- Developing an eating disorder
- Engaging in self-harm
- **Alcohol/substance use**
- Sleep disturbance

Bullying is a form of aggressive behavior in which someone intentionally and repeatedly causes another person injury or discomfort through physical contact, words, or subtle actions. Intense and repeated bullying can be traumatic. Trauma and bullying can lead to a child wanting to hurt themselves.

Trauma can lead to a variety of mental health and learning disorders, as well as make existing disorders worse.



Protective Factors

Having family meals together
Feeling connected to school/community
Resilience
Problem-solving skills
Sense of purpose

Treatment Options

Therapy alone
Medication alone
Combination of both

Getting help early is better. Never worry alone. Consult your pediatrician.

