



MANAS

Speaks

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Children's Mental Health Matters!

#ChildMentalHealth

CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH

Childhood Trauma

IVF Child

Giftedness

All about ADHD

Temper Tantrums

The Academy of
Psychology



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MANAS *Speaks*

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Manas Speaks is a monthly magazine from Manas-The academy of psychology, to publish a wide range of conceptual articles relating to different perspectives on methodologies in psychological research and to support student communities to strengthen their knowledge.

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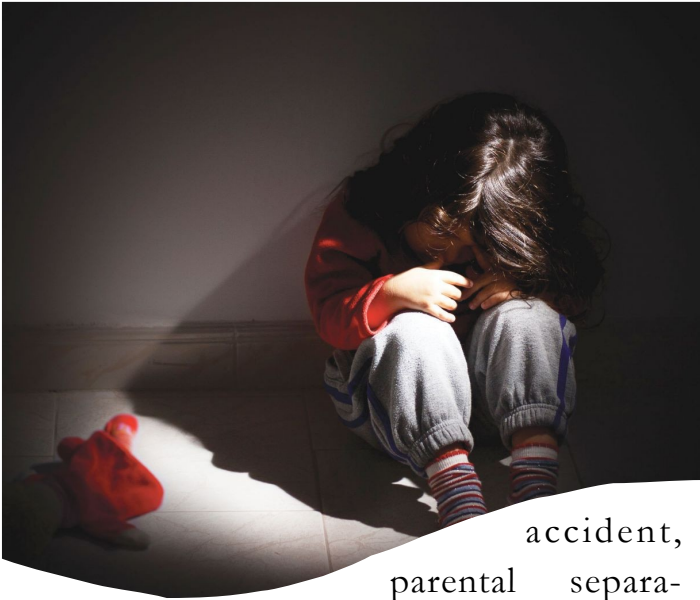
I'm gonna tell you a story about a girl I know, who was given for adoption to her paternal parents who doesn't have children, at age 5. She used to call both the biological parents and paternal parents as mom and dad before and after. Somehow she knows the truth and was confused. She was abused by her paternal mother where her paternal father has no idea about it. Now this paternal mother has an extra marital affair where the child knows about it and can't tell anyone about it because she is being punished and abused and was not allowed talking to her actual mother over phone. It was somehow sorted out and the child came to her biological parents at age of 10. She is now 23 and still carries her childhood trauma with her; these experiences haunt her till date.

The second story is similar to the prior one. Once in a month, my cousins come to my

home for sleepover. We chitchat and fill up with each other's stories. One of my cousins showed up with brooding face. I asked her what's wrong!! She started crying right away. She says, my parents are still not talking properly and I'm being the mediator. I'm done and exhausted. Most of her Childhood was distressed. For some reasons there started a disturbance between her parents & stopped talking and facing each other for years. Whenever they fight my cousin used to come out and cry like hell. Years passed but still her parents were being dysfunctional. She was 13 when it was all started, now she is 21, still carrying the burden.

In both the cases, they both have been through adverse childhood experiences which results in trauma. Children go through a sweep of adverse experiences that are classified as psychological trauma, which includes neglect, bullying, abandonment, physical and sexual abuse, witnessing abuse of sibling/parent or having a mentally ill parent,





accident, parental separation/divorce, change in place, death of pet or loved ones etc.,

These profound events can impede with child's health and mental wellbeing. It was also determined that adverse experiences during childhood are root cause of many impairments and unhealthy behaviours influencing adolescences and adulthood.

People often believe that the traumatic childhood experience can be forgotten. Childhood trauma can have lifelong effect. Children who undergo such traumatic events may have problems with handling emotions, anxiety, depression, difficulty trusting others, fear of being dependent, school truancy, and feelings of isolation, low self-esteem and self-destructive behaviour.

Childhood trauma doesn't always look like severe abuse or neglect. It can be subtle sometimes, un-noticed, undervalued, or under-responded to. They are sometimes repressed and can be hidden underneath.

Children should enjoy their childhood to the fullest. They shouldn't feel responsible for:

- ◆ Mediating conflicts between parents
- ◆ Raising their siblings

- ◆ Fulfilling a parents dream and unmet needs
- ◆ Regulating parents' emotions.

Parenting mistakes that can cause childhood trauma: (Never ever do this)

- ◆ Refusing to listen to child's problems and giving emotional support
- ◆ Spending very little time with their children
- ◆ Abusing verbally and physically
- ◆ Constant comparison with other siblings, cousins, friends
- ◆ Criticizing and judging children for their mistakes
- ◆ Ignoring child's achievements and refusing to praise.

Children react to trauma in different ways. Likewise, no two individuals react the same to the same events. There are some ways that would help child cope with traumatic event:

- ◆ Answer questions honestly
- ◆ Acknowledge and validate child's concerns
- ◆ Reassure your child
- ◆ Encourage child to freely share his feelings and express his emotions
- ◆ Encourage child to pursue activities they enjoy
- ◆ Allow them to grieve for any loss
- ◆ Engage with your child in their play time
- ◆ Set healthy boundaries
- ◆ Rebuild trust and safety
- ◆ Limit child's media exposure to traumatic events
- ◆ Schedule family outing

Yamuna Nandivada

