

Pre-Adoption Education on RAD/Developmental Trauma Survey

March 21, 2019

Introduction

Studies indicate that nearly half of American children have had at least one adverse childhood experienceⁱ. Chronic abuse or neglect, chronic adverse childhood experiences, can cause developmental trauma. In fact, according to the study "The Prevalence of reactive attachment disorder in a deprived population," nearly 50% of the children may meet diagnostic criteria for Reactive Attachment Disorder (RAD).ⁱⁱ

Anecdotal evidence indicates that most adoptive and foster parents are not provided with the training to be equipped to parent a child with developmental trauma. Because these children require specialized parenting and treatment to heal and thrive, this is detrimental to these families and children.

Purpose

The purpose of this survey was to investigate how prepared adoptive and foster parents are to recognize the signs of developmental trauma and to get help for their child.

Summary Key Findings

95% of parents are not equipped to recognize or manage developmental trauma.

- 95% of parents surveyed indicate they did not have the training or knowledge to recognize developmental trauma in their children. Further, they did not know how or where to get help.

Detailed Findings

Responses

242 people responded to the survey.

Survey Questions

When your child began to exhibit signs of RAD/Developmental Trauma were you prepared, able to recognize it, and did you know where to get help?

Yes

5%

No

95%

Freeform responses

(Edited for grammar and clarity)

- In foster parenting training we were told about RAD but that it was so rare that it was not worth much discussions as we would likely never see it in our home.”
- We knew RAD was a likely thing when we started fostering, not because our agency bothered to tell us, but based on our own research.
- We knew and were trained and immediately sought help through a therapist we were already using. It didn't change a thing though. She still tried to have me killed this past November. All the resources, professionals, etc didn't make it any better.
- I recognized something was wrong on day 2. It took me 10 months of researching to find what it was.
- Yes I knew, but NO I was completely unprepared for the extent to which the challenges would be.
- We adopted 15 years ago and were told nothing and knew nothing about RAD. I should add that I am a medical professional and was never taught anything about this.
- We were not taught about it. In fact we were not even told he had been diagnosed with it. Of course we were told that he had had Leukemia and would need follow ups.

Methodology

The survey was configured in Facebook and shared on the @RaisingDevon page. The automatic survey settings allow one response per Facebook user.

The survey opened on March 18, 2019 and closed on March 20, 2019.

The link to the survey was posted in two private online parenting groups:

Attach Families Support Group

Number of Members: 680

Focus: For parents of children with developmental trauma

The Underground World of RAD

Number Members: 1010

Focus: For parents of children diagnosed with RAD

It was shared to individual Facebook pages and groups by participants.

Respondents were asked to add comments to the survey post. It was noted that these responses may be edited for grammar and clarity.

ⁱ "Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)." *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

ⁱⁱ Minnis, Helen, et al. "Prevalence of Reactive Attachment Disorder in a Deprived Population." *Cambridge Core*, Cambridge University Press, 2 Jan. 2018