

In This Issue

- Colorado Hometown News
- Trauma and Children
- Adoption and Psychology

About Us

Front Range Psychological Associates, LLC is a mental health practice dedicated to promoting and providing mental health care to children, adolescents, adults, seniors, families, and couples. We provide counseling services as well as psychological testing. We work with insurance carriers and also accept fee-for-service payment.

Dr. Bridget Engel and Dr. Stephanie Smith are both licensed clinical psychologists in Colorado, and have extensive experience working with clients in improving psychological health.

Monthly Column

FRPA was recently contacted to write a monthly column about mental health issues for Colorado Hometown Newspapers, which provides papers for Lafayette, Louisville, Superior, and Erie, Colorado. Please watch for our column on the 3rd Wednesday of each month in the Health section of the newspaper. Let us know your thoughts!

Spotlight on Children:

Kids and Trauma

It is an unfortunate part of life that children are often exposed to trauma of various kinds. Natural disasters, accidents, and man-made tragedies occur everyday, and children are too often the victims. Caring for children who have experienced trauma of any kind is essential, but it is important for adult caregivers to keep in mind that children's needs after tragedy can be different from their own.

Dealing with Fear:

1. Treat all fears as real and genuine.
2. Listen to your child explain her fear and reassure her that you will take care of her.
3. Encourage children to express their fears in ways that they know how; this may include talking, drawing, or acting.
4. Let your child know they can count on you during the crisis; don't make promises you can't keep.

Daily Routine:

1. Maintain your daily routine as much as possible.
2. Make school counselors, clergy, or other professionals that have contact with your child aware of the situation so that they may help if the need arises.
3. Be aware that bedtime routines may need to be flexible for a time in order to allow the child to feel safe (i.e., leaving the light on in the bedroom, or having a parent nearby when falling asleep).

Trauma Resources:

Helping Children Cope Fact Sheet:

http://www.cdhs.state.co.us/dmh/Documents/Disaster_RP_HelpingChildrenCope.doc

American Psychological Association Fact Sheet:

<http://www.apa.org/practice/ptguidelines.html>

Tips for Teachers and Children:

<http://mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/publications/allpubs/KEN-01-0093/default.asp>

Following a Traumatic Event, Preschool to Adolescence:

<http://mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/publications/allpubs/NMH02-0138/default.asp>

Adoption Resources:

www.adoptionnetwork.com

www.adopt.org

www.adoptionguide.com

www.apa.org/videos/4310732.html

4. Be aware that young children may regress to a previous behavioral stage in response to the trauma (i.e., thumb sucking, bedwetting).

Talking about the Event:

1. Tell your child what you know about the event – in developmentally appropriate language and detail.
2. It is ok to let your child know that you have fears too – however, communicate that you have confidence in both your, and your child's ability to cope with the event.
3. Encourage your child to talk about the event as much as he needs to.

Healing from the Trauma:

1. Allow your child to help in clean up activities if appropriate; she'll feel more in control if she can help.
2. Young children need to be held.
3. Try to find a special time each day to spend together as a family.
4. Deal with the tragedy, but don't let it dominate family time indefinitely.
5. Children imitate the way adults cope with pain; let them see you taking care of your own psychological needs.

Resources:
SAMHSA
FEMA
Red Cross

Adoption and Psychology

November is National Adoption Month.

Adopting a child is a naturally exciting time. However, even with the support of a full-service adoption agency, many expectant parents have worries before the adoption, as well as after it is finalized. Listed below are some areas in which a mental health professional can assist families in making the process of adoption go more smoothly for everyone involved.

1) Many couples struggle with infertility and other painful barriers that prevent them from having children naturally. Psychologists can assist in making the decision about whether or not to pursue adoption. Psychologists also often have knowledge of reputable adoption agencies.

2) A therapist is able to provide the support and understanding families need during the process itself. Adoption is often complicated and it may be difficult to endure repeated delays and setbacks.

Contact Us

<http://www.frontrangepscyhology.com/>

303-828-3080

If you would like to be removed from our email list, please send a note to:

drsmith@frontrangepscyhology.com

Pass It On!

Please feel free to forward this newsletter to your co-workers, friends, or family members.

3) A psychologist can help prepare couples for inquiries from family, friends, and others. Although people do not always mean to be intrusive or rude, questions can take adoptive parents off guard. It's important to know how to respond when people are insensitive.

4) Once your child is a part of the family, psychologists are excellent resources for learning effective parenting skills. They can help parents understand what to expect developmentally from their child, and how to parent them in accordance with their family's values.

5) New parents may want to learn more about how adopted children attach to new parents and what things they can do to make the transition into the family easier for their child. A psychologist is a great resource for this kind of education.

6) Families will want to prepare for discussions with their child about adoption, and their feelings about being adopted.

6) Often times, the adoption process goes smoothly and the family members transition into their new roles without complications. Sometimes, however, children may join families after having suffered difficult or traumatic events, and/or may develop difficulties after settling into their new home. Psychologist can provide adults, families, and children with resources that will assist in achieving emotional and psychological health for the new family as a whole.

****FRPA provides comprehensive family therapy and consultation. We also provide pre-adoption psychological evaluations for families hoping to adopt.**

Feedback

Please let us know what you think about our newsletter! And also feel free to email or call us with questions, or for more information about the information presented in this newsletter, or about the services provided by FRPA.

We are happy to answer your questions, and take pride in responding quickly and thoroughly to our clients' needs.