

Welcome to our webinar!



The Impact of Adultification on Child Survivors of Trauma with an Emphasis on Children of Color

April 11, 2019


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Healthy Actions Intervening Responsibly (H.A.I.R.)



National Resource Center
on Domestic Violence



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National Resource Center
on Domestic Violence

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The NRCDV is a comprehensive source of free information for those wanting to educate themselves and help others on the many issues related to domestic violence.

Primary approaches to our work:

- TA and Training
- Resource Development
- Organizing and Networking
- Key Initiatives and Special Projects



Key Initiatives & Special Projects



VAWnet.org
National Online Resource Center on
Violence Against Women



DOMESTIC
VIOLENCE
AWARENESS
PROJECT
Supporting Public and
Prevention Education Efforts
www.nrcdv.org/dvam



DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
EVIDENCE PROJECT
Building
Comprehensive
Solutions



preventIPV
tools for social change




RHY & DV
TOOLKIT

NRCDV STANDS

NRCDV STANDS.

WE STAND with individuals and groups who have been targeted, degraded, threatened, or marginalized because they are Native Americans, people of color, immigrants, women, Muslims, LGBTQ, or people with disabilities.

WE STAND against white supremacy, racism, misogyny, anti-Semitism, homophobia, transphobia, xenophobia, and all other forms of structural oppression.

WE STAND with survivors of domestic and sexual violence, especially those most vulnerable and with limited access to services and protection.

WE STAND together in celebration of the rich diversity of people in this country and the vitality and strength they bring to our communities and society.

WE STAND with those who embrace self care and community connection as necessary and powerful for social change.

WE STAND with other activists and organizations who continue to work passionately for gender, racial, economic, and social justice for ALL.

National Resource Center
on Domestic Violence

November 11, 2016

H.A.I.R.
(Healthy Actions Intervening Responsibly)

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Through conducting trainings, webinars, and community engagement activities H.A.I.R. is designed to raise the awareness of issues that have negative impacts on children and their childhoods, with an emphasis on Black girls. H.A.I.R. emphasizes the importance of “healthy” interventions, as not all interventions are healthy.

H.A.I.R. mobilizes families, communities, faith leaders, educators and law enforcement to intentionally “invest” time and action steps towards improving service-delivery and trauma-informed approaches while working in partnership Black girls *—emphasized, unsilenced and made visible.*

Learning Objectives:

- To explore adultification, its intersections and impact.
- To understand how experiences of childhood trauma can impact development and decision making.
- To examine the ways in which family traditions, cultural norms, and layers of oppression impact children’s experiences of violence and healing.
- To shed light on the impact of structural and institutional racism on children of color.
- To identify tools and sources for creating a plan to address adultification.

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National Prevalence

More than three women a day are murdered by their husbands or boyfriends in the United States, and women experience two million injuries from intimate partner violence each year.

Many of these women are mothers who often go to great and courageous lengths to protect their children from abusive partners. In fact, some research has shown that the non-abusing parent is often the strongest protective factor in the lives of children who are exposed to domestic violence. However, growing up in a violent home may be a terrifying and traumatic experience that can affect every aspect of a child's life, growth and development.



7 Promising Futures Best Practices for Serving Children, Youth, and Parents Experiencing Domestic Violence

Children Exposed to Family Violence

Almost 30 million American children will be exposed to family violence by the time they are 17 years old and one in four American children will experience violence between their parents/caregivers – that's about 20.5 million children.



8 Promising Futures Best Practices for Serving Children, Youth, and Parents Experiencing Domestic Violence

Who Grows Up More Quickly and Why



ADULTIFICATION

The premature empowerment of a child to assume authority, acquire knowledge and function in roles associated with adulthood.

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Decision-Making Ability

- Includes skills, knowledge, resources, and social networking which helps to manage relationships with others, to play various roles, to perform behaviors and to react to environments under the familial culture or the climate of a larger society.



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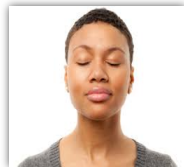
- Captures self-perceptions of one's age, in terms of how old one feels compared to others of the same chronological age, or the age group with which one identifies.



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LET'S TAKE A POLL

What do you think might accelerate subjective aging?



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For example, one teen said...

"Sometimes I just don't believe how this school operates and thinks about us. Here I am a grown man. I take care of my mother and have raised my sisters. Then I come here and this know-nothing teacher treats me like I'm some dumb kid with no responsibilities. I am so frustrated."

"They are trying to make me something that I am not. Don't they understand I've been a man longer than she's been a woman? I better be a man before I lose my life on these streets!"



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Developmental Implications



- When children and adolescents perform adult-like roles, the experience can have unique developmental implications for them.
- These may include disturbances of their socio-emotional development and their ability to make and maintain healthy relationships with others.



14 Burton, 2007; Hooper, Tomek, Bond, & Reif, 2015; Garber, 2011

One Highlighted Disturbance

- It is argued that experiencing social behavior, and engaging in social interaction, is vital during childhood development.
- However, many children, for various reasons, are not able to participate in, or experience, the social behavior that is crucial for their well-being, mental health, and development.
- Adulthood can be a contributing factor to social isolation.

15 <https://www.resolution.com/global/research/how-does-social-isolation-affect-a-childs-mental-health-and-development/>

The Severity of Social Isolation

- In 2000,
 - 245,000 deaths attributed to low education
 - 176,000 to racial segregation
 - 162,000 to low social support
 - 133,000 to individual-level poverty
 - 119,000 to income inequality
 - 39,000 to area-level poverty
- Social isolation is equivalent to smoking 15 cigarettes per day.



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Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

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Social
access is
crucial.

- Unfortunately children who are experiencing social isolation, through adultification, may not have access to trusted adults, extra-curricular activities and community activities and resources that may help to mitigate harm and risk factors.



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The Power
of
Imitation:
children
learn from
what they
see.

- Imitation is a powerful form of learning commonly used by children, adults and infants. A child's enthusiasm for imitative behavior prompts parental attention and interaction, and provides a mechanism for transmitting appropriate cultural and social behavior.



<https://www.mimic.com/globalresearch/how-does-social-isolation-affect-a-childs-mental-health-and-development/>

A Study of Preschoolers Role-Playing as Adults

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- Meats and dairy (10 items)
- Fruits and vegetables (16 items)
- Breads and cereals (13 items)
- Desserts (15 items)
- Snacks and candy (23 items)
- Condiments, spreads, and prepared foods (17 items)
- Medicine, toiletries, and non-food items (13 items)
- Nonalcoholic drinks (11 items)
- Beer and wine (9 items, including Budweiser, Coors, Schlitz, and Pabst)
- Cigarettes (6 items: 3 packs of Camels and 3 packs of Marlboros)

A Study of Preschoolers Role-Playing as Adults

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- 65.8% purchased cake
- 40.8% purchased Reese's candy
- 76.7% purchased at least 1 fresh fruit or vegetable
- 37.5% purchased chicken
- 17.5% bought ibuprofen (Advil)
- 11.7% bought a newspaper
- 28.3% bought cigarettes of whom 50.0% identified them by product type (cigarettes or smokes) and 17.7% identified them by brand name.
- 61.7% bought alcohol of whom 58.1% identified it by type (beer, wine, or booze).

jamanetwork.com/journals/jamapediatrics/fullarticle/486117

After leaving the grocery store ...

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They returned to the dining and living room setup.

- 71% played with the cigarette packs
- 72% children played with the alcohol
- Children were more likely to play with the cigarettes if their parents smoked.
- Parental alcohol use was not related to whether or not a child played with or "used" the alcohol.



jamanetwork.com/journals/jamapediatrics/fullarticle/486117

Experiences that can Impact Childhood

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It is well documented how poverty and having the lack of support can be sources of stress for children. Below can be additional sources of their stress.



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Family Traditions

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- There is a strong sense of family identity that involves fulfilling family responsibilities.
- Fulfillment of parental expectations.
- Collectivistic cultures, there is often a strong sense of family obligation.
- Fulfilling the needs and desires of the elders.

Bhattacharya & Schoppale, 2004; Park, 2005; Weisskirch, 2010; Hua & Costigan, 2012

Discrimination-Related Stress

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- Unequal pace of acculturation between parent and children.
- Fear of discrimination.
- Stressors of adjusting to a new cultural environment.
- Loss and lack of social support.
- Difficulty of finding jobs.
- Non-acceptance by the host culture.

Crockett et al., 2007; Titzmann, 2012; Hwang & Ting, 2008

Stressors-Related to Immigrant Families

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- Adapting to new environments.
- Children are expected to play more dominant roles.
- Take on parental responsibilities and receives less parental support.
- Societal perspectives to honor family.
- Language and cultural behaviors that require children to act as translators for their parents.

Qorobshin Kuman, 2009

Children of the Dominant Culture

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- An examination between Caucasian with Asian students in a parentification inventory: parent-focused, sibling-focused, and perceived-benefit parentification.
- Asian students disclosed that, within their culture, there was a strong tendency to emphasize "assisting" behaviors and togetherness to produce a tight kinship structure.
- Caucasian students perceived adultification as a beneficial experience for them when compared with their Asian counterparts.



Crockett et al., 2007; Titzmann, 2012; Hwang & Ting, 2008

More concerns...

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How adults view children and their behaviors.



Neighborhood-Related Stress

- When young people witness or experience violence on a daily basis, it can raise the possibility (and sometimes the reality) of the end of their life drawing nearer.
- Fear and the lack of safety on a daily basis can accelerate subjective aging by pushing young people into more adult-like responsibilities.



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Burton, 1998. Kotlowitz 1991

Homelessness & Adultification

- Many homeless youth left their family residence at an early age and now face additional stressors related to street life.
- Limited space and lack of privacy.



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Burton, 1998. Kotlowitz 1991

Economics & Poverty



Children living in poverty are more likely to:

- Live in high crime neighborhoods, increasing their exposure to violence.
- Live in low-resource communities.
- Take on heavier work loads outside the home.
- Function at a more mature developmental stage out of necessity.



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Ludwig, Duncan and Hirschfeld, 2001

Stereotypes

- Stereotypes often result in Black children not being afforded the opportunity to make mistakes and to learn, grow, and benefit from correction for youthful missteps to the same degree as white children.
- Black girls are viewed less innocent and are punished more harshly **despite their status** as children.



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Children's Development in the 21st Century

325 adults from different racial, ethnic and educational backgrounds in the US were recruited online in order to obtain a community sample of typical adults.



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Georgetown Law's Center on Poverty and Inequality

Adultification Age-Brackets

As early as 5 years of age:

- Ages 5-9
- Ages 10-14
- Ages 15-19



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- Black girls were described as having “very mature” behavior, socially, [not academically], sophisticated and controlling at a young age.
- The interpretation of Black girls’ outspokenness is often associated with the stereotype of Black women as aggressive and dominating.
- Black girls are treated as if they are willfully engaging in behaviors typically expected of Black women.



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- Black children are rarely perceived as being worthy of playtime and are often severely punished for exhibiting normal child-like behaviors.
- Adultification contributes to disproportionality in school discipline outcomes, harsher treatment by law enforcement and officials across the juvenile justice system.



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Supreme Court Rulings

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Children should not be treated as adults.

- In 2005, the Court ruled in *Roper v. Simmons* that a young person under the age of 18 cannot be sentenced to death.
- In 2010, the Court ruled in *Graham v. Florida* that young people who commit a non-homicidal offense must be offered a 'meaningful' or 'realistic' opportunity for release.
- In 2011, the Court ruled in *J.D.B v. North Carolina* that the age of a child is relevant when determining police custody.
- In 2012, the Court ruled in *Miller v. Alabama* that it is unconstitutional to sentence a child to life without the possibility of parole.



One size does not fit all!

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- One study demonstrated that Black boys were perceived as older and likely to be guilty.
- Seasoned officers consistently overestimate Black adolescent felony suspects' by 4-5 years older than what they are.



<https://www.law.georgetown.edu/poverty-inequality-center/wp-content/uploads/sites/14/2017/08/griffith-interrupted.pdf>

Leadership Development

- Teachers perceptions of students as adult-like is known to interfere with providing Black girls leadership development opportunities.
- The lack of access to mentorship opportunities is also a factor.



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Risks and Resilience

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Guiding Principles

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- Child Safety
- Well-Being of mom or primary caregiver
- Creating opportunities for engagement



What is Resilience?

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- Resilience has to do with a person's ability to make plans and follow through with them, to problem solve, and to manage impulses and feelings.
- Resilience is not something that you either have or don't. **It's a human capacity** and can be developed in anyone.



Factors which can promote resilience:

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- Relationships with family members.
- The immediate environment in which they live.
- Life events.
- Helping the child improve her/his self-esteem and self-efficacy.
- Altering the child's perceptions of/or exposure to risk of harm.



Creating a Plan

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Reduce Social Isolation

- Creative engagement can help to ease social isolation.
- Design systems and activities to bring people into meaningful relationships.



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Holt Lunstad J et al 2010

Part of the Plan

- Be non-judgmental.
- Get to know the family and how they function.
- Have conversations about flexibility and inner strength that keeps them strong in times of stress.
- Adapt agency forms to be more open and flexible for use.
- Observe and assess for early signs of family distress. And respond with encouragement and support.
- Teach concrete skills to prevent stress, such as planning and goal setting, anticipating difficulties, problem-solving, communication, and self-care.
- Link parents with resources for stress management, such as exercise opportunities, relaxation techniques, and venues for meditation or prayer.



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Additional Reading Materials

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- Pushout: The Criminalization of Black Girls in Schools – Monique W. Morris
- Childhood Disrupted: How Your Biography Becomes Your Biology, and How You Can Heal – Donna Jackson Nakazawa
- Girlhood Interrupted: The Erasure of Black Girls' Childhood



Thank you for attending!



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"I have come to believe over and over again that what is most important to me must be spoken, made verbal and shared, even at the risk of having it bruised or misunderstood." — **Audre Lorde**

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One person's actions may seem insignificant, but together a communities' collective "#1Things" can lead to real social transformation.

Believe Victims. Healing & Resilience
 Support the Community. Respect.
 Encourage Equality. Equity. Peace.
 Share Power. Policy & System
 Change. Leverage Your Privilege.
 Vote. Engage. Action + Awareness
 = Social Change

#1Thing 

Download your copy of the #1Thing Action Guide at
<https://nrcdv.org/dvam/1thing>

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We Need your Feedback

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Thank you for attending our session today. Your experience at this training is very important to us.

We invite you take a few minutes to complete a short survey and provide your feedback. The survey should take less than four minutes. Your participation is voluntary, anonymous and confidential.





National Resource Center on Domestic Violence

The National Resource Center on Domestic Violence (www.nrcdv.org) provides a wide range of free, comprehensive, and individualized technical assistance, training, and specialized resource materials. You can access our publications online at VAWnet.org.

Contact us:
 1-800-537-2238
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