



A Newsletter from your Technical Assistance Center, Prevent Child Abuse-NJ

Supporting Essex, Hudson, Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth, Ocean and Somerset Counties



The Road to Resilience

As our team was brainstorming ideas for this issue, we noticed a number of conversations with programs and providers in how various types of trauma impact everyone involved in the field of Early Care and Education. This includes children, parents, staff and administrators. These conversations, in conjunction with the recent natural disasters and traumatic events happening throughout the country, led us to develop and gather the following articles, tips and resources to support our work. You may feel that this topic does not apply to you or your families, but we know that trauma impacts people from all walks of life and has lasting effects. With such profound impacts, it is worth considering how you can help children to build resiliency and be better equipped to handle adversity. It is also worth noting that these ideas can be infused into work you may already be doing with Grow NJ Kids, such as adapting your learning environment and a focus on family engagement. Read on to find out more!

“Resilience requires relationships, not rugged individualism”

[8 Things to Remember about Child Development](#), Center on the Developing Child, Harvard University

Trauma Informed Care

There may be children in your program that have experienced a traumatic event or circumstance. How would you know and what can you do to support these children? A traumatic event may include: a natural disaster; abuse or neglect; loss of a parent or caregiver; exposure to violence; separation/divorce; and/or living with a parent with mental health, substance abuse or mental health challenges. These children may have challenges with class rules or routines and difficulty focusing and are more likely to suffer harmful long-term consequences when not supported with understanding and trauma-appropriate responses from adults. While you may not be certain that a child has experienced trauma, you can take a proactive approach by incorporating trauma informed practices into your work. These practices include **understanding, recognizing and responding** to the effects of trauma. The benefits of using this approach include fewer behavior problems and reduced impact of post-traumatic stress.

Bartlett, J. Wilson, A. Anderson Moore, K. & Redd, Z.
[“5 Ways Trauma-Informed Care Supports Children’s Development.”](#)
Child Trends, 2016

Ways to Incorporate Trauma Informed Care

1. Learn the signs, symptoms and impacts of trauma by attending **training** such as the *Keeping Babies & Children in Mind* workshop series.
2. Integrate trauma informed practices into your **policies/procedures** (e.g. mandated reporting, emergency planning, staff training).
3. Identify and establish **relationships with community partners** that are trauma informed (e.g. family success centers, counseling agencies, central intake).
4. **Share related information with families** through workshops or by connecting them to community resources.

“Recognizing and Addressing Trauma in Infants, Young Children, and their Families: Building Trauma Informed Services” Retrieved from: https://www.ecmhc.org/tutorials/trauma/mod4_10.html





Your Learning Environment

By being intentional in your teaching practices and how you set up your learning environment, you can be effective to improve a child's experience in your care. Schwartz-Henderson (2016) recommends the following teaching strategies and environment considerations that can help support a child who has experienced trauma and are also aligned with best practices in the Environment Rating Scales (ERS).

Teaching Strategies:

- ⇒ Break complex tasks into easy-to follow directions
- ⇒ Provide many opportunities for children to understand and appreciate differences
- ⇒ Model good conflict-resolution processes
- ⇒ Provide opportunities for children to make good choices
- ⇒ Control your own emotions and do not personalize any misbehavior
- ⇒ Have guidelines for classroom procedures, daily routines, parent engagement, etc. that consider the impact of trauma
- ⇒ Give leadership opportunities instead of punishments
- ⇒ Give five-minute warnings before transitions to allow the hyper system to adjust to changes

Considerations for your Environment:

- ⇒ Provide ample indoor space that is accessible to all children and family members to set the tone that all are welcome
- ⇒ Provide a space for one child to work independently or in pairs recognizing that not everyone is always ready for participation in a large group
- ⇒ Create a more relaxed atmosphere by adding softness to the room like a cozy book area and plan times to lower lighting and reduce sound level
- ⇒ Provide culturally sensitive materials and displays that are of interest to the children and display individualized artwork at the child's level to place value on the child's voice within the classroom
- ⇒ Have enough toys to prevent boredom, but not so many that the children feel overwhelmed
- ⇒ Provide a safe space for active gross motor play to acknowledge the need for physical movement to release energy and/or stress

Related Items in the ERS

ECERS-3 Items 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 26, 30, 31, 32

ITERS-R Items 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 16, 26, 27, 28

FCCERS Items 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 26, 28, 29, 30

FCC Highlight

FCC Provider Adria Janni, with the support of TAS Lissette Falcon, makes changes to her environment to support best practices.



Ms. Janni uses an old curtain to set up a cozy corner and private reading area to allow space for children to take a break.



Ms. Janni provides a variety of materials in the dramatic play area including multicultural props and accessories in a space that encourages pretend play.





Strengthen Your Program to Build Resilience

Taking the first step towards implementing the Strengthening Families framework is a great starting point in your efforts to incorporate trauma informed practices. By learning more about the families that you serve, you can more effectively promote the [Five Protective Factors](#), enhance your relationships with parents/caregivers and work your way to meeting a number of standards in GNJK Category 3!

5 Steps to Begin Strengthening Families

1. Work with families to complete the [Protective Factors Survey](#) to gain an understanding of the families you serve.
2. Create a self-assessment committee consisting of parents and staff to begin reviewing the Strengthening Families Self-Assessment Tool (SAT), [Center Based SAT](#) or [Family Child Care SAT](#).
3. Create a safe space for parents where they can connect with each other like a family cozy corner or offer a morning “coffee chat” session.
4. Create a space where families can find information and resources that are available in the community that provide both support services and opportunities for social connections.
5. Schedule local service providers either periodically or in connection to events to set up a resource table at drop off or pick up time to help families make connections (health department, dentists, pediatricians, a nurse practitioner, WIC, etc.).

GNJK Standards: 3.2.1; 3.2.2; 3.3.1; 3.3.3; 3.4.1; 3.5.1

Webinar Resources

[GNJK TAC Webinars](#)

Check out our archived webinars on Protective Factors in Action, Family Engagement and much more!

Online Resource

[Traumatic Experiences](#)

Check out this resource to learn more about traumatic experiences, activities to help children cope and family friendly resources.

“There’s always something you can do to make a difference in the life of a child.”

Center Highlight

University N.O.W. Day Nursery, Mercer County

University N.O.W. Day Nursery (UNOW) has been a non-profit, quality, play based center on the Princeton University campus for over 40 years. Originating on the heels of University Faculty and the National Organization Women, the need for quality child care was recognized. UNOW has

maintained its’ partnership with Princeton University, yet separate as a not-for-profit status serving faculty, staff and student families as well as a percentage of families from the local community.

UNOW joined Grow NJ Kids at a critical point in the growth of the center. Because of UNOW’s long standing partnership with Princeton University, NAEYC Accreditation standing and recognized quality service in the community, we were chosen as the providers for the newly constructed center on campus. This meant a move to a new center and doubling the number of children and staff. Although it was an exciting change, **with any change there can be stress as well as opportunity for growth.** Initially, there was much to-do about the design of the new building and the formation of the classrooms and playground. It was known that the University would design a state of the art facility, but the preservation of the **quality programming and community feeling** in the smaller center was of equal importance. Bricks and mortar are nice, but the **heart of the program is the staff and families.**

This was the critical point where the Grow NJ Kids framework, tools and supports provided helped us to review policies, curriculum and the quality of services. Creative Curriculum was selected as teachers are provided with the framework, but also have the freedom to use their personal style and creativity in planning activities. UNOW also implemented the use of a developmental screening tool and will be working to implement TS Gold. The opportunity to host the **KBCM training** series was presented this past Spring and the administration decided the opportunity was too wonderful to pass up. It has been well attended and very informative. **The staff have felt that it has enhanced their understanding of the unique social and emotional development of young children.** UNOW is working hard on Continuous Quality Improvement and preparing to submit for their star level rating next Spring. The supports afforded through GNJK are helping as they build their program in the new facility. Overall, this has been a positive experience. *Jessie Bradley, Associate Director*

Save the Date for these Upcoming Opportunities!

Webinars, *Open to all GNJK programs*

Date	Time	Topic	Presenter	Description
12/20/17	12-1pm	Building Your Business Brain: Exploring Grow NJ Kids Category 5	Grow NJ Kids Technical Assistance Center–North	At high quality childcare centers, what happens in the front office is just as important as what is happening in the classrooms. Participants will receive an overview of Category 5 Standards relating to Administration and Management. Topics of discussion will include budgeting basics and business strategic planning, staff retention strategies and assessing workplace climate, as well as how to incorporate reflective teaching practices into staff development.

GNJK Peer Learning Communities (PLCs), *County Specific*

Date	Time	Location	County
11/14/17	12-2pm	North Bergen Library – Kennedy Branch	Hudson
11/16/17	1-3pm	Child Care Connection, Trenton	Mercer
12/6/17	10am-12pm	Learning Resource Center, East Orange	Essex
12/12/17	3:30-5:30pm	Oceanport Preschool, Oceanport	Monmouth/Ocean
1/19/18	10am-12pm	Little Treasures Learning Center, Edison	Middlesex/Somerset

Virtual Learning Community

*Open to the Central Region
(Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth, Ocean & Somerset Counties)*

Join us from the comfort of your office to discuss GNJK related topics, Continuous Quality Improvement and leadership in the field of Early Care and Education. On the third Wednesday of each month, we will be hosting an on-line forum to reflect on best practices and other topics as requested to meet your needs.

Online & Phone Accessible
Wednesday, November 15th
1-2pm
[Click to Register](#)

Networking Meetings

Central Region

Thank you to all who attended the meeting on October 16th and a special thanks to Nicki Cordi, Luz Horta and Dr. Avonia Richardson-Miller for sharing their experiences and expertise!

Northeast Region

Friday, November 3rd
10am-2pm
Learning Resource Center
7 Glenwood Ave. #201, East Orange



PCA-NJ operates a broad range of preventative services designed to support the improvement and quality of professional workforces and programming, resulting in significant positive impacts on family functioning and health in all 21 counties. **PCA-NJ programs include:**

- ◆ Grow NJ Kids TAC
- ◆ Healthy Families
- ◆ Parents as Teachers
- ◆ Parent Linking Program
- ◆ Enough Abuse
- ◆ Middlesex County Council for Young Children
- ◆ Human Trafficking Prevention
- ◆ Essex Pregnancy & Parenting Connection
- ◆ Parent Education & Technical Assistance
- ◆ The Period of Purple Crying

Central Region TA Center 103 Church Street, Suite 210 New Brunswick, NJ 08901 732.246.8060

Northeast Region TA Center 550 Broad Street, Suite 1105 Newark, NJ 07102 973.371.5301

<https://www.preventchildabusenj.org/growtac>