

Impacts

Blue Knot Foundation fact sheet about trauma and its impacts

- 1** Trauma can have many different impacts, especially if it occurred in childhood, and was repeated. There is no one size fits all.
- 2** Trauma can be especially damaging if a child is young, when the brain is growing and developing. Trauma in childhood can affect the way the child develops as well as how they attach or bond.
- 3** Complex trauma (repeated often extreme interpersonal trauma) stops people from feeling and being safe.
- 4** Trauma often includes betrayal. This can make it hard for people to trust, or lead people to trust too easily.
- 5** Trauma can lead people to feel worthless which in turn leads to struggles with their self-esteem and identity.
- 6** Trauma can cause strong feelings e.g. sadness, anger, fear, distress, and can lead some people to be impulsive.
- 7** Many people blame themselves for their challenges. Being abused is never a person's fault and is certainly never the fault of a child. Many people also feel deep shame which can stop them reaching out for help.
- 8** Many people don't ever tell anyone about what happened to them as a child or as an adult. This is for many different reasons including fear of not being believed.



- 9** People with trauma experiences can find it hard to make friends and build solid relationships, including intimate relationships. Trauma can make it harder for us to engage socially. This limits connections and can leave people isolated and alone.
- 10** Many survivors experience feelings of anxiety and depression, disconnection, being 'spaced out', confused and other forms of mental distress. Physical health problems are common as well.
- 11** When children need to focus on survival they miss out on learning and exploring. This can affect their education and work opportunities later.
- 12** Trauma can affect our thinking, concentration and memory.
- 13** Trauma can make us less flexible and more rigid. We can be less able to respond to new experiences and more likely to want to control things.

