

Suddenly Bereaved Children and Young People: Mental Health Interventions Issues



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Traumatic Events (Single, Complex/Multiple)

- Various types of loss

- Accidents

- Human-induced

- Abuse and neglect

- Domestic violence

- Community violence

- War conflict

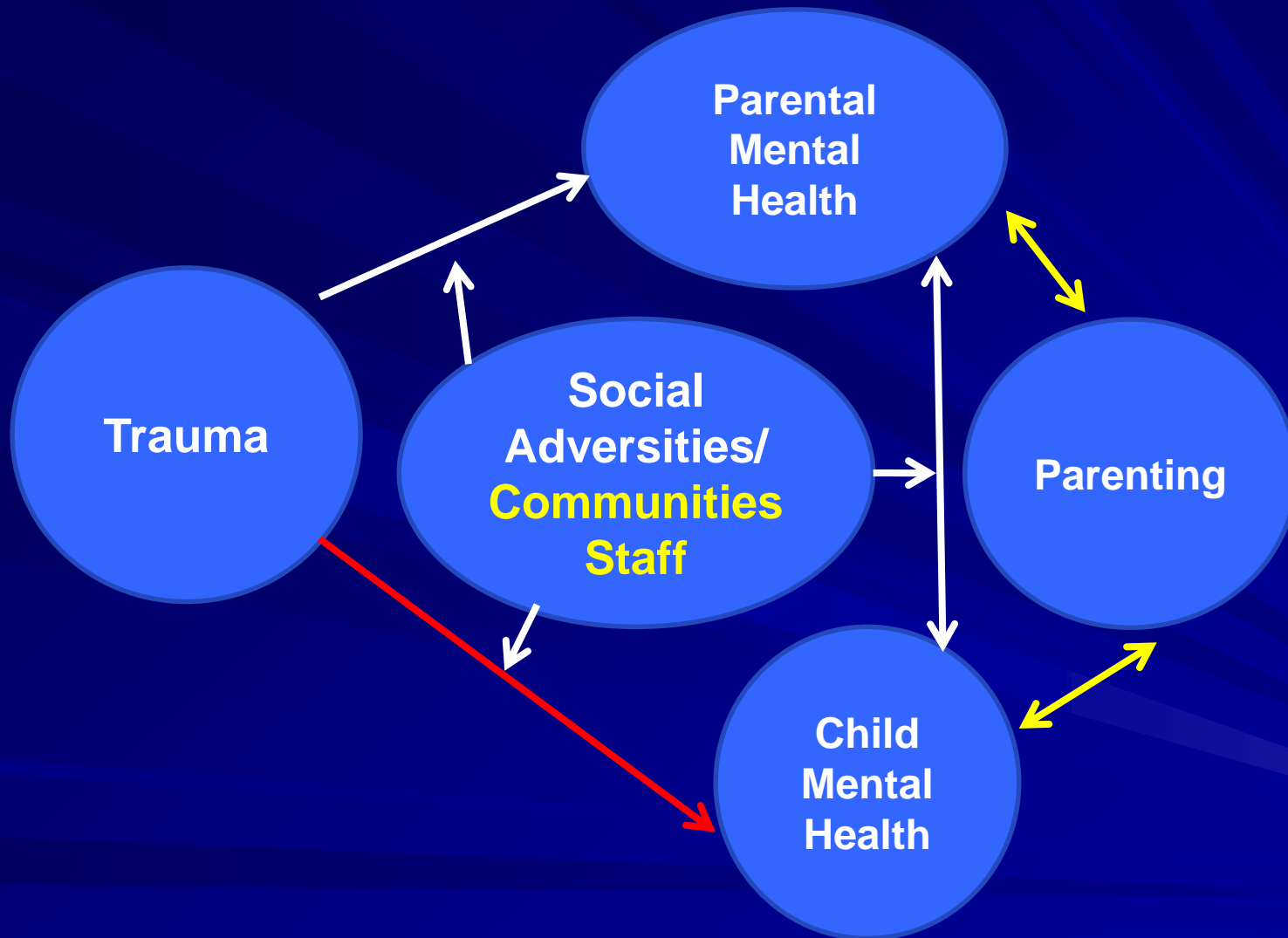
- Terrorism

- Aftermath

- Natural disasters



How trauma impacts on child mental health

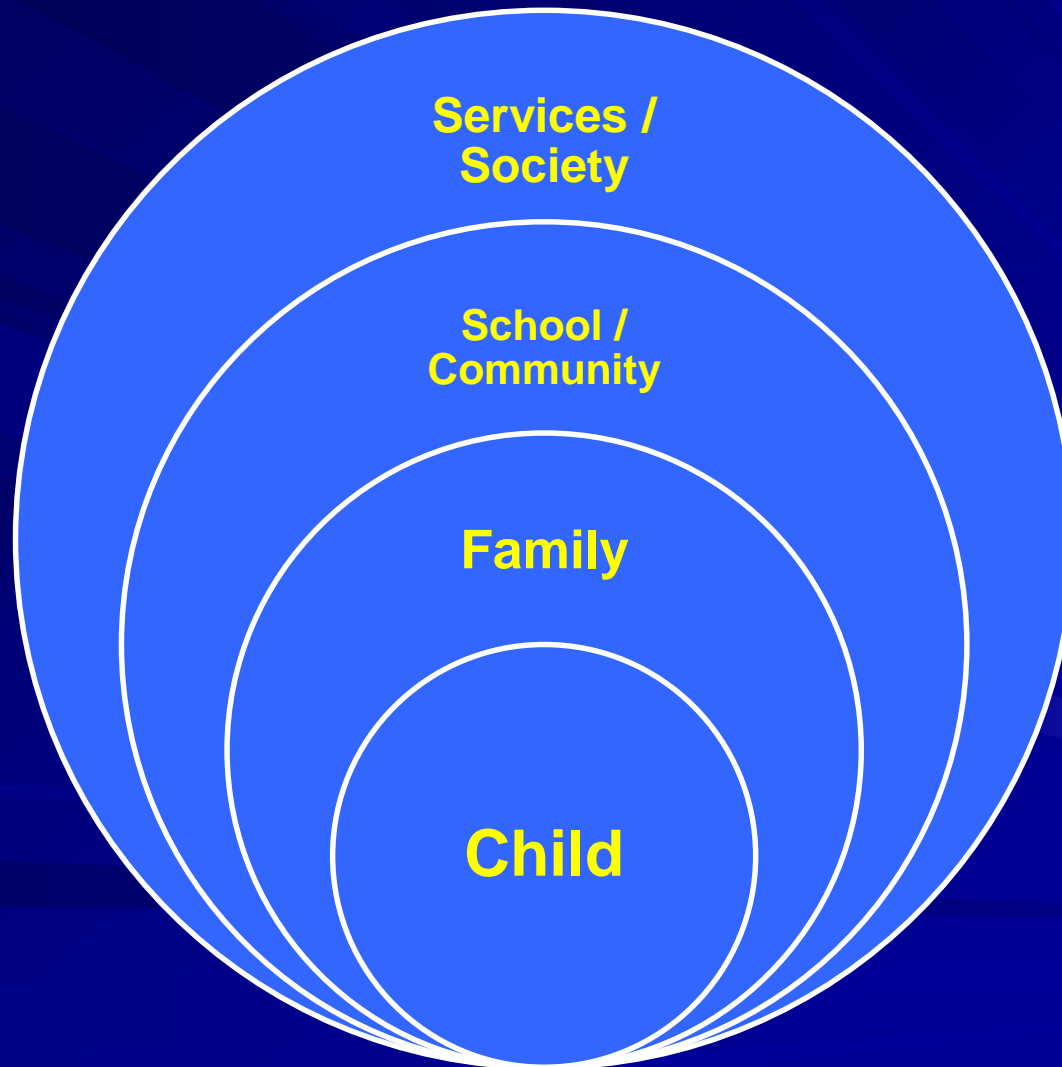


Impact of disrupted environment on child mental health

- ☐ Acute and chronic
- ☐ Direct impact
- ☐ Indirect impact through adults
- ☐ Secondary impairments
- ☐ Increase of risk / loss of protective factors
- ☐ Interaction between factors (chain of adverse events)



Ecological Systems Resilience Framework



Resilience (protective) factors for child mental health

- ❑ Attachment to carer(s)
- ❑ Family and social stability
- ❑ Educational achievement
- ❑ Friendships
- ❑ Coping strategies



Vulnerability (risk) factors for child mental health

- ❑ Violence
- ❑ Abuse
- ❑ Acute life events
- ❑ Chronic adversities
- ❑ Family conflict, mental illness



Assessment of children who have suffered trauma

- Engagement!
- Potential discrepancy with adults
- Developmental capacity
- Follow child's clues, but with purpose and direction
- Remain mindful of (more) trauma
- Disclosure can take time – child must be and feel safe



Therapeutic issues to consider for single traumatic events

- Neither miss nor overstate mental health needs
- 'Sensitive' observation / monitoring
- Communication between carers and professionals
- Family values and preferences
- Available supports
- Consider risk factors
- Child may share in their own time – when you least expect them too
- Everyone has a therapeutic role!

Interventions for complex trauma

- Psychoeducation
- Trauma-reprocessing / Psychodynamic
- Cognitive-Behavioural
- Attachment-focused (theraplay)
- Creative
- Family / Systemic
- Behavioural
- Multimodal



World Awareness for Children in Trauma (WACIT)

A psychosocial model for vulnerable children in LMIC: www.wacit.org



WACIT Psychosocial Model

