

# 5 TIPS FOR PARENTING CHILDREN WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED TRAUMA

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## YOUR RESPONSE IS IMPORTANT

- Be understanding. Recognize that changes in behavior, such as tantrums or bedwetting, may be the way your children react to trauma. They are telling you something that they can't express in words.
- Tune in to their fears and distress. Comfort and support them, giving extra attention when needed.
- Talk about your feelings in an appropriate way with your child and allow them to talk about theirs. If you get things wrong at first, it's okay. Apologize and start again.
- In this way, you bring knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, kindness, and love. - 2 Peter 1:6-7

2

## FREEDOM TO FEEL AND CHOOSE

- Remember everyone is different and may have different emotions. Your child may not feel or react the same way as you. Explore those feelings and try to understand and connect.
- Give your children a sense of control over their lives. Even minor decisions, such as allowing them to choose between two snacks, helps them to feel in control.

3

## TURN DOWN THE NOISE

- Limit stimulants like sugar, artificially colored foods, and chocolate.
- Help your child to physically relax - warm baths, story times and lots of cuddles can help relieve muscle tension.
- Intervene if an activity makes your child upset or anxious.
- Involve them in some sort of personal physical exercise.

4

## HAVE FUN

- Allow your child plenty of time to play and enjoy recreational activities.
- Play their favorite games with them and arrange activities with friends and family, even virtually if need be.
- Laughter, good times, and shared pleasure can help all family members to feel better

5

## SOUL CARE

- To be effective, you must take care of yourself.
- Make sure you build in time to prepare yourself for the day. Use prayer, journaling, and deep breathing to ground yourself. Seek wisdom and direction from the Lord. He will freely give it to you. - James 1:5
- You are amazing for stepping up in helping these children in need. Allow yourself to believe that and let it motivate you to forge ahead in times of trouble.
- "Take care of yourself, concentrate on your teaching, and stick with these things. If you do, then you will be effective in bringing salvation to yourself and all who hear you." - 1 Timothy 4:16