

# BGCA 80th Anniversary Scientific Conference – Invest in our Young for a Brighter Play Therapy in Trauma: A Journey to Grow

Kelly, Yee Ping, Chung

MSW, MSocSc, BSW, RSW, RPT-S (A4PT)

Registered Play Therapist-Supervisor of Trauma Treatment Service for  
Children & Youth (10/2013-6/2016)

Center-in-charge of Growth & Development Center (6/2016 - Present)

The Boys' & Girls' Clubs Association of Hong Kong

## Service Model from Trauma Center at Justice Resources Center in 2012



van der Kolk, B, MD (1943 – now)



Warner, E.,  
Psy.D. and  
Heather Finn,  
LICSW



Spinnazola, J.,  
Ph.D., Jana  
Pressley, Psy.D

- <http://www.traumacenter.org/>
- ARC - Attachment, Regulation, Competence Model
- SMART© - Sensory Motor Arousal Regulation Treatment
- $PTG_{Total}$  = Total score of all domains of Post-traumatic Growth Index
- 60 cases
- 13 sessions



## Subcortical response of the organism to threat: fight-flight-or-freeze response



# Basic Concept of Trauma

- Exposure to an overwhelmingly stressful event or series of events,
- Normal response by normal people in abnormal situation
- Typically extraordinary or severe that would distress almost everyone
- Dangerous to self or others
- Overwhelm our ability to response adequately
- Report feeling fundamentally changed by their traumatic experience

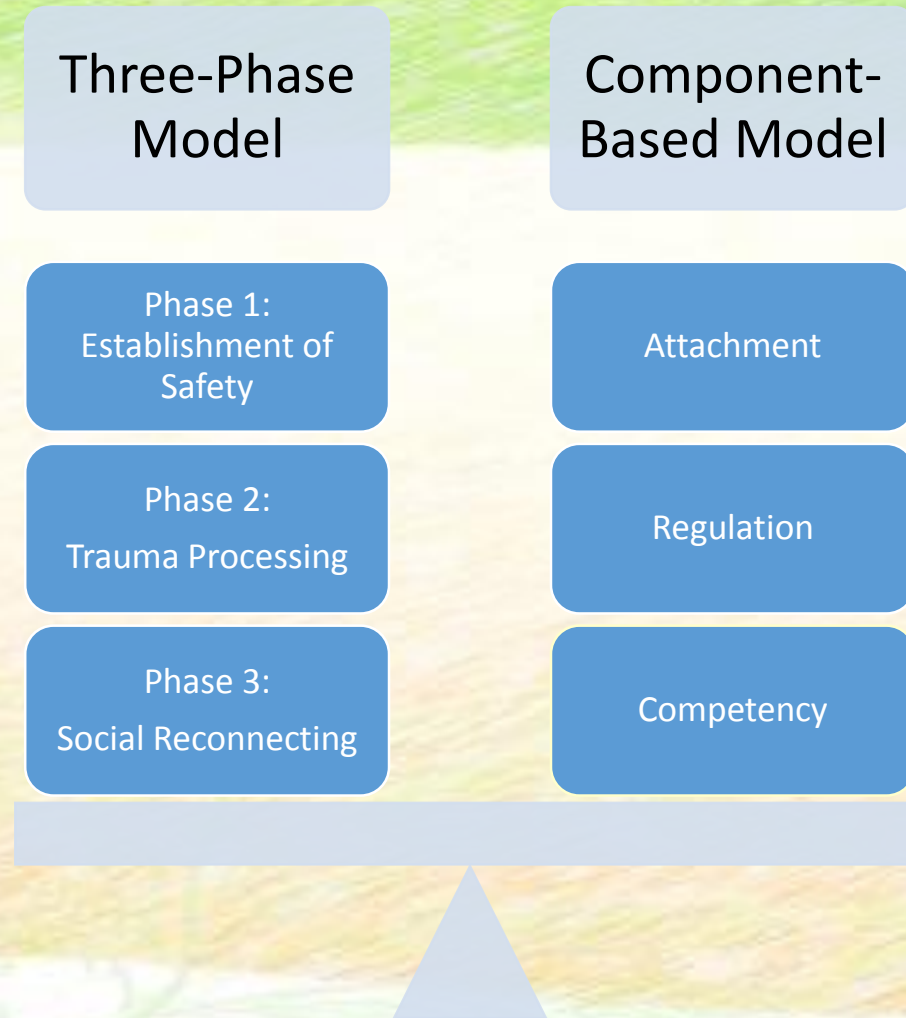
Girl, aged 5: Bloody  
Smell soldier and  
woman put in Jail in  
first 5 sessions



# Using Play Therapy in Traumatized Children

Trauma (Rothschild, 2000: van der Kolk, 2005: Levine, 2008)	Play Therapy (Gil, 2011; Knell, 1996)
Body remembers	Natural medium of communication from birth
Experienced at a sensory level	Processing at different level: Physical, Emotional, Cognitive, Social & Psychological
Implicit memory	Externalizing
Detached from cognitive understanding (Neurohormones effects)	Distancing Projection
Cycles of denial and secrecy	Gradual Exposure Release Containment Mastery sense of control

# Three-Phase Model & Component-Based Model





**Family genogram: using  
animals miniatures as my  
family members**

# Establishment of Safety and Attachment

## Clear boundary setting

- ✓ Life is disrupted recently
- ✓ 50 minutes per session and meets every week
- ✓ 6 sessions for assessment: intake with parents, 3 individual assessment, 1 family play session, 1 review session with parents
- ✓ 6 session for intervention or more after review with parents or referrers
- ✓ Evident-based treatment - SDQ, CBCL, Post-traumatic Growth Index...etc

**Basic emotion: happy,  
sad, scared & angry**

**Color-your-heart  
with the loved  
one**

Providing deep touch pressure  
Sandwich between cushions/  
pillows

“Blowing a cotton balls Battle”

# Establishment of Safety and Attachment

## Relaxation

“Puppet Trampoline” to learn inhale and exhale

Transfer the learning to reality life

## Sensory-Motor Arousal Regulation Therapy©

1. Tactile input
2. Proprioceptive input
3. Vestibular input
4. Sensory satiation
5. Combing inputs
6. Varying Intensity, Duration, Frequency
7. Rhythmicity
8. Safe place

SMART© for tactile and  
proprioceptive inputs for  
increasing the sense of security



## Emotional Recognition Game

**Magic Wand:**  
finding their own  
strengths to  
change the worse  
things

# Trauma Processing and Regulation

## Emotional Recognition

**Cards games** for understanding 4 basic emotions

**Magic wands:** understanding him/her own needs

## Trauma Processing

**Color-my-ginger-bread-man:** understanding the children feeling towards his/her parents.

The unresolved feeling towards the parents would discuss. Then, gained the “being understood” feeling after the group.

**Self-soothing techniques** : deep breath, massage thighs, exercises and fragrance for relaxing the pressure

When I meet my father, my feeling....

# Trauma Processing and Regulation

Trauma themes: fear, terror, worry, hurt, anger

**Sensation Body Outlines:** To help a child learn to listen to this sensation and the story that goes with it.

On the body outline page, or on a life size body tracing, show with symbols, colors, images, words, collage, how your body was hurt .... Thinking about healing.

For soothing/calming or for arousing

Sensation Management (body outline/life-sized body tracing)

Peter, aged 9. He was being whipped by his aunt seriously in aged 6 because he played truancy in after-school-program. He had been hospitalized for one month. Afterwards, he had stealing problems and diagnosed as ADHD & ODD recently. The mother used corporal punishment.



# Trauma Processing and Regulation

## Bibliotherapy

Step 1: Identify the readiness

Step 2: Select the developmental appropriate book

Step 3: Reading together

Step 4: Post-reading exercises



Four themes:

1. Attachment problem
2. Anxiety
3. Anger
4. Adjustment to divorce

Case example

Ling, a girl, aged 8, father and mother died because of some reasons. She was lived in foster care home. However, the relationship between the foster parents and Ling was very difficult.

Please apply Bibliotherapy on Ling to tackle her problem

# Social Reconnection and Competency

## Externally Grounded Guided Imagery

**Safe place for beloved animals:** a concreted positive imagery for traumatized children who may have no historical place for safety.

Questions on the safe place should target tastes, smells, sounds, and tactile experiences.

All the children provided a cozy home with food, shelter and partners for their beloved animals.

A place for the beloved animals.  
The place is full of pleasure:  
water, food, playground, friend,  
fragrance, lullaby and soft in  
texture.



# Social Reconnection and Competency

## Practice new skills

**Termination Takeaways/ My Story:** positive affirmations or symbols of the work done in treatment

**Family SMART© & photo:** Parents and children tried to touch each other in a gentle way. Parents and the child were asked to take a polaroid. In each photo, they wrote down a positive statement to each other.

Establishing constructive relationship between the parents and the children.

Takeaways

Family photo

My Story



# 服務成果

出版『一起走過創傷的日子』

一本有關六個兒童及青少年的故事，他們各人均經歷不同心理創傷事件，令生命出現不同程度的影響，經接受本會賽馬會兒童及青少年心理創傷治療服務後，得以治療，在生命旅途上重新出發。

藉此鳴謝書中六位兒童及青少年，讓我們分享他們的故事，從他們的故事中，令人們明白生命中的沙石，有適切盡早的介入，總可被清理，必可繼續前行。





## References

- Knell, S . N. (1993). Cognitive-behavioral Play Therapy. Northvale, NJ: Jason Aronson.
- Gil, E (2008) Trauma-focused Integrated Play Therapy, Gil Center for Healing & Play
- Rothschild, B. (2000). The body remembers: The psychophysiology of trauma and trauma treatment. N.Y.: Norton and Company.
- van der Kolk, B (2003). The neurobiology of childhood trauma and abuse,. Child & Adolescent Psychiatric Clinics of north America, 2, 293-317.
- Warner, E., Cook, A., Westcott, A & Koomar, J (2011). SMART: A manual for therapists working with children & adolescents: a “bottom up” approach to treatment of complex trauma. The Trauma Center at JRI.