



Biographical Statement

Dawn Chillon, Ph.D.^(c), NCC is a nationally recognized trauma specialist in the treatment of children with severe behaviors with over fifteen years in the counseling field. Her expertise in early childhood trauma, survival behavioral patterning in adolescents and attachment repair in foster and adopted children has made her a sought after conference speaker to both state and private agencies. She is the Founder of The Foundation for Family Healing and The Attachment and Trauma Institute. The Attachment and Trauma Institute provides Specialized Attachment Assessments, Out-patient Counseling, Intensive In Home Counseling, and professional trainings to schools, state and non-profit organizations. The Foundation for Family Healing is dedicated to providing national training, education, lectures and two day workshops to both parents and professionals nationally. These trainings have proven to improve disruption rates of children in care leading to permanency within the family unit through a given understanding of the impact of trauma, effective intervention strategies, permanency planning and reform strategies.

“Nearly 400,000 children are in the foster care system in America each year. Out of that number each child on average will experience 3-5 placements prior to adoption. Add to this statistic the fact that as a nation we are nearly doubling the juvenile detention and residential placement rates nearly every year. It’s time to gain a greater understanding into the core issues driving severe behaviors in adolescents. It’s time to admit that as professionals we have been lured into ‘managing’ mental health needs rather than providing genuine healing to children who have experienced trauma and families is crisis” ~Dawn Chillon

“Severe behaviors in adolescents and adults who have experienced trauma are a language...and this language is often misunderstood by mental health professionals. We know there is misunderstanding because we make it about removing the behaviors instead of understanding the meaning underneath the behavior itself and providing treatment that addresses core pain driving behaviors. Without a clear understanding of trauma and the maladaptive behaviors of coping that often result after a single incident or series of repeated painful events, we will continue to “support” children in care but not holistically integrate their experiences so that they are not repeated. It is critical that state agencies understand the impact of pervasive stress upon the brain and effective treatment strategies that work to help children integrate past experiences. Without advanced training of our foster, adoptive and biological caregivers we will continue to see children filter throughout our systems of care year after year while we attempt to ‘manage’ their needs but never really address healing and integration of their experiences leading to security in both themselves and in the world around them” ~ Dawn Chillon

Dawn remains active in public education through her weekly television programs, *Parenting Solutions* and *Trauma Matters* which are designed to bring hope to parents and professionals through a comprehensive understanding of trauma and the behavioral patterning that often follows pervasive developmental stress in children. She is the author of *Pathways to Preverbal Memory*, *The Parenting Solution Series*, and *Trauma Matters* a monthly newsletter received by parents and professionals and more than 12 additional DVD, audio, and articles. During the first ten years of her professional development Dawn developed her understanding and skills in working with at-risk adolescents through various non-profit organizations in New York and New Jersey. She pioneered one of the largest youth outreach programs in the tri-state which is still providing support services to families Northern NJ. She currently holds a national license and ministerial ordination within the United States and remains active in volunteer work within the community where she resides.

In the last twelve years of her professional work as a mental health specialist and pioneer of treatment strategies within home settings for children returning from congregated care and through doctoral studies Dawn has acquired a comprehensive and practical understanding of how to heal the maladaptive behavioral cycles following trauma in children. She is currently completing the research within her dissertation at Santa Barbara Graduate Institute in Santa Barbara, California where she is earning her Doctorate of Philosophy in Prenatal and Perinatal Psychology. Her interest in the areas of Early Life Trauma and Attachment related issues have prompted her current studies. Dawn has two Master of Arts degrees from the School of Psychology and Counseling and the School of Divinity at Regent University Virginia Beach Virginia

Education

- 2009 Doctorate of Philosophy, Prenatal and Perinatal Psychology,
Santa Barbara Graduate Institute, Santa Barbara, CA (In Dissertation Status)
- 2006 Master of Community Counseling, Regent University School of Psychology & Counseling,
Virginia Beach, VA.
- 2004 Master of Theology, Regent University School of Divinity, Virginia Beach, VA.
- 1996 Standard Teacher Diploma, Zion Bible Institute, Barrington, RI.
- 1996 Bachelor of Biblical Studies, Zion Bible Institute, Barrington, RI.

Advanced Studies

- 2002 to Present Direct training focused on understanding the attachment and bonding process with children and adolescents
with severe behaviors returning from congregated care to home settings.
- October/2008 *Healing Trauma* – Level One and Two Training
The Foundation for Human Enrichment
New York, New York
- September/2008 Permanency the Only Option
Henrico Department of Social Services
Presenter: Pat O'Brien from You Gotta Believe, NY.
- January/2008 *New Frontiers in Trauma Treatment/Intervention*
Presenter: Dr. Bessel van der Kolk, Child Trauma Center, Boston, MA.
- February/2005 *Understanding Severe Behaviors in Adolescents with Trauma*, Virginia Beach, VA
- October/2003 *Children, Adolescents and Grief: Effective Therapeutic Strategies for Healing*

Certifications / Specialties

- 2008 (In Status) Doctorate of Philosophy in Prenatal and Perinatal Psychology.
- 2006 *National Board Certified Counselor* Awarded with NBCC.
- 2004 Awarded Ordination; Vanguard Associates; Virginia.

Publications

- Due for 2009: *Life in a Hostile Womb: Pathways to Preverbal Memory*
Chaos, Control and Mental Health Reform: Redefining the Essence of Human Behavior.
- 2008: *Trauma Resources, Introduction to Trauma*, Pt. I & II
- 2008: *Pervasive Developmental Stress and Family Repair*
- 2008: *The Making of a Secure Child*
- 2008: *The Wonders of Reactive Attachment Challenges*
- 2008: *How to Help the Angry and Defiant Child*
- 2007: *Trauma Interventions*
- 2007: *Stress and the Life of a Family*
- 2007: *Attachment Repair – Critical Components Every Parent Needs to Know*
- 2006-2008: 16 Clinical/Parenting Articles
- ♦ *Trauma Matters*
 - ♦ *How Anger is Necessary for Survival*
 - ♦ *Pervasive Developmental Stress Upon a Child: Discovery and Recovery*
 - ♦ *10 Steps for Relational Repair With the Most Difficult of Children*
 - ♦ *Trauma; Interventions and Integration*
 - ♦ *Attachment Repair – Critical Components*
 - ♦ *Parenting Solution Series* (1-6 on DVD)
 - ♦ *Therapeutic Toolbox* (Completed 1-8 of 10 pt. series)

Guest Lecturer

Regent University School of Psychology and Counseling, Virginia Beach, VA.
Regent University School of Divinity, Virginia Beach, VA.
Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA.
Henrico County Department of Social Services, Richmond, VA.
Chesterfield County Department of Social Services, Richmond, VA.
Hanover County Department of Social Services, Richmond, VA.
Richmond City Department of Social Services, Richmond, VA.
New Kent County Department of Social Services, New Kent, VA
Virginia Beach Department of Social Services, Virginia Beach, VA.
Chesapeake Department of Social Services, Chesapeake, VA.
Norfolk Department of Social Services, Norfolk, VA.
Newport News Department of Social Services, Norfolk, VA.
King William Department of Social Services, King William, VA.
Roanoke Department of Social Services

Board Appointments

Board of Trustees – The Family and Children’s Trust Fund of Virginia
Henrico County Department of Social Services, Richmond, VA. Support Team Division of Henrico Cares Foster Care Reform Board (www.henicocares.com)
Clinical Consultant: The Attachment and Trauma Institute, Richmond, VA
Clinical Consultant: Henrico County Department of Social Services, Richmond, VA.

International Consultation Appointment

2007 New Horizons Specialized Day Treatment Program, Ontario, Canada

Memberships

Member of The National Board of Certified Counselors
Member of The Association for Treatment and Training in the Attachment of Children
Member of The Child Welfare League of America
Member of The Association of Prenatal and Perinatal Psychology and Health
Member of the United States Association of Body Psychotherapy

Employment History

January 2006 to Present

Founder and Executive Director of The Foundation for Family Healing: Providing national training, education and support to parent and professionals within state and non-profit agencies. Training parents and professionals in the area of pervasive developmental stress, the impact of trauma in children and adults, adoption and foster care needs and reform strategies for state improvement in permanency. Recognized attachment and trauma expertise across the United States including Canada.

December 2005 to Present

Founder and Executive Director of The Attachment and Trauma Institute: Counseling agency employing thirty Counselors serving in Central Virginia; responsible to provide intensive in home counseling for at risk adolescents, mental health support services for adults, therapeutic visitation support and out patient counseling services. Responsibilities include all duties as Clinical Director including training of all staff in trauma theory and applied clinical practice and ongoing supervision and counselor development.

May 2005 to July 2007

Clinical Director of The Family Healing Program in partnership with Children’s Services of Hampton Roads: Intensive Therapeutic foster care placement for level 4+ children. Responsible for training of staff, support and clinical work with children and families currently placed. Case management responsibilities including local county and court representation. Also provided intensive in-home counseling services in the greater Tidewater area of Virginia. Trained fifteen counselors and supervised an independent research team from Old Dominion University in establishing a research project for the efficacy of the clinic’s training and direct client care improvement.

December 2002 to April 2004

Counselor Compass Youth Services providing Intensive In-Home Counseling Services to at-risk adolescents, clinical consultation, case management and court representation.

January 1996 to January 2001

Active Private Practice and Consultation. Provide consultation, treatment and training locally and nationally on specific to severe childhood and family disturbance. Areas of expertise: Attachment Disorders, Adoption, Foster Care, Prenatal and Perinatal Psychology, Pervasive Developmental Trauma and treatment of related behavioral and emotional disorders.

August 2000 to November 2001

Children's Program Director, Cedar Road Academy, Chesapeake, Virginia. Actively trained 50+ staff in children's program, coordinated all courses for 500+ children ages 5-18 including after school recreational activities.

Lectures

2007-2013 Active in over 85 lectures/training 21 counties/districts in Central and Northern Virginia:

Topics:

Foster Care Reform: Education, Training and Support
Moving from Management to Healing
Understanding Severe Behaviors in Adolescents
Understanding Developmental Trauma in Children
Attachment Formation and Repair in Children & Adults

2008 COMCAST Education Weekly Television Broadcast, Richmond, VA.

Topics:

Trauma Matters
Understanding the Critical Components of Attachment Repair
Pervasive Developmental Trauma – The Impact with Ages & Stages of Growth
Prenatal and Perinatal Imprinting – Healing Pre-Verbal Trauma in Children
Critical Components of Attachment Repair
Understanding Severe Behaviors in Adolescents – Live Call In Program
Foster and Adoption Support Series
The Parenting Solution Series

2009-2015 Active Training in Department of Social Services, partnership hospitals and community resource agencies in Central Virginia

2008 - Active in P.R.I.D.E. supplemental training on *Understanding Trauma*, Henrico County, Richmond, VA.

2008 - Head Start training, *Understanding Pervasive Developmental Trauma*, Richmond, VA.

2008 - CHIP of Virginia – Early Developmental Needs and Repair

2007 - *Early Parent/Infant Relationship: Understanding Bonding and Attachment*, Henrico Doctors Hospital, Henrico County, Virginia.

2005-2006 - Regent University, Virginia Beach, Virginia. Frequent Guest Lecturer.

2002-2005 - Children's Hospital of the King's Daughters, Norfolk, Virginia. Frequent Guest Lecturer.

Lecture Objectives:

- Understanding the Impact of Trauma in Both Children & Adults
- Healing Trauma – Critical Interventions with Children, Adults & Families
- Understanding Attachment and Bonding
- Understanding How to Repair Attachment: Uncoupling Separation and Loss Patterns
- Understanding the Impact of Pervasive Developmental Stress
- Keys to Systemic Change – Parents and Professional Seminar
- Foster Care Reform Strategies: Permanency Improvement

