



Post Adoption Resource Center Newsletter Wayne County

Understanding Fight, Flight, or Freeze

The fight, flight or freeze response is our brain's built-in alarm system designed to help us in times of imminent danger. The problem occurs when that response system is misfiring due to increased cortisol levels from prenatal stress or early childhood trauma.

When the brain is in the fight, flight or freeze response is triggered, the brain sees higher functioning tasks such as logic and planning, as nonessential and effectively shuts down that part of your brain. This is good if you're in mortal danger and need all your energy to run away, but bad if your fight, flight, or freeze response is triggered by everyday occurrences such as loud noises or the smell of vanilla.

Children who were abused may associate change or unpredictability with their trauma and a change in routine or sense of chaos can trigger that alarm. If a child witnessed domestic violence or loud fighting, yelling or loud noises may be a trigger for them. For a child who was neglected or abandoned, feeling left out or alone can send the alarm bells sounding.

CALMING TECHNIQUES

Squeezing a stress ball
spending in a calm down area
blowing bubbles
coloring
yoga poses
chewing bubble gum
doing sensory activities
using a calming/glitter jar
deep breathing

Triggers can be as subtle as a smell, sound or visual that reminds them of their past trauma and can be enough to send a child into full blown fight, flight or freeze mode. Having your body going into fight, flight or freeze response often and unnecessarily can be debilitating. It is no wonder that some of our kiddos struggle with regulation!

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PARC UPDATE: COVID-19

Orchards Children's Services and the Post Adoption Resource Center Program hopes your family continues to be safe and healthy during the Covid-19 pandemic. Orchards continues to keep family safety at the forefront of our services. Our PARC staff have enjoyed seeing families during our past monthly support activities. We feel so connected to you and thank you for allowing PARC the opportunity to get to know your family. As we begin transitioning to more in person events, PARC will continue to keep you updated on all our upcoming events via our website, email communications and our Facebook page.

Connect with PARC at:

Website: parc-orchards.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/OCSPostAdoptionResourceCenter

Email: parcocs@orchards.org

**Orchards
Children's
Services**

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*For more information
on the Post Adoption
Resource Center
please contact us at
313-530-9746*

*Or visit our website at
PARC-orchards.org*



Cont. From Page 1: Understanding Fight, Flight, or Freeze

For parents, it can be like living in a minefield. You can feel like you don't know where or when the next thing that will set them off will be. One big signal to parents that a child is being triggered is when their response to something seems disproportionate to the situation.

You can help your child to recognize when their brain starts to respond this way by talking about the things they notice in their bodies right before the fight, flight or freeze response like their breathing speeding up, a funny feeling in their tummy, tightness in their chest, or their face getting hot. Discuss what techniques worked for calming you child and give them calming tools that they can use the next time they notice those same feelings creeping up.

Keeping a record of your child's fight, flight or freeze responses along with notes on possible triggers can help you to see patterns emerging. Getting to the root of your child's triggers can help you and your child recognize, avoid, anticipate, prepare, navigate and calm future trigger responses and is an essential piece to helping continue the healing journey.

Explain the triggered brain response to your child. Empower them with knowledge to enable your child to talk about their responses and better understand themselves. This also gives them a scientific reason for why they respond the way they do instead of just feeling like they are "bad" or out of control. To help you better understand and explain, check out the following videos on YouTube:

- Dan Siegel - "Flipping Your Lid:" A Scientific Explanation
- Murray Williams – Lizzard Brains

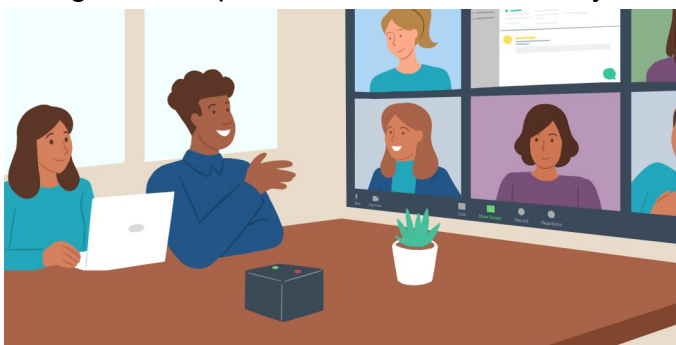
WHAT IT CAN LOOK LIKE...		
<u>Fight</u>	<u>Flight</u>	<u>Freeze</u>
kicking	running without concern for safety	whining
screaming	doing anything to get away	feeling numb
spitting	darting eyes	daydreaming
pushing	restlessness	holding his/her breath
throwing things	excessive fidgeting	shutting down
hands made in fists		feeling unable to move
glaring		escaping into own mind
clawing at the air		heart pounding and/or
gasping for breath		decreased heart rate

DO THIS, NOT THAT	
<u>Yes!</u>	<u>No</u>
Keep your words simple	using the words "calm down"
help child focus on their breathing	lecturing or trying to reason
"let's breathe together"	yelling
"you're okay, just breathe"	
"in through the nose, out through the mouth"	

**Information expanded from: "The Chaos and the Clutter"*

PARC in the Community

PARC slowly but safely has been able to move towards some more in-person events. We love being able to spend more time with all of you!

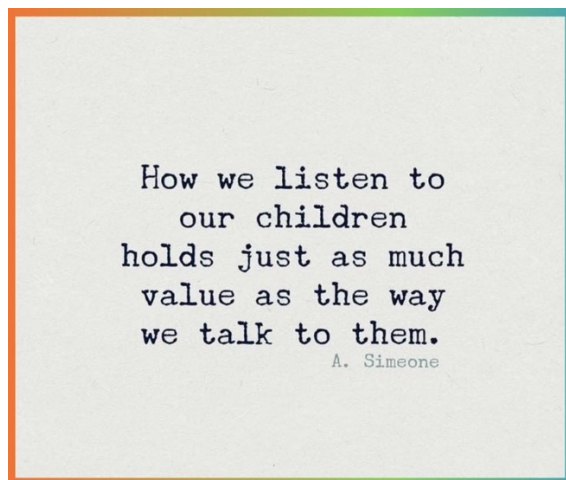


PARC held a two weekend, all-day, hybrid conference "Matters of Race", which was such a big hit, that it sparked a new monthly parent group, "Culture Matters".

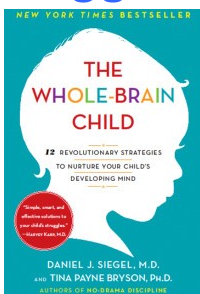
Our parent support group continues to meet monthly, with Joy Davies as the facilitator. We love to see new faces jumping on, in addition to familiar faces!



PARC is always working to come up with new ideas, trainings and activities and as always, we are open to hearing any suggestions or feedback you might have. Feel free to share any pictures too, we love to see them!



Suggested Read



The Whole-Brain Child

Authors: Daniel Siegel, M.D. and Tina Payne Bryson, Ph.D.

The Whole-Brain Child is an excellent resource for caregivers looking to develop a better understanding of their child's development. Siegel and Bryson have broken down the complexities of neurobiology into a reader-friendly guide that includes practical parenting strategies. The book helps caregivers think creatively and turn daily interactions with your child into healthy brain-shaping moments.

Upcoming Virtual Meetings, Trainings & Events

Adoptive Family Support Group / Children's Yoga

When: Second Tuesday of Every Month from 6:00 – 7:30 PM

Where: 24901 Northwestern Hwy, Ste. 600, Southfield, MI 48075

OR via Zoom (yoga is only available in person)



Support Group Facilitator: Joy Davies from the Attachment Coalition

Joy provides professional counseling to individuals, families and groups. Her primary focus centers around issues relating to developmental trauma, adoption and attachment disorders. Joy is an adoptive parent herself and understands a parent's desire to restore and/or maintain peace in their homes and to create environments that are supportive to healthy parent and child relationships.



Yoga Instructor: Carly Cenit

Carly started her journey in 2011 and continues to educate herself as a YogaMedics practitioner and licensed clinical social worker in order to ensure students practice safe, alignment-based yoga that reconnects each person with their inner personal power.

Matters of Culture - Parent Group

When: First Thursday of Every Month from 7:00 – 8:00 PM

Where: Virtual Training – Zoom

Facilitator: Mr. Potts and Mrs. Knox-Potts (Adoptive Parents) In addition to Mr. Potts and Mrs. Knox-Potts we will have a transracial adoptive parent and expert trainer on the topic of transracial adoption will also be present



**Paul Potts &
Ayana Knox-Potts**

Join us for an ongoing conversation to help us build up our toolbox as we learn ways to celebrate one another's differences and celebrate our children that came to us through adoption. This is a training that will look beyond race to culture and recognize that we all come from different cultures and how important it is to recognize, celebrate, and value these differences.

Parent Training with Annie Lange

Title: Learning to access innate health through understanding concepts related to trauma, attachment and the power of thought.

When: Saturday, April 2, 2022

Where: 24901 Northwestern Hwy, Ste. 600, Southfield, MI 48075 OR via Zoom

Facilitator: Annie Lange, BSN, LMSW, ACSW, a licensed Social Worker and a Nurse



The challenges facing parents and children of foster and adoptive families can often result in tremendous stress, resulting in fractured family relationships. In this course, participants will learn how to support and access innate health through understanding concepts related to trauma, attachment and the power of thought. Concrete strategies will be taught to support solid family relationships based on neurobiology, mindfulness principles, self regulation and trauma informed attachment parenting. An introduction to The Nurtured Heart Approach® will be included.



DRIVE - THRU EASTER BUNNY

On Saturday, April 9th between 9am – 5pm, PARC will host a socially distanced drive – thru Easter Bunny event. RSVP's are limited and must be in by April 1, 2022. Please call 248-530-5381 or refer to your email/our Facebook page to RSVP online, if you haven't yet!



We are continuously working on adding trainings and activities, (and have a few things in the works!) Please keep an eye out for updates via email and social media!

