



**SAFE HARBOR  
COUNSELING**

**Dr. Beth  
Speaks**



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**WSPY, Your Life Matters, Trauma**

Mike Williams

It's time now for **Your Life Matters** with **Clinical Social Worker, Dr. Beth Placketka** from **Safe Harbor Counseling** and **Dr. Beth Speaks**. Dr. Placketka, thanks for joining us again. How we doing?

Dr. Beth Placketka

Very good. How are you doing Mike?

Mike Williams

Doing well. Thank you. As we welcome everybody to another show for this Monday and today we're talking about a tough topic, trauma is kind of where we're focusing today and what kind of different things do we want to kind of hit on in this particular show.

Dr. Beth Placketka

I want to talk about what trauma actually is and then what happens in childhood that lasts throughout life when trauma is experienced

Mike Williams

So the different to types of trauma. There are many, of course what are some of the things that we focus on.

Dr. Beth Placketka

Well the things that really would be considered trauma has to be a deeply distressing event that threatens a person's sense of physical safety or sense of self. So could be something they see. It could be something that happens to them, sexual abuse, domestic violence. If a storm, a really bad storm comes and knocks a tree on the roof or something that could be very upsetting to a young person. Severe illness, if a family member dies or if they see something and like an act of violence, it could be to someone who's in the home but it could also be things that they watch on TV or of some of the video games that they play. So we have to be very aware that different sensitivities qualify different things for trauma.

Mike Williams

And it seems like at least from the examples your listing it's not always directly affecting the person or directly happening to the person, it could be something they witness and that could have a big effect. It's not always something tangible, I guess that the actually happens to them directly.

Dr. Beth Placketka Right. And the younger the child, the more they rely on their parents to provide their safety. So if a little person sees like their mother getting hit, that's very scary because mom is the one or dad is the one that is supposed to protect them. And so it's kind of interesting, there was a study that came about accidentally it's called **ACES**, it's **Adverse Childhood Experiences** and they found out about it when they were doing a diabetes study, and they were looking for reasons why somebody might have diabetes. And they found that a lot of people had experienced what the category of **Adverse Childhood Experiences** to a significant degree. So there's like seven types: there's psychological, there's emotional abuse, physical or sexual abuse, violence against mom, substance abuse in the home, there could be mental illness, someone could be in prison. Those kinds of things that really are offsetting to a child and when I say child, we're really talking under 18. So it's not like OK they're 13 and they can handle everything, but they found out that it really makes a difference on adult health based on what happens to kids. And there's ways that we can address that. Out of the seven categories, persons who had four or more of childhood exposure had a 4 to 12 times, not percent, times increased health risk for alcoholism, drug abuse, depression, and suicidal attempts and some of those whose successful as adults. It really is scary what happens along that line. And then there's other illnesses because we know untreated trauma, if we don't address really our body remembers what happened and sometimes it just lands in places and we do get sick from it. You know like heart failure or the skin rashes, all kinds of different things that can come up.

Mike Williams So what are some of the things that can be done to try to help in these cases?

Dr. Beth Placketka Well I think that it is really important that we pay attention to what is going on, what kids are seeing and what they are experiencing. It could be at a friend's house. It could be in the neighborhood. It could be in your own home and there is nothing embarrassing about it. We all end up with some kinds of issues going on. So if you know it's going on you want to make sure that your child has a chance to talk about it, to know where they go for safety, if it's appropriate, if touching them is not going to make them more scared, that physical touch, and if necessary going to a therapist so that they can act out in play therapy, and they can talk about where the safety comes in and how they can get better.

Mike Williams I'm sure there are basic guidelines to try to treat this but every case is going to be different, every person's going to be different so trying to find that that right area to treat. Some people might be more receptive to one approach versus another.

- Dr. Beth Placketka Right and the earlier it happens, the earlier that you can treat it the less you need to do. For example one mother called not too long ago and she said, "Hey I've done everything I can do, we've read stories, we've talked about it, OK let's have my daughter come in. Great and she's working with someone and she's doing fine. So knowing what a trauma is, talking to your child about it, protecting them, trying to end the association with them, is all good stuff, but if you see behaviors that you are concerned about, if they don't go away, then you want to call a therapist.
- Mike Williams We got about a few seconds left, anything else that we missed on the this topic
- Dr. Beth Placketka Well I do think that it's important to know that there's a lot of books that talk about you know what trauma does to the body and so you like: ***The Body Keeps The Scores*** is one of them. ***The Boy Who Was Raised By a Dog And Other Stories from a Child Psychiatrist's Notebook*** and then ***Born for Love***, why it's so important to be attuned to what your child is experiencing.
- Mike Williams And if people want to look up some of these resources they're available on the website?
- Dr. Beth Placketka Absolutely!
- Mike Williams Right another good show, some good information. That's all the time we have on today's edition of our **Safe Harbor Counseling** and **Your Life Matters** it's with **Dr. Beth Placketka** and **Dr. Beth Speaks** and that website again [safeharboril.com](http://safeharboril.com) and join us again next Monday for another installment of **Your Life Matters** from **Safe Harbor Counseling**.