

Developmental Trauma Symptom Screening Checklist

To be completed by a clinician

Please note that this is not a diagnostic tool but rather lists some of the diagnostic symptoms that a child/teen with developmental trauma may endorse. These symptoms vary based on an individual's developmental stage and intellectual ability. The clinician should seek to determine if the child/teen's functioning is abnormal given the norms for their age.

Domain/Item	√
Emotional Regulation Difficulties	
Developmental regression (e.g., emotionally acts like a younger child)	
Frequent crying or crying in inappropriate situations	
Flat or numb emotional expression	
Excessive worry, nervousness, fear, or shyness	
Frequently feels depressed or down	
Negative sense of self (e.g., helplessness, worthlessness)	
Frequent intense emotional outbursts or irritability	
Lack of coping skills to deal with stress or adversity	
Social/Relationship Difficulties	
Frequent conflict (e.g., distrust, defiance)	
Difficulty making and maintaining friendships	
Lack of empathy, compassion and remorse	
Intense preoccupation with safety of the caregiver or difficulty reuniting with them after a period of separation	
Inappropriate peer relationships (e.g., bullying, dysfunctional peer group)	
Behavioural Difficulties	
Poor impulse control	
Self-injury behaviour (head banging, cutting, etc.)	
Maladaptive self-soothing (e.g., rocking)	
Aggression towards others	
Difficulty understanding and complying with rules and requests	
High risk behaviour (e.g., (children): climbing, running into the street; e.g., (teens): drug or alcohol use, early sexual behaviour)	
Physiological Difficulties	
Unexplained physical complaints (e.g., headache, abdominal pain)	
Sleep disturbance	
Eating disturbance (e.g., hoards, gorges, or hides food; refuses to eat; eats strange things)	
Unexplained weight gain or loss	
Failure to thrive	
Enuresis, encopresis, or constipation	
Hair loss	
Poor control of chronic disease (e.g., asthma, diabetes)	

Cognitive/Academic Difficulties	
School failure or absenteeism	
Difficulty thinking clearly, reasoning, or problem solving	
Difficulty planning ahead, anticipate the future, and act accordingly	
Difficulty acquiring new skills or taking in new information	
Difficulty sustaining attention or interest in a task or activity (may be distracted by trauma reminders)	
Speech and language problems	
Memory deficits	

Sources:

Center For Youth Wellness (2015). Retrieved from <http://www.centerforyouthwellness.org>

Healing Resources (n.d.). *Trauma, Attachment, and Stress Disorders: Rethinking and Reworking Developmental Issues*. Retrieved from http://www.healingresources.info/trauma_attachment_stress_disorders.htm

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