

**Mont Vernon  
&  
Amherst  
Community  
Recovery  
Group**

*Dubois*

# Group Participants

- Mary Jennings
- Renea Sparks
- John Quinlan
- Kim Roberge
- Kris Wilson
- Barbara Belak
- Deanna Cordts
- Porter Dodge
- Kevin Becker (ORI)
- Jeff Weir (ORI)
- Catriona Grant
- Bob Schaumann
- Paul Bernard
- Gretchen Pyles
- Howard Brown
- Pody Hansbrough
- Brian Irwin
- Bob Thompson
- Maggie Paul

# MISSION STATEMENT

*To facilitate community resilience and healing through the coordination of resources, education, and support.*



# **Helping Your Child With Grief and Loss**

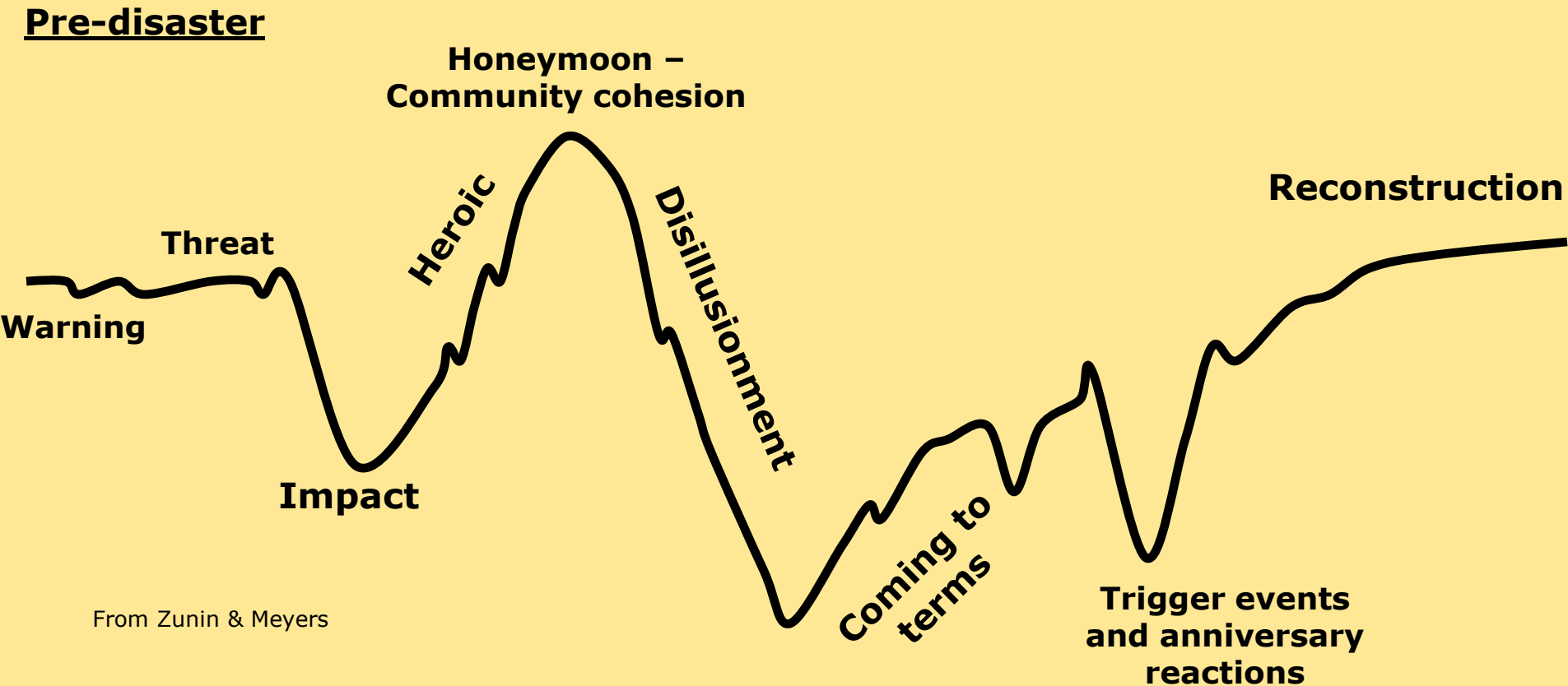
Facilitated by:

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**Organizational Resilience International, LLC.**

# Psychological Lifecycle of Traumatic Events



From Zunin & Meyers

# Safety, Predictability & Control

...are the 3 key principles to emphasize in helping children cope with trauma

*(p.s. you're already doing a lot of this)*

# SAFETY

## Physical Safety and Security

- A sense that I am generally safe from harm and that others will take care of me if I need it.

## Emotional/Psychological

- A feeling of being connected to others and that I am free to express how I feel.

# PREDICTABILITY

- A sense that I can reliably anticipate what is going to happen next. A feeling that life is predictable and that there are routines that I can count on.

# CONTROL

- A feeling that I can influence others and the world around me. A sense of competency and effectiveness over my world.

# General child risk factors

- Age
- Child's relationships
- Caregiver's ability to cope
- Caregiver's prior relationships
- Separation from parent / caregiver
- Past trauma
- Recovery/Holding environment

# Developmental Tasks

## Ages 5-11

- Increased autonomy
- Peer group orientation. Importance of approval
- Increased verbal and conceptual skills
- Proud of school accomplishments
- Follows rules and works hard for approval
- Competition
- Plays games with friends

# Reactions

## Early Childhood (ages 5-11)

- Irritability
- Whining
- Clinging
- Aggressive behavior at home or school
- Overt competition with younger siblings for parents attention
- Night terrors, nightmares, fear of darkness
- Loss of interest and poor concentration in school
- School avoidance
- Withdraw from peers

# Interventions (ages 5-11)

- Patience and tolerance
- Play sessions with adults and peers
- Discussions with adults and peers
- Relaxation of expectation at school or at home (with a clear understanding that this is temporary and the normal routine will be resumed after a suitable period).
- Opportunities for structure but not demanding chores and responsibilities at home
- Review of safety measures to be taken in future

# Interventions (ages 5-11)

- Prevent exposure to graphic material
- Monitor their play and look for opportunities to insert Safety, Predictability, and Control
- Touch and physical soothing
- Maintain or establish bedtime routines and rituals

# The Role of Attachment

Secure attachment is the foundation for a child's sense of confidence and security

*Secure attachment lays down a lifetime pattern of biological, psychological, and social coping...even in difficult times.*

# Loss of Safety

- Ongoing fear without safe haven of parent
- Premature separation from attachment figure without ‘secure base’
- Expectation of injury to self or attachment figures (e.g. domestic violence)
- Lack of protection from dangers

# Loss of Predictability

- Lack of structure in daily routine or living condition
- Unpredictable behavior/mood of caregivers
- Unpredictable access to ‘safe haven’

# Loss of Control

- Child's inability to 'control' (gain access) to parental attention/soothing
- Child's inability to self soothe (control or regulate emotions)
- Child's inability to protect self or exercise important choices

# Key goals in helping traumatized children

- Provide sense of safety & trust
- Help facilitate communication including play
- Simply listening & being available
- Follow the child's lead
- Clarify in words what is told in action
- Support the child's imagining recovery
- Normalize child's reaction to the event
- Support attachments

# Discussion...

- What seems to be working?
- What are your concerns for your children?
- Thoughts or suggestions?

# Websites for More Information

- National Center for PTSD
  - <http://www.ncptsd.va.gov>
- NYU Child Study Center
  - <http://www.aboutourkids.org>
- TLC- The National Institute for Trauma and Loss in Children
  - <http://www.tlcinstitute.org>
- National Center for Child Traumatic Stress
  - <http://www.nctsnet.org>

# Further Questions/Comments/Input?

Please email us at:

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