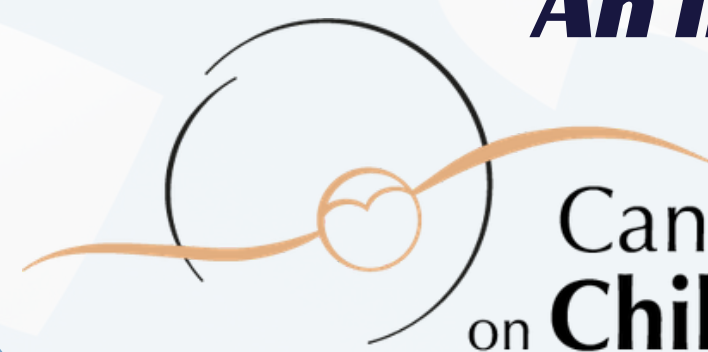




An initiative of the

Canadian Consortium
on **Child & Youth Trauma**

NEWLY EMERGING RESEARCH

on child & youth trauma
and trauma-informed care

MONTHLY JOURNAL WATCH

Translating and disseminating research-based knowledge
to practice & policy settings.

RESEARCH TO PRACTICE & POLICY KNOWLEDGE BULLETIN

NOVEMBER 2025
MONTHLY SUMMARY

By Mélanie Letendre Jauniaux, a master's student at Bishop's University

Articles résumés:

- *Breaking the cycle: A systematic review of intergenerational transmission of child maltreatment and preventive parenting interventions.*
- *A scoping review on the neurosequential model.*
- *The Role of Attachment in Intergenerational Trauma Transmission: A Structured Literature Review.*

Breaking the cycle: A systematic review of intergenerational transmission of child maltreatment and preventive parenting interventions

Ahmed, R. S. and M. Shaban (2025). "Breaking the cycle: A systematic review of intergenerational transmission of child maltreatment and preventive parenting interventions." *Child Abuse and Neglect* 169.<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2025.107743>

Background

Most individuals will experience some kind of adversity in childhood, which can then impact their parenting and echo into the next generation. The good news is that with the right **support**, many **parents** can **break** this **cycle**. A growing number of initiatives aim to support parents to do just that.

OBJECTIVES

This review evaluated multiple **initiatives** designed to **help parents** with a history of childhood abuse or adversity in order **to prevent** the intergenerational transmission of child maltreatment.

METHODS

The authors gathered publicly available studies from six major research databases. A total of 18 studies from the United States, Canada, Ireland, South Korea, and Sweden were reviewed. These studies all focused on helping adults with a history of abuse or adversity who care for children aged 0–18.

RESULTS

The initiatives reviewed all aim to help parents. However, many of their settings and specific goals varied. Settings included individual and group follow ups, parent-child therapy, psychoeducation, educational parenting programs, as well as live and asynchronous video feedback coaching. Specific goals included helping parents improve their relationship with their children, address their own wounds, adopt healthier parenting skills, adopt healthier coping in the face of strong emotions and decrease their negative mental health symptoms. Main outcomes across initiatives showed positive influences on caretaker behaviours and mental health, child behaviours and mental health as well as relationship quality and long-term risk of maltreatment recurrence. The review suggests that organizers should take into consideration the parents' broader context to promote equitable access to these initiatives. Considerations include culture, language, and barriers such as housing instability, poverty, limited access to childcare. In short, successful initiatives are tailored, flexible and co-constructed with communities.

IMPLICATIONS

These findings provide support for initiatives to help parents break the cycle of adversity for themselves and their own children. Trauma-informed, attachment focused and resilience building initiatives can help parents with a history of adversity, which ultimately benefits their children. Indeed, such parallel recovery represents a promising avenue to support the next generation. Parents who benefit from these initiatives experience fewer negative mental health symptoms, are better able to regulate their emotions, and develop positive parenting skills. These parental gains in turn lead to improved child behaviours and mental health outcomes. Further research is necessary to evaluate these initiatives more in depth, for example in lower income countries and over longer periods.



TAKEAWAY QUESTIONS

- What could our collective priority be for the prevention of child maltreatment?
- How What actions could your local organizations put in place to reduce barriers for stressed or marginalized parents to join and stay in parenting programs?
- What could policymakers and leaders do to ensure that breaking the cycle of maltreatment becomes a shared responsibility, not just a private family struggle?

A scoping review on the neurosequential model

Lindenbach, D., et al. (2025). "A scoping review on the neurosequential model." *Child Abuse and Neglect* 170. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2025.107745>

Considering brain development to guide effective helping: Users and outcomes of the neurosequential model.

Childhood adversity affects **brain** development, often leading to coping, relationship, and behavioural challenges in adulthood. Misunderstandings about the underlying causes of these struggles can create barriers for survivors. Dr. Bruce Perry's **neurosequential model** provides a framework that considers these brain changes to guide effective support.

The authors conducted a review of studies, book chapters, and reports to investigate what is known about the neurosequential model, its primary users and to highlight remaining gaps in knowledge.

The authors reviewed 70 English-language publications on the neurosequential model.

Most **users of the neurosequential model** are mental health providers and educators working with youth under 21 years of age in **child- and youth-serving settings** such as child welfare, adoption services, residential care, outpatient clinics, and schools. The studies were from high-income countries. While adoption of the model is increasing, its holistic 'map like' nature makes fidelity to the model difficult to measure, and thus its impact is difficult to isolate and compare. However, some noteworthy benefits for staff include the development of a more complete understanding of challenges leading to shifts in the interpretation of behaviours, and to more individualized and flexible care plans as well as stronger relational ties. However, relatively few studies used comparison groups or long-term follow-up, so the overall strength of the evidence is still modest.

The neurosequential **model** is **like** a guide or a **map**, **not a stand-alone** technique or therapy. This perspective **prompts reflections** about lived experience, brain development and the **impact of adversity on the brain** to inform follow ups. The model is helping an increasing number of youth-serving services and educators **look beyond "difficult"** behaviour towards lived experience and brain development. It is guiding **more tailored and effective interventions** for children and their families.



The Role of Attachment in Intergenerational Trauma Transmission: A Structured Literature Review

Kaur, S. and V. Békés (2025). "The Role of Attachment in Intergenerational Trauma Transmission: A Structured Literature Review." *Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment & Trauma* 34(10): 1560-1584. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10926771.2025.2574315>

Adults who have experienced war, abuse, forced migration, or other forms of trauma often carry **long-lasting effects** from these events. These impacts do not remain confined to the individuals themselves, but can **extend into their parenting**, affecting not only their children but also their grandchildren. The specific ways in which **trauma is transmitted from one generation to the next** are not yet fully understood and require further research.

One possible pathway of transmission that has attracted considerable attention is the **quality of attachment**—the early emotional bond formed between caregiver and child. Research shows that **adversity and trauma can undermine these attachment relationships**, compromising their quality. When attachment is secure, it supports a wide range of adaptive mechanisms and behaviours. Conversely, insecure attachment has been associated with a number of negative outcomes, including anxiety, depression, behavioural problems, and other symptoms.

This review investigated whether attachment is the mechanism that transmits trauma across generations, examining various contexts and populations. The authors evaluated supporting evidence and explored potential differences in attachment's role across groups.

The authors reviewed 26 studies on attachment and intergenerational transmission of trauma.

Across different populations and contexts, the studies tend to show **direct and indirect relationships between trauma, attachment and a host of negative outcomes**, including the transmission of behavioural difficulties and mental health symptoms from one generation to the next. Attachment, however, was not the only pathway from parental trauma to childhood negative outcomes, indeed parental depression or PTSD symptoms, parenting sensitivity, and family communication were also sometimes related. Some studies also highlighted **protective factors such as strong family emotional bonds, and reflective functioning** (the parent's ability to think about their own and the child's inner world) that could buffer children from negative impacts of their parents' trauma. Though an important contribution, the strength of these conclusions are limited by factors such as the restriction to English language studies only, and the fact that most data comes from parent self-reports only.

Overall, these findings suggest that **prioritising family relationships is crucial**. Beyond symptoms, clinicians could consider parents' experiences and attachment patterns. **Interventions aimed at improving relationship quality and parental reflection may help disrupt intergenerational trauma and foster resilience**.



AN OCCASION TO EXCHANGE

JOURNAL WATCH GROUP

Once a month, we gather a group of researchers, practitioners, policy-makers, and students to read and discuss newly emerging research publications on child and youth trauma, and trauma-informed care.

Meetings take place online in a friendly and casual atmosphere; all are welcomed.

Our students pull highlights from these publications and discussions to create Research to Practice & Policy Knowledge Bulletins. We share these research-based knowledge bulletins with practice and policy settings who are actively working to improve the lives of children and youth across Canada.