

Update: Impact of Legal Professional Trauma Training

Through our Legal Professional Trauma Training, Texas Lawyers for Children has trained over 1,600 judges, attorneys, CASAs and other professionals in 241 Texas counties on the impact of trauma on children and related legal issues. The feedback has been very positive. One recent training participant made these comments:



"I have waited for a training like this to be released for about 15 years, since I first became a trauma-informed parent. I changed my law practice from intellectual property law to children's law when my adopted child showed me and taught me what trauma was all about. As I tried to explain these concepts to schools, caseworkers, and others, they looked at me like I was crazy. Even in court all these years later, I see such a huge lack of trauma knowledge among attorneys and even some caseworkers. THIS is the training I wish I had been given before adopting my daughter so she didn't have to teach me, through her behavior and suffering about trauma.

THIS is the training I hoped I could give teachers, social workers, therapists, friends, and family 15 years ago to support our family and could not. THIS is the trauma training attorneys need. It would change the lives of children everywhere if those in the system could understand these concepts. I have been to hundreds of hours of trauma training and conferences but, if I had to pick just one training for everyone to see, this would be THAT training."

Below are additional examples of some the feedback we have received from the Legal Professional Trauma Training, with 97% of training participants (in both the live and online versions) rating the training as excellent, very good, or good.

- This is the most helpful CLE I've ever attended and I've been licensed 9 years.*
- This training was very informative. I've been licensed over 20 years and I've enjoyed this CLE the most. It will truly help children in CPS and the juvenile justice system! Thank you!*
- This should be mandatory training for all family, criminal, and juvenile lawyers and judges.*
- Definitely more aware of the impact of the global impact of trauma on a child. I will look at all kids through that lens from now on. I wish every judge, AAL and CASA were required to attend.*
- This webinar should be required for any attorney wanting to practice in the area of abused & neglected children. It contains extremely important information for caregivers, especially those who see the care of foster children as just a job.*
- I would love to see this (or very similar) training be provided and required for Foster Homes, CPS, CASA as well as therapists, doctors, & other providers. It would also be great if all lawyers were required to attend.*
- I want to . . . ensure that trauma training is required for every person who deals with a foster child from the foster parents, to the therapists, to the attorneys and judges involved. There should be a minimum of 8 hours of trauma training required for every practitioner and foster parent.*

Below, please find specific ways children and families have been served as a direct result of TLC's Legal Professional Trauma Training:

- Being able to get children and parents the treatment they need to heal their families.
- We have court programming with a therapeutic component. We have been able to implement many of the principles and concepts learned into group therapy and individual therapy sessions. We have also trained our mentors, who we pair with the foster youth, on these concepts as well.
- I was able to get a foster agency investigated when they authorized anti-psychotic medication to a six-year-old child without notice to the Department. The CASA and I got an immediate medication review. After review, the Department filed a licensing complaint against the foster agency, and they have since changed protocol to ensure the Department consents to the use of this medication.
- As a judge, I have been able to temper the judicial decisions I make based on the information I learned about the impact of trauma to children and/or parents.
- There was a sibling group, and one child was going to be separated because of his behaviors. I spoke to the relative placement about the trauma the child had suffered, and the relative placement agreed to take the child too, so the siblings could stay together.
- I've been able to ensure that [counseling and mental health] professionals have the right qualifications to address the specific needs of the children they serve.
- One of my parent clients worked really hard and was able to have her kids returned on a return and monitor. She had experienced trauma in her life, but I was able to get through to her and help her communicate more effectively which helped immensely.
- Two children who had been severely traumatized were struggling in school. I was able to meet with school personnel and discuss the girls' behavior as symptoms of trauma and come to a comfortable resolution, so the girls could succeed at school.
- A child kept running away from one placement, but I advocated for the child to go to a trauma-informed placement, and the child is doing much better.
- The training allowed me to handle a highly contested situation with more confidence and I have been able to redirect state action from a law enforcement matter to a more trauma-informed approach.
- I identified a child who had been trafficked.
- I represent the Department, and I have been able to encourage my client to be more proactive when it comes to children who are medicated instead of being treated for their underlying trauma.
- I successfully argued against a child going to a residential treatment facility after his 4th placement by getting family trauma therapy reinstated to help with his behaviors.
- The training helped me direct a parent from being angry and helpless with her pending CPS legal case. She was able to refocus and open to help. She in turn was able to help her husband. They will be reunified with their children soon.