**Reframing Behavior Problems as Survival Behaviors

Parenting Resources · https://bridges4mentalhealth.org/hub/parenting-resources/reframing-behavior-problems-as-survival-behaviors/

From the NTI Curriculum

Identified as one of the most valuable resources by Parent Partners

Reframing Behavior Problems as Survival Behaviors explains that many challenging behaviors displayed by adopted and foster children, such as lying, defiance, aggression, withdrawal, or control struggles, are often survival strategies developed in response to trauma, loss, disrupted attachments, and inadequate early caregiving rather than simply willful misconduct. The resource encourages parents and professionals to look beyond behavior to the underlying emotional needs related to attachment, safety and control, self-regulation, and identity, and to use trauma-informed, relationship-focused interventions that promote healing, connection, and resilience.

The handout also provides a framework for identifying the emotional issues driving a child's behavior and matching them with supportive parenting and therapeutic strategies, emphasizing that understanding a child's history and experiences is essential to improving behavior and strengthening family stability.

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