



## **Strategies for a Successful Summer**

*Tips and tools to prepare caregivers and empower children*

### **TBRI & Summer**

- Transition from the structure of school to unstructured summer is difficult for our CASA kids
- Many placements break down over the summer
- We want to empower our children to have a successful summer
- Caregivers need to be aware of the need for structure, physical play but also not over sensory stimulation.

**\*\*Remember to see the need behind the behavior\*\***

### **Safe & Structured Environment**

- Outcome of complex developmental trauma is chronic fear which impacts both cognitive and emotional functioning.
- Children who learn their environment is safe and predictable can learn to trust others and develop healthy emotions and behaviors that are trust driven instead of fear driven.

### **Summertime Structure Strategies**

- Dry erase board
- Weekly calendar
- Calendar for the whole summer
- Every day/week needs to follow a similar schedule
- Day Camp

### **Recognize the Transition Summer Brings**

- Summer is considered a major life transition
- Loss of teachers & friends
- Memories of previous school years
- Children not knowing if they will return to this school next year
- Good or bad memories of previous summers
- Give the child the opportunity to share their feelings either with caregiver, journal, draw pictures or with therapist

**\*\*Remember with “kids from hard places” sometimes sad looks mad.\*\***

### **Summer Opportunities to Build Connection**

- Playing in a pool together—jumping and catching, sliding
- Swinging
- Building Legos, puzzles, sand castles
- Band-aids
- Cooking together
- Letting the child choose the activity or the schedule
- Letting the child choose the order of activities

### **Remind caregivers to have observational awareness**

- Recognition of nonverbal markers of anxiety such as:
  - Pupil dilation
  - Heart rate
  - Depth of respiration
  - Muscle tension

### **Empowering Strategies**

- Hydration
- Blood sugar
- Food every two hours
- Protein snack at bedtime
- Gross motor exercise

### **Sensory Needs**

- Sensory activity every two hours
- Limit screen time
- Allow for quiet periods alternating with active periods: Physiologic Principles

### **Transitions Between Activities**

- Give the child a warning of a change in activities at 30 min, 15 min, 10 min, 5 min
- Allowing the child to ask for a compromise
- Encourage the child to “use their voice”

### **Other Empowering Principles**

- Sleep—sleep dysregulation may be for many reasons including harm at night
- Weighted blankets
- Bedtime routine
- Physical Activity
  - Every two hours including running, jumping and climbing
  - Decreases the stress chemical cortisol and also negative behaviors