

Hoofbeats



News from the Attachment Disorder Network

SERVING CHILDREN AND FAMILIES AFFECTED BY ATTACHMENT DISORDER JAN/FEB 2005

Symptoms of RAD

- ◆ Superficially engaging or charming
- ◆ Poor eye contact
- ◆ Lack of cause and effect thinking
- ◆ Absence of guilt, no remorse
- ◆ Chronic, nonsensical lying (Crazy lying)
- ◆ Triangulation of adults
- ◆ Destructive to self/others/material things
- ◆ Cruelty to animals and/or children
- ◆ Abnormal eating patterns
- ◆ Presumptive entitlement issues
- ◆ Refusal to answer simple questions
- ◆ Continually provoking anger in others
- ◆ False allegations of abuse
- ◆ Theatrical emotions
- ◆ Denial of accountability, always blaming others
- ◆ Learning lags
- ◆ Poor peer relationships
- ◆ Lack of ability to give and receive affection
- ◆ Preoccupation with blood, fire, or gore
- ◆ Persistent nonsense questions & chatter or mumbling
- ◆ Inappropriately demanding and clingy
- ◆ Stealing

Notes from Nancy



The *Attachment Disorder Network* was born out of my frustration at the isolation experienced by and lack of services available to families like mine. As each year passes, it is my hope that struggling foster and adoptive families will have *more* services available to them, find *more* understanding and support in the community, and be fighting *less* of an uphill battle. Sometimes I think we are making headway, sometimes I wonder...

A recent *Dr. Phil* show had a segment that included a couple with two biological daughters who had adopted a son from India. It appears the boy had attachment difficulties, and the connection between the child and parents was very strained. Although *Reactive Attachment Disorder* was mentioned on the flurry of message board activity that followed the show, it was not mentioned on the show. Dr. Phil thoroughly chastised the parents (not that they didn't need re-directing) and basically told them to "go home and love this child". (Apparently he did help them find a therapist and apparently they are doing better. A follow up show spent

Mission Statement

Support families parenting children with attachment issues or Reactive Attachment Disorder through education, mentoring, advocacy, and local/regional resources, and in all child-centered environments (schools, doctors offices, foster/adopt community, legislative) to develop awareness of attachment-related issues.

about two minutes discussing their improved relationship, but provided no information about how they arrived in a better place...) The general community just doesn't get it.

The topic of *parental abuse by children* is certainly not one talked about in "polite society." But it is a very real worry in families living with severely disturbed kids. Families like ours need concrete approaches to helping disturbed children heal. Approaches like those provided by Nancy Thomas. Join other ADN families in attending Nancy's upcoming workshop in the Chicago area! (See page 5)

Violence to Parents

By Eddie Gallagher, B.A. Hons (Psychology); B.S.W.; M.A.P.S.; Clinical Memb V.A.F.T.

(Note: This is not about Elder Abuse, another form of violence to parents.) The issue of children's violence and abuse of parents is not one that attracts much publicity or research. Of the tens of thousands of articles written on family violence over the past 20 years only a few dozen are on children's violence to parents. Books and articles on children's behavior problems, on delinquency, on parenting and even on family violence almost never mention this topic. There is almost nothing available on the web.

There are some reasonable reasons why this form of family violence has been largely ignored or downplayed:

- It is not usually as dangerous as violence towards wives—serious injuries are much less common
- Children don't usually dominate and subjugate their mother the way an abusive husband does
- It is more likely to be temporary, as children do sometimes grow out of it, or at least leave home

Why has this form of abuse been ignored?

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Our Philosophy

We believe that a child's experiences and environment from the time of conception until 2-3 years of age establishes the child's frame of reference for all future interactions and relationships.

*** Pre-natal factors that affect attachment include: denial of pregnancy, dislike for the father of the child, substance abuse, inadequate diet and/or poor self-care, resentment, prematurity risk factors, and variable family support.*



*** Post-natal factors include: lack of parenting skills, various caregivers, ongoing substance abuse, "mechanical parenting," neglectful/abusive parental reactions, prematurity factors, and undetected or unrelieved pain in the child.*



We provide training on the recognition of Reactive Attachment Disorder and suggest resources and interventions to parents and professionals.

We provide support and alternative parenting methods for the beleaguered parents of these children.

Why Is It So Hard to Implement Nancy Thomas or Other Forms of Tough Love Parenting?

by Susan M. Ward

Parents of very challenging children often need to move beyond familiar parenting styles in order to parent children who are out of control, abusive, or destructive. Some parents use Nancy Thomas parenting or variations that might be called "tough love." All of these approaches include lots of structure, high expectations, and consequences that encourage a change in thinking. These parenting approaches are intended to help children who have trouble with boundaries, poor cause and effect thinking, and often display abusive behaviors.

Nancy Thomas, a therapeutic parenting expert extraordinaire, developed a parenting technique that helps heal children diagnosed with RAD (Reactive Attachment Disorder) and other challenging and oppositional behaviors. Ms. Thomas's approach has proven effective with children who may have killed, maimed, and set fires, as well as children who are consistently defiant, controlling, manipulative, and out-of-control. Ms. Thomas's core expected behaviors are respectful, responsible, and fun to be around. Her parenting interventions include, among many others, creating a very structured life for the child, removal of privileges and possessions and the child earning them back, and providing lots of cuddles and nurturing.

Well meaning friends and family may suggest that the child is "just being a kid." Or that the parents "just need to love her more." Or, that the parents "just need to teach her to manage her emotions." Or, that "you're too hard on her." In the meantime, as parents search for a diagnosis and a "cure," the child is often antagonizing family members, injuring animals, abusive towards parents, and more.

Therapists who work with families whose children have severe behavior and emotional issues recognize that therapy alone will not heal a child who has no conscience, no ability to love, and a poor sense of self. These children, some of whom may be diagnosed with Reactive Attachment Disorder (RAD), need to be surrounded by interventions that will help them to change the core of their being. Attachment (RAD) therapists, in particular, partner with parents as the parents learn new intensive parenting methods to help their child heal. These approaches are often based on Nancy Thomas (NT) parenting, tough love parenting, or other structured, therapeutic parenting styles.

When learning to implement therapeutic parenting, some parents are advised by their therapists to use *When Love Is Not Enough* (the parent guide) by Nancy Thomas as a template for their new parenting techniques. Some parents read about it and decide it's not for them. Other parents try it for a while, get overwhelmed, and decide to abandon the effort. Many parents decide to implement only a few aspects of Ms. Thomas' approach. And even for those parents who work hard to implement each and every aspect, it's very, very challenging. The NT parenting approach has healed children with horrific behaviors. Children who have killed. Children who have destroyed property. Children who live lives of defiance and control. Many parents attempting to use Ms. Thomas' approach, or other versions of tough-love parenting, are dealing with less severe behaviors than this. Yet they give up. Unfortunately, they often continue to deal with challenging, annoying, debilitating, or abusive behaviors from their child.

Why do parents give up? Why is this so hard to do?

To be effective using NT parenting techniques, parents must learn to create firm boundaries, structure their child's time, be creative with consequences, be totally consistent with expectations, and teach their child strong sitting, all while maintaining a loving voice, lots of empathy, and super-charged nurturing. It's hard. Dawn Precour, a therapeutic respite provider in North Carolina who has trained with Ms. Thomas, says, "Starting with all of NT's interventions at once is hard for most parents. They can start by working on one behavior using one intervention per week, and keep adding." She elaborates on this by saying that Bill Goble, one of the attachment therapists she has worked with, tells clients that it will take them one year to be comfortable with this new parenting approach.

One mom of a child diagnosed with RAD describes how NT parenting is counter-intuitive. "When your child repeatedly, intentionally, does something wrong, it doesn't feel natural to smile and say gently, 'I bet you need to rest and get strong enough to try it again.'" The Nancy Thomas approach, however, puts a premium on balancing structure and consequences with empathy and nurturing.



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The proud mom of a now-healing daughter shared how she and her husband had to completely change their parenting style and how difficult it was. "Having to create structure for our daughter was really hard. My husband is a card-carrying ADD member and I just have those tendencies. So, remembering that we had to create structure on a daily and momentary basis was really hard." She added, "I think parents need to have lots of support to stay sane, lots of reminders of how to keep parenting in this style, and tools to deal with difficult behaviors. I have found myself feeling crazy and confused too many times in response to my daughter."

Another parent talked about how, in the beginning, this parenting approach stirs up even more emotions in your child. "They HATE to feel that you're in control, not them." She continued, "It dawned on me after a few months of therapeutic parenting that I had been spending huge amounts of energy keeping aspects of my daughter's life on HER terms, in order to not trigger any violence or aggression. But, that wasn't helping her to heal. She had to learn that if she chose to become violent, she would suffer the consequences. My changed view was a huge step toward my daughter's healing."

One attachment therapist talks about how the lack of therapy support can be a huge factor in the implementation of Nancy Thomas's parenting techniques. She suggests, "The outline is there in *When Love Is Not Enough*. But, each child is different. Each parent is different. You need a therapist to help you figure out the subtleties appropriate for each family." One mom followed this up with, "...and even if you could follow these parenting techniques under normal circumstances, these aren't normal times! Your child is attacking you, or destroying your house, or doing so many things to control you that you don't have enough energy to figure things out on your own. You need a therapist to keep you on track."

Ms. Precour says, "Sometimes parents don't want to change themselves, they want the therapist or someone to fix their child so they don't have to change. In the end, though, the parent HAS to change in

order for the child to change." Ms. Precour adds that the complicating issue is that parents are starting to implement NT parenting at a time when they are utterly exhausted by their child's controlling and/or abusive behaviors that may have been going on for years.

One mom suggests that the level of intimacy proposed in NT parenting is hard for some parents, especially when you're burned out and fed up with your child. NT parenting talks about the steel box with the velvet lining. The steel box is the structure, consistency, and consequences. The velvet lining is the continual nurturing, even on days when you're drained and angry: hugs, games, silliness, sweets, gentle touches, and more.

Many parents fall into the category of "well, my child isn't really THAT bad" so I'll just pick a few of these techniques and surely they'll help." It's true that even minimal parenting changes can have a positive impact on our children. However, when it comes to children in need of changing core issues, along with the essence of who they are and what they believe, they need to be surrounded with safety in ALL facets of their life. Nancy Thomas and other tough love parenting approaches surround the child in a new, complete, healing environment. Ms. Precour says, "For children to heal, they must feel that their parents are safe in all ways, not just some ways."

One mom who has formed her therapeutic parenting style based on a combination of Nancy Thomas, Love and Logic, and others, shares her thoughts about why people have difficulty with any type of Nancy Thomas or tough love parenting: "Some people would rather take their kids to a myriad of doctors or try handfuls of different prescriptions or a gazillion different therapies, rather than spend 15 minutes of by-themselves time with their kid. Maybe it won't work? You'll never know until you try. Maybe my child doesn't really have RAD? Nothing in Nancy Thomas will cause permanent damage, and learning to address people respectfully will carry you a long way in life. There are a dozen different reasons not to do it and by the time it takes you to counter them all, it will be too late."

Parents implementing Nancy Thomas or other tough love parenting are not trying to get their fairly regular child to do their chores more quickly. They're trying to help a child find peace and contentment inside. To feel safe and loved by adults. To give up their maladjusted beliefs and behaviors. They're trying to save a life. Regular parenting won't do it. Changing a few things in the parenting repertoire won't do it. It takes a major shift on behalf of the parents. It's not easy. But parents need to remind themselves that the way they can show total commitment to their child is by being totally committed to a new way of parenting.

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Postings from the listserve

After dd was moved from the RTC, I sent a 5-page letter outlining and documenting all my concerns about the RTC to each member of their Board of Directors. (Believe me, it was definitely the *Readers Digest* version). Yesterday I received a response from the President of the Board. You can imagine the peace of mind I found when I read this line, "I ENSURE you that the Board and staff will do our best to address the issues that you have outlined in your letter."



Now I ask you, what does a Senior citizen's drink have to do with anything? ;o)

Then today the RTC Admissions Director called and asked if I wanted to complete a "Satisfaction Survey" since dd was discharged. After I stopped laughing, I politely declined. I wish I'd had a can of Ensure to cap off the evening. —Cherri
(“dd” is the list serve abbreviation for “dear daughter”!)

While funny, it would likely hurt the cause rather than help. We'd like them to take Advantage and Ensure that things are not done in a Slimfast way.
—Nancy C

(Continued from page 1)

- In some cases children's violence is in self-defense (like much of women's violence towards men)

Some not-so-good reasons why the topic has been largely neglected are:

- Some people worry that any attention paid to other forms of family violence will distract from the most common and serious form, namely men's violence towards their partners
- Children's behavior is generally assumed to be directly caused by parents' behavior so it is the parent's own fault if they are abused by their child!
- Children are seen as 'victims' within families where there is violence (and they often are) and we have difficulty dealing with the idea of someone being both 'victim' and 'victimizer'
- Children's behavior problems are 'explained' by the use of a pseudo-medical label, which obscures who is actually doing what to whom. So a child is seen as having a "conduct disorder" rather than being a parent abuser.

How common is it?

I don't believe we can answer that question with anything other than a wild guess. If you read some of the articles written on the subject you'll repeatedly come across the "fact" that about 10% of adolescents are violent towards parents. I don't believe that this is a meaningful statistic because the surveys ask about people hitting each other. People in families hit each other quite a lot but most of this is not abusive. Someone lashing out in an atypical rage can be upsetting and the action can be said to be abusive but this does not in itself make an abusive relationship. People also hit each other in fun or in self defense.

This form of family violence is common enough to be a serious problem, but I don't believe it is as common as abuse of wives by their husbands or of abuse of children by parents.

Most workers I talk to believe it is increasing.



Different types of violence towards parents

One of the confusing things about this subject is that children may hit parents in quite a few different situations:

- Very young children quite frequently attempt to hit parents
- Older children may occasionally lash out during a temper tantrum
- Severely disabled children may lash out at caregivers
- Some abused children will try to defend themselves against their abuser
- Abused or neglected children with attachment problems may be violent to caregivers
- Some older children may try to prevent violence to their mothers and may be violent towards fathers or stepfathers
- Drug affected or drug abusing young people are quite often violent towards parents (or anyone who gets in their way)
- A few young people suffering from mental illness such as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder or severe depression may be violent to parents
- There are some chaotic, violent families where almost everyone is violent
- Some young people become increasingly violent as they become immersed in a delinquent, violent life-style
- Children of sole mothers who have witnessed past violence towards their mothers may copy the behavior
- Some children have such high feelings of entitlement that they may attempt to bully a parent or parents to get their own way

Looking at this list it should be obvious that there can be no one explanation for every situation where children are violent towards parents. Nor does the list above cover every possible situation.

I'm most interested in the last 2 categories. These are the ones I've mostly dealt with in my counseling practice and met in groups for parents that I've run.

Steps for parents to regain control over an out-of-control child

1.Examine your attitudes: What are you

feeling guilty about? Is this helpful? What is really your responsibility? What are your rights as a person and as a parent?

2. Look at the young person's behavior: what is normal, what is acceptable, what is dangerous, what is abusive?

3. Think about why they behave as they do and throw out the unhelpful myths. Labels such as ADHD, "conduct disorder", "depression", "learning difficulties" etc. are not excuses for bad behavior. If they have a real condition (and you can't assume they do just because of their awful behavior), is it so severe that they are actually out of touch with reality? If not then you should still demand acceptable behavior. Even young people with schizophrenia need boundaries and control.

4. Prioritize: What behaviors do you need to reduce or eliminate (especially abusive or self-destructive behavior)? What behavior do you merely wish to discourage (such as annoying habits)? What behavior can you ignore for now? What behavior do you want to encourage? Be clear about your priorities. Whether or not a teenager does their homework is not currently very important if they are also abusing you and drugs. Choose your battles carefully.

5. Clearly define the behavior in your child you need to change: what is acceptable and unacceptable to you (and your partner).

6. Look at how you are currently reacting and try to stop unhelpful patterns, such as physical punishment, escalating power struggles, your own temper tantrums, lectures, unrealistically high standards or expectations, battles with your partner, etc.

7. Look at all the things you do for your child. Consider which could be used as consequences. Eliminate those you feel too guilty about not doing (or that you don't have your partner's support for not doing).

8. Look for any other privileges that you can control and use as consequences (phones, transport, internet, favorite foods, etc). Unless your child cares (at least a

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little) about them they are of no use as consequences. However, if behavior is really unacceptable it is often better to have any consequence rather than none.

9. Make a detailed plan for how you are going to encourage your child to behave in a civilized manner. Work out how your child will try to sabotage or wriggle out of it, and make contingency plans. Don't rely on their cooperation or good will.

10. Announce or present the plan to your child (preferably in writing). You can discuss it and perhaps negotiate about small details but don't make any changes on the spur of the moment and don't let the child take control.

11. Get support from other people for the changes you intend to make. This may include family, teachers, parents of your child's friends and even your child's friends themselves. Your ex-partner may be a potential ally if you can set aside personal differences. If your child is potentially dangerous you may want to alert the local police or child protection agency.

12. Consider the fall-back options if your child continues to refuse to cooperate. If you are attempting to use consequences that require any cooperation from the child you need to consider what you can use as a fall-back if you don't get this cooperation, and make this alternative clear to the child.

13. Be prepared for a backlash if you are suddenly trying to be firm. Many children will test your resolve and a few may even become more violent.

14. Make a safety plan in case the worst happens. Who ya gonna call? (There is no such thing as Brat-Busters).

15. Institute your plan of action (remaining positive and confident and prepared for abject failure at the same time).

16. Revise as necessary. They are your rules for your home, so don't feel that you can't change them. Don't let your child play barrack-room lawyer and attempt to wriggle through loop-holes. Be firm but fair!

17. Very important: Give positive feedback, affection, encouragement and occasional rewards or celebrations if your child is improving—even if you think it is an act and won't last. Don't wait until they are perfect before acknowledging improvement.

18. Expect relapses and new crises. Don't get disheartened by these.

19. Get on with your own life regardless of what your child decides to do. Don't let your happiness depend totally on any one person.

20. There is no number twenty. It just sounded better than 19, so make up your own number 20. You're in charge!

Eddie Gallagher is a psychologist, social worker, family therapist and foster parent with 30 years experience working with families. Eddie hails from Scotland and currently works part time in a Community Health Centre in Melbourne, Australia, does some private counseling, teaches counseling and runs groups for parents of abusive children as well as groups for violent men. <http://www.eddiegallagher.id.au>

The Attachment Disorder Network

Proudly presents:

Nancy Thomas

Author of

When Love is Not Enough: A Guide to Parenting Children with Reactive Attachment Disorder

April 27 & 28, 2005

Village Church of Gurnee, IL

Wednesday, April 27

Taming the Tiger While it's a Kitten

In this clear, comprehensive program, you will learn to understand bonding and the essential care required for success with high-risk children. The effects of separation, trauma, abandonment, and inconsistent care will be discussed. Current research on vital infant brain development will also be presented.

Turning a Family from Sinking to Ship Shape

Did your family get a ticket for the Love Boat and end up on the Titanic? Life boats and life preservers will be provided for those whose ships are in troubled waters because there's Attachment Disorder on board. Come learn not only how to keep your boat afloat, but how to reach your destination.

Parent Reception 6:30 to 8:30 PM, Holiday Inn

Food, fun, fellowship and friends... and FREE to ADN members!

Thursday, April 28

It takes a Team to Help a Hurting Child

This workshop, filled with hope and humor, is designed for child welfare and adoption social workers, mental health clinicians, educators, and residential program staff, as well as parents of high-risk children.

Participants will:

- ⇒ Gain a clear understanding of attachment difficulties.
- ⇒ Gain tools to accurately assess high-risk children.
- ⇒ Have a clear plan to guide children back to health.
- ⇒ Understand therapies effective with RAD.
- ⇒ Gain strategies to support parents and relieve anxieties.
- ⇒ Make a permanent difference in the life of a child.

Check out www.radzebra.org for prices, registration forms and more information, or call our conference hotline at 920-994-8685

- Sponsorships are available for agencies or clinical practices
- CEU's will be available
- Gurnee is located between Milwaukee and Chicago and is accessible by both airports

Children Abusing Parents

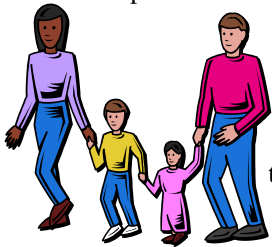
by Susan M. Ward

I hope this topic is of no interest to you. I hope you don't know anyone who has been abused by their child. I hope your child has never abused you.

Unfortunately, this abuse does occur. Yet, no one talks about it... or writes about it... or reports on it...

Try doing a search on any of the main WWW search engines. Look for "children abusing parents," or "children's violence towards parents," or "children's violence." The results will include articles about parents abusing children, about abuse of elderly parents, and about how violence from parents creates children who are abusers as adults.

Nothing about six-year-olds being restrained from pummeling their parents. Nothing about 12 year olds that need to be sat on to keep from injuring their mom. Nothing about children who pick up six-foot long sticks and threaten their parents, stopped only by the guile and quickness of the parent.



As adoptive parents of older children, the topic of children abusing parents is one that cannot be ignored. There are no statistics. No one talks about it.

But emails to our Older Child Adoption website often come from hurt parents looking for a place to share, vent, and seek support for this seldom discussed topic.

Older adopted children may be abusive due to a variety of circumstances in their backgrounds. They may have grown up in violent and abusive birthfamilies, foster homes, or orphanages. They may be affected by Reactive Attachment Disorder, bipolar, or other disorders that can include violent behaviors. They may be filled with so much grief and anguish that it seems to them their only release is through violence.

Their abusive violence may last for a couple of days, several weeks, many months, or longer. The duration will depend upon the causes, personality of the

child, and how quickly you seek therapeutic interventions for your child.

Dealing with abusive children provides adoptive parents with multiple interconnected challenges. They are being abused. Yet, help and support are unavailable. Friends and family may say, "Well, what did you expect with a child who's adopted...?" Or, when they ask for help, *they* may be turned into the reason for the child's abuse i.e. poor parenting, or worse, accused of being the abuser.

A few years ago, at a meeting of mental health professionals who were discussing RAD (Reactive Attachment Disorder) issues, I asked about learning safe ways to restrain my daughter. I was variously told, "Oh, restraining holds can be very dangerous," or, "I took a two-day class in restraining holds and still wouldn't want to do one." When I displayed my abundant bruises, scratches, and bite marks, and asked again, "How do I protect myself?" there was silence, then mumbles about finding my daughter's triggers so she wouldn't get violent, suggestions that I learn to parent her better, etc.

There is little awareness among professionals and the general public about children abusing parents. That may be due to several issues. 1) It's hard to grasp the idea of a blond-haired, blue-eyed, eight-year old girl, inflicting body and facial wounds to her mother. 2) There's been such strong (and needed) effort to educate people about parental child abuse, that the reverse situation seems unthinkable...a cover-up...a made-up story. 3) Many professionals are untrained and unaware of the potential violence that young children can bring upon their parents due to their mental, emotional, and behavioral issues.

While unscientific, it's interesting to note that in a local support group of about 40 families whose children have emotional and/or behavioral disorders, nearly all of the parents have been physically attacked by their children.

One mom says, "Until I found the support group I'm in, I was embarrassed

that my son was doing this to me. I had an incredible sense of shame." She elaborated by sharing that once, while in a parking lot, her son began smacking her and kicking her. She pushed him to the ground and sat on him to restrain him. A passerby yelled, "I'm going to call the police and report you for hurting your son."

One of the few articles on the WWW about parental abuse is at www.silencewhispers.com. In their article, Parent Abuse, they write:

Whatever the age, a parent that is being abused by their child must begin to seek help as soon as the abuse starts. These parents must tell someone—anyone. A doctor, trusted friend, family, therapist—even law enforcement. Will the child get in trouble? Probably, yes.

It is embarrassing and frightening to tell someone that your child is abusing you, but think of it like this: the abuse that a parent suffers at the hands of their own children is far worse than anything that can happen to them as a result of their actions. The parent is in far more danger than the child is. It is a gut wrenching decision for a parent to turn their child in, but that child needs help, and the parent needs help in dealing with it.

There was a study done in Halifax, Nova Scotia, about teenagers abusing their parents. A summary of the project was published in the Spring 1996 issue of *Vis-à-vis*, A National Newsletter on Family Violence from the Canadian Council on Social Development. Part of the report defines parental abuse:

"Any behavior that creates fear and is harmful to you can be defined as abuse. It may include

- Hitting, punching, kicking
- Shoving and pushing
- Yelling
- Stealing
- Breaking or throwing things, punching holes in walls
- Put-downs
- Threatening to hurt, maim or kill you, or to run away, commit suicide or otherwise hurt themselves."

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We all expect older adopted children to be stressed and traumatized by their past, and by their adoption. However, none of us expect to be attacked.

If you need help, you'll find resources and support to be limited. However, here are a few action steps for you to take if you're being abused by your child:

- Most importantly, if you're being abused, seek therapy for yourself and your child.
- Create a plan for what to do whenever your child is violent. Learn to restrain your child, even though you will find it difficult to find anyone to train you in doing safe restraints. Ask your therapist or use the example in *Help for the Hopeless Child* by Dr. Ronald Federici. It has an explanation of how to do a restraint, and how long to restrain your child. In addition to restraint, decide what support you need, and what consequence your child needs.
- Have someone you can call on who has witnessed your child's violence to support you if the police or social services come to your door, called by neighbors or strangers thinking you're the abuser.
- Develop a solid relationship with your pediatrician, therapist, or psychiatrist who will not only help you and your family, but will support you if you're accused of being abusive.
- Some parents suggest that you call the police when your child is violent towards you so that you have a "record" of your child's abuse towards you. Be sure you know ahead of time what their procedures will be. Will they talk to your child, take them to the local juvenile detention center, or handcuff them and take them to the local psychiatric hospital? Talk these things over with your therapist or pediatrician.
- Keep a journal of your child's behaviors so you have a record that it's your child, not you, doing the abusing.

If you're not an abused parent but understand the issue, let other parents share with you their worries and their shame, and offer to help in any way you can. These abused parents may find it difficult to get support from anyone else.

The Halifax, Nova Scotia project discusses the need to raise awareness of the issue:

What you can do to raise awareness of parent abuse...

Invite parents, social service workers, therapists, community health nurses, and teachers to a one-day introductory workshop on parent abuse. Ask an abused parent to tell her or his story and have a counselor talk about supporting parents and teenagers. Explore the reasons why parent abuse is not talked about and how we can raise awareness of this issue.



Children abusing parents creates a sense of shame in parents. The lack of awareness for the topic makes it difficult to talk about. And the lack of training and support can be disastrous for families who struggle with this unspoken trauma.

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"It should be your care, therefore, and mine, to elevate the minds of our children and exalt their courage; to accelerate and animate their industry and activity; to excite in them an habitual contempt of meanness, abhorrence of injustice and inhumanity, and an ambition to excel in every capacity, faculty, and virtue. If we suffer their minds to grovel and creep in infancy, they will grovel all their lives."—John Adams

"To love someone who does not love you is like shaking a tree to make the dew drops fall."—Unknown

"You did what you knew how to do, and when you knew better, you did better."—Maya Angelou



Need more information?



Attachment Disorder Network
PO Box 4104
Overland Park, KS 66204

Nancy Spoolstra, DVM
Executive Director
17572 W. Bridle Trail Rd.
Gurnee, IL 60031
847-855-8676
Nancy@radzebra.org

Julie Beem, CPSM
Director of Marketing & Fundraising
770-423-4824
JulieB@radzebra.org

Kelly Killian
Administrative Assistant
920-994-2489
Kelly@radzebra.org

Deb Dunlap
Secretary/Treasurer
785-748-0917
Deb@radzebra.org

Attachment Disorder Network



P.O. Box 4104
Overland Park, KS
66204

Check out our website!!!

www.radzebra.org

- Info on symptoms, treatment modalities and parenting techniques
- Articles, Poems & Family Stories
- Links to resources
- Calendar of events, weekly chats and news for the adoption/foster community.
- Join or donate on-line.
- Members-only section.

Attachment Disorder Network Membership Form

I would like a one-year membership in the **Attachment Disorder Network** for \$25.

My **Individual Membership** includes:

- An informational packet on attachment disorder.
- A year's subscription to ADN's bi-monthly newsletter, **Hoofbeats**.
- Access to on-line directory, lending library, past issues of newsletters and other member-only info.

Professional Membership for therapists and other practitioners for \$150 includes:

- Five copies of each issue of a year's subscription of ADN's bi-monthly newsletter, **Hoofbeats**.
- Unlimited sample newsletters and recruitment materials.
- Detailed information about your practice on www.radzebra.org website with links to your website.
- Discounts on training/educational programs & materials (coming soon).

I learned about ADN through:

Name

Organization (if applicable)

Address

City, State, Zip

Phone Number

E-mail address

Total Amount enclosed \$ _____

I am:

Adoptive Parent Counselor/Therapist Other

Foster Parent Social Worker

Bio Parent School Personnel

Please make checks/money orders payable to the

Attachment Disorder Network

And mail to: P.O. Box 4104

Overland Park, KS 66204

847-855-8676

Credit cards accepted through Paypal at www.radzebra.org