

25th November 2019 Adelaide

Workshop: Treating Chronically Traumatized Children.

The Sleeping Dogs method

By Arianne Struik



Many chronically traumatized children do not receive adequate treatment. They can refuse to participate in therapy or become very aggressive or dissociate when the trauma is mentioned. Clinicians do not know where to start because the child is so severe and chronically traumatized. It is often then advised to focus on symptom management and behaviour and not 'wake up sleeping dogs' but to wait until the child starts talking about his traumatic memories. However children rarely do and the child's 'sleeping dogs' (traumatic memories) damage the child's development in all areas. But how to help these children?

The Sleeping Dogs method is for children ages zero to 18 who were severely and chronically traumatized in early childhood, for whom 'standard' trauma treatment is not possible and every other therapy fails or the child refuses to participate or is not motivated. The word resistant or not motivated implies wrongly that there is fault in the child. The barriers to engage in therapy are created by the child's current social environment and by what has happened to him in the past. Unsafety, instability in daily life, unsafe attachment relationships, lack of emotion regulation skills and negative core beliefs can form barriers for children to process trauma. The goal of this method is to help children who were chronically traumatized in early childhood overcome their barriers, so they can participate in trauma processing and integrate their trauma. This will relieve their symptoms instead of only managing them.

The Sleeping Dogs method is used to plan trauma-focused treatment for the child, support the parents and caregivers as well as to guide decision-making by child protection services around disclosures, safety, contact

arrangements with biological parents, contact between foster parents and biological parents, and reunification. Child protection or youth care workers can assess the child's development, health and wellbeing and plan interventions for improvement with the Sleeping Dogs method. This is a practical one-day workshop in which the Sleeping Dogs method is explained and illustrated with case examples and video material. The theory will be explained in straightforward language; the same language that participants can use with their clients. Participants practice the use of the method their own cases. This workshop can be valuable for, for example private practitioners or clinicians working in organisations, child protection workers, residential staff or foster care workers.

Practical issues

Date: Monday 25th of November 2019 9.00-4.00 pm

Location: DCP Building 7, 300 Richmond Rd, Netley SA 5037

Costs: including the book *Treating Chronically Traumatized Children* (Struik, 2019) and morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea:

\$275 ex GST early bird rate until 15 September 2019

\$300 ex GST after 15 September 2019

\$25 discount for APS EMDR IG or EMDRAA members. Please email if you require this discount.

Registration: www.ariannestruik.com

Information/ inquiries: ariannestruik@hotmail.com

Arienne Struik is a clinical psychologist, family therapist and EMDR practitioner and consultant, originally from the Netherlands. She worked in Child and Adolescent Mental Health for twenty-two years as a clinical psychologist and program director. She moved to Australia and became director of The Institute for Chronically Traumatized Children (ICTC) from which she provides specialized trauma treatment in remote areas, as well as workshops, training, supervision and research from the Institute for Chronically Traumatized Children. She developed the award-winning Sleeping Dogs method, described in the second edition of the book *Treating Chronically Traumatized Children* (Struik, 2019) and teaches internationally on the treatment of trauma and dissociation in children. She is member of the European ISSTD Child and Adolescent Committee and convener of the Australian Psychological Society EMDR Interest Group.

