Multiple traumas

How do they affect children and what do the children need
While growing up, children encounter various amounts and different kinds of potentially traumatic experiences.
Previous research on the impact of traumatic experiences in children has focused almost entirely on the effect of single trauma.
Cumulative exposure to traumatic life events among children polytraumatization (the number of different potentially traumatic events) is an important predictor of reported trauma symptoms.
Harmful aspects of trauma

The accumulation of different traumas, polytraumatization

The interpersonal quality of trauma
PTSD

The person has been exposed to a traumatic event or events which has involved death, serious injury or threat, or threat to own or others physical integrity

The person has reacted with intense fear, helplessness or fright

Symptoms:
- Intrusive memories
- Avoidance of stimuli
- Increased arousal

- DSM-IV
PTSD

• Live one’s life over again (sometimes repetetive play)

• Avoidance

• Continously highly strung

• Duration more than one month
PTSD in everyday life

- Traumatriggers
- Cronical stress
- The alarmsystem has no apprehension of time
- Avoidance
- The symptoms will very seldom heal by themselves
Why don’t they tell?

• Commonly children do not tell or that it takes a long time before they tell

• Fear of not being believed, fear of adult’s reactions, feeling of guilt, threat, lacking of words

• Denial - want to forget, wishful thinking that it didn’t happen
What do they need

• Protection
• Mandated report
• Be believed and be relieved of sense of guilt
• Crisis intervention
• Trauma focused treatment
• Relations heal
• Cooperation, support in every part of the child's life environment
Estimated length of treatment after trauma

- **Low Vulnerability**: Non-personal, few sessions, one single trauma.
- **High Vulnerability**: Complex chronic symptoms and attachment disorder, many years.

Types of Trauma:
- **One single trauma**: Few sessions, complex chronic symptoms and attachment disorder.
- **Several traumas of one type**: Multiple traumas, multiple and complex attachment problems.
- **Multiple traumas**: Many years.

- **Relation and Interpersonal**: Non-personal, few sessions, one single trauma.
Components in treatment

Three phases,
  stabilising,
  processing,
  enhancing future safety and development

Challenge avoidance

Exposure
TFCBT (Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy)

CPC-CBT (Combined Parent-Child Cognitive-Behavioural Group Therapy for Families at Risk for Child Physical Abuse), (KIBB in Swedish)

Prolonged exposure

Trauma focused therapy for children

Child oriented family therapy

EMDR
Treat and share the difficulties

- Talk, write, play, draw, sing
- Hitta ord för vad som har hänt
- Find words for what has happened
- Get answers on questions
- Gradual exposure – the brain needs to re-learn and to stop ala´rming
- Share story with important adult
Learning about trauma

What is sexual abuse

Words to use
For body parts

Who's fault is sexual abuse?

Can you feel well again after being sexually abused?

Can you harm some one with words

How can you react when you get very frightened?

What is an OK way to quarrel?
Psychoeducation – children’s reactions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Angry</th>
<th>Glad outside, Sad inside</th>
<th>Worried and scared</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thin bad about oneself</td>
<td>Difficulty sleeping, nightmares</td>
<td>Difficulty concentrating</td>
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Before, during, today, in the future