

# **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 repetitive play)
- Avoidance
- Continuously 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



(Bild: [ki-media.blogspot.com](http://ki-media.blogspot.com))



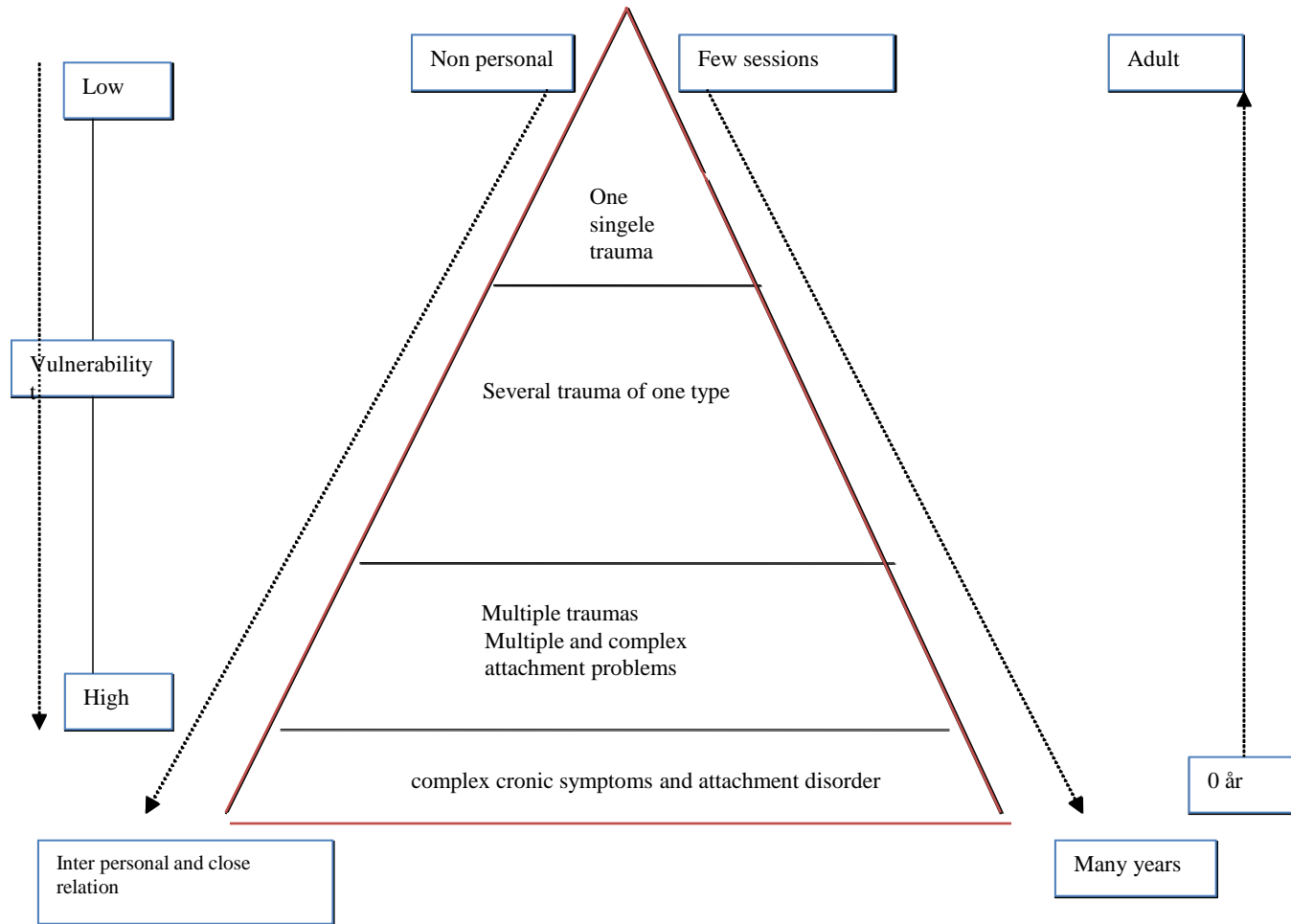
# Why don't they tell?

- 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



# 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, singHitta ord för vad som har hänt
- Find words for what has happend
- 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

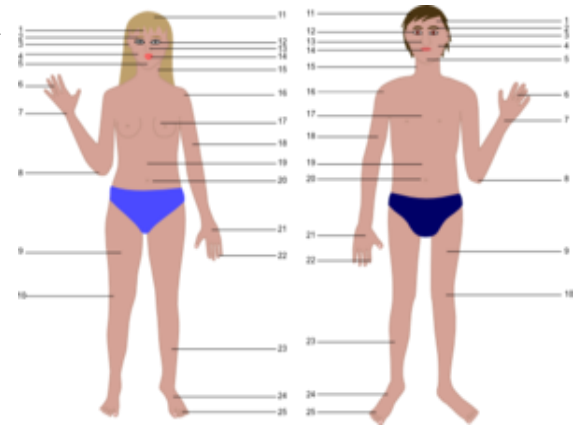
What is sexual abuse

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

**Angry**



**Glad outside,  
Sad inside**



**Worried and scared**



**Thin bad  
about oneself**



**Difficulty sleeping,  
nightmares**



**Difficulty concentrating**



# Before, during, today, in the future

