

MadeToBelong

**Becoming a Trauma Sensitive
& Engaged Faith Community**

Course Syllabus



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Created by America's Kids Belong

Course Title:

Made to Belong: Becoming a Trauma-Sensitive and Engaged Congregation

Course Description:

Communities of Faith have a great opportunity to provide hope and healing to those impacted by trauma, grief & loss, especially in the areas of foster care and adoption. They can also do harm if they have unrealistic expectations of those affected by trauma and loss.

In this **6.5 Hours** of training across **11 modules**, participants learn what the Bible and science teach us about:

- How all humans are made to belong
- How trauma, toxic stress, loss, abuse and neglect impact human development
- How to create environments and interactions that foster healing
- How the language we use surrounding foster care and adoption matters
- How to meet needs so as to impact behavior
- How to build resilience and hope for the future

Made to Belong is brought to you by America's Kids Belong, a national organization activating government, business, and faith leaders to end the crisis for kids in foster care.

Course Trainers:

Lindy Green Johnson:

Lindy Johnson is the Trauma Trainer and Director of Organizational Health for America's Kids Belong. She also serves as an Associate Clinical Social Worker at The Paved Road, Individual and Family Therapy in Newport Beach, California. She is an adoptive sister and aunt, which fuels her passion to see the church mobilized to solve the crisis for kids in foster care. She has served full time for orphan care related programs as a case worker in foster care and adoption agencies, with the Saddleback Church Orphan Care team, private practice, and national non-profits. In addition, she is a practitioner of Trust Based Relational Interventions and certified in National Adoption Mental Health Competency.

Krista Petty:

Krista is the Faith Sphere Manager for America's Kids Belong and foster and adoptive mom. Over the past 20 years, she has worked with faith leaders, equipping them to more compassionately and effectively serve the elderly, homeless, impoverished and now those impacted by foster care and adoption. She has worked for Leadership Network, Group Publishing and a number of nonprofit ministries and churches. She is certified in Results-Based Conversations Facilitation and Strategic Planning, Mental Health First Aid, and a frequent presenter for faith communities on Best Practices for Equipping Volunteers in Ministry.

Specific Topics & Resources Used:

Module 1: We Are Made to Belong

In this module, learn what it means to be a Trauma-Informed & Engaged Faith Community and why the church has such an important role to play in healing families and children impacted by foster care and adoption.

- The 6R's of Being Trauma Informed (From SAMHSA and AKB)
- Why the Church & Foster Care
- What is hurt in relationship is healed in relationship
- How Brains are Built, by Alberta Family Wellness

Articles & Videos Referenced:

- Why the Church Video with Dr. Deb Shropshire America's Kids Belong Vimeo Channel <https://vimeo.com/392521286>
- How Brains are Built: The Core Story of Brain Development <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LmVWOe1ky8s>

Module 2: Hurt by Trauma & Toxic Stress. Healed by Understanding.

Learn how our bodies were designed by God to experience stress and to be calmed down following stress. You'll also gain an understanding of how Adverse Childhood Experiences can have long-term effects on the brain and body and how a faith community can be helpful, not hurtful.

- Defining Trauma & Toxic Stress and it's impact
- The ACES
- Neglect vs Abuse
- What Trauma looks like from National Child Traumatic Stress Institute

Articles & Videos Referenced:

- ACES with Dr. Deb Shropshire America's Kids Belong Vimeo Channel <https://vimeo.com/392521241>
- ACES & Toxic Stress FAQ from the Harvard Center on the Developing Child <https://developingchild.harvard.edu/resources/aces-and-toxic-stress-frequently-askedquestions/>
- Finding Your ACE Score from Acestohigh.com <https://acestohigh.com/got-your-acescore/>
- Still Face Experiment University of Massachusetts

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=apzXGEbZhto>

- Toxic Stress Derails Healthy Development <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rVwFkcOZHJw>

Module 3: Hurt by Grief & Loss. Healed by Yes.

Children and teens involved in foster care and adoption have experienced many layers of loss. But, children and teens often express grief and loss differently than adults. Learn how to walk alongside them in processing layers of loss in healthy ways.

- Layers of Loss
- Healthy & Unhealthy Ways to Express/Process Grief
- Finding Ways to Say Yes
- Tending to Your Own Grief and Loss

Articles & Videos Referenced:

- Children and unresolved grief, Signs and treatment, Shanna's Story, By Jayne Cotter-Katharoon, Adoptive Families Association of BC
<https://www.bcadoption.com/resources/articles/children-and-unresolved-grief-signs-and-treatment>

Module 4: Hurt by Neglect or Abuse. Healed through Attachment.

God designed people to be in relationship with Him and one another. Our brains and bodies depend on secure attachments to grow and develop properly. Learn about Attachment Styles, what happens when secure attachment is lacking, and how to build environments and interactions that promote healthy attachments between children, teens and their families and caregivers.

- Attachment Theory & Attachment Styles
- Supporting Parental/Caregiver Attachments in Faith Settings
- Attachment in Teens

Articles & Videos Referenced:

- Peppa Pig Weebles Wobble but They Don't Fall Down
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WsFt_jD4Cms
- How We Love By Milan and Kay Yerkovich & the Love Style Quiz
<https://howwelove.com/love-styles>

Module 5: Hurt in Development. Healed in Play.

In this module, learn about the Eight Stages of Development and what can happen when development is interrupted by traumatic experiences. Also gain an understanding of common triggers for children and teens in foster care and adoption situations and how to build environments that promote healing and offer felt safety.

- Child Development- Erikson's 8 Stages
- Survival Skills of Child from Hard Places
- Chronological Age vs Emotional Age

- Brain Development, Executive Functioning & Regulation
- Creating Felt Safety, Routines & Adjusting Expectations
- Questions for Self-Reflection on Attachment

Articles & Videos Referenced:

- 8 Stages of Development by Erik Erikson, produced by Sprouts <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aYCBdZLCDBQ>
- Experiences Build Brain Architecture <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VNNsNglJkws&t=1s>
- Fuller Youth Institute <https://fulleryouthinstitute.org/>

Module 6: Hurt in the Body & By Triggers. Healed by Needs Met.

God created us as multi-sensory beings. What happens when the body is triggered and how can we respond? In this module, learn about common sensory needs in children and teens and how to create environments that address common triggers for kids in foster care.

- Sensory Needs
- Understanding Triggers
- Helping a Child Regulate

Article & Videos Referenced:

- Understanding Sensory Processing - Karyn Purvis, Empowered to Connect <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v79-x34dEm0>
- A Sensory World with Kranowitz & Purvis, Karyn Purvis Institute of Child Development <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kGuHwXDoX8M>

Module 7: Understanding Their World- Adoption.

Adoption is a beautiful reflection of the gospel, but no adoption comes without loss. In this module, we will see the unique dynamics within the story of adoption, how we can be mindful of them as we walk alongside families, and how we can intentionally create a healthy adoption culture within the church.

- Appropriate Adoption & Foster Care Language
- 7 Core Issues of Adoption
- Understanding Adoptive Parents and Birth Parents
- Disputations & Dissolutions
- Creating a Healthy Adoption/Foster Church Culture

Articles & Videos Referenced:

- Foster/Adopt Parent Survey, Foster/Adoption Language - Found at faith.Amkidsbelong.org
- Creating a Healthy Adoption Culture in Your Church - Karyn Purvis, Empowered to Connect <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=meMLiY6cydw>

Module 8: Understanding Their World- Foster Care

In this lesson, look at James 1:27 from a new perspective and learn about the realities of foster care: what causes children to be removed, what reunification looks like, and what foster parent life is like. How can the church wrap around children and families to offer grace and hope?

- Statistics in Foster Care
- Why Children Enter Foster Care
- Case Goals in Foster Care: The Importance of Reunification
- Ways to Wrap Around Foster Families

Articles & Videos Referenced:

- What does James 1:27 mean? With Jason Johnson, from Jason Johnson Blog
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bjGR6NqouXA>
- AFCARS Report from Children's Bureau
<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/research-data-technology/statistics-research/afcars>
- Wrap Around Ministry - Found at faith.Amkidsbelong.org

Module 9: Ask Better Questions. Gain Deeper Healing.

How can we connect with kids physically, emotionally, and playfully to bring about healing and the fruit of joy? We discuss safe touch, modeling empathy and the importance of play in learning and healing.

- Ways to Connect Physically
- Ways to Connect Emotionally
- Ways to Connect Playfully

Articles & Videos Referenced:

- Connecting to Calm Dr. Dan Siegel, from Dalai Lama Center for Peace and Education
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aV3hp_eaoiE
- Gifts: Give Children Playfulness with Dr. Karyn Purvis, Empowered to Connect
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3OzJBi_xLKc
- Theraplay Institute <https://theraplay.org>

Module 10: How Can I Correct?

Children impacted by foster care and adoption have often developed survival strategies that can appear as negative behaviors. In this lesson, you'll get a picture of what these survival strategies can look like and how to correct behaviors in grace-filled, connected and effective ways.

- Recognizing a Child's Survival Strategies
- Behavior is Communication
- Correcting Behaviors
- Meeting Biological, Emotional, Cognitive, & Social Needs

Articles & Videos Referenced:

- No Drama Discipline, Dr. Dan Seigel & Tina Payne Bryson
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XWGaENBneE8>
- Behavior is Communication graphic – (Iceberg) MEHRIT Centre
http://northstarpaths.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/IMG_1158-1.jpg
- Reframe The Behavior (Can't vs Won't graphic with Ross Greene)
<http://northstarpaths.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Reframe-Behaviour-Growth-Mindset-Edition.jpg>
- Emotions Chart
<https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/Character-Emotions-Charts-FREE-2370313>

Module 11: How Can We Build Resilience?

While the Bible does not use the word resilience, the willingness to overcome difficulties rather than avoid them is certainly a theme throughout. In this lesson, discover the science of resilience and how faith leaders can help improve the “hope score” of a child or teen from a hard place. Moses certainly rebounded from a difficult childhood and we can help children and teens impacted by foster care and adoption to claim their purpose, too!

- Resilience Building
- The Science of Resilience
- Hope Score

Articles & Videos Referenced:

- The Science of Resilience by The Center of the Developing Child Harvard University
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1r8hj72bfGo&t=13s>
- Resilience and Hope with Dr. Deb Shropshire, America's Kids Belong <https://vimeo.com/392521123>
- No Barriers Bounce Program <https://www.nobarriersleadership.com/bounce>