

The National Institute for Trauma and Loss in Children

Home TLC NDK Glasswing Contact Us

The TLC Practitioner

With William Steele, PsyD, MSW

Edited by Roger Klein, PsyD and Mary McHenry, MSW

Welcome to the May 2010 edition of *The TLC Practitioner*, a monthly eNews publication from The National Institute for Trauma and Loss in Children. We welcome your comments, questions and contributions. Email us at steele@tlicinst.org. Click on a link below to read more!



[A Note From the Editors](#)



[TLC's Plans and Pursuits](#)



[TLC Updates](#)



[TLC Assembly](#)



[Flash Point](#)



[What Do You Think?](#)



[What Makes Sense?](#)

From the Editors



A Note from Mary and Roger

We have been privileged to work with Bill Steele, Cae Kuban and the incredible staff of TLC for over ten years. As faculty members, we have also had the opportunity to meet and work with many of you; the folks who continue to provide critical trauma care and clinical expertise to the children, youth and families you work with daily. *The TLC Practitioner*

will provide a forum for sharing knowledge, experiences and staying connected in our quest to ensure those who are traumatized receive the best intervention possible. TLC intervention models have evolved as a result of you utilizing the strategies and providing ongoing feedback on their effectiveness. This eNews publication is just another way TLC is reaching out and maintaining our vital connections with you. We look forward to participating in this new venture and look forward to hearing from you!

Mary McHenry and Roger Klein

[back to top](#)

TLC Plans and Pursuits



Bill Steele

I want to thank the hundreds of you who so generously took time to write formal support letters for our projects. As many of you know, our two major grant proposals to the House Appropriations Committee have past all hurdles and are ready for final review and hopefully acceptance. The following are awaiting decisions:

Trauma Sensitive Schools: Community Collaborations

If accepted, this school proposal will allow the financial support to develop, establish and research outcomes the impact school-based trauma-informed practices have on at-risk middle school students in one Ohio school district.

TLC Certified Referral Network for Military Families and Their Children

Our military proposal for Michigan will, if accepted, actually allow us to bring together experienced professionals working off-base with children of deployed parents to identify best practices and then develop these into a manualized program to support a new TLC Certification Training Program for professionals working with military families off-base and create a formal national referral network specifically for military.

Working Through A Culturally Competent and Trauma Informed Lens

In addition we submitted, again with your help, a wonderful collaborative project to host a four-day conference focusing on culturally trauma informed competent practices. If accepted, we will be able to use a wonderful collaborative involving but not limited to Native American, Arabic, Muslim, Asian and African American communities. Our intent is to translate these resources into "attachments" or revisions of TLC materials.

The real value in putting these proposals together has been the connections we have made with many of you and the tremendous experience and expertise you bring to these projects. Thank you again.

Podcasts, Webinars and Supervision

For the past several months, we have been working on establishing the technology to bring you podcasts and video conferencing segments. We hope to have those up and running by September of this year. We intend to interview the many professionals we meet across the country to bring you what they have found to be best practices. Many of you have asked about supervision. Video conferencing/webinar provides a "live feed" format we are quite excited about providing, especially from a supervisory perspective. Having the kind of technology we would really like is not only costly but certainly dictates having an experienced IT position available to us. Our parent organization, Starr Commonwealth, will be completing a major market analysis and strategic plan involving a number of operations, especially the use of a technology to deliver service, education and training.

[back to top](#)

Childhood Practitioner's Assembly



Time to Register

Register by June 11th to SAVE!
CEUs available

TLC Members \$125/day
Non-Members \$140/day
Full-Time Student \$95/day

The theme for this year's Childhood Trauma Practitioner's Assembly is: **Supporting Children of Deployed Parents: Lessons Learned—Helpful Strategies.**

This four-day conference, July 13-16, 2010 at Macomb ISD Education Center, will focus on providing practitioners with a variety of practical strategies.

For those who work with military families we are offering 3-hour workshops such as:

- Adjustments: The Return Home
- Cycles of Deployment
- Club USA: Helping Children and Families with Multiple Deployments
- **AND MORE!**

For those who don't work with military families you can attend Level-1 and Level-2 TLC Certification courses, as well as 3-hour workshops on various trauma and loss subjects such as:

- Domestic Sex Trafficking of Minors
- Project Live: School Mental Health Program
- Using Music and Play with Traumatized Infants and Toddlers
- **AND MORE!**

Call TLC toll-free at 877-306-5256 or [click here to learn more.](#)

[back to top](#)

TLC Updates



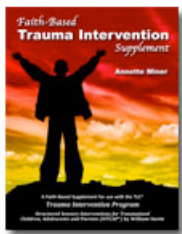
NEW! Teen Empowerment

NEW PROGRAM! *Teen Empowerment Program* is a *SITCAP*® group program designed for adolescents who have been exposed to domestic violence. It includes 12 sessions with additional individual and specialized sessions if needed (sexual assault, debriefing, parental involvement, and more). Sessions use music, journaling, activities and worksheets. A workbook is included that contains specific information for safety planning. This valuable resource can be used in both school and agency settings. This program is the result of over a decade of experience with domestic violence survivors and is grounded in TLC's sensory based intervention processes. Adapted from *Structured Sensory Interventions for Traumatized Children, Adolescents and Parents: At-Risk Adjudicated Treatment Program (SITCAP-ART)*.

Written by [Kelly Warner](#)

Call TLC toll-free at 877-306-5256 or [click here to order online.](#)

[back to top](#)



NEW! Faith-Based Intervention

NEW SUPPLEMENT! *Faith-Based Trauma Intervention Program Supplement* is designed to be used in conjunction with TLC's *Trauma Intervention Program for Children and Adolescents*.

There is an additional complex dynamic of the trauma experience that happens when a person of faith is met with tragedy. They not only have to deal with the normal areas that are identified through the *SITCAP*® model, but they also have to come to grips with what they believe happened to them from a spiritual perspective. In other words, they not only have to deal with their pain, and loss, but they also have to work through what they believe God's role is in their tragedy. Underlying distorted beliefs about God tend to emerge, which add to the pain and sometimes even worsen the terror that is being experienced which often compounds/complicates the trauma intervention process. This supplement will help with working through these distorted beliefs by engaging sensory activities designed to help individuals experience different perspectives.

Written by [Annette Miner](#)

Call TLC toll-free at 877-306-5256 or [click here to order online.](#)

[back to top](#)



NEW! Trauma-Informed Assessment and Practice

NEW ONLINE COURSE! This online course sets the framework and support for using trauma-informed and strength-based assessments to determine trauma-informed treatment planning. It provides case examples, research and how assessment outcomes are applied to treatment planning and intervention. It supports the concept of trauma as a series of experiences through developmental periods that result in symptoms/criteria that can be applied to multiple diagnostic categories beyond the narrow descriptors of the current PTSD category. It addresses and supports the Developmental Trauma Disorder (DTD) category proposed in 2009 by Bessel van der Kolk, Robert Pynoos and other practitioners. The focus of this course is on children and adolescents six through eighteen years of age.

Instructor [William Steele](#)

Call TLC toll-free at 877-306-5256 or [click here to order online.](#)

[back to top](#)



NEW! Confronting Death in the School Family

NEW ONLINE COURSE! This online course is based on the belief that the people best equipped to deal with a tragedy in the school are the school's very own teachers, counselors, administrators and staff. When tragedy strikes a school family, many school administrators look upon the incident as a "guidance department issue." I strongly disagree. I see this and hope you will also see this "as a school family issue." In excess of 80% of thousands of students I have spoke with in over 30 states report the person they most wish to speak to at school following a tragedy is their classroom teacher. They also state that their greatest need immediately following a tragedy is for comfort instead of counseling. The counselors do have a very important function (which will be explored in this course) and that function is to counsel after the comfort and diffusing activities have taken place in the classroom. This protocol is in line with recent brain research stating that a quality sensory connection (comfort) must be in place before a quality cognitive connection (counseling) can occur.

Instructor [Dave Opalewski](#)

Call TLC toll-free at 877-306-5256 or [click here to order online.](#)

[back to top](#)



NEW! Ethics of Art and Play Therapy with Traumatized Children

NEW ONLINE COURSE! This course covers the major ethical issues of using art and play therapy in trauma intervention with children. Topics include professional practice codes in art therapy and play therapy; ethics of touch in play therapy; confidentiality and retention of children's art expressions; unique dilemmas of using art and play therapy in disaster relief; children's drawings as admissible evidence in child abuse cases; and ethically and culturally sensitive art therapy with children. All readings are included; course materials and objectives are complemented by quizzes, short response papers, films, links to valuable resources, downloadable documents, and hands-on activities.

If you are a professional who needs the mandatory 6 continuing education credits for license or certification renewal, you'll find this course both practical and enjoyable. For art and play therapists, this course will provide a refresher on professional practice and specific skills in the area of traumatized children. For counselors, marriage and family therapists, social workers, nurses, and psychologists, you'll upgrade your understanding of the ethical application of art and play in your work with traumatized children.

Instructor [Cathy Malchiodi](#)

Call TLC toll-free at 877-306-5256 or [click here to order online.](#)

[back to top](#)



Trauma & Children

TLC BLOG! If you haven't checked out TLC's Blog, it is time to do so. Dr. Malchiodi, who writes the Blog for TLC, has an amazing ability to take us into the many facets of trauma and healing in less than five minutes of reading. This is a regular feature that will give you a wonderful overview of the many creative ways others are helping and being helped. And the links provided are invaluable resources. [Click here to read the current post.](#)

[back to top](#)

Flash Point!

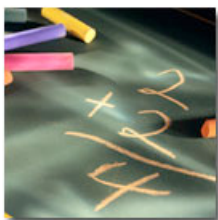
Raising a New Generation of Children



www.freep.com 4/25/10, Sunday Detroit Free Press, Sunday Comics

[back to top](#)

What Makes Sense?



Sensory Intervention By Bill Steele

In this first of many commentaries to come, let me answer a question so many have asked over the years – “How did you happen to develop your ‘sensory intervention’ approach to helping traumatized children?”

Many years ago, struggling with a number of personal issues that had

become quite overwhelming, I found my way into individual and group psychotherapy. For a number of years, I continued, fortunately, with the same psychotherapist. She was not only quite good but open to using different interventions when we seemed to be 'stuck' or unable to make sense of what was driving me to repeat behaviors that were quite self-defeating.

In those days, psychotherapy was primarily talk therapy which required the ability to retrieve and describe early experiences as well as identify current feelings. It also required the ability to arrive at insight as a way to resolve issues and move forward. At times, this was doable. However, the turning point in my personal healing journey was not the result of these cognitive processes. In fact, I had reached a point where talking, listening, trying to figure out the 'whys' of my troubles was not only going nowhere but leaving me more frustrated, feeling as if things would never really change.

I do believe in some 'divine serendipity' because had my therapist herself not been curious to explore other interventions, I know TLC would not exist today. In her constant search and endeavor to be the best practitioner she could be, she came across Dr. Alexander Lowen. Dr. Lowen, like so many others, began his career using Freudian theories but like others, found that trying to help some people heal through language alone, simply was not helping and in fact hurting by creating a sense of futility and helplessness. He discovered back in the 1950's what neuroscience now documents – the body remembers trauma. Dr. Lowen was the founding Director of the Institute for Bio-Energetic Analysis in New York. His system of bio-energetics was a syntheses of biological and psychological practices and exercise that helped restore balance between feeling and thinking. Bessel vanderKolk, Peter Levine, Bruce Perry are the Dr. Lowen's of today.

It took considerable time, but the earlier years of therapy allowed me to come to trust my therapist so when she asked if I would be willing to try something new to see if it would release the trauma-related energies trapped in my body and keeping me in a defensive survival mode, I agreed. I did feel safe with her and that sense of safety allowed me to 'go places' that were previously too terrifying, too overwhelming, too hidden to see.

So the new journey began with a series of bio-energetic body activities. There was no talk during these body movements and postures that released emotions of a depth and intensity I never knew existed. Those experiences brought the kind of relief and meaning words would never adequately describe.

Now it must be said that these body activities were always my choice. There were times when I said "no" because I was not ready, perhaps even scared, to feel more at times. My choice was always respected, sometimes encouraged but never challenged or pushed.

To this date some thirty years later, I can explicitly recall in detail those body activities and what I learned from them. Words did make a difference at times but, I cannot honestly remember phrases or specific words that stand out with any certainty; that 'body work' is as vivid as ever.

As an aside, my psychotherapist actually brought Dr. Lowen to one of our sessions to assist. He was a remarkable individual whose time with me was golden. The healing, the renewed energy, the healthier, more empowering view of myself after that accelerated tremendously, all because my psychotherapist abandoned traditional, explicit cognitive strategies and taught me how to use my body as a resource as well as a source to maintain a balanced emotional well being.

I began working with traumatized children in the early 1980's first with potentially suicidal youngsters and then from the mid 1980's with children exposed to all forms of violence. Unfortunately, working in Detroit led to a

great deal of exposure to kids traumatized by violence. Working with kids and their bodies, at least in the systems I worked in, was taboo in those days. Even today many of our child care facilities and agencies simply do not support the kind of trauma-informed care that recognizes the value and need for inclusion of sensory-based activities in the healing process. Talking alone simply was not helping many of these kids. The challenge for me then was to find an acceptable way to have kids get their bodies involved in the intervention process as well as provide practitioners a structured process they could feel safe using and learn with limited training.

In the late 1980's Dr. Robert Pynoos at UCLA had developed a one-session interview process with children exposed to violence. As part of the process he asked children to draw a picture of what happened. He had fairly good success with this process however it was never further developed as a specific intervention process. Because it did make sense to me as a partial solution for engaging the body into the healing process, it made sense to further explore its potential.

Initially I took Dr. Pynoos' model and given my personal experiences and experience with so many victims, adjusted his format, added drawing activities and then field tested this process over seven counties with 150 professionals in 58 agencies and schools. The outcomes were so strong I was convinced that if we were to be more helpful to youngsters we needed to develop a series of structured sensory activities to deal with the many ways trauma is experienced. At TLC we now refer to these as the major themes or experiences of trauma. Over the next five years, these activities were developed into a structured format to provide safety for all involved. Actually we are continually developing these activities as we continue to learn from our experiences.

What makes sense? My only expertise was with my own personal healing experiences. I certainly knew that although what worked for me, would not work for everyone, most were not even being given the opportunity I was given to discover myself, not through language nor my cognitive brain, but through my body and all those visual, sensory memories stored in my deep, mid brain.

Creating a very structured process made sense to me because my own therapist always prepared me, always respected my choice in response to her suggestions. Drawing certainly made sense to me because I had far more visual memories than cognitive memories. And although I had not done any drawing in my own healing process, I sensed that being able to recreate those visual memories on paper would capture what words, talk could not. I knew that the reality of the content of these visual memories did not matter; they drove my behavior, my reactions to others, my inability to process information when really frightened. When the visuals changed all that changed. It only made sense that if, we could see what other traumatized children were seeing and then help them change those visual and sensory memories, their behaviors too would change. My experiences with children, teens and parents exposed to so much violence also contributed to creating activities for what are now the major themes TLC focuses on in its intervention.

Finally what makes sense is that talking may encourage and guide us to want to change but it is what we experience in our effort to change that actually reshapes, reframes, changes our behaviors and our thoughts – not talk. And so TLC sensory interventions evolved from, not only my personal experience but, from the experiences of the hundreds of professionals who were so gracious to field test the process and allow their experiences to shape the intervention processes we use today. And as you know, these processes have undergone a number of research efforts now published in professional journals.

Do feel free to comment and/or contact TLC if you have any questions at steele@tlcinst.org

[back to top](#)

What Do You Think?



Debriefing... Dangerous or Not?

The past several months, a number of callers have requested our response to articles discussing the dangers of debriefing. Our response has been posted on the website but in case you missed it [click here to download](#).

What do YOU think? Send us your thoughts and comments on the form below to let us know!

What do you think?

Your Name *

Your Email *

What do you think? *

To prevent spam, please answer the simple math question below.

2 + 2 =

Submit

* = Required Field

[back to top](#)

- TLC website <http://www.starrtraining.org/tlc>
- TLC blog: <http://tlcinstitute.wordpress.com>
- TLC Youtube: <http://www.youtube.com/tlcinstitute>
- TLC twitter: <http://twitter.com/TLCchildtrauma>
- TLC facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/The-National-Institute-for-Trauma-and-Loss-in-Children/137750291707>



Founded in 1913, [Starr Commonwealth](#) is



[Montcalm Schools](#) is a Private Therapeutic



The National Institute for Trauma and Loss

an internationally recognized non-profit children's charity

Treatment Program offering a broad spectrum of real-world solutions for families with struggling teens. Montcalm Schools is a private program of Starr

in Children is a nonprofit program of the Starr Commonwealth Institute for Training.

[The National Institute for Trauma and Loss for Children](#)
[No Disposable Kids](#)
[Glasswing](#)