Module 3: Generally Accepted Truths about the Psychological Effects of Trauma
Generally Accepted Truths

- Children’s responses to stressful conditions are often less intense than might be anticipated.

- There is a non-specific relationship between specific trauma exposure and psychological consequences.
Generally Accepted Truths

- Parental symptoms and poor parental functioning predict posttraumatic stress symptomatology in children.
Generally Accepted Truths

- There is commonality of psychological responses to trauma exposure, irregardless of the specific trauma, manifested by a spectrum of internalizing and externalizing behaviors.
Generally Accepted Truths

**Exposure** to a traumatic stressor may be the direct result of immediate physical impact, visual or media exposure or through various forms of interpersonal experiences.

**Combined forms** of exposures increases the risk.
Generally Accepted Truths

Predisaster and post disaster variables have value in predicting chronicity.
Generally Accepted Truths

- The *psychological response* to a trauma varies with *age* and *cognitive development*.

- The *psychological response* to a traumatic situation may be *delayed* and actually increase over time.
Generally Accepted Truths

A “distant trauma”, vis-à-vis media exposure increases the risk of PTSS.
Generally Accepted Truths

- PTSD has limited applicability as a paradigm for understanding the psychological response to overwhelming stressors.

- Trauma invariably impacts not just the individual but also the family and social system within which one lives.
Generally Accepted Truths

The individual’s *subjective experience* at the time of exposure to the traumatic situation (i.e. *peritraumatic psychological responses*) are also powerful *predictors* of enduring *psychological morbidity*.
Generally Accepted Truths

- The child’s subjective appraisal of the traumatic situation is a strong predictor of psychological response.
- Being physically injured or having a family member injured or killed increases the risk of PTSD.
Generally Accepted Truths

- The lifetime prevalence of exposure to traumatic situations is greater in males but upon exposure females are at greater risk for PTSD.