The “Take Away” Sheet – A listening guide:

1. Why is “Trauma Education” necessary in my line of work as a GAL?

2. Describe Trauma? Trauma with a little “t” – and with a BIG “T.”

3. What does Trauma impact? Psychological? Physiological?

4. The 3 big areas in your attorney-client relationship affected by trauma?

5. The 3 MYTHS of child trauma?
   A. Little kids don’t remember, do they?
   B. Moving the child away from the trauma and my work is done?
   C. Little children should not go to therapy, it would only make “it” worse.
   D. Really…. All my client needs is a good LOVING home, right?

6. BUILDING a relationship with your client – Some Resources:

   A. Suggested Reading from the New York Courts:  *Attorneys For Children Guide to Interviewing Clients: Integrating Trauma Informed Care and Solution Focused Strategies* (Great examples of questions to ask)  


7. Nuts and Bolts of Client Relationship with Child of Trauma – It’s not about you!
   A. Impaired Sense of Safety
   C. Control of Emotions
   D. “Trust Me, I’m a Lawyer”…. And other trust issues.
8. COMMUNICATING with the traumatized child:
   A. What NOT to say in first meeting the child!
   B. Expecting chronological age vs. the emotional age of your client
   C. They don’t process info like other kids – focus on survival!
   D. Inability to express self – vs. your ability to put words in their mouth.
      a. Sequential memory?
      b. Cause and effect thinking?
      c. Smooth narratives?
      d. The power of family secrets?
   E. The trauma history (when to leave it to the counselor).
   F. Decision Making issues

9. What YOU can do to make for better a relationship with client:
   A. Developing POSITIVE relationship (“You have a team on your side now.”)
   B. No exact formula for you to follow, but DON’T MAKE IT WORSE.
   C. Be TRANSPARENT in appropriate terms
   D. PREDICTABILITY is BIG… preview court decisions, actions, why they are needed sometimes and not others. Avoid unexpected changes. Create Routines.
   E. Give client a VOICE in the case.
   F. FOLLOW THROUGH on what you say you will do. Breaking promises, even minor breaks in trust are not acceptable.
   G. AN TICIPATE issues – triggers.
   H. PATIENCE when there are bumps in the road.

10. NOT all treatment is created equal.
    A. Insisting on proper credentials. Do you have the right as GAL to ask for an order setting minimum qualifications of your child’s therapist?
    B. Difference in levels of training – all things being equal, a more seasoned licensed professional therapist will have a more favorable outcome.
    C. Questioning the therapists background or the facility’s expertise in my particular client’s area of need?
    D. When to visit facilities…what to expect in their reports… conferences with the child’s case therapist.

11. Always be a STUDENT! Use cases with unusual twists as a paid opportunity to learn. Ask, ask, ask.

12. Sharing your success stories / Learning from your failures.

Questions:  Bob Noone  
P O Box 1050   P O box 2425  
Logan, WV 25601  Gadsden, AL  35903  
304-784-8818  
Bob@BobNoone.com