“They Just Don’t Get It”: The Prevalence of Learning Problems and Developmental Delays in Children and Juveniles with Sexual Behavior Problems

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Research has shown that a history of trauma and other types of adverse experiences has a notable impact on neurodevelopment and can lead to a range of learning and processing problems. These difficulties are often at the root of many of the self-regulation, attention, and behavioral difficulties exhibited by our clients. However, despite clear evidence that children and adolescents who are involved with the social service and the juvenile justice systems exhibit significantly higher rates of learning difficulties than the general population we often fail to adapt our assessment and treatment protocols in ways that could more effectively serve these individuals and their families.

This workshop will discuss the research that integrates trauma, attachment, learning difficulties and behavioral problems and examine the implications that these findings have for assessment and treatment.

**Learning Goals and Objectives:**

- Examine the neurodevelopmental research that explores the impact of trauma and attachment difficulties on learning and processing problems.
- Discuss what the research indicates about the problems our clients experience in emotional and behavioral regulation, adaptive problem solving, and positive social relationships.
- To learn how to apply this research in adapting assessment protocols.
- Examine treatment interventions that take into consideration the different ways clients process, learn, and remember information.
- Examine the ramifications that learning problems can present for future risk as well as the development of healthy sexuality.
- Discuss ways to inform effective systemic interventions for youth with learning difficulties.