

A terrified little boy

A Case of Simple Trauma with a Positive Attachment Background

Presenting Problem: This child is 8 years old. He was referred because of specific fears and anxiety that began after seeing on television a rerun of an incident which occurred years ago during the Munich Olympics when the Israeli delegation was attacked by terrorists. Participants were killed and badly injured. Since then he has been unable to sleep in his bed at night. He wakes and must be taken to his parents' bed. In addition he has trouble leaving the house to visit friends or take part in his usual activities.

Background: This is a child with normal development, from a well functioning family with three healthy children. Both his parents are understanding and generally attentive to the children's needs. They live in a quiet village in the center of the country. Until the traumatic event occurred he had enjoyed being in 2nd grade, playing with friends, good relations with his siblings.

There were two factors which it was important to note: first, the grandmother was a holocaust survivor whose story is part of the family experience, and secondly the father had been a career army officer who had recently retired and was now looking for other work. The little boy had always looked on the father and his position in the army as the symbol of the force that protected the borders. His retirement came around the time of the traumatic event.

Resources: High intelligence; good social skills; strong, secure attachment to both parents;