

# Intergenerational transmission of maltreatment

Latest research: Approximately 30% of parents who maltreat their children have histories of their own maltreatment

(Kim, 2009)

# Drug Addiction

- 50 – 80% of children who come into foster care have parents with active substance abuse problems

- Lack of Parenting Knowledge and Skills

Moving from “Why” to  
“What Happened to  
you ?”

# New Research: The Trauma Factor

- Trauma symptoms mediate the relationship between childhood experiences of physical abuse and parent perpetration of physical abuse (Millner et al., 2010).

- Parent trauma symptoms account for 90% of the association between a parental history of child physical abuse and current parent risk to abuse their children in the USN sample;  
79% in the college sample  
(Millner et al., 2010)

Among parents who were physically abused as children, individuals high in “ Avoidance of Past Traumas” were at heightened risk of physically abusing their own children relative to those low in Avoidance.

This suggests that individuals who have more thoroughly processed their childhood abuse may have reduced risk of continuing the cycle of violence.



# Trauma robs relatedness

- Our parents can learn new parenting skills that translate into “activities,” but the parent’s ability to relate, nurture, and empathize, which are foundations of parenting, are often absent or impaired

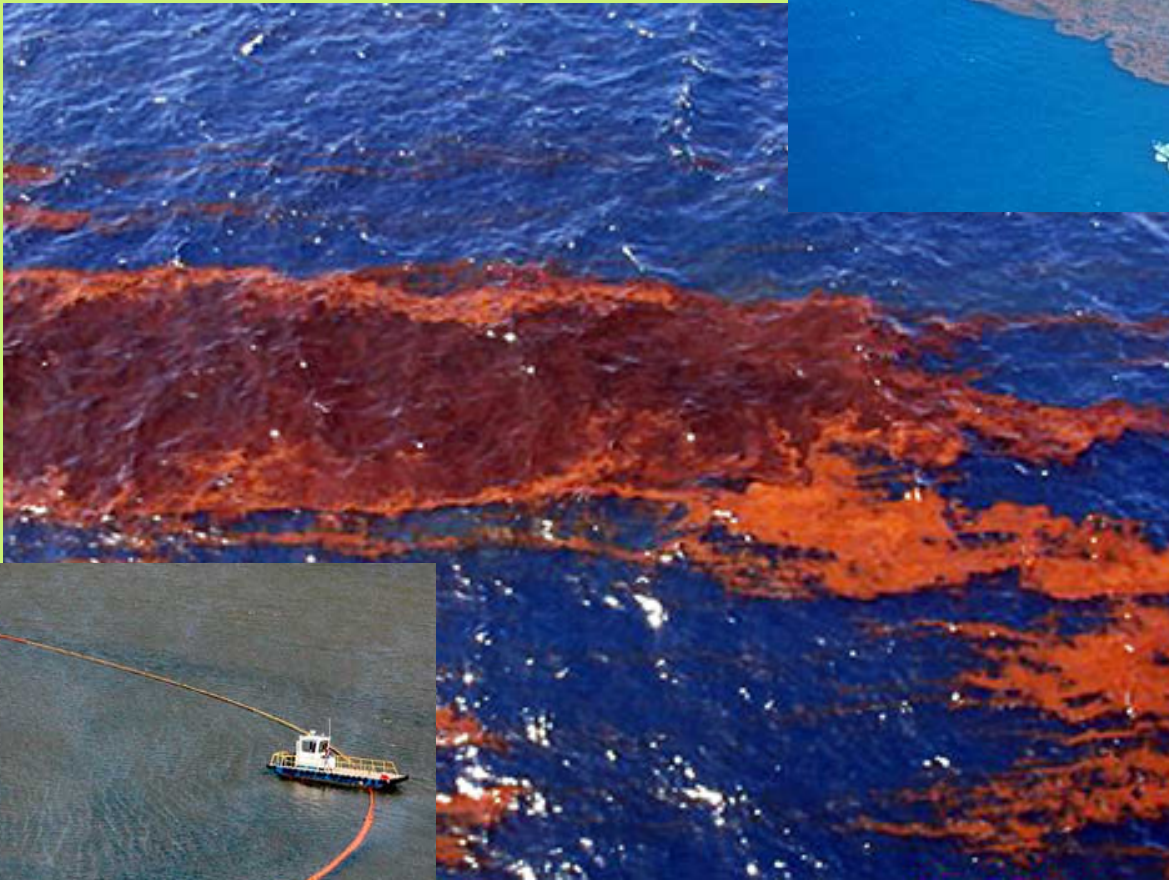
# Trauma and Substance Abuse

- High Correlation between Trauma and Substance Abuse
- Substance abuse can be understood as *“hijacking”* of the parental capacity to invest in parenting (Suchman, 2007)

- Without relatedness with their children, parents risk of further maltreatment is extremely high due to:
  - Internalizing child's behaviors as personal
  - Low frustration tolerance
  - Lack of empathy







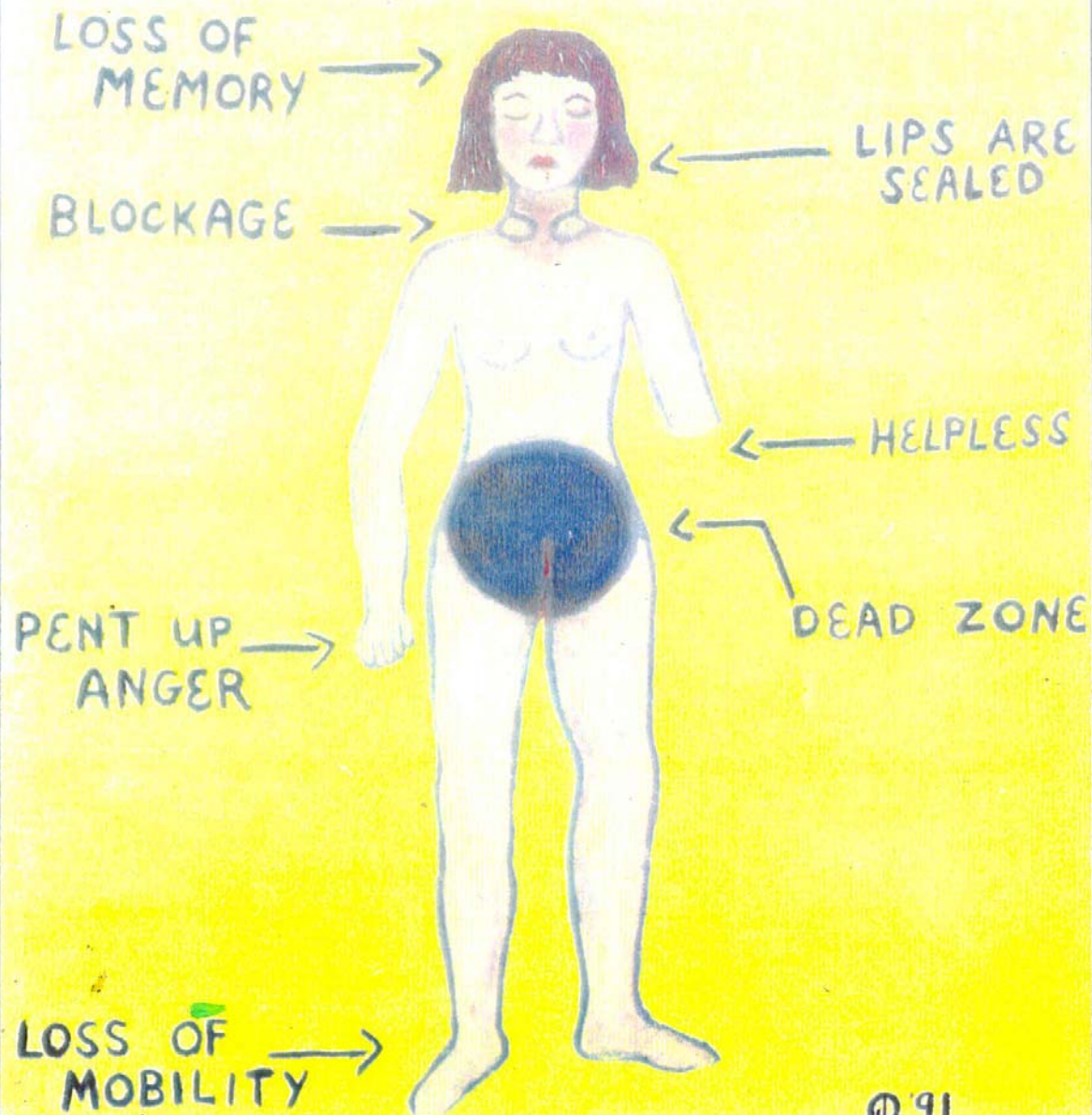




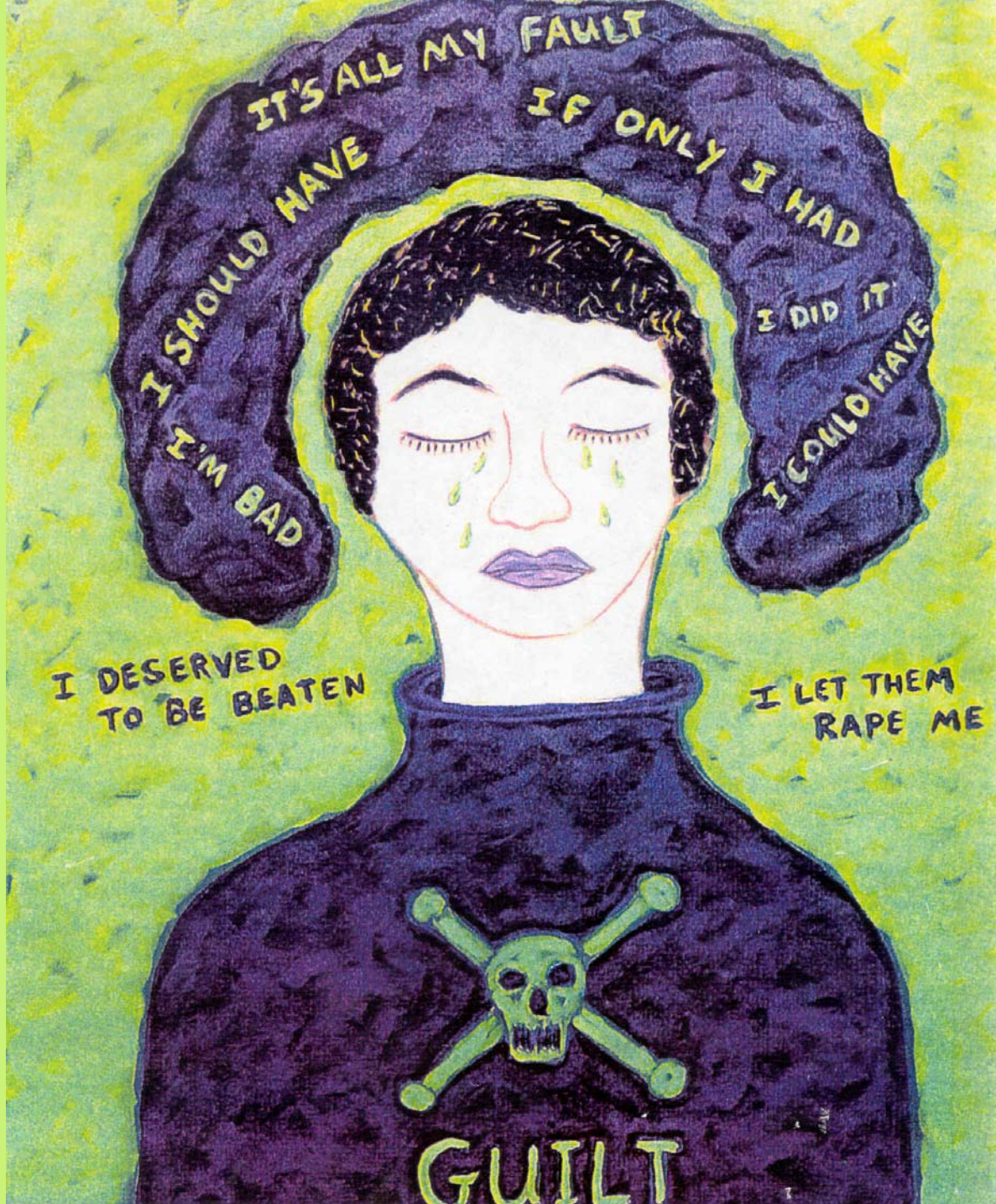




# SYMPTOMS OF CHILD ABUSE







IT'S ALL MY FAULT

I SHOULD HAVE

IF ONLY I HAD

I DID IT  
I COULD HAVE

I'M BAD

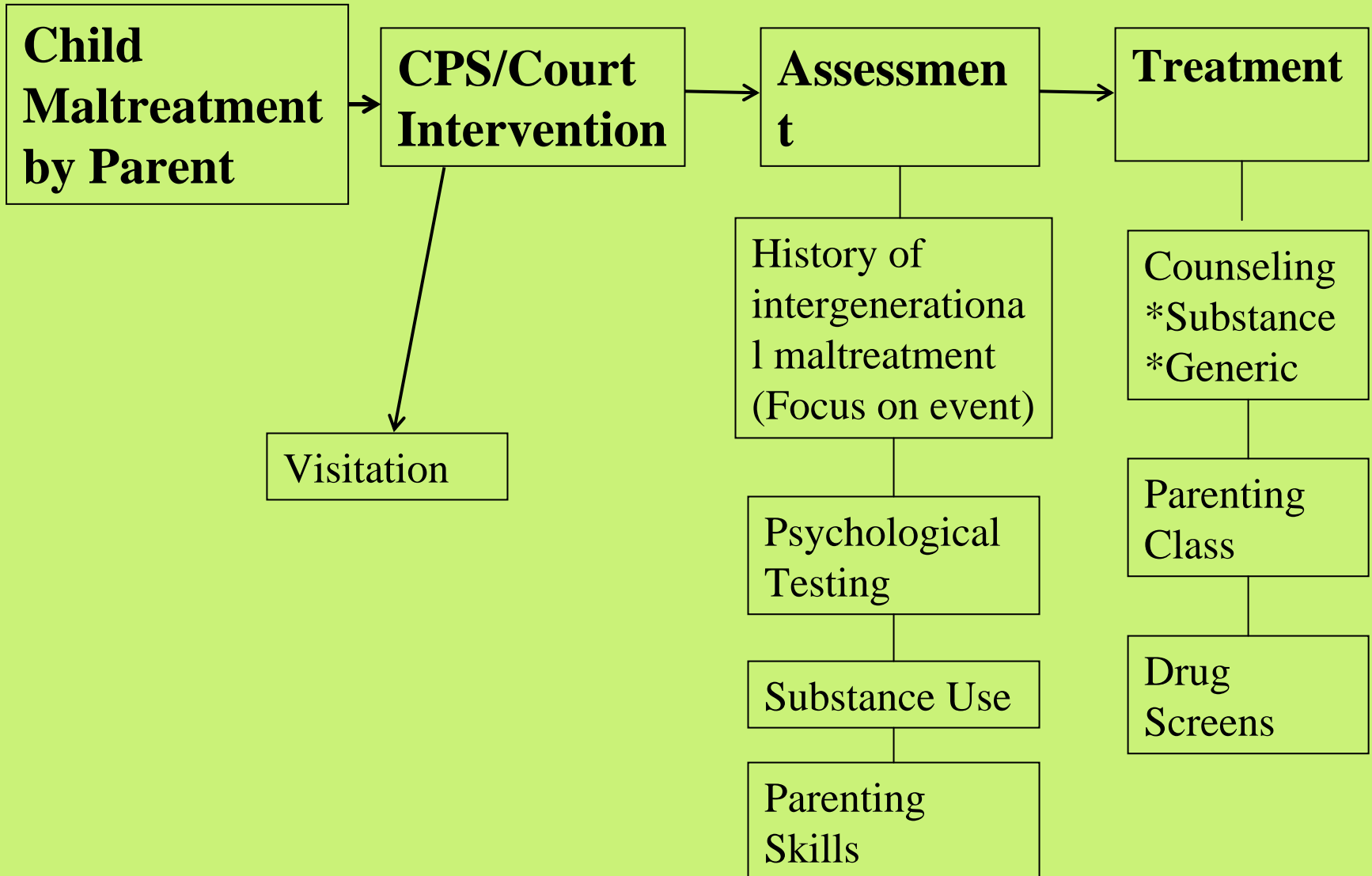
I DESERVED  
TO BE BEATEN

I LET THEM  
RAPE ME

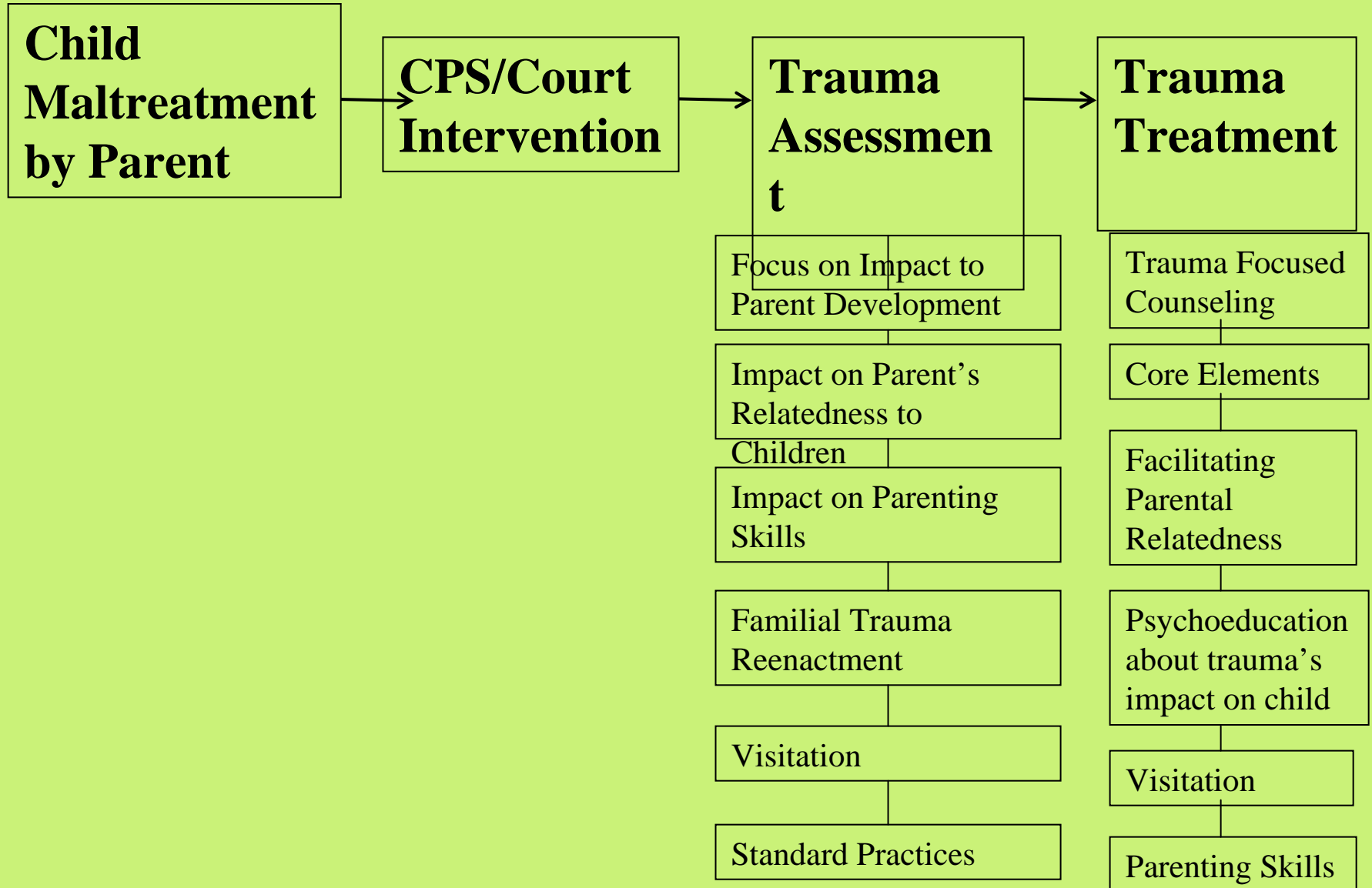


GUILT

# Traditional



# Trauma Informed



# What does this mean for us?

- Confronting and responding to our own hopelessness that no matter what I do nothing is going to change.
- “I have worked with so many these families I already know that this parent is going to fail.”

# Our Own Relatedness

- Recognition of my own limits of control and powerlessness to MAKE PEOPLE CHANGE.
- Recognizing and Embracing Secondary Trauma

- Restoring the belief that relationships MATTER in creating the environment of change



# Necessary Interventions

- Creating Safety
  - Foundation for trauma resolution

Utilization of what we know works for trauma resolution:



- Psychoeducation of the parent as to the child's trauma and the consequences to his/her perception of parent, ability to regulate, and behaviors.
- Providing understanding that dispels parental internalizations

- moving away from relational disengagement and personal judgement

# Improved Outcomes

- We have honed in on the core of parenting issues that will decrease triggers, increase emotional regulation, and improve relatedness for parents
- Children's symptoms will not be internalized as "willful disobedience" or "ingratitude" which will decrease parental stress and increase frustration tolerance