

Mental Health Monday – How Childhood Trauma Affects Health across a Lifetime

In his New York Times, best-selling book, **The Body Keeps Score**, Dr Bessel Van Der Kolk observes: *One does not have to be combat soldier, or visit a refugee camp in Syria or the Congo to encounter trauma. Trauma happens to us, our friend, our families, and our neighbors. Research by the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention has shown that **one in five Americans was sexually molested as a child.***

Childhood trauma isn't something you just get over as you grow up. Pediatrician Nadine Burke Harris explains that the repeated stress of abuse, neglect and parents struggling with mental health or substance abuse issues has real, tangible effects on the development of the brain. This unfolds across a lifetime, to the point where those who've experienced high levels of trauma are at triple the risk for heart disease and lung cancer. Dr Harris here presents an impassioned plea for pediatric medicine to confront the prevention and treatment of trauma, head-on.

Nadine Burke Harris' healthcare practice focuses on a little-understood, yet very common factor in childhood that can profoundly impact adult-onset disease: trauma.

