

Congressional Briefing: Addressing the Mental Health Impact of
Violence and Trauma on Children

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CONGRESSMAN TED POE (R-TX)

Thank you very much for being here. I want to thank these experts for coming in to help educate all of you all on this very important issue. I'm Ted Poe and I'm a member of Congress from Texas. I'm co-chair with my good friend Jim Costa with the Victim's Rights Caucus and it's a bi-partisan caucus focused specifically on how to help victims on a national level. Blair is my victim advocate and you should know her before you leave.

I want to say this about the Victim's Rights Caucus. If you pull it up on our Website you will see that it is bi-partisan and you will see that there are people on this caucus that don't vote together on anything – except this issue. I mention our caucus because we want to expand the influence of the Victim's Rights Caucus with Congress, and we want to have your input and the input of these experts, on information, new ideas, new legislation, anything. Contact Blair or Jim Costa's office as well because this is a very important issue.

Without getting into a lot of detail, I spent my other life at the criminal courts building in Houston as a prosecutor and then a judge for 22 years. I saw thousands of young kids come to the courthouse who were the victims as a result of how they were treated in their homes and by their neighbors and by strangers. Those children – most of them have grown up and done OK and others have not done OK. And it's all because of the trauma they experienced when they were a child. And I'm not an expert in this area at all, don't get me wrong, but I have seen what happens when children are traumatized and there isn't someone there to help them throughout the years.

Thank you and please contact us anytime that you have ideas.

And I really want to thank these five experts for spending their time to come down here to educate us. Thank you very much.