

2013 Urban Child Symposium: A Holistic Approach to the Urban Child's Trauma: From the Eyes of the Beholder



humans.

It is well known that violent adults often have a history of childhood psychological trauma. Some of these individuals exhibit very real, physical alterations in a part of the brain called the orbitofrontal cortex. A landmark study published by the Ecole Polytechnique Federale de Lausanne, a major science and technology university in Switzerland, demonstrates for the first time a correlation between psychological trauma in pre-adolescent rats and neurological changes similar to those found in violent

"This research shows that people exposed to trauma in childhood don't only suffer psychologically, but their brain also gets altered," explains Professor Carmen Sandi, Director of the Brain Mind Institute in Lausanne and a lead researcher in the study. "This... obviously has scientific, therapeutic, and social implications."

The Center for Families, Children and the Courts (CFCC) explored these and other implications of childhood trauma during its fifth annual Urban Child Symposium, "A Holistic Approach to the Urban Child's Trauma: From the Eyes of the Beholder," on April 4, 2013, at the University of Baltimore School of Law. The symposium addressed the importance of considering exposure to childhood trauma when developing more effective means to confront the problems that urban children and their families face.

Rain Pryor, an actress, singer, writer, comedian, producer, and daughter of comedian Richard Pryor, provided keynote remarks about the importance of the arts in developing the resilience necessary for children to overcome trauma. The daylong event also included the following speakers, among others: Thomas M. Scalea, the Francis X. Kelley Professor of Trauma Surgery at the University of Maryland School of Medicine; Yvette Bryant, Judge-in-Charge of the Baltimore City Circuit Court Family Division; Anthony Batts, Baltimore City Police Commissioner; and Karen Webber-Ndour, Baltimore City Public Schools Executive Director of Student Support Services.

For more information and to view videos from the event, please visit www.ubalt.edu/urbanchild.

