

This supplementary table has been included to ensure that the voices of participants and their experiences have been fully captured and are recognised in their entirety. As this table is quite substantial, including it in the main body of the paper would violate the submission guidelines in terms of manuscript length. However, to not include these quotes, or to edit them down to fit the manuscript would be to do the participants who shared their experiences a disservice. Therefore, their quotes will be included as supplementary material.

Supplemental Table 1. Main themes and sub-themes and corresponding supporting quotations

Main Theme	Sub-theme(s)	Supporting quotes
Trauma related difficulties have a perceived impact on parenting	Anger and reactivity meant having a short fuse with their children	<p>I'd smash my house up, I smashed up the house and the house was smashed to pieces...I was yelling in the house and she [daughter] couldn't understand. I strangled my wife and nearly killed her. It was hard for them [family] and I felt guilty. It's not nice having flashbacks or panic attacks in front of your daughter you know? She didn't know what's wrong with me. It was hard, it was hard for me. I wanna say never, ever laid a finger on my daughter but X, my wife I did strangle and hurt her and she put up with a lot from me. (PID 009, father).</p> <p>And I'd take it out on him [husband] and I'd be shouting at him and my son. I would be exploding on them even more then, and then I take myself off and then they'd be worrying about me and then I'd be upstairs crying and they'd be down here and then one of them would come upstairs then and I would be like "what the f'ing hell do you want, just leave me alone." (PID 012, mother).</p>

No, I have never raised a hand in my life. I've never smacked the children, but have yelled at the children. What I would say would be worse than what I would do. I would put my hands through a wall or smash the door and they used to be petrified. And as soon as I calmed down, I would apologise and say, 'I'm not being malicious, I'm not being mean to you, it's just stuff that came out of my mouth'. (PID 014, father).

Overprotective and strict parenting

Oh no, no. I didn't want him to become harmed in any way, so I wouldn't take him to ice hockey or things. I just wouldn't go. It was just sheer anxiety. I was so concerned for his [child] safety...I'd already had one accident and that was the only time I'd had an accident and I certainly didn't want to have another one. (PID 007, father).

Horrible. Similar to when he was first born, I just want to be with him all the time in case it happens again. I wanted the control for myself; so for quite some time afterwards, I wanted to have some sort of monitor in his room...quite frankly...the first night he came back home from hospital I actually slept on his bedroom floor. I then wanted to go dig out the baby monitor, y'know. I did and put it in his room. It was horrendous, I couldn't sleep! The slightest little noise that he made, I'd be awake. So, it wasn't productive and in the end my husband actually hid it from me and told me that he had it and that he was going to be the one to keep an ear out. (PID 028, mother).

Withdrawal from children

Sometimes it does happen, I'll have to go to bed early, because it is all just too much. My son will be like "why are you going to bed early dad?" if I'm going to bed at 6pm, instead of going to the cinema with him. But those feelings have come back and I can't explain it to

him...I feel like I can't explain it to him and I don't think I should tell him that...tell him what's going on you know? I think I should protect him. (PID 007, father).

I didn't show them [children] the affection I wanted. I never explained to them why I was in bed all the time. But I'd just go upstairs out of the way. I didn't stop them playing with their toys or anything like that. If it was a noisy toy, I would go to the other room, I would go away from it. (PID 014, father).

I would get in moods. I mean, I've never, ever been...I always say would never take, never took it out on the children. But I did lock myself away or I become unresponsive, I used to go and sit in the room for hours and hours on end. Because it was I had to get rid of the frustration or I'd, there's times where I would get in the car and drive and I didn't want to be...and I'd go and sit in the countryside, away from everybody...The last thing I want to do is start, you know, upsetting people and shouting things and saying this, that...because it's nobody's fault. Nobody's fault. It's my fault, it's my fault. (PID 026, father).

Communication with children – sharing but not sharing

“I always made it safe for them if they ever wanted to tell me anything I was there. They could be open with me. Nothing they could have said would have offended me or shocked me or...because nothing...nothing could” (PID 002, mother).

I would say to her [daughter] ‘if you don't want to talk to Mum or you don't want to talk to Dad’ then you can speak to...and I named all the people that she's close to that she can speak to. I'm always pretty good at fixing things, and I said to her, “Don't you worry, Mum will fix it.” So, we've broached the things when it comes to private areas in the bathroom

and things that are appropriate and things that aren't. I felt that if anything untoward, I think she would talk to me. I think I'd notice as well. (PID 020, mother).

Because it was a nasty event and I really didn't want them bothered with it. I really didn't want them knowing that. Because when I was with them [children] it was nice and it was different and it had absolutely nothing to do with [trauma], so that can stay where it is. And my kids don't have to be involved with any of it, y'know? (PID 004, father).

Erm, because I didn't want him to... I didn't want him to know that I'd been sexually abused, erm he knows that I'd been physically abused but he doesn't know that I've been sexually abused so I just wanted to protect him from that really because I didn't want him to be upset and to have all that to deal with so I suppose it's me protecting him from knowing that. (PID 012, mother).

And ever since then I've never really spoke about the accident to the boys, because again, I just felt it was inflicting all this sadness on them because it was a huge part of their lives. I just kept it to myself really. (PID 019, father).

Concerns about potential negative impacts of parental trauma on children

...during the time of my PTSD, when he [son] was younger. I always feel quite sure that it affected him, y'know? There was a brief period of time where he went through a bit of drinking as well, which was wrong" (PID 004, father).

Perceived parenting self-efficacy

Yes. I find that quite hard but um, no. It, I think in the early years, yes, it, it has impacted...I see it because my oldest daughter, she is a worrier and I honestly feel that's because of my state of mental health and I've you know, children are a product of their environment...I

think that is down to me, she is such a worrier. I am disappointed and sad about that, but I can't change what it...it is what it is now. Isn't it? (PID 015, mother).

I do feel guilty because there are children put there who don't have a parent with this condition. Therefore ... of course my PTSD affects them and affects my parenting. And so I do feel incredibly guilty and it is very hard when I have bad time, that they would be better off without me, because they would then be brought up by someone who doesn't have PTSD. (PID 025, mother).

Parents struggled to identify what they had done well

I think as a mum, I think well I'm obviously doing something right because both the boys are doing really well. Really, really well and I know in my heart of hearts that neither of them have actually suffered because of my accident, and I know that because they're great, they're happy, they're healthy...well... [thinking] I suppose now that the kids are older, I've got that friendship back again haven't I? 'Cause I lost that friendship with them for a while I think and that was difficult. (PID 029, mother).

Well the fact we can talk on a one-to-one basis as adults and also that they are both successful. (PID 004, father).

Well, I know I've done a good job – I got two boys that are both married, one with two children, one with one child. (PID 019, father).

At that time, my son and I were at a point where we were never going to have a relationship because everything I stood for he appeared to rile against to a point that he wanted to go into [city] with his friends. He was 15 at the time, and I didn't want him to go. I said I've got a busy day ahead and he said I'll behave, I said don't let me down. And that, that was the big

thing for me. Anyway, about an hour and a half later I get a phone call, Dad we're in trouble, we've been caught shoplifting. I literally drove as fast as I've driven anywhere. Got out of my car where they were. My son walked up to see me and I just punched him in the face. That was the only time and I knew then that I crossed the line and I know that. (PID 014, father).

Obviously at the time I didn't think it affected her, stupidly, but she was talking about it the other day and she was saying 'remember that time when you said you said you were drinking 'Scottish water' and I was like, 'no, Russian water''. So I used to tell her what vodka was. Now I'm able to explain to her that it should never have happened. I should never have been drinking while you kids were in the house. I reassured her, if you ever want to talk about anything that's fine, but that should never have happened. I know that now. (PID 018, mother).

I still find it very difficult... I am better at sort of listening to my eldest. But it's kind of difficult... but I just take it on board as what a bad parent that I am. That I never spotted it, or never did anything. I should have noticed and all these 'I should haves.'. (PID 025, mother).

Perceptions of falling short  
meant parents felt the  
needed to compensate

Well as I say, normal children who have normal parents are able to go out; they go to the park or for walks, they go to the movies. I can't even do a simple thing like go to the movies. I can't tolerate being in crowds. I can't tolerate being locked in a room. And I just feel guilty. I will buy them that movie they want to see when it comes out on DVD and we'll sit here at home as a family and watch it. But that's kind of the life that we have to

have and I feel inadequate as a parent. Because as a parent, I should be able to do all these normal things that normal parents do, but I can't do because of my condition. And from that perspective I feel as though that I am a bad parent. (PID 025, mother).

I used to try and overcompensate, just thinking back now. Um, you know, I, if I didn't feel very well or I'd order them a new toy. You know, to try and spoil them in other ways...I would feel so bad that I hadn't done what I wanted to do, or we hadn't gone to somebody's house or I was feeling quite crap and they picked up on it. So, I'd overcompensate and spoil them. (PID 015, mother).

Well things like their birthdays, the accident was on September 12th, and [son's] birthday was November 17th, and I went to my savings and I gave him £1000. And I gave him loads of money for passing his exams...I did it because I knew, or I felt, as a mother I was letting them down elsewhere. (PID 023, mother).

In the last six months, eight months but I've had two lots of PTSD treatments, so now I'm okay. Whereas if, a year ago or two years ago, I wasn't. I had quite extreme PTSD from it all, but I've had two lots of EMDR, so because I've had that, I'm in a much better place now. (PID 031, mother).

Recovery, coping  
and support

Traditional/formal  
treatment for PTSD  
brought improvements, but  
not a return to how parents  
were pre-trauma

I never say I'm cured. I live with PTSD now. It [treatment] has helped with that acceptance. I have the skillset that allows me to be partly in control of what happens now. If I have a panic attack when I'm out in my car I know I can work through that really easily just by doing breathing exercises or grounding myself in the moment and whatever. That gives me a bit of that control back which means I can live with this now...I go for coffee now, I go into

Ongoing impacts of PTSD  
on parenting, despite  
having received PTSD  
treatment

town, I can change coffee shops and everything. I can go to the cinema now. I couldn't do any of these things when I was in the grip of the worst part of PTSD. (PID 035, father).

It's still quite restricting going anywhere, but it has got me to the stage now, nearly a decade later, where I can actually go on short trips away, if there's not too many people around. It's sort of expanded my world a bit. However, for the kids' birthdays and stuff, I still can't.

That's absolutely impossible, I couldn't possibly get into a crowd like that...Just reminds me of all the things I can't do and I felt pretty useless. (PID 010, mother).

It is hard, even now, I usually get more anxious when he's [child] having difficulty adapting to a new situation. And consequently, I didn't want to let him out of my sight because I needed to know he wasn't hurting himself. And then it is always just a case of making sure he was alright, but that that didn't overlap onto my daughter, so I would end up having to check in on her constantly as well. (PID 028, mother).

I'm in a much better place now. Before, I was a mess and it affected my whole being. Basically, like two years ago, I was sitting outside the school, rocking back and forth because I just thought he [son] was going to, you know, something was going to happen in school. I would check on him seven times a night because I thought he might die in his sleep. You know, I had no reason to think that was going to happen...I became neurotic and I mean, really neurotic and I gave myself a mental breakdown. So it [treatment] has helped, but I think if I can, if I look at him, if he's been ill or she as well, mind. If they've been ill, until they're better, I can't function. (PID 031, mother).



The importance of children  
as a key motivating factor  
for coping

Summing it up, I think my son got me through all of it. I don't think I'd be alive today having taken that overdose, every time I've contemplated it, I think about my son and how upset he would be and I don't want him to have that with him for the rest of his life. He's my anchor, that's what I'd say he was. He keeps my feet on the ground. (PID 007, father).  
But, the love, it's just... I'd never felt anything like it before. It was incredible. I've got to be honest, it has driven me over the years to do some incredibly wonderful things. When everything kicked off with my husband and he took my daughter and he went off, it would have been so easy for me to just lie down and die, but I didn't. I went to a solicitors and I fought. It's having that fight and that desire, which I think came from having my little girl. I can't give up, because I'm forever and a day going to be a mother. No matter what I want to do, I can't give up, because there's somebody relying on me who's always going to rely on me. I'm always going to be mummy. (PID 020, mother).

It sounds really bizarre, but if like he [child] wanted new school shoes, I would almost kill myself to get in that car to get him to get school shoes. The drive to keep the kids normal overpowered everything, and at the point of it almost killing me, literally. Because I would just put everything on hold and just grit my teeth, take a tablet and just think, I've got to do this, I've got to do it. But as soon as we got back in the house, I would just be a crumpled wreck for days. (PID 023, mother).

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