



Centra Wellness Network
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Trauma, trauma, trauma...

It has become a buzz word and yet there are still many questions surrounding it within the communities we serve. The fact is trauma is a widespread, harmful, and potentially costly public health problem. It is the result of a harmful emotional or physical experience that overwhelms the coping capacities and has sustained adverse effects. This can be from violence, abuse, neglect, loss, disaster, or other emotionally harmful experiences. An example of a collective trauma we have all experienced is living through the covid-19 pandemic.

It is important to note that something that is considered traumatic to one, may not be for another. However, trauma has no boundaries, it does not matter your age, gender, socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity, geographical location, or sexual orientation. Bottom line: it exists, it is universal, and it needs to be addressed.



Trauma Effects

The effect of trauma places a heavy burden on families, communities, and creates challenges for many service systems. Although it's true that many people who experience a traumatic event will go on to live their life without adverse reactions, others will face lasting effects. Things like obesity, diabetes, depression, heart disease, suicide attempts, or even smoking, alcoholism, and drug use. We even see lower graduation rates, academic achievement, and lost time from work. The list of possible negative health and well-being outcomes goes on and on.

Due to the sheer prevalence of trauma in all populations, we see it in the criminal and juvenile justice system, child welfare, school systems, primary care settings, and in just about every other public institution and service system.

Many of these systems that are intending to provide services and supports can be trauma-inducing themselves.

Although that sounds very doom and gloom, please know there is hope! If an individual has access to the appropriate supports and interventions, they can overcome traumatic experiences. This is where a trauma-informed approach comes into play. Trauma-Informed Care can be considered and adopted by many community partners.

Hello There!

Welcome to the NEW trauma-informed newsletter brought to you by me, Sarah Madsen, the Trauma-Informed Practices Specialist at Centra Wellness Network. This will be a monthly installment of all things trauma. I hope that this will inform you and your organization on what trauma is, the effects of it, and resources on how to best approach it.

The goal being that with a greater public commitment to trauma-informed programs and systems, we lessen and prevent a wide range of physical health, behavioral health, and social problems for generations to come.

If you have any questions or would like more information on anything covered, please feel free to reach out!

Thanks for reading,

Sarah Madsen

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Looking ahead:

Next months edition of the trauma newsletter will touch on more trauma basics and start dissecting the guiding principles of trauma-informed care and how to implement it within any setting.

Guiding Principles:

Safety
Ensuring physical and emotional safety.

Trustworthiness/ Transparency
Decisions are made with transparency, with a goal of building and maintaining trust for all.

Peer Support
Utilizing their stories and lived experience to promote healing.

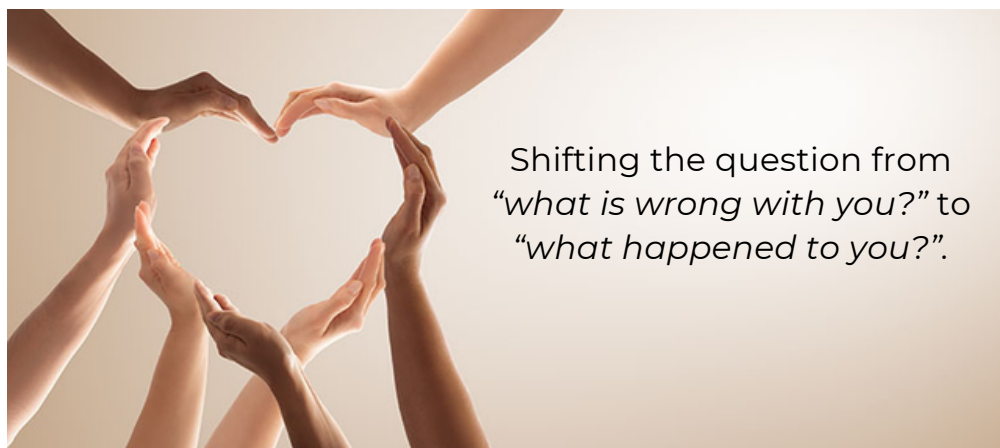
Collaboration / Mutuality
Everyone has a role to play in the healing

Empowerment, Voice & Choice
Individuals' strengths are recognized, built on, and validated.

Cultural, Historical, and Gender Issues
Actively moving past stereotypes and biases, offering inclusive services.



Trauma-informed care is about creating universal precautions on how we approach situations and individuals. There are six guiding principles to look at when thinking of being trauma-informed—**safety, trustworthiness & transparency, peer support, collaboration & mutuality, empowerment, and cultural, historical & gender issues.** The goal is to promote an environment of healing and recovery rather than practices and services that may inadvertently retraumatize.



A program, organization, or system that is trauma-informed **realizes** the widespread impact of trauma and understands potential paths for recovery; **recognizes** the signs and symptoms of trauma in clients, families, staff, and others involved with the system; and **responds** by fully integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, and practices, and seeks to actively **resist re-traumatization.**

Reference: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. *SAMHSA's Concept of Trauma and Guidance for a Trauma-Informed Approach.* HHS Publication No. (SMA) 14-4884. Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2014.