



Trauma-Informed Care: A Values-Based Context for Psychosocial Empowerment

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Institute of Medicine Workshop on Preventing
Violence against Women and Children

Washington, DC
January 28, 2011





What is Trauma-Informed Care?

- Trauma-informed vs. trauma-specific
- Trauma-informed contexts of care:
 - Incorporate knowledge about trauma—prevalence, impact, and recovery—in all aspects of service delivery and practice
 - Are hospitable and engaging for survivors
 - Minimize revictimization: “do no harm”
 - Facilitate healing, recovery, empowerment
 - Emphasize collaboration throughout the system



Why Trauma-Informed Care?

- Trauma is pervasive
- Trauma's impact is broad and diverse
- Trauma's impact may be deep and life-shaping
- Trauma, especially interpersonal violence, is often self-perpetuating
- Trauma differentially affects the more vulnerable
- Trauma affects how people approach services
- The service system has often been retraumatizing



Retraumatization in the Behavioral Health Care Setting

- Replication of trauma dynamics
 - Disbelief or lack of interest in trauma history
 - Coercive approaches, including involuntary medications and hospitalizations
 - Presumed incompetence and need for guardianship
- “Sanctuary Harm”
 - Violence and fear of violence, including restraint and seclusion
 - Negative interactions with staff, including inconsistent rules, disrespect, and humiliation



A Culture Shift: Core Values of Trauma-Informed Care

- Safety: Ensuring physical and emotional safety
- Trustworthiness: Maximizing trustworthiness, making tasks clear, and maintaining appropriate boundaries
- Choice: Prioritizing consumer choice and control
- Collaboration: Maximizing collaboration and sharing of power with consumers
- Empowerment: Prioritizing consumer empowerment and skill-building



A Culture Shift: Scope of Change in a Distressed System

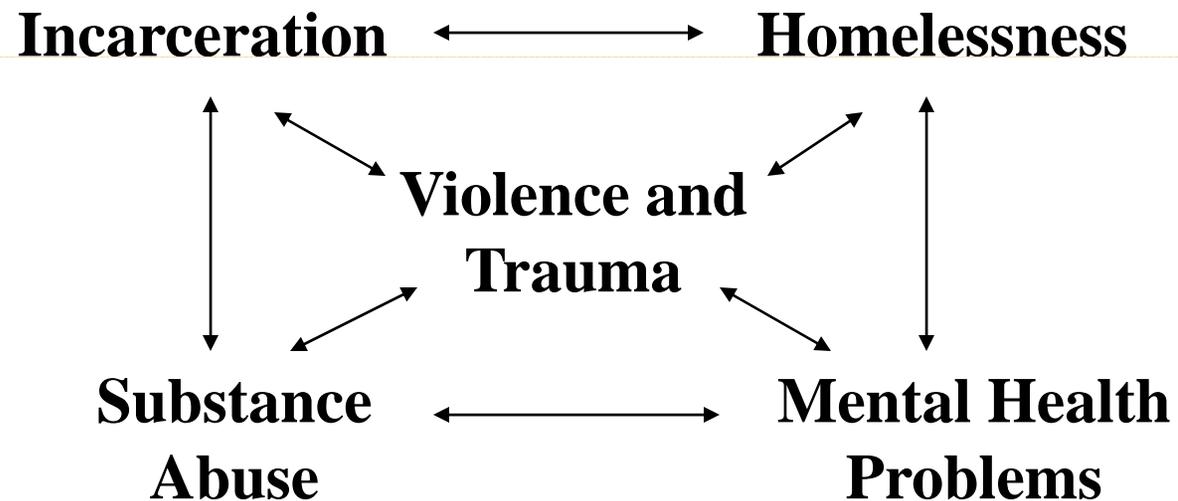
- Involves all aspects of program activities, setting, relationships, and atmosphere (more than implementing new services)
- Involves all groups: administrators, supervisors, direct service staff, support staff, and consumers (more than service providers)
- Involves making trauma-informed change into a new routine, new ways of thinking and acting, both understanding and practice (more than new information)



Trauma-Informed Contexts of Care

- Balance needs for individual empowerment and skills-development with needs for supportive organizational- contextual qualities (e.g., trustworthiness)
- Consistent with other values-based approaches: recovery-oriented, gender-responsive, and culturally-competent
- Consistent with many empirically-supported interventions: motivational interviewing, shared decision-making, psychosocial empowerment

Changes in Understanding: The Centrality of Trauma





Changes in Understanding: The Paradigm Shift

- Understanding of Trauma
- Understanding of the Trauma Survivor
- Understanding of Services
- Understanding of the Service Relationship



Changes in Practice: Protocol for Developing a Trauma- Informed Culture

- Services-level changes
 - Service procedures and settings
 - Formal service policies
 - Trauma screening, assessment, service planning, and trauma-specific services
- Systems-level/administrative changes
 - Administrative support for program-wide trauma-informed culture
 - Trauma training and education
 - Human resources practices



Changes in Practice: Reviewing Service Procedures and Settings

- 1) Identify formal and informal activities and settings; specify sequence of events
- 2) Ask key questions about each activity and setting
- 3) Prioritize goals for change
- 4) Identify specific objectives and responsible person(s)



Changes in Practice: The Core Values in Review of Procedures and Settings

- Safety: How can we ensure physical and emotional safety for consumers throughout our system of care?
- Trustworthiness: How can we maximize trustworthiness? Make tasks clear? Maintain appropriate boundaries?
- Choice: How can we enhance consumer choice and control?
- Collaboration: How can we maximize collaboration and sharing of power with consumers?
- Empowerment: How can we prioritize consumer empowerment and skill-building at every opportunity?



Safety: **Physical and Emotional Safety**

- To what extent do service delivery practices and settings ensure the physical and emotional safety of consumers?
- How can services and settings be modified to ensure this safety more effectively and consistently?



**Denial
Stops
Here!**



Optimism Lives Here!

We Believe in Kids!



Empowerment: Recognizing Strengths and Building Skills

- To what extent do current service delivery practices prioritize consumer empowerment, recognizing strengths and building skills?
- How can services be modified to ensure that experiences of empowerment and the development or enhancement of consumer skills are maximized?



A Starbucks Customer Satisfaction Survey Story

- Was your drink prepared properly?
- Did anyone greet you by name?
- Was your visit to Starbucks _____?
(fill in the blank)



Changes in Practice: Revisiting the Core Principles Yet Again—for Staff this Time

- Safety: How can we ensure physical and emotional safety for staff members throughout our system of care?
- Trustworthiness: How can we maximize trustworthiness as administrators and supervisors? Make tasks and procedures clear? Be consistent?
- Choice: How can we enhance staff members' choice and control in their day-to-day work?
- Collaboration: How can we maximize collaboration and sharing of power with staff members?
- Empowerment: How can we prioritize staff empowerment and skill-building at every opportunity? Provide resources?



The Basic Lesson from Staff

Staff members—all staff members—can create a setting of, and offer relationships characterized by, safety, trustworthiness, choice, collaboration, and empowerment only when they experience these same factors in the program as a whole. It is unrealistic to expect it to be otherwise.

Conclusion

- What we know about trauma, its impact, and the process of recovery calls for trauma-informed cultures of care
- A trauma-informed approach involves fundamental shifts in thinking and practice at all programmatic levels
- Trauma-informed cultures offer the possibility of enhanced safety and collaboration for all participants in the human service system

