

The Institute on Trauma and Trauma-Informed Care (ITTIC)

Rising from the Ashes...

“When an event is traumatic to children and adults, they may be negatively impacted emotionally, physically and spiritually by these adverse life events.” –ITTIC, 2014

“Trauma-Informed Care is about ensuring all individuals feel physically and emotionally safe, are noticed and listened to, and are given a voice.” –ITTIC, 2014

The Effects of Trauma

- Trauma impairs: memory, concentration, new learning and focus.
- Trauma has been correlated to: heart disease, obesity, addiction, pulmonary illness, diabetes, autoimmune disorders, cancer.
- Trauma impacts an individual’s ability to: trust, cope, form health relationships.
- Trauma disrupts: emotion identification; ability to self-soothe or control expression of emotions; one’s ability to distinguish between what’s safe and unsafe.
- Trauma shapes: a person’s belief about self and others; one’s ability to hope; one’s outlook on life.

Retraumatization

What Hurts?

System (Policies, procedures, “the way things are done”)

- Having to continually retell their story
- Being treated as a number
- Procedures that require disrobing
- Being seen as their label (ie. Addict, schizophrenic)
- No choice in service or treatment
- No opportunity to give feedback about their experience with the service delivery

Relationship (Power, control, subversiveness)

- Not being seen/heard
- Violating trust
- Failure to ensure emotional safety
- Noncollaborative
- Does things for rather than with
- Use of punitive treatment, coercive practices and oppressive language

What Helps?

Creating a Trauma-Informed environment using the following five principles:

- Safety – creating areas that are calm and comfortable
- Choice – providing an individual options in their treatment
- Empowerment – noticing capabilities in an individual
- Collaboration – making decisions together
- Trustworthiness – providing clear and consistent information

References:

Simpson, R. & Green, S.A. (2014). Adapted from: Falot, R.D. & Harris, M. (2001). Using trauma theory to design services systems: New directions for mental health services. Jossey-Bass: San Francisco, CA.

Jennings, A. The Anna Institute, National Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare. Is your organization trauma informed?

Contact:

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