TRAUMA INFORMED CARE
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TO EFFECTIVELY ACHIEVE THE GOAL OF “TRANSFORMING THE LIVES WE TOUCH”, WE NEED TO HAVE AN UNDERSTANDING OF TRAUMA AND IT’S IMPACT, AND SEE CLIENTS THROUGH A TRAUMA LENS (WHAT HAPPENED TO THEM? RATHER THAN, WHAT’S WRONG WITH THEM?).
WHAT IS A TRAUMA INFORMED SYSTEM?

- Understands the impact of traumatic stress on those who have contact with the system. (Staff and clients)
- Understands the impact of vicarious trauma on agency staff.
- Understands the exposure to trauma as part of the job.
- Understands how trauma has shaped the culture of child welfare the same way trauma shapes the world view of child victims.
SAMHSA FOUR KEY ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT TRAUMA INFORMED SYSTEMS

• 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.

• RESPONDS BY FULLY INTEGRATING KNOWLEDGE ABOUT TRAUMA INTO POLICIES, PROCEDURES, PRACTICES AND SETTINGS.

• RESISTS RE-TRAUMATIZATION OF CLIENTS AS WELL AS STAFF
SAMHSA SIX PRINCIPLES OF A TRAUMA INFORMED APPROACH

• SAFETY: THROUGHOUT THE AGENCY, STAFF AND THOSE WE SERVE FEEL PHYSICALLY AND PSYCHOLOGICALLY SAFE; THE PHYSICAL SETTING IS SAFE AND INTERPERSONAL INTERACTIONS PROMOTE SAFETY.

• TRUSTWORTHINESS AND TRANSPARENCY: AGENCY OPERATIONS AND DECISIONS ARE CONDUCTED WITH TRANSPARENCY AND WITH THE GOAL OF BUILDING AND MAINTAINING TRUST AMONG CLIENTS, FAMILIES, STAFF AND OTHERS INVOLVED WITH THE AGENCY.

• COLLABORATION AND MUTUALITY: THERE IS TRUE PARTNERING AND LEVELING OF POWER DIFFERENCES BETWEEN STAFF AND CLIENTS AND AMONG AGENCY STAFF. STAFF RECOGNIZE THAT HEALING HAPPENS IN RELATIONSHIPS AND IN THE MEANINGFUL SHARING OF DECISION MAKING.
SAMHSA SIX PRINCIPLES OF A TRAUMA INFORMED APPROACH

• **EMPOWERMENT**: Throughout the agency and among clients served, individuals’ strengths are recognized, built on, and validated, and new skills are developed as needed.

• **VOICE AND CHOICE**: The agency aims to strengthen the experience of choice for clients and families, and staff recognize that every person’s experience is unique and deserves an individualized approach.

• **CULTURE, HISTORICAL AND GENDER ISSUES**: The agency incorporates policies, protocols and processes that are responsive, and incorporates a focus on historical trauma.
A TRAUMATIC EXPERIENCE

• THE PHYSICAL AND EMOTIONAL RESPONSES TO EVENTS THAT THREATEN THE LIFE OR PHYSICAL INTEGRITY OF THE CHILD OR OF SOMEONE CRITICALLY IMPORTANT TO THE CHILD (SUCH AS A PARENT, GRANDPARENT, SIBLING).

• TRAUMATIC EVENTS OVERWHELM A CHILD’S CAPACITY TO COPE AND ELICIT FEELINGS OF TERROR, POWERLESSNESS, AND OUT-OF-CONTROL PHYSIOLOGICAL AROUSAL.

• CAUSES AN OVERWHELMING SENSE OF TERROR, HELPLESSNESS AND HORROR

• PRODUCES AN INTENSE PHYSICAL EFFECTS SUCH AS POUNDING HEART, RAPID BREATHING, LOSS OF BLADDER CONTROL
TYPES OF TRAUMATIC STRESS

• **ACUTE TRAUMA** is a single traumatic event that is limited in time.

• **CHRONIC TRAUMA** refers to the experience of multiple traumatic events.

• **COMPLEX TRAUMA** describes both exposure to chronic trauma—usually caused by adults entrusted with the child’s care—and the impact of such exposure on the child.
VARIABILITY OF TRAUMA

THE IMPACT OF A POTENTIALLY TRAUMATIC EVENT DEPENDS ON SEVERAL FACTORS, INCLUDING:

- THE CHILD’S AGE AND DEVELOPMENTAL STAGE
- THE CHILD’S PERCEPTION OF THE DANGER FACED
- WHETHER THE CHILD WAS THE VICTIM OR A WITNESS
- THE CHILD’S RELATIONSHIP TO THE VICTIM OR PERPETRATOR
- THE CHILD’S PAST EXPERIENCE WITH TRAUMA
- THE ADVERSITIES THE CHILD FACES FOLLOWING THE TRAUMA
- THE PRESENCE/AVAILABILITY OF ADULTS WHO CAN OFFER HELP AND PROTECTION
EFFECTS OF TRAUMA EXPOSURE

- A child’s response to a traumatic event may have a profound effect on his or her perception of self, the world, and the future.

- Long-term trauma can interfere with healthy development and affect a child’s
  - Ability to trust others
  - Sense of personal safety
  - Ability to navigate and adjust to life’s changes
  - Physical and emotional responses to stress
EFFECTS OF TRAUMA EXPOSURE

• **ATTACHMENT.** Traumatized children feel that the world is uncertain and unpredictable. They can become socially isolated and can have difficulty relating to and empathizing with others.

• **BIOLOGY.** Traumatized children may experience problems with movement and sensation, including hypersensitivity to physical contact and insensitivity to pain. They may have sleep difficulties, exhibit unexplained physical symptoms and increased medical problems.

• **MOOD REGULATION.** Children exposed to trauma can have difficulty regulating their emotions as well as difficulty knowing and describing their feelings and internal states.
EFFECTS OF TRAUMA EXPOSURE

- **Dissociation.** Some traumatized children experience a feeling of detachment or depersonalization, as if they are “observing” something happening to them that is unreal.

- **Behavioral Control.** Traumatized children can show poor impulse control, self-destructive behavior, and aggression towards others.

- **Cognition.** Traumatized children can have problems focusing on and completing tasks, or planning for and anticipating future events. Some exhibit learning difficulties and problems with language development.

- **Self-Concept.** Traumatized children frequently suffer from disturbed body image, low self-esteem, shame, and guilt.
EFFECTS OF TRAUMA EXPOSURE

RESEARCH IS CLEAR THAT THE EXPERIENCE OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT LEAVES A PARTICULAR TRAUMATIC FINGERPRINT ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN THAT CANNOT BE IGNORED IF WE WANT TO IMPROVE THE LIFE TRAJECTORIES OF MALTREATED CHILDREN.

MOST OF THE PARENTS IN OUR CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM WERE SUBJECTED TO COMPLEX TRAUMA/TRAUMATIC STRESS AS A CHILD WHICH HAS SIGNIFICANTLY IMPACTED THEIR PHYSICAL AND BEHAVIORAL FUNCTIONING AND THEIR ABILITY TO FORM AND MAINTAIN HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS.
ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF TRAUMA INFORMED PRACTICE

• MAXIMIZE THE CHILD’S SENSE OF SAFETY.

• ASSIST CHILDREN IN REDUCING OVERWHELMING EMOTION.

• HELP CHILDREN MAKE NEW MEANING OF THEIR TRAUMA HISTORY AND CURRENT EXPERIENCES.

• ADDRESS THE IMPACT OF TRAUMA AND SUBSEQUENT CHANGES IN THE CHILD’S BEHAVIOR, DEVELOPMENT, AND RELATIONSHIPS.

• COORDINATE SERVICES WITH OTHER AGENCIES.
ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF TRAUMA INFORMED PRACTICE

• UTILIZE COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT OF THE CHILD’S TRAUMA EXPERIENCES AND THEIR IMPACT ON THE CHILD’S DEVELOPMENT AND BEHAVIOR TO GUIDE SERVICES.

• SUPPORT AND PROMOTE POSITIVE AND STABLE RELATIONSHIPS IN THE LIFE OF THE CHILD.

• PROVIDE SUPPORT AND GUIDANCE TO CHILD’S FAMILY AND CAREGIVERS.

• MANAGE PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL STRESS.
VICARIOUS TRAUMA

YOU CAN BE EXPOSED TO TRAUMA THROUGH:

• WHAT A CHILD OR PARENT TELLS YOU OR SAYS IN YOUR PRESENCE
• A CHILD’S TRAUMATIC PLAY, DRAWINGS OR OTHER REPRESENTATIONS OF THE TRAUMA
• OBSERVING A CHILD OR ADULT’S REACTION TO TRAUMA REMINDERS
• READING CASE HISTORY REPORTS, PARTICIPATING IN CASE DISCUSSIONS
VICARIOUS TRAUMA

COMMON REACTIONS OR STRONG FEELINGS THAT ARE EVOKED WHEN WORKING WITH TRAUMATIZED CHILDREN INCLUDE:

• FEELING INEFFECTIVE
• GUILT
• SHAME
• ANGER OR FRUSTRATION
• HOPELESSNESS/HELPLESSNESS
• SADNESS
• ANXIETY/WORRY
SELF-CARE BASICS

ANTICIPATE - BE AWARE OF THE STRESSORS THAT RELATE TO A HARD DAY FOR YOU

STAY AWARE - SELF-CARE IS ESSENTIAL TO HELP THE CHILD

- BODY
- EMOTIONS
- BEHAVIOR
- THOUGHTS
SELF-CARE BASICS

• GET A GOOD NIGHT’S SLEEP AND EAT A HEALTHY BALANCED DIET.
• STRESS MANAGEMENT SKILLS SUCH AS:
  • MAKING TIME FOR YOURSELF.
  • DEEP BREATHING, MUSCLE RELAXATION AND MEDITATION.
  • SELF-AFFIRMATION STATEMENTS.
  • TALK WITH OR VISIT A FRIEND.
  • REGULAR EXERCISE.
  • DO SOMETHING YOU ENJOY.
  • TRY TO REMEMBER ONE GOOD THING THAT HAPPENED TODAY.
SELF-CARE

HOW BALANCED IS YOUR WHEEL?

WHAT IS SOMETHING YOU CAN DO TO FOR YOURSELF TO ENHANCE YOUR SELF-CARE?