The Road to Resilience
An introduction to trauma, its impact and trauma-informed environments
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Getting started…
• Introductions
• Sign in and evaluations
• This training includes difficult information, please reach out if you need support
• This content comes from a combination of resources, including SAMHSA and NCTSN
  – This material was developed with the input of trauma survivors
  – Every situation is different
  – No one has all the right answers
• Let’s talk! Please ask questions!

About me:
Training objectives:

• Gain basic understanding of the definition of trauma
• Define traumatic stress and complex trauma
• **Realize**: Learn about the prevalence of trauma and its universal nature
• **Recognize**: Learn about the impact of trauma on various components of one’s life and identify indicators of trauma
• **Respond and resist re-traumatization**: Learn the importance of responding to our knowledge of trauma by changing our practice

Chicago Children’s Advocacy Center and our partners are the front-line responders in Chicago to reports of child sexual abuse, as well as reports of physical abuse of children under 3 years old.

Multi-disciplinary team partners

• **Illinois Department of Children & Family Services (DCFS)** – child safety, protection and well-being
• **Chicago Police Department** – criminal investigation
• **Cook County State’s Attorney’s Office** – felony review
• **Cook County Health & Hospitals System** – forensic medical exams and holistic treatment
• **Chicago Children’s Advocacy Center** – coordination of investigation, and support services
ChicagoCAC provides children with a safe place to share their story in their own words with experts who will listen to them, protect them and help them heal.

Child abuse is reported, then…

Collaboration

Arrive for medical and FI

ChicagoCAC provides via safe family

Family driven to center
A day at ChicagoCAC

Family Advocacy

Child-friendly environment

Child Abuse Pediatrician

Forensic Interview

Therapy

PATHH providers
Defining trauma and complex trauma

What is trauma?

Individual trauma results from an event (actual or threatened), series of events, or set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or threatening and that has lasting adverse effects on the individual's functioning and physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being.

SAMHSA

Everyone experiences trauma differently.
What about stress?

- Positive stress
  - First day of school
  - Getting a shot
- Tolerable stress
  - Natural disaster
  - Loss of loved one
  - Frightening injury
- Toxic stress
  - Repeated abuse
  - Exposure to violence frequently

Types of trauma

- Acute
  - A single traumatic event that is limited in time
- Chronic
  - Multiple traumatic events that take place over an extended period of time
- Complex
  - Exposure to chronic trauma coupled with a severe experience and response to the trauma

Complex trauma

- Overwhelms ability to cope
- Interpersonal nature
- Longer duration

What is resilience?

Partner up with someone you don’t know very well

1. One partner talks: Take 2-3 minutes to tell a story of a time you, someone you know or someone you admire was resilient.
2. One partner listens: Jot down a few notes about what you heard.
3. Reverse roles and repeat #1 and #2.
Healing is possible.

Resilience
Resilience often refers to the ability of an individual, family or community to cope with adversity and trauma, and adapt to challenges or change.

Resilience can be personal, contextual and dynamic.

Resilience often relies on relational conditions and may be an ongoing process.

Resilience does not look the same for everyone.
How do we help Jermaine on his road to resilience?

Four Rs
Realize the prevalence of trauma;

Recognize how trauma affects all individuals involved with the agency;

Respond by putting knowledge into practice;

Resist re-traumatization.

R1: Realize the prevalence of trauma
Realize the prevalence of trauma

Trauma has a very real and significant impact on:

- **Individuals** who experience traumatic events
- **Providers** working with those individuals
- **Public health** as a whole

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Think about trauma's impact as *universal* – later we will talk about what this means for our work.

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People don’t just have an ACE score.

**Additional childhood stressors**

- Poverty
- Being a victim of crime
- Exposure to community violence
- Bullying
- Homelessness
- Being in the foster care system
- Immigrating from another country
- Household member(s) active or was active in the Military/National Guard
- Exposure to war and/or terrorism
- Exposure to a natural disaster
Resiliency, change and hope

• Resilience: Not everyone exposed to these experiences is traumatized.

• Recovery: Brains respond to can change over time.

• Even as adults, brains are capable of learning and healing!

Source: Bruce Perry

R2: Recognize how trauma impacts all individuals
Based on what we know about Jermaine, what might he have missed out on because his brain was focused on survival in his early years?
**Impact of trauma**
*Flight, fight, freeze*

**Hyper-arousal**
- Flight or Fight
- Hyper-vigilant
- Anxious
- Sleep/eating problems
- Avoidant

**Dissociation**
- Freeze or surrender
- Oppositional behaviors
- “Zoning out”
- Self-harm behaviors

Source: B. Perry

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**Behavioral impact:**
Which of Jermaine’s behavior’s could be due to his trauma history?
Interpersonally, children may have difficulty:
• Trusting others
• Sensing the world as safe
• Regulating emotions within relationships
• Relying on others to help them
• Understanding that others care for them

Relational impact: How might Jermaine’s trauma history impact his ability to build relationships with others?

“The world is an unsafe place.”

“People are unsafe and can’t be trusted.”

“I expect crisis, danger and loss.”

“I have not worthy of love and protection.”
Caregivers provide a foundation for building trust and healthy relationships.

Caregivers are key buffers to trauma.

Protective factors can help!

- Individual
  - Temperament, understanding, relationships with others, expression & mastery, conflict resolution skills, and cultural identity
- Family
  - Role models, physical health of caregivers, networks, support, stability
- Community
  - Access to services, school, mentors, neighborhood cohesion

Divide into groups of 2 or 3

1. In your current role with children, what are you already doing that helps to realize the universal nature of trauma and recognizing the indicators of trauma?

2. Begin to develop a list of practices you could change or improve to better respond and resist re-traumatization.
Time for a stretch!

R3: Respond by putting knowledge into practice

Trauma-informed care and trauma-informed environments

Four Rs

Realize the prevalence of trauma;

Recognize how trauma affects all individuals involved with the agency;

Respond by putting knowledge into practice;

Resist re-traumatization.
Reflection time: what did your group discuss during the activity?

What does it mean to be trauma informed?

A trauma-informed approach refers to how an agency thinks about and responds to those who have experienced trauma.

A trauma-informed approach is designed to avoid re-traumatization of clients.

Think about trauma informed care like a “universal precaution” – applied to everyone all the time to ensure the utmost care.
Two questions:

What’s wrong with you?

What happened to you?

Six principals of a trauma informed approach
• Safety
• Trustworthiness
• Peer support
• Collaboration
• Empowerment
• Considerations of culture and history

How does this compare to the feelings and needs we listed earlier?

What are the values that guide your work? Do they reflect a trauma-informed approach?

ChicagoCAC’s Core Values:
1. Freedom from abuse and exploitation is a basic human right.
2. The Center is a safe place for everyone who enters its doors.
3. The collaborative process is the best approach to prevent and respond to child abuse.
4. Children and families deserve to receive the highest standard of care available.
5. Best-practice interventions can restore lives.
R4: Resist re-traumatization
Empathy, self-awareness and respect

Thinking about physical space

What increases anxiety? | What makes someone feel safe?

What does a trauma-informed space look like for the population you work with?
Four pillars of security for a child:

• People
• Place
• Routine
• Ritual

What are examples of trauma-informed rituals for the population you work with?

Every child & family is unique. Every path towards healing is different.
Take care of yourself!

Good practice

• Healthy boundaries
• Respect for all
• Self-awareness
• Positive coping skills
• Strong communication skills
• Supervision and support

What we covered:

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• Realize: Learn about the prevalence of trauma and its universal nature
• Recognize: Learn about the impact of trauma on various components of one’s life and identify indicators of trauma
• Respond and resist re-traumatization: Learn the importance of responding to our knowledge of trauma by changing our practice
A path to hope and healing