



Becoming a More Trauma-Informed Organization  
Improving Trauma-Informed Care & Services for  
The Families We Serve

Regions 3 and 4 Conference  
June 2018

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This material was adapted from Diana  
Autin's full presentation at the  
NE-PACT Region 1 Parent Center  
Conference 2017

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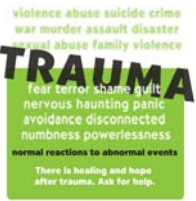
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### What is trauma?

- ▶ Emotional, psychological, physical wounding
- ▶ Traumatic reactions occur when neither resistance nor escape is possible




violence abuse suicide crime  
war murder assault disaster  
sexual abuse family violence

**TRAUMA**

fear terror shame guilt  
nervous haunting panic  
avoidance disconnected  
numbness powerlessness

normal reactions to abnormal events

There is healing and hope  
after trauma. Ask for help.

 [www.trauma-informed.ca](http://www.trauma-informed.ca) 1011

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## What is trauma?

- ▶ Traumatic events can be shocking & terrifying
- ▶ Can include interpersonal violence
- ▶ Trauma often involves betrayal by trusted person or institution
- ▶ Trauma can be cumulative



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## Why do we need to be “trauma informed?”

- ▶ Families we work with have faced/face trauma
- ▶ Many actions & responses (coping strategies) that seem ineffective & unhealthy in the present are adaptive responses to past traumatic experiences
- ▶ The impact of trauma is often experienced across the lifespan & across generations



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## Adverse Childhood Experiences Study

- ▶ Largest public health crisis study examining health & social effects of adverse childhood experiences throughout the lifespan (17,421 participants)
- ▶ 66% of women reported at least one childhood experience involving abuse, violence, or family strife



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### Adverse childhood experience on adulthood

- ▶ Adverse childhood experiences determine the likelihood of the 10 most common causes of death
- ▶ With an ACE score of 0, the majority of adults have few, if any, risk factors for these diseases
- ▶ With an ACE score of 4 or more, the majority of adults have multiple risk factors for these diseases or the diseases themselves




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### What is “trauma informed?”

- ▶ Realizes the widespread impact of trauma
- ▶ Recognizes that “symptoms” are often adaptive coping mechanisms
- ▶ Resists re-traumatization
- ▶ Responds by integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, practices, & settings




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### Qualities of a Trauma-Informed System

- ▶ Intentionality: Action rooted in “knowing”
- ▶ Mutuality: Healing happens in relationships
- ▶ Commonality: We all have a story
- ▶ Potentiality: Healing is possible for all




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## Trauma Informed Practice

- ▶ Reframes the conversation from "what's wrong with you" to "what happened to you"
- ▶ Acknowledges the many pathways to recovery
- ▶ Recognizes healing happens in relationships
- ▶ Focuses on the person, not the label
- ▶ Incorporates an understanding of the impact of trauma on the body
- ▶ Creates conditions for safety, healing, recovery
- ▶ Incorporates the wisdom, experience & expertise of women with lived experience in all aspects of the work



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## To See (or Hear) Clearly



- It is only with the heart that one can see clearly; what is essential is invisible to the eye.  
- *The Little Prince*  
Antoine de Saint Exupery

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"Most of your healing journey will be about unlearning the patterns of self-protection that once kept you safe"

Vironika Tugaleva

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You work with these families every day...

How do their stories affect you?

How do we recognize and deal with our own trauma?

How can you build in some strategies to help you and your staff?

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### Objectives



- Identify elements of trauma informed relationships in the workplace
- Identify knowledge, skills and values of trauma informed staff
- Strengthen core competencies for trauma informed staff within our own organizations

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Self-care is not selfish. You cannot serve from an empty vessel.






"Self-care is never a selfish act - it is simply good stewardship of the only gift I have, the gift I was put on earth to offer to others."  
- Parker Palmer



Be careful how you are talking to yourself because you are listening.  
- Lisa M. Hayes



When one is out of touch with oneself, one cannot touch others. - Anne Morrow Lindbergh, Gift from the Sea

<b>THINGS TO REMEMBER:</b> I will be okay, ask for help when I need it.  When no one is comforting you, You can comfort yourself.	<b>THINGS TO REMEMBER:</b> I have my own power and strength.  When no one is kind to you, You can be kind to yourself.
<b>THINGS TO REMEMBER:</b> I am worthy and deserve kindness.  When no one is validating you, You can validate yourself.	<b>THINGS TO REMEMBER:</b> I can do it! And you got me here!  When no one believes in you, You can believe in yourself.

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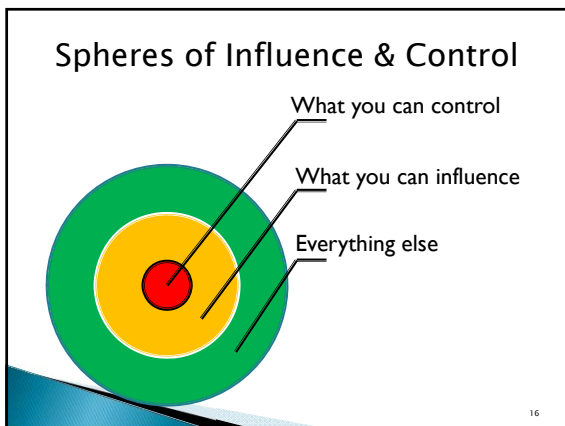
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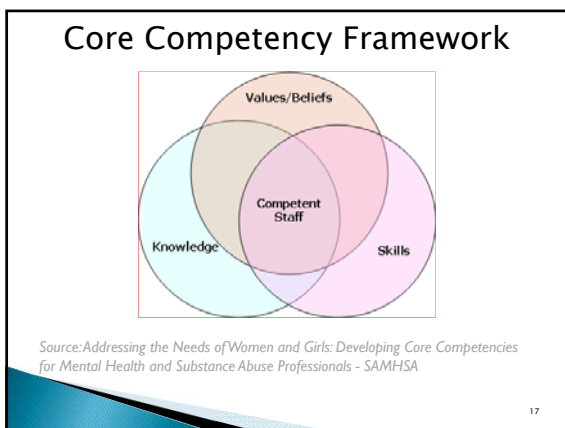
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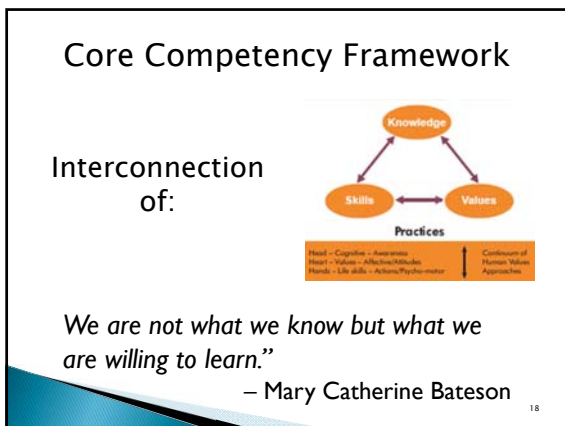
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### Core Competency Framework

**Knowledge** is defined as that what needs to be known to be effective. It may be acquired via:

- Research findings
- Study of best practices
- Feedback from peers and program participants

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### Core Competency Framework

- **Skills** are specific proficiencies and techniques that enable staff to work with efficacy and intention
  - They are what someone does

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### Core Competency Framework

**Values** are the principles and beliefs that underlie our work

They are made manifest through actions and interactions with colleagues and peers/participants

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## Reviewing Core Competencies

“How Do You Know What You Know?”

- Vignettes, Scenarios, Case Studies
- Observation
- Feedback from peers and program participants
- Feedback from Team Members
- Prompts in Supervision
- Self-Assessment
- Annual Performance Reviews
- Storyboards



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## Supporting Staff Through Change

When moving to a trauma informed organization, staff roles, responsibilities, knowledge, skills, and values are continually

- Reviewed
- Reflected upon
- Revised (as needed)

What does this mean for you as staff &/or as supervisors?

What is your experience with change?



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## We are In this Together

In Trauma-informed organizations, staff develop intentional working relationships where

- New knowledge
- Practices
- Courage
- Commitment can develop



Adapted from Margaret Wheatley

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## Cultural Reciprocity

- Recognizes that people process trauma & recovery in different ways
- Understands that recovery happens in relationships
- Requires a sharing of oneself with the person we are seeking to help heal from trauma & develop resilience
- Avoids a “one size fits all” approach
- Believes that each person has it within themselves to develop resiliency...with support

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## Key Strategies

- ▶ Peer support
- ▶ Active listening
- ▶ Skill building
- ▶ Sharing decision-making
- ▶ Development of trust
- ▶ Recognizing the power of powerlessness, habit, & paralysis
- ▶ Replace “fixing” with “facilitating”
- ▶ Understand the dynamics of unequal power relationships

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## Taking Action

- What is the first thing you are going to do when you get back to work?
- Who else needs to be involved to make this happen?
- Who are your allies?
- Who do you have to inform about your intentions?



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