



Creating Sanctuary:

Providing Effective Services to Victims of Trauma

HANDOUTS

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What is a Trauma Informed System or Service?

Many characteristics of trauma informed services

- a **Trauma experience is integrated** into how staff understand people and their problems
- a Commitment to integrating **knowledge about violence and abuse** into service delivery
- a **Do no harm**
- a Promote **healing** and **empowerment**
- a Recognize trauma as a **defining experience** in people's lives, not just an event
- a Acknowledge **strengths**

Definition of Trauma

Dr. Judith Herman, "*Trauma and Recovery*" Defines trauma as:

- a Render victim **helpless** by overwhelming force
- a Involves **threats to life** or bodily integrity or a close personal encounter with violence and death
- a **Disrupts** a sense of **control, connection** and **meaning**
- a Confronts human beings with **helplessness** and **terror**

TIS as a paradigm shift

Traditional Services & Systems	Trauma-Informed Services & Systems
Sees clients as broken , vulnerable, damaged, needing protection and help. Agencies and providers responsible for “fixing” the “problem.”	Focus is on resilience and courage . Agency responsible for creating environment conducive to healing and being partner in client-defined goals.
Staff are experts . Homeless families are seen and treated as passive recipients of services being provided by people who are more knowledgeable about what is best for them.	Homeless families are active experts & partners with the people providing services. Control and choice are left up to individual as much as possible.

Adapted from *A Long Journey Home*, 2009

Key points

- ❑ Any agency providing services to people who may have a trauma history can practice Trauma-Informed Services.
- ❑ Trauma informed systems always have: Universal Screening, Training & Education for all staff, volunteers and Policy & Procedure evaluation related to improving services
- ❑ Homelessness puts women & children at risk for violence, and violence puts women & children at risk for homelessness
- ❑ Intentional human causes are the most complex and difficult types of trauma to recover from
- ❑ Trauma is a normal response by normal people to an abnormal violent and/or traumatic situation
- ❑ People often experience multiple trauma's in their lifetime, not just a single event
- ❑ Causes and effects of violence and trauma are at multiple levels, not just individual level
- ❑ Disconnection and disassociation are typical reactions to people who have been traumatized
- ❑ Services should always seek reduce reminders of trauma

Resources

- Harris, M., & Fallot, R. (2001 a). Using Trauma Theory to Design Service Systems. *New Directions for Mental Health Services*, Number 89, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Prescott, Laura. (2009 Draft Release). *A Long Journey Home: Trauma-Informed Services for Mothers and Children Experiencing Homelessness*. Funded with support from National Child Traumatic Stress Network, W.K.Kellogg Foundation, Homelessness Resource Center and Daniels Fund.
- Herman, J. (1992). *Trauma and Recovery*. New York: Basic Books.

Thank you for your time and attention!



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