

HOW BEING TRAUMA-INFORMED  
IMPROVES  
CRIMINAL JUSTICE RESPONSES



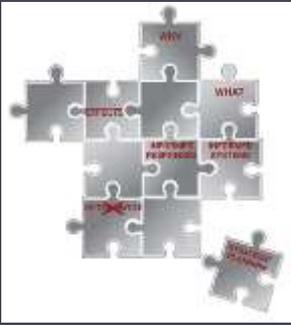
 Jennifer Lopez, Executive Director

1

Self Care Alert



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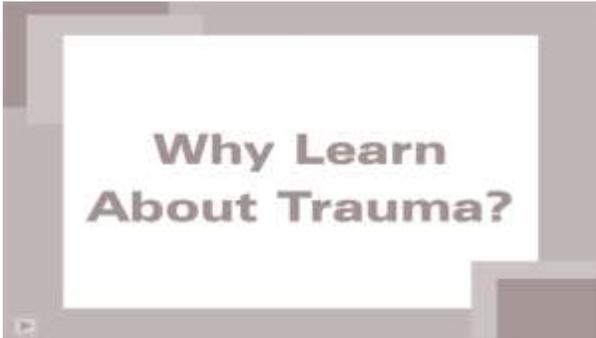


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The Power in Shifting the Paradigm



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### Trauma in the United States

- 1 in 3 girls & 1 in 7 boys experience sexual abuse
- 17% of adult women experience sexual assault
- 1 in 4 women, 1 in 13 men experience IPV
- 10-20% of children are exposed to DV
- Over 21,000 homicides every year
- 7-10 loved ones impacted
- 22% of teens have witnessed a shooting
- High rates of poly-victimization

9

### Question

Studies of women in jail show that \_\_\_\_\_% have a history of trauma.

- a. Between 20 and 40%
- b. Between 40% and 60%
- c. Between 60% and 80%
- d. Over 90%

National Resource Center on Justice Involved Women

10

### Jail Diversion Study

<h2 style="font-size: 2em; margin: 0;">W</h2> <p><b>Women</b></p> <div style="border: 1px solid gray; padding: 5px; width: 80%; margin: 10px auto;"> <p>96% lifetime</p> <hr/> <p>74% current (12,000)</p> </div>	<h2 style="font-size: 2em; margin: 0;">M</h2> <p><b>Men</b></p> <div style="border: 1px solid gray; padding: 5px; width: 80%; margin: 10px auto;"> <p>89% lifetime</p> <hr/> <p>86% current (12,000)</p> </div>
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11

### Mental Health Court Study

Statement	Women (n=100)	Men (n=100)
Knows how to get services for self	70	70
Knows how to help others get services	60	60
Knows how to get help if not going to court	50	50
Knows how to get help if not going to court	40	40
Knows how to help others if not going to court	30	30
Knows how to get help if not going to court	20	20

<h2 style="font-size: 2em; margin: 0;">W</h2> <p><b>Women</b></p> <div style="border: 1px solid gray; padding: 5px; width: 80%; margin: 10px auto;"> <p>87% lifetime</p> <hr/> <p>80% current (10,000)</p> </div>	<h2 style="font-size: 2em; margin: 0;">M</h2> <p><b>Men</b></p> <div style="border: 1px solid gray; padding: 5px; width: 80%; margin: 10px auto;"> <p>75% lifetime</p> <hr/> <p>65% current (10,000)</p> </div>
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I was in the mental health system for 14 years before somebody thought to ask me if I'd been hit, kicked, punched, slapped or knocked out. When they asked those kinds of questions, I said "Oh, yeah, sure." But when they asked if I'd been abused, I said "no." It was just my life.

-A Trauma Survivor

13

The past is never dead.  
It's not even past. William Faulkner



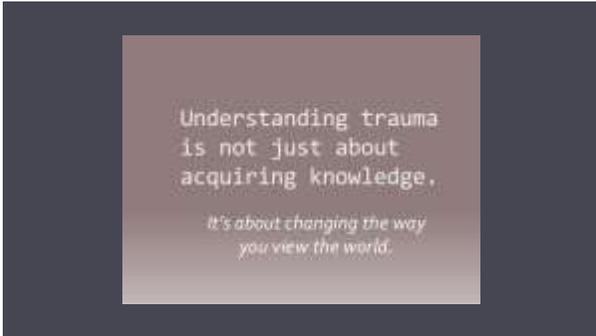
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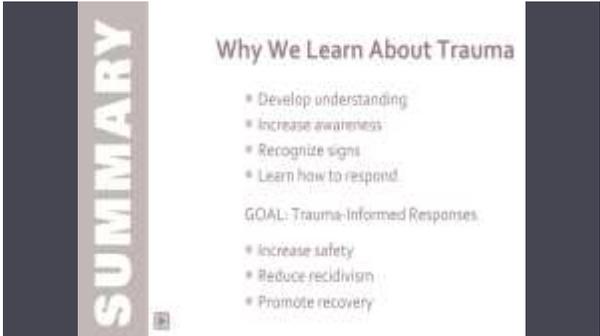
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21

## Learning check

### Traumatic Events

- Physical Abuse/Neglect
- Natural Disaster/Accidents
- Combat/Victim of War
- Sexual Abuse
- Secondary/Vicarious Trauma
- Historical/Community Trauma

22

### Trauma "Defined"

Individual trauma results for an EVENT, series of events, or set of circumstances that is EXPERIENCED by an individual as physically and emotionally harmful or threatening and that has lasting adverse EFFECTS on the individual's social, emotional, or spiritual well-being.

-SAMHSA

23

### Racial Trauma

Physical & psychological symptoms that occur as a result of witnessing or experiencing racism, discrimination, or institutional racism

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Ongoing and collective injuries

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Profound impact on MH of individuals exposed

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24

## Who experiences Racial Trauma?

- All Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) are vulnerable to racial trauma
- Education Level
  - Black people with at least some college education are more likely to say they've experienced discrimination
- Gender
  - In general, no differences
  - Black men are more likely to report that they were unfairly stopped by the police and to be treated as suspicious
- Age
  - No differences; but it is experienced differently based on developmental age
- Pew Research 2019

25

## Implications

- Acknowledgement of racial trauma in all trauma-informed strategies
- Consider through lens of racial equity informed by historic and contemporary systems of oppression

26

## Vicarious Trauma



27

## Who is affected?



- First Responders
- Law Enforcement Officers
- Judges & Court Personnel
- Attorneys
- Correctional Officers/Jail Staff
- Probation/Parole Officers
- Behavioral Health Providers

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Impact on work

- Behavior
- Relationships
- Personal values/beliefs
- Job performance



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Event

Experience

Effect

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Traumatic Events

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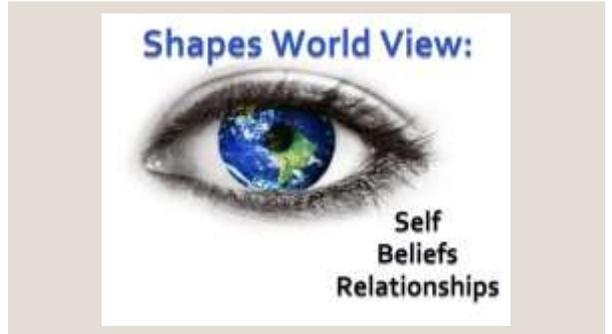
Experienced as:

- Threatening
- Terrifying
- Overwhelming

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**SUMMARY**

**What is Trauma?**

- Event, experience, effect
- Sudden overwhelming abuse, past/present
- Experienced as terrifying, threatening, overwhelming
- Impact is pervasive and experienced throughout life
- Individualized experiences
- Vicarious trauma can occur in professionals working in the justice system and/or with justice-involved individuals

*Many people cope or heal – others get stuck*

35



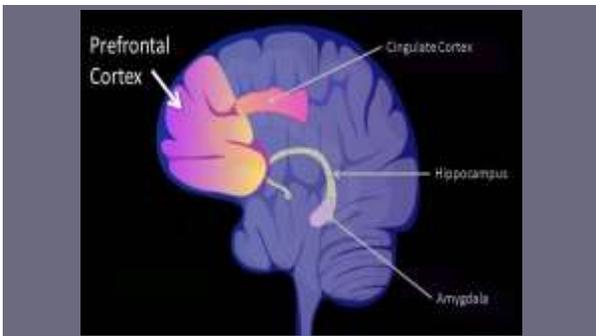
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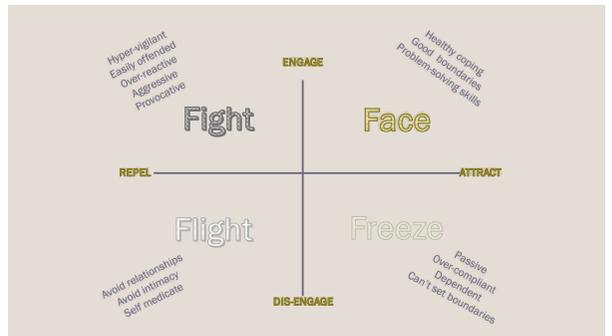
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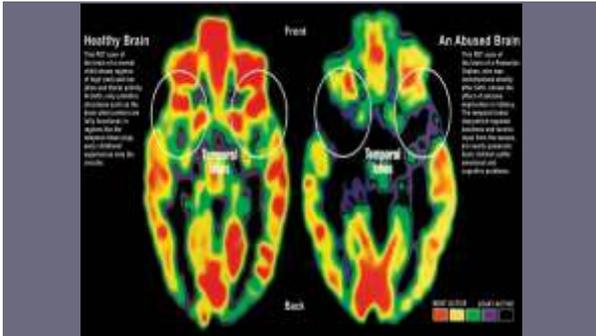
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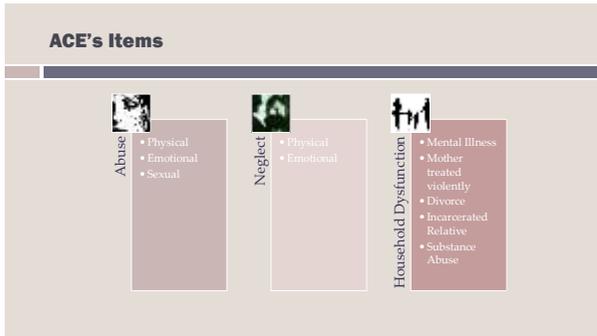
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**BEHAVIOR**  
=  
**SURVIVAL**

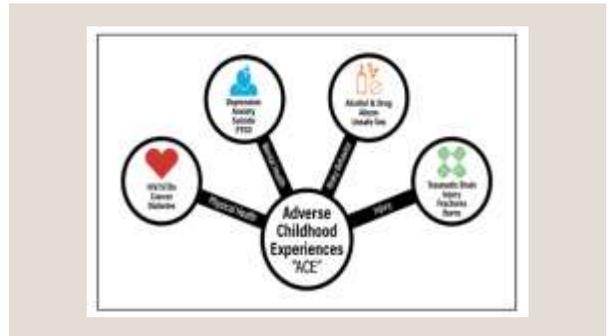
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- BEHAVIOR = SURVIVAL**
- "I learned to fight to take care of myself...I got big."
  - "I was tired of being the prey, so I turned into the predator...it was either them or me."
  - "I became an instigator...because I felt I need to have the upper hand."

44



45



46

- ### Adverse childhood experiences NOT covered by the ACES Study
- Community violence
  - Witnessing a shooting, bombing, riot
  - Being shot at
  - Being jumped or beaten
  - Being stabbed
  - Having lost someone close to you to murder

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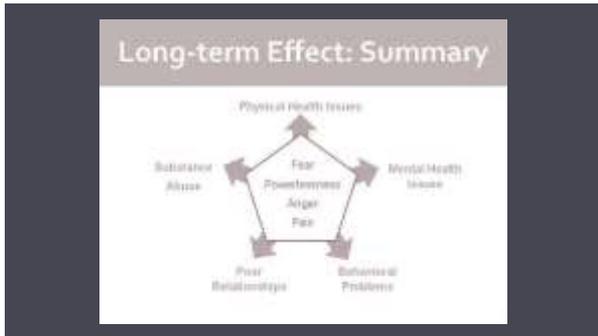
### Early maltreatment & Criminal Justice

Being abused and/or neglected as a child increases the likelihood of arrest:

- As a juvenile by 59%
- As an adult by 28%
- For a violent crime by 30%

Widom 1995

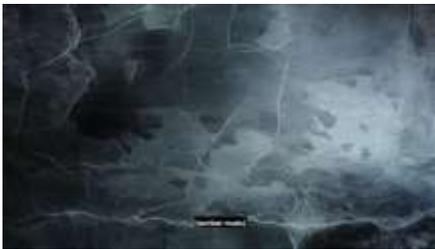
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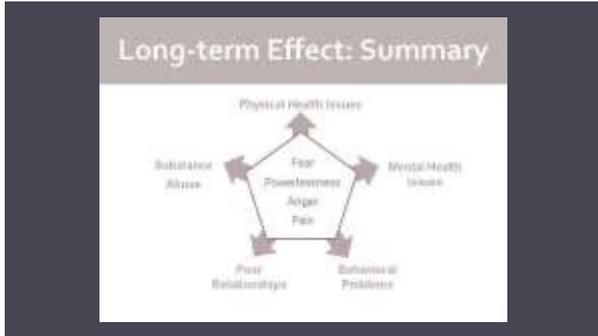
51

### Learning check

#### Trauma's Effects

- **Mental Health and Trauma**
  - Symptoms of trauma and mental illness overlap
  - Trauma may exacerbate mental illness and vice versa
- **Substance Misuse/Abuse**
  - Coping behavior and escape from reality
  - Alcohol and drugs "medicate" trauma effects
- **Behavioral Problems and Poor Relationships**
  - Engaging in high-risk behavior
  - Affects many aspects of relationships

52



53

- ### Custodial Settings - Who is safe?
- Women & girls are generally safer in prisons/jail/detention
  - Men are rarely safer in prison/jail/detention
  - Those with sexual abuse/neglect sometimes at higher risk of behavioral problems & acting out while detained
  - At higher risk of sexual assault & lethal violence

54

### Inmate Code

“You have to establish yourself through violence, and I have. I started lifting weights and assaulting people so other prisoners would leave me alone. It all comes back to respect through fear. Once this type of perspective is ingrained in you, it’s hard not to let it come to the forefront of your personality. Meditation and Buddhist practices are helping me rid myself of this “convict mask” that I have kept on for so many years.”

55

- ### SUMMARY Trauma's Effects
- » Affects broad aspects of life
  - » Behavior can =
    - » Coping
    - » Attempts to survive
  - » Can lead to justice involvement

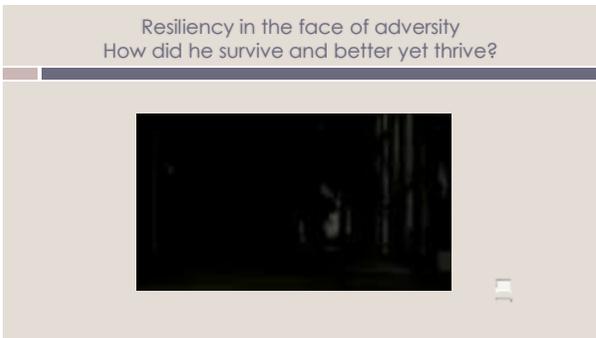
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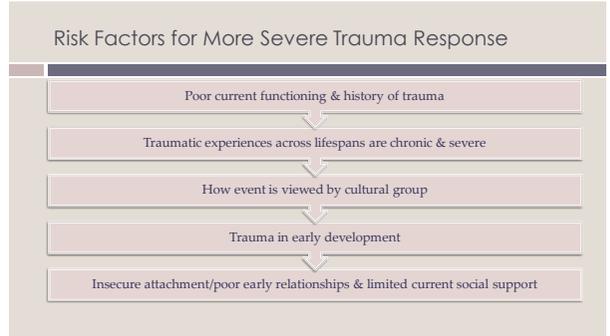
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People think differently about trauma



- Fear of stigma
- Can't be a victim
- Suck it up
- Self-blame
- Negative self-view
- World is dangerous
- Betrayal
- Anger & rage
- Desire for revenge

61



62

Many Justice-Involved Individuals also experience:



- Death of family member
- Parental abandonment
- Foster care placement
- Community violence
- Poverty

Haugebrook, Zgoba, Maschi, Morgan & Brown 2010  
Maschi, Gibson, Zgoba & Morgen, 2011 Courtney & Maschi, 2013

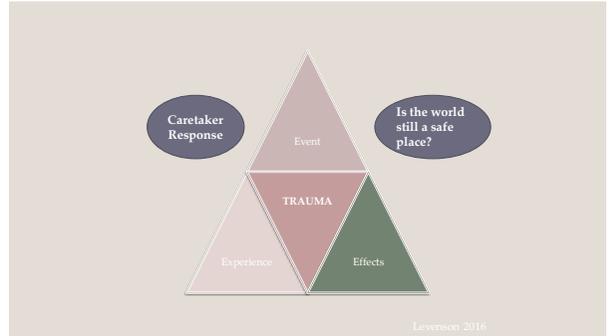
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Many individuals are raised in disordered social environment in which parents or caretakers with many problems of their own were ill-equipped to protect their children from a variety of harms.

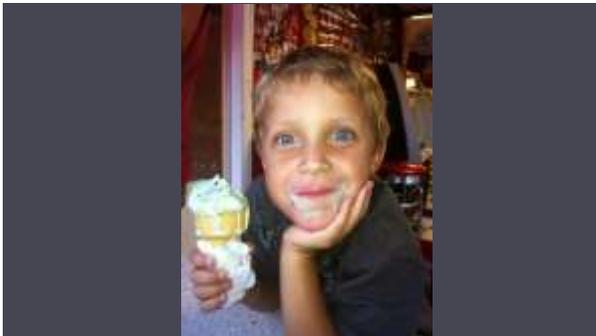
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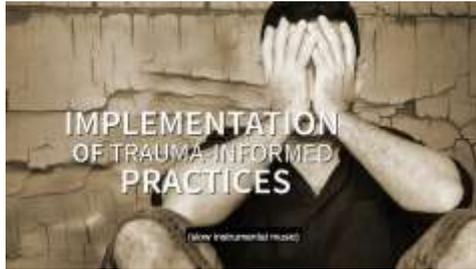
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67



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69



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- Respect
- Information
- Safety
- Choice

71

Levenson 2016

 <b>Physically Safe</b> Comfort Privacy Positioning	 <b>Socially Safe</b> Consistent & Reliable Boundaries Respect
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72

### TIPS for Creating a Safe Emotional Environment

- Providing consistent, predictable & respectful responses to clients across the agency & office staff
- Asking clients what works best for them
- Explaining how client information may be used
- Privacy & Confidentiality
- Cultural Humility

73

### Respectful Non-Judgmental Stance

- MEET PEOPLE WHERE THEY ARE
- APPROACH WITH PATIENCE
- PROPER PACING
- CALM PERSISTENCE
- "PERSON-FIRST" LANGUAGE

74

Clients will be ambivalent, defensive, combative, resistant at times

Reframe: Resistant clients are struggling with a conflict between a genuine desire to change and the need to maintain what is familiar

Levenson 2016

75

**AVOID**

Overreacting  
Triggering behavior

76

# APPROACH

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With caution  
Allow safe space

77

### Triggers

Smells	Lack of power/control
Sounds,	Conflict in relationship
Taste	Separation or loss
Tone of voice	Transitions & routine disruption
Time of year	Feeling of vulnerability or rejection
Appearance	Feeling threatened or attacked
Authority figures	Loneliness
Events	Sensory overload

78

### The "Biggies" Among Trauma Triggers

A PERCEIVED LACK OF CONTROL OR POWER	Unpredictability/Unexpected change	Feeling threatened or attacked
Feeling vulnerable or frightened	Feeling shame	Feelings of deprivation or need

79

# COMMUNICATE

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Tell "what happens next"  
Include the person  
Calm, slow, clear

80

**RESPOND**

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Patience  
Sensitive to fear  
Active listening  
Flexible with consequences  
Cultural sensitivity

81

Trustworthiness  
Respect  
Choice

**INTERACT**

Collaboration  
Empowerment

82



83

Traditional Paradigm	Trauma-Informed Paradigm
<b>Clients are sick or bad</b>	<b>Clients are wounded</b>
Bad behavior is due to immorality, bad character, lack of motivation	Bad behavior is viewed through the lens of early experiences
Emphasis on control/compliance	Emphasis on collaboration
We need to manage client behaviors	We need to help clients develop self regulation skills
Clients are resistant	Clients are ambivalent about change
Addictive, self-destructive or abusive behaviors are choices	Maladaptive behaviors are reflective of survival skills
Focus on presenting problem	Presenting problems as symptoms of underlying trauma responses

Levenson 2016

84

### Trauma-Informed Approach:

How a program, agency, organization, or community thinks about and responds to those who have experienced (or are at risk of experiencing) trauma

85

### Healing Happens in Relationships

*Healing occurs by changing the elements of relationships*

- From abusive to nurturing
- From unresponsive to empathetic
- From lies and denial to authenticity and honesty
- From controlling to empowering

Adapted from Schilling, K. Trauma-Informed Care for Individuals Who are Homeless, 2010

86

Reduced Incident Report  
Rhode Island WP

Physical Violence	2007	2008	2009
Inmates assaulting inmates	22	9	6
Inmate fights	38	28	4
Inmates assaulting staff	13	4	2
Use of Force	24	10	5

87

### Trauma-Informed Responses

**SUMMARY**

- Respond with flexibility, sensitivity, and patience
- Interact with respect, information, and choice
- Safety is the primary goal

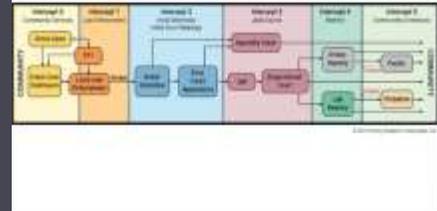
**Universal Assumption of Trauma**

88

## Trauma-Informed Systems

89

## The Sequential Intercept Model (SIM)



90

### Guidelines for Implementing a Trauma-Informed Approach

- Governance & Leadership
- Policy
- Physical Environment
- Engagement & Involvement
- Cross Sector Collaboration

91

### Guidelines for Implementing a Trauma-Informed Approach

- Screening, Assessment, & Treatment Services
- Training & Workforce Development
- Progress Monitoring & Quality Assurance
- Financing
- Evaluation

92

**SUMMARY**

**Key to Becoming Trauma-Informed**

- Develop understanding
- Increase awareness
- Recognize signs
- Learn how to respond

**GOAL: Trauma-Informed Responses**

- Increase safety
- Reduce recidivism
- Promote recovery

**TAKE ACTION**

- Get the word out
- Take steps to create trauma-informed systems

93

**For More Information**



<http://samhsa.gov/gains>  
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94