



Transforming Culture, Policy & Practice *of organizations*

Realize ...

Trauma is pervasive.

- Trauma results from an event, series of events, or set of circumstances that people experience as physically or emotionally harmful or life-threatening. Trauma has lasting adverse effects on an individual's functioning and well-being.
- Trauma impacts individuals, families, groups, organizations, neighborhoods, and communities.
- Many people who work in organizations have also experienced trauma.

Behaviors may be coping strategies and defense mechanisms.

- People often develop behaviors (ways of interacting with others) to survive the effects of traumatic events.
- Ask a different kind of question...
"What happened to you/me?" instead of "What's wrong with you/me?"

Recovery is possible.

- Recovery is an individual process. There are many different paths that each person might take.

Recognize ...

The signs of traumatic experience may be immediate or delayed.

Reactions to trauma may take many forms:

- Emotional (e.g., anger, shame, sadness, fear, numbness).
- Physical (e.g., sleep disturbance; startle response; chronic health conditions like heart disease, diabetes, and many others).
- Behavioral (e.g., use of alcohol, tobacco, other drugs; withdrawn; impulsive; self-injurious).
- Social/interpersonal (e.g., difficulty trusting others; isolation; impaired relationships).
- Cognitive (e.g., difficulty concentrating; intrusive memories; suicidal thoughts).
- Existential (e.g., despair; questioning "why me?").

Respond ...

Apply a trauma-informed approach to all functions of the organization (e.g., policy, leadership, supervision, direct practice, training).

- Provide an environment that is physically and psychologically safe.
- Implement universal screening and assessment for trauma.
- Provide access to and supervision for trauma-specific services (e.g., individual and group therapy).
- Offer peer support.
- Ensure continuity of care between organizations and across systems.
- Help staff members address stress from secondary trauma.
- Conduct organizational operations and treatment planning transparently to build and maintain trust among clients/families, direct-service staff, and leadership.

Resist Re-Traumatizing ...

Organizations often inadvertently create stressful or toxic environments that interfere with client and staff well-being.

- Recognize that certain practices (e.g., seclusion, restraint) may create trauma and trigger traumatic memories.
- Understand the negative impact of power differentials (e.g., coercive decisions, activities, and treatments).
- Support meaningful power-sharing and decision-making (e.g., client and staff voice and choice, shared decisions, shared treatment planning).

Resources: www.centerforebp.case.edu/resources/tools/tic | <http://mha.ohio.gov/Default.aspx?tabid=104>