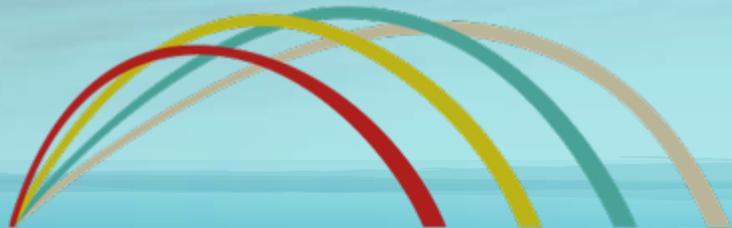


Using a Trauma-Informed Approach

*Mary Maley, MS (She/Her)
ACT for Youth, Cornell University
May 25, 2022*



**Bronfenbrenner Center
for Translational Research**



Self Care Note

Do what you need to do to take care of yourself

During the session

- ▶ Take a quick break from the session
- ▶ Get up/stretch
- ▶ Eat or drink something
- ▶ Leave the session----it will be available later

After the session

- ▶ Talk to someone (personal, professional)
- ▶ Reflection & Journaling
- ▶ Get moving---Exercise, dance, go for a walk
- ▶ Rest

Need to talk to someone immediately?

- ▶ Crisis Text Line: <https://www.crisistextline.org>
- ▶ NYC Well (Talk.Text.Chat 24/7):1-888-NYC-WELL / <https://nycwell.cityofnewyork.us/en/>
- ▶ National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (Lifeline)
1-800-273-TALK (8255),
or text the Crisis Text Line (text HELLO to 741741).
- ▶ National Sexual Assault Hotline <https://www.rainn.org/resources>
(800)-656-4673

Group Agreements/Rules of Engagement

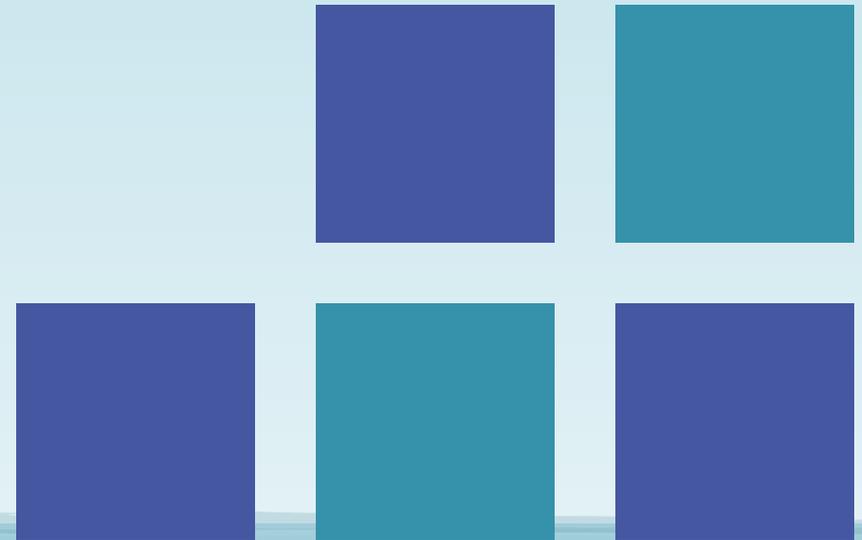
Be willing to share while being mindful of what is shared

Values-neutral statements

Make space, take space

Chat responsibly

Self-care



Plan for Today

- Define Trauma and its impact on youth
- ACEs (Adverse Childhood Experiences)
- Understand the Key Principles of a Trauma Informed Care Approach
- Recognize impact on direct service providers and identify self-care strategies



Question of the Day

In the chat box, share a place, person or thing that helps you feel safe



What is Trauma?

Trauma results from an event, series of events, or set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or life threatening and that has lasting adverse effects on the individual's functioning and mental, physical, social, emotional or spiritual well-being. SAMHSA 2014

Trauma is universal Regardless of ...

- **Age**
- **Culture**
- **Gender**
- **Class**



Types of Trauma

Acute – A singular event (e.g. natural disaster, a violent attack, an accident)

Chronic – An on-going issue or series of events (e.g. long-standing abuse, hunger, poverty, alcohol or substance abuse in the home)

ACUTE

- **School shooting**
- **Race-related violence**
- **Terrorist attack**
- **Natural disaster (e.g., earthquakes, flood, tornado, hurricanes)**
- **Serious accident (e.g., car or motorcycle crashes)**
- **Sudden or violent loss of a loved one**
- **Physical or sexual assault**
- **Out-of-home placement of children**
- **Divorce**
- **Medical procedure, hospitalization, surgery**
- **Suicide of loved one, friend, or acquaintance**
- **Workplace violence**
- **Bullying / Harassment**

CHRONIC

- **Physical/ Emotional abuse**
- **Long-standing sexual abuse**
- **Alcohol or substance abuse within the home**
- **Domestic violence**
- **Multiple medical hospitalizations, procedures, and surgeries**
- **Workplace harassment**
- **Wars and other forms of political violence**
- **Vicarious traumatization resulting from providing services to trauma survivors**
- **Malnutrition**

The Three E's of Trauma

Event

An **Event** is objective and measurable. Traumatic events include abuse (physical, emotional, sexual); domestic or community violence; an accident or natural disaster; and war or terrorism



Experience

An **Experience** is subjective and difficult to measure because it relates to how someone reacts to an event. It is often thought to be life threatening or physically or emotionally overwhelming, and intensity can vary among people and over time



Effects

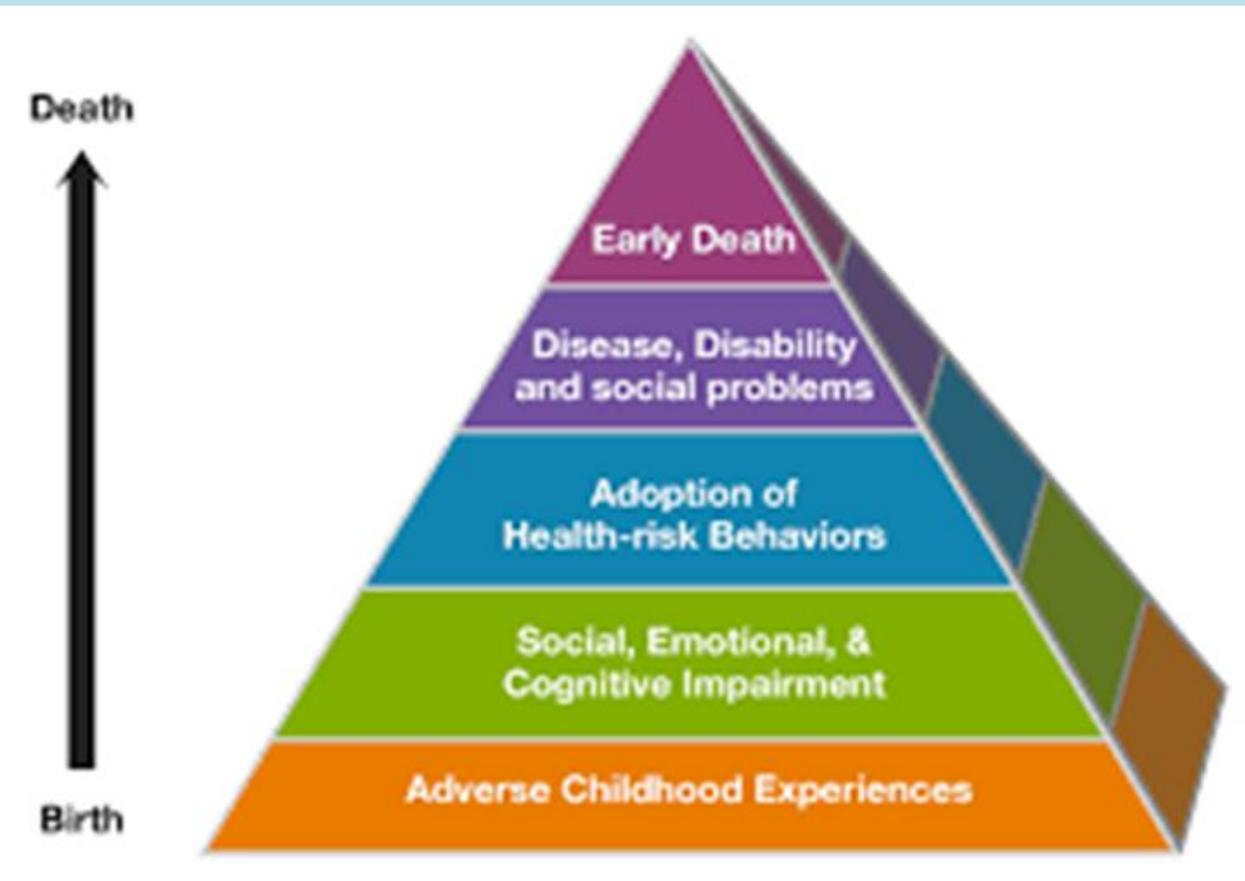
Effects are the reactions a person has to an event and the ways an experience changes or alters that person's ongoing and future behavior.



Effects of Trauma

Behavioral Effects	Cognitive Effects	Social Effects
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Risk taking- Acting out- Rule breaking- Isolating	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Attention- Memory- Executive function- Verbal abilities- Skills development- Problem solving	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Impulsivity- Aggression- Deviance- Withdrawal- Challenged relationships

Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE)



- Physical or Emotional abuse by a parent
- Sexual abuse by anyone
- Growing up with an alcohol and/or drug abuser in the household
- Domestic violence
- Experiencing the incarceration of a household member
- Living with a family member experiencing mental illness
- Loss of a parent
- Emotional or physical neglect

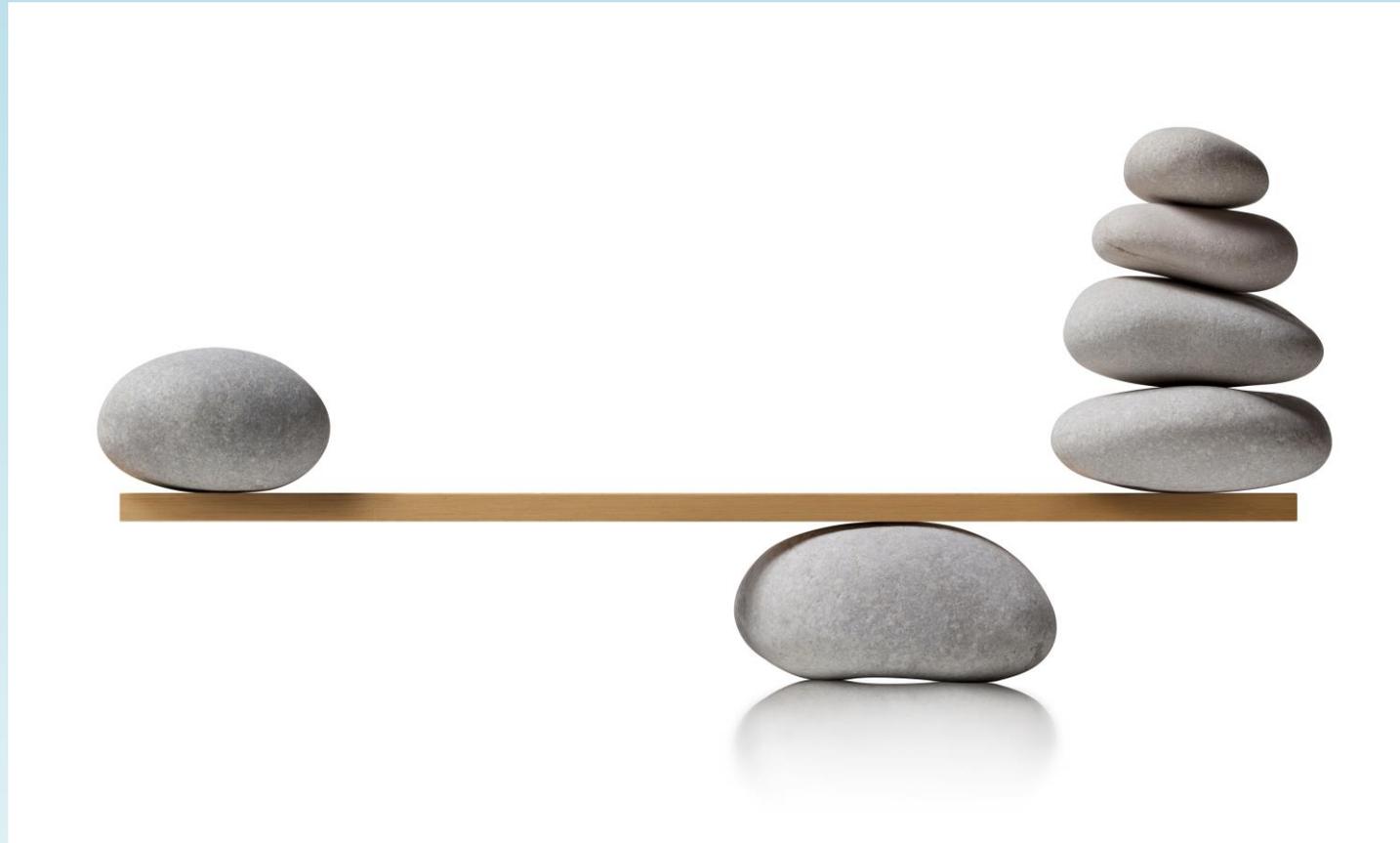
ACEs Study Findings

- 63% of study participants had experienced at least one category of childhood trauma.
- Over 20% experienced 3 or more categories of trauma
- 4 or more traumatic experiences greatly increased adults' risk for alcoholism, drug abuse, suicide attempts, sexually transmitted diseases, and poor general health.
- 4 or more ACEs:
15% of women - 9% of men



More widespread
than assumed

But it's not always balanced



Historical & Racial Trauma

- The cumulative emotional and psychological wounding, as a result of group traumatic experiences, transmitted across generations within a community.
- Often associated with racial & ethnic population groups in the US who have suffered major intergenerational losses/trauma and assaults on their culture and well-being.
- Witnessing or experiencing racism, discrimination, or structural prejudice (also known as institutional racism) can have a profound impact on the mental health of individuals exposed to these events.
- Race-based traumatic stress refers to the stressful impact or emotional pain of one's experience with racism and discrimination

Trauma and Stress Increase Allostatic

Allostatic load refers to the cumulative burden of chronic stress and life events.

Increases risk for long term health problems

Trauma & Current Events



A close-up photograph of a branch with several pink cherry blossoms in various stages of bloom. The flowers are vibrant pink with visible yellow stamens. The background is a soft, out-of-focus blur of more pink blossoms, creating a dreamy, ethereal atmosphere. The lighting is soft and natural, highlighting the delicate petals.

And

Breathe

Addressing Trauma

- Creating supportive relationships and communities
- Using Trauma-Informed Care
- Good news: Resiliency trumps ACEs

Resiliency Findings

Internal Protective Factors

- Social Competence
- Problem Solving Skills
- Autonomy
- Sense of purpose, belief in a bright future

Environmental Protective Factors

- Caring Relationships
- High Expectations
- Opportunities for participation

Instead of asking

“What is wrong with this person?”

ask...

“What happened to this person?”

Trauma-Informed Approach

“A program, organization, or system that is trauma-informed:

Realizes the widespread impact of trauma and understands potential paths for recovery;

Recognizes the signs and symptoms of trauma in clients, families, staff, and others involved with the system;

Responds by fully integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, and practices; and

Seeks to actively **resist** re-traumatization.”

- <http://www.samhsa.gov/ntic/trauma-interventions>

Guiding Principals of a Trauma-Informed Approach

Safety

Trust

Choice

Collaboration

Empowerment

Cultural, Historical & Gender Considerations

Trauma-Informed Care Understands

A situation, attitude, interaction, or environment that *replicates the events or dynamics of the original trauma* and triggers the overwhelming feelings and reactions associated with them

SAFETY

Ensuring physical and emotional safety includes:

- Where and when programs are delivered
- Awareness of an individual's discomfort or unease



TRUSTWORTHINESS



Ensuring trustworthiness through clarity, consistency, interpersonal boundaries includes:

- How to maintain boundaries
- How to communicate reasonable expectations

CHOICE

Maximizing choice and control includes:

- Deciding whether or not to participate in program
- Participation in decision-making throughout programming
- Built in small choices that make a difference



COLLABORATION



Maximizing collaboration and sharing power includes:

- Communicating respect for life experience and history
- Communicating respect for individuals being the expert on their own lives
- Identifying tasks that can be worked on together

EMPOWERMENT

Prioritizing empowerment and skill building includes:

- Emphasizing growth
- Providing opportunities for practice & reflection on skills



CULTURAL, HISTORICAL AND GENDER CONSIDERATIONS



Acknowledging the role culture, history and gender can play in trauma...

- Program actively moves past cultural stereotypes and biases
- Program provides access to gender-responsive services
- Program leverages the healing value of traditional cultural connections
- And recognizes and addresses historical trauma



Incorporating a trauma-informed approach (TIA) into your work with youth

Incorporating TIA in Youth Programs



Re-establishing/re-creating group agreements developed by the youth (**safety, empowerment**)



Start sessions with a light check-in e.g. 1-10 check-in (**safety, empowerment**)



Routines – Provide consistent programs that youth can participate in to create a sense of normalcy. (**Trustworthiness**)



Give youth the option to participate or opt-out of an activity or a full session (**choice**)

Incorporating a TIA in In-Person EBPs

Make sure you discuss with the teacher or site coordinator what the process is for students who need to excuse themselves.

Prior to starting the program, know what support services are available to students.

If going into a school, let the guidance/counseling office know you're starting programming soon, in case they see an increase in visits to their offices.

Is the space itself welcoming? What is the “emotional temperature” in the room? Does it feel open or confined?

If school policy allows, explain that if someone gets uncomfortable, they can leave the room to take care of their needs.

In the sex ed classroom

Have experienced or are currently experiencing one of the many situations we aim to prevent or deter them from

May have students that are children of teen parents or parents themselves

Students who have witnessed or experienced abuse

Young people who are living with HIV or have a family member that is

Safety

- *Educator* is free of judgment
- Uses inclusive language
- Creates a sex positive environment
- Structure

Trustworthiness

- Clear about what you know, and don't know
- Mandated reporter status
- Information is accurate and up to date

Choice

- Youth are choosing to participate
- Using “right to Pass”
- If the site allows, Youth can leave if uncomfortable

Collaboration

- Honor group agreements, not only the agreements, but the process as well
- Take brainstorming seriously

Empowerment

- Recognize youth as the experts of their own experiences
- Integrating discussions on consent when possible



Historical/Cultural/Gender Considerations

- Consistently strive to become more culturally competent
- Check your privileges

Trauma Informed Care at the Organizational Level

Review

Review agency policy regarding trauma-informed care.

Ensure

Ensure proper training regarding trauma-informed care.

Consider

Consider alternative methods to how we interact and intervene with the people we work with, especially when there is a concern for their psychological and physical safety.

Adjust

Adjust our perspective - what we think of as intervention may feel abusive and become re-traumatizing.

Impact on Direct Service Providers

When working with traumatized individuals, staff can experience increased stress related to:

- Secondary/vicarious trauma
- Threats to physical/emotional safety
- Being asked to do “more and more” with “less and less”

Self-care resources

Self-Care for Youth Work Professionals

- http://www.actforyouth.net/youth_development/professionals/self-care.cfm

Self-Care Starter Kit

- <http://socialwork.buffalo.edu/resources/self-care-starter-kit.html>

Back to Our Safe Spaces



RESOURCES

ACT for Youth: Positive Youth Development

http://www.actforyouth.net/youth_development/

ACT for Youth: Youth Work Professionals

http://www.actforyouth.net/youth_development/professionals/

SAMHSA's Concept of Trauma and Guidance for a Trauma-Informed Approach. 2014.

https://ncsacw.acf.hhs.gov/userfiles/files/SAMHSA_Trauma.pdf

RESOURCES

Addressing Race and Trauma in the Classroom -

https://www.nctsn.org/sites/default/files/resources/addressing_race_and_trauma_in_the_classroom_educators.pdf

Trauma-Informed School Strategies During COVID-19 -

https://www.nctsn.org/resources/trauma-informed-school-strategies-during-covid-19?utm_source=ebulletin&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=nctsn-ebulletin

Implementing a Trauma-Informed Approach for Youth Across Service Sectors - https://youth.gov/docs/Trauma_Informed_Approach_508.pdf

The Institute of Trauma & Trauma-Informed Care at the University at Buffalo School of Social Work <https://socialwork.buffalo.edu/social-research/institutes-centers/institute-on-trauma-and-trauma-informed-care.html>

Trauma-Informed Community Initiative of Western New York
<http://ticiwny.com/>

RESOURCES

Guide to Toxic Stress: <https://developingchild.harvard.edu/guide/a-guide-to-toxic-stress/>

Turnaround USA/Resilience: <https://turnaroundusa.org/resources-three-rs/>

ACF: What is Historical Trauma: <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/trauma-toolkit/trauma-concept>

National Child Traumatic Stress Network:
<https://www.nctsn.org/resources/all-nctsn-resources>

7 Surprising Classroom Triggers for Kids Who experience Trauma:
<https://www.weareteachers.com/classroom-trauma-triggers/>

After the Harvest: A Story about saying goodbye (e-book for children)
<http://fsustress.org/AfterTheHarvest/AfterTheHarvest.html>

Thank You From Your ACT for Youth Training Team



Marisol De Leon md696@cornell.edu

Michele Luc ml782@cornell.edu

Heather Wynkoop haw48@cornell.edu

Mary Maley mm153@cornell.edu

www.actforyouth.net