Building a Trauma-Informed Workforce

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Agenda

01 Adverse Childhood Experiences
02 The Four Rs
03 Principles for trauma-informed organizations
04 Review of policies & practices
05 Literature review
06 Closing & questions
Adverse Childhood Experiences
Before your 18th birthday

Did a parent or other adult in your household often or very often swear at you, insult you, put you down, or humiliate you? act in a way that made you afraid you might be physically hurt?

Was a parent ever lost to you through divorce, abandonment, or other reason?

Did you live with someone who was a problem drinker or alcoholic, or who used street drugs?

Was a household member depressed or mentally ill, or did a household member attempt suicide?

Take the ACE Quiz - And Learn What it Does and Doesn't Mean (Starescheski 2015)

We Can Prevent Childhood Adversity (CDC 2021)
How do ACEs show up in the workplace?
The Four Rs

Provided by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)

SAMHSA’s Concept of Trauma and Guidance for a Trauma-Informed Approach (SAMHSA 2014)
Realize

People at all levels of the organization or system have a basic realization about trauma and understand how trauma can affect families, groups, organizations, and communities, as well as individuals.

SAMHSA’s Concept of Trauma and Guidance for a Trauma-Informed Approach (SAMHSA 2014)
People in the organization are also able to recognize the signs of trauma.

Recognize

SAMHSA’s Concept of Trauma and Guidance for a Trauma-Informed Approach (SAMHSA 2014)
The program, organization, or system responds by applying the principles of a trauma-informed approach to all areas of functioning.

SAMHSA’s Concept of Trauma and Guidance for a Trauma-Informed Approach (SAMHSA 2014)
Resist re-traumatization

A trauma-informed approach seeks to resist re-traumatization of staff as well as patrons.

SAMHSA’s Concept of Trauma and Guidance for a Trauma-Informed Approach (SAMHSA 2014)
Six principles for trauma-informed organizations
Safety
Transparency
Peer Support
Collaboration
Empowerment
Culture, history, gender
Policies that support trauma-informed approaches
Characteristics of a trauma-informed organization
Writing organizational policies

Elements of a trauma-informed policy

Implementing trauma-informed policies
Trauma-informed HR practices

Hiring

Onboarding

Offboarding & turnover
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Common/traditional view</th>
<th>Trauma-informed view</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employees choose their actions and behavior and need consequences</td>
<td>Employees want to do well but lack the skills or support, or have learned bad behaviors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Characterizes employee behavior negatively</td>
<td>Characterizes employee behavior constructively</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uses labels to describe employees</td>
<td>Reframes characteristics to identify strengths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authoritarian</td>
<td>Collaborative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimizes coping strategies or tells employees to leave it at home</td>
<td>Creates a supportive work environment that offers healthy coping strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance-focused</td>
<td>Whole person-focused</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee should know expectations</td>
<td>Expectations are communicated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uses jargon</td>
<td>Uses language everyone can understand</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Retain

Practicing the four Rs can lead to the fifth.

SAMHSA’s Concept of Trauma and Guidance for a Trauma-Informed Approach (SAMHSA 2014)
White Supremacy Culture - Still Here (Okun 2021)
Retention factors
Benefits
Workload
Training
Acknowledgement

SAMHSA’s Concept of Trauma and Guidance for a Trauma-Informed Approach (SAMHSA 2014)
White Supremacy Culture - Still Here (Okun 2021)
Advice for Implementation

- SAMHSA’s Concept of Trauma and Guidance for a Trauma-Informed Approach (SAMHSA 2014)
- White Supremacy Culture - Still Here (Okun 2021)
Specific advice after a trauma situation

SAMHSA’s Concept of Trauma and Guidance for a Trauma-Informed Approach (SAMHSA 2014)
Urban Library Trauma Study: Final Report (Comito, Zabriskie, et al. 2022)
Do

Decompress
Take it seriously
Communicate
Don’t

- Micromanage reactions
- Judge their response
- Ignore the event
  (or be perceived to ignore it)
Outcomes

Retention
Customer service
Safer space for POC
Literature Review
Next Steps
Quick Start Tool Kit

CTRI: Crisis & Trauma Resource Institute
Trauma Informed Workplace Assessment
A Little Book about Workplace Culture
A Little Book about Trauma Informed Workplaces
Become a Trauma Informed Leader
Urban Library Trauma Study Final Report
Questions?

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