

EPIC TEAMWORK



ENCOURAGE PEERS. INSPIRE CHANGE.

How New Hampshire's Division for Children, Youth and Families is Promoting Workforce Resilience

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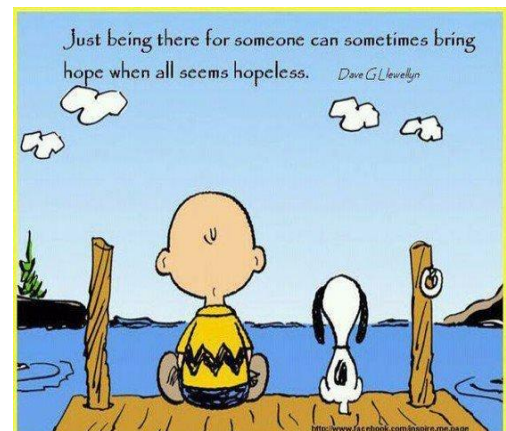
The National Child Trauma Stress Network

Creating Trauma-Informed Systems (extracted from the NCTSN website)

A trauma-informed child and family service system is one in which all parties involved recognize and respond to **the impact of traumatic stress on those who have contact with the system** including children, caregivers, and **service providers**. Programs and agencies within such a system infuse and sustain trauma awareness, knowledge, and skills into their **organizational cultures, practices, and policies**. They act in collaboration with all those who are involved with the child, using the best available science, to **maximize physical and psychological safety**, facilitate the recovery of the child and family, and support their ability to thrive.

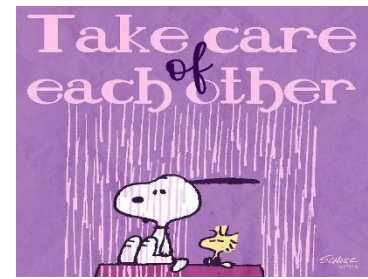
A service system with a trauma-informed perspective is one in which agencies, programs, and service providers:

1. Routinely screen for trauma exposure and related symptoms.
2. Use evidence-based, culturally responsive assessment and treatment for traumatic stress and associated mental health symptoms.
3. Make resources available to children, families, and providers on trauma exposure, its impact, and treatment.
4. **Engage in efforts to strengthen the resilience and protective factors of children and families impacted by and vulnerable to trauma.**
5. Address parent and caregiver trauma and its impact on the family system.
6. Emphasize continuity of care and collaboration across child-service systems.
7. **Maintain an environment of care for staff that addresses, minimizes, and treats secondary traumatic stress, and that increases staff wellness.**



These activities are rooted in an understanding that trauma-informed agencies, programs, and service providers:

1. **Build meaningful partnerships that create mutuality among children, families, caregivers, and professionals at an individual and organizational level.**
2. Address the intersections of trauma with culture, history, race, gender, location, and language, acknowledge the compounding impact of structural inequity, and are responsive to the unique needs of diverse communities.



What is Trauma-Informed Care and why does it matter?

Trauma-informed care occurs when all parties involved recognize and respond to the impact of traumatic stress on those who have contact with an organization, including children, caregivers, and **service providers**. Trauma-informed organizations infuse and sustain trauma awareness, knowledge, and skills into their organizational cultures, practices, and policies. Collaborating with all those who are involved with the child and using the best available science will **maximize physical and psychological safety**, facilitate the recovery of the child and family, and **promote and support staff well-being**. Organizations that serve children and families have an opportunity and an obligation to identify those experiencing trauma and help them receive appropriate care as early as possible, to prevent potential negative outcomes and promote children's ability to thrive. **Trauma-informed care also requires that organizations support their staff by preventing and addressing the impact of secondary trauma.**

What is the NCTSN Trauma-Informed Organizational Assessment?

The NCTSN Trauma-Informed Organizational Assessment (TIOA) is a tool created by the National Center for Child Traumatic Stress (NCCTS) to help organizations assess their current practices in the context of serving children and families who have experienced trauma. Results from the assessment can drive organizational change that facilitates the recovery of the child and family, supports their ability to thrive, and **maximizes physical and psychological safety**. Results from the NCTSN TIOA can help guide organizations to identify, prioritize, implement, and sustain trauma-informed practices. This tool is an important part of an organizational transformation process to create trauma-informed organizations.



The NCTSN TIOA is derived from the NCTSN definition of a Trauma-Informed Child and Family Service System, which is based on collaborative work from a diverse group of NCTSN members with trauma and systems-change expertise. Their work identified nine areas, or domains, that are key to creating a trauma-informed program or organization, and these are the nine domains of the NCTSN TIOA.



Culture of Safety

What DCYF is doing to build a psychologically safety workplace:

It begins with changing our language.
Instead of workforce, we call ourselves a community.
Instead of staff or coworkers, we call each other



It continues by creating a safe environment where colleagues are encouraged to share experiences, concerns, hopes, ideas, values... without judgment

Fear of making mistakes becomes
opportunity for learning
there is no blaming
only sharing

An important way DCYF promotes psychological safety is through the work of our EPIC Team. The Team is comprised of DCYF colleagues providing peer-to-peer, confidential support in our District Offices, Sununu Youth Services Center and State Office locations.

Our EPIC Team provides one-to-one support that addresses work related stress as well as group activities that promote community building and team bonding.

The best way to combat secondary trauma stress is to create an environment where colleagues feel safe to share how they are feeling.

**A community centered approach creates a sense of belonging and connection.
We become more proactive and less reactive as individuals and as an organization**

As an added measure, our EPIC Team partners with our DHHS Employee Assistance Program (EAP) to provide a direct link to a higher level of therapeutic intervention and support.

A strong community = a safe culture

A strong community + a safe culture = a feeling of belonging & being valued

A strong community + a safe culture + a feeling of belonging & being valued = worker retention

SIGNS OF SECONDARY TRAUMA STRESS

<https://www.nctsn.org/resources/secondary-traumatic-stress-fact-sheet-child-serving-professionals>

Sleeplessness Hypervigilance

Inability to embrace complexity

Hopelessness Physical ailments Minimizing

Fear Anger and cynicism Guilt

Inability to listen, avoidance of clients

Chronic exhaustion

NOTES, EXPRESSIONS & THOUGHTS:

“I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.”

~ Maya Angelou

Thanks to you all, I have valued our time together!
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NH Department of Health & Human Services
Division for Children, Youth & Families