

Trauma, Children and Homelessness

Supporting families on
the path to success

eliminating racism
empowering women

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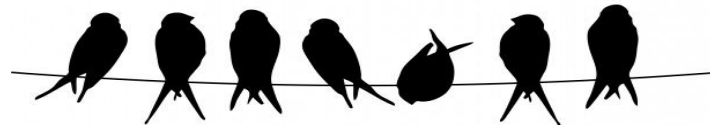
Presenters

- **Beth Russell-** Supervisor of Young Adult Services at the YWCA of Rochester and Monroe County
- **April Allen-** Parent Services Navigator with the YWCA Parents as Teachers Program

What is Trauma?

“Results from an event, series of events, or set of circumstances experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or life-threatening

with lasting adverse effects on the individual’s functioning and mental, physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being.”



What is Trauma Informed Care?



Trauma Informed Care: T.I.C.
What do we already know?

Definition of Trauma Informed Care

- “Trauma-Informed Care (TIC) is an approach in the human service field that assumes that an individual is more likely than not to have a history of trauma.”
- TIC acknowledges the presence of trauma and recognizes that this can play a major role in an individuals life, *including service staff.*
- Changes organizational culture
- Switches from:

*“What’s wrong with this person”
to
“What has happened to this person”*



Source: University at Buffalo What is Trauma Informed Care <http://socialwork.buffalo.edu/social-research/institutes-centers/institute-on-trauma-and-trauma-informed-care/what-is-trauma-informed-care.html>

TIC Definition Continued

Intention of TIC is not to treat symptoms or issues related to trauma

Purpose is to provide support services that are accessible and appropriate to those who may have experienced trauma.



Key components:

- Safety
- Autonomy
- Control
- Empowerment

At Minimum, Do Not Re-Traumatize

Trauma, Homelessness & Families

Mothers Experiencing Homelessness:

- * 4x more likely to be African American
- * 1.5x more likely to be Latina
- * 60-70% have experienced domestic violence
- * 45%-85% have clinical depression
- * 36% -56% have PTSD
- * Shelters often unable to take in single fathers

Trauma Homelessness & Families

93% of
homeless
mothers have
experienced
trauma

81%
experienced
multiple
traumatic
events

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Source: Hayes, Pastek and Zommerville, 2013, The SHIFT Study. The National Center on Family Homelessness.

https://www.air.org/sites/default/files/SHIFT_Service_and_Housing_Interventions_for_Families_in_Transition_final_report.pdf

Source: America's Youngest Outcasts. American Institutes for Research

<https://www.air.org/center/national-center-family-homelessness>

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How Trauma Impacts Families who are Experiencing Homeless

- Traumatic stresses such as interpersonal and community violence are prevalent
- Impact of violence is long lasting
 - Housing stability
 - Maintaining employment
 - Forming healthy relationships
 - Parenting skills
 - Health Outcomes



How Trauma and Homelessness Impact Children

- 2.5 million children are now homeless in the United States every year, 1 in 30 children.
- Children who are experiencing homelessness often face:
 - Frequent moves
 - Family separation
 - Crowded living environments
 - Interrupted schooling
 - Academic disparities
 - ADHD Diagnosis



Source: America's Youngest Outcasts. American Institutes for Research

<https://www.air.org/center/national-center-family-homelessness>

Source: American Psychological Association. Effects of Poverty, Hunger and Homelessness on Children and Youth.

<https://www.apa.org/pi/families/poverty>

Is it ADHD or Child Traumatic Stress: A Guide for Clinicians, (2016). The National Child Traumatic Stress Network.

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

How Trauma and Homelessness Impact Children

- ½ of school age children experience depression, anxiety or withdrawal.
- 25% witness family violence
- 5x more likely to have gastrointestinal problems
- 4x more likely to have respiratory infections
- 2x more likely to have ear infections



Source: Facts on Trauma and Homeless Children, 2005. The National Child Traumatic Stress Network.

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

Source: *Effects of Poverty, Hunger and Homelessness on Children and Youth*. American Psychological Association <https://www.apa.org/pi/families/poverty>

Source: *Homeless Children and Youth: Causes and Consequences*, (2009) National Center for Children in Poverty.

http://www.nccp.org/publications/pub_888.html

How Trauma and Homelessness Impact Children

Children experiencing homelessness:

- Get sick at 2x's the rate of other children
- Go hungry 2x's as often as non-homeless children
- Have twice the rate of learning disabilities as non-homeless children
- 2x's as likely to repeat a grade

What can we do about it?



For children:

- **Comfort, Support, Structure**
- **Encourage Self Regulation**
- **Co-Regulation between Parents and Children**
- **Positive childhood experiences**
- **Promote positive parenting practices**

Source: America's Youngest Outcasts. American Institutes for Research <https://www.air.org/center/national-center-family-homelessness>

Source: Herbers et.al. (2014). Parenting and Coregulation: Adaptive Systems for Competence in Children Experiencing Homelessness. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5886013/#R54>

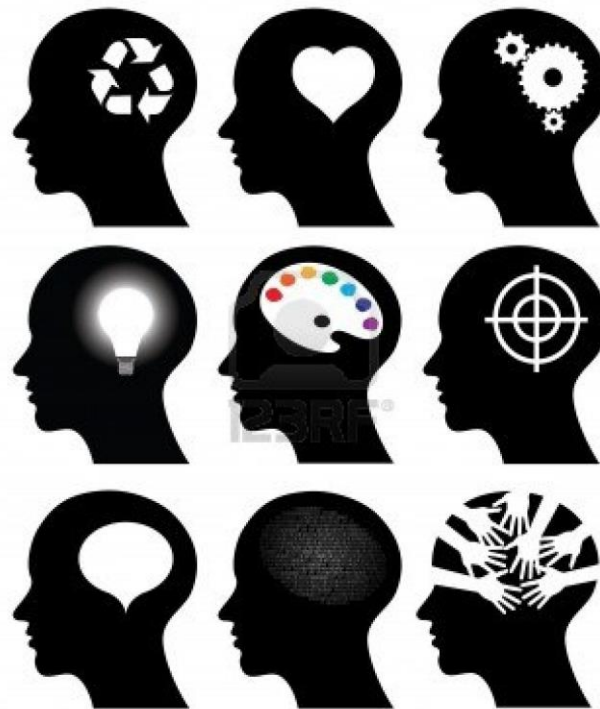
Source: Positive Childhood Experiences. National Public Radio, www.npr.org

What we can do about it?

For All:

- **Share the power**
- **Practice Cultural Humility**
- **Explain “the why”**
- **Utilize McKinney Vento**
- **Support people in establishing routines and keeping traditions**
- **Screen for trauma exposure**
- **Create Healing Spaces**
- **Be Trained in Trauma Informed Care**
- **Other Ideas?**

What will you bring back to your agency?



Questions?



Reference Page

- **University at Buffalo What is Trauma Informed Care**
<http://socialwork.buffalo.edu/social-research/institutes-centers/institute-on-trauma-and-trauma-informed-care/what-is-trauma-informed-care.html>
- **Dr. Carmela Decandia presentation May 23, 2017**
- **Hayes, Pastek and Zommerville,2013, The SHIFT Study . The National Center on Family Homelessness.**
- **Source: America’s Youngest Outcasts. American Institutes for Research** <https://www.air.org/center/national-center-family-homelessness>
- **Source: Is It ADHD or Child Traumatic Stress? The National Child Traumatic Stress Network.**
https://www.nctsn.org/sites/default/files/resources/is_it_adhd_or_child_traumatic_stress.pdf
- **Source: “ What do I Do?” Echo Training**
<https://www.echotraining.org>