



BlueCross BlueShield
of North Carolina

HealthyBlue
Care Together

Trauma-Informed Care: Foundations and Practice Training



Agenda

- Overview
- Goals
- Objectives
- Wrap Up
- Questions

Overview

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- Trauma-Informed Care (TIC) is an approach that assumes an individual is more likely than not to have a history of trauma.
- TIC recognizes the presence of trauma symptoms and acknowledges the role trauma may play in an individual's life.
- This training program is designed to provide professionals with the introductory knowledge and tools necessary to deliver care that is respectful and responsive to the impact of trauma.



Goals

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- We intend for you to complete the training with a foundational understanding of trauma-informed care principles and practical implementation strategies.



Objectives

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The primary objectives of this training include:

1. Understanding Trauma: Types of Trauma, Prevalence, and Impact
2. Trauma Responses: How Trauma Affects the Brain, Body, Health, and Behavior
3. Trauma-Informed Framework: Principles and Practice Integration
4. Cultural Sensitivity: Recognizing and Respecting Diversity in Trauma-Informed Care
5. Practical Skills: Recognizing and Responding to Signs of Trauma, De-escalation Techniques, and Promoting Resilience

Understanding Trauma

Defining TIC:

- TIC is an approach that recognizes and responds to the impact of traumatic stress on those who have contact with service delivery systems, including clients, providers, and family members.
- TIC emphasizes understanding, recognizing, and responding to the effects of all types of trauma.
- TIC focuses on creating an environment where patients feel safe, which can foster healing and recovery.

Prevalence and impact of trauma:

- Over two-thirds of children report experiencing at least one traumatic event by age 16.
- At least one in seven children experience abuse or neglect annually in the U.S.
- Each day, 14 youth die from homicide, and more than 1,300 are treated for violence-related injuries.

Understanding Trauma (cont.)

- Trauma is an event, series of events, or set of circumstances that an individual experiences as life-threatening or physically or emotionally harmful **and** has a lasting adverse effect on the person's functioning and well-being.
- Risk for negative outcomes is greatest when some type of trauma or childhood adversity is paired with one of the following during childhood:
 - Sexual abuse
 - Physical abuse
 - Neglect
 - Intimate partner violence

Source: <https://samhsa.gov/mental-health/trauma-violence>

Source: <https://nctsn.org>

Trauma Responses

Consequences:

- Acute and traumatic situations can have near and long-term consequences.
- Anyone can be at risk of experiencing some form of trauma.
- Many children experience at least one traumatic event during their childhood years.

Neurobiology of trauma — how trauma affects the brain:

- Trauma has far-reaching effects on the brain, changing both its structure and function.
- These changes can result in a range of psychological, emotional, and behavioral symptoms that impact an individual's quality of life.
- Recognizing and understanding these effects is critical to maximizing the positive impact of TIC while minimizing the risk of re-traumatization.

Trauma Responses (cont.)

Affected areas of the brain:

- Hippocampus — involved in memory formation and spatial navigation
- Amygdala — plays a critical role in processing emotions, particularly fear and pleasure
- Prefrontal cortex — responsible for decision-making, impulse control, and moderating social behavior

Psychological and behavioral effects of trauma:

- Hyper vigilance and fear conditioning — Trauma can lead to the development of heightened fear responses to stimuli associated with the traumatic event. This can result in phobias and avoidant behaviors.
- Emotional dysregulation — Survivors of trauma may experience intense and rapidly shifting emotions in response to perceived triggers, including anger, sadness, and fear.
- Impaired memory and concentration — Trauma can lead to difficulties with concentration, attention, and memory, making it challenging to perform daily tasks or succeed in work and educational settings.

Trauma Responses (cont.)

Physical and mental health — short and long-term effects of trauma:

- Attachment issues — difficulty forming secure attachments with caregivers, leading to social and emotional difficulties
- Developmental delays — potential delays in speech, motor skills, and social development
- Behavioral problems — increased aggression, oppositional behaviors, or withdrawal
- Academic challenges — struggles with learning and academic performance due to concentration issues and emotional distress

Chronic psychological issues:

- Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
- Depression
- Anxiety disorders
- Dissociative disorders

Trauma Responses (cont.)

Cognitive impairments:

- Memory problems
- Concentration difficulties
- Negative self-perception
- Decreased self-esteem

Behavioral issues:

- High-risk behaviors
- Relationship problems
- Work and academic issues

Physical health issues:

- Chronic health conditions
- Sleep disorders
- Substance use

Building a Trauma-Informed Framework

Therapeutic environment:

- Building a trauma-informed environment involves creating a setting that understands and responds to the pervasive impact of trauma.
- This environment prioritizes safety, trustworthiness, and empowerment for patients, staff, and the broader community.

Building a trauma-informed environment includes:

- Committed leadership
- Training and educating staff
- Creating a safe environment
- Cultivating a trustworthy and trauma-informed culture
- Empowering patients and staff
- Recognizing and acknowledging cultural diversity
- Promoting respectful communication
- Supporting staff well-being
- Implementing continuous improvement and feedback
- Tracking outcomes

Cultural Competence and TIC

Practical steps for cultural competence:

- Hiring practices:
 - Hire a diverse workforce that reflects the cultural, racial, and ethnic backgrounds of the patient population.
- Patient engagement:
 - Use culturally appropriate methods to reach out to and engage with diverse communities.
 - Ensure that all patient communications, including written materials and signage, are available in the primary languages spoken by the patient population and are culturally appropriate.
- Inclusive environment and policies:
 - Create a welcoming physical environment with culturally relevant decor and materials.
 - Develop policies that respect cultural differences.

Wrap Up

Conclusion

- By understanding and applying TIC principles, you can:
 - Make meaningful differences in patients' lives by helping them heal and thrive.
 - Enhance the work environment for staff through identification and support of secondary traumatic stress.

Questions?

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