

NEWSLETTER

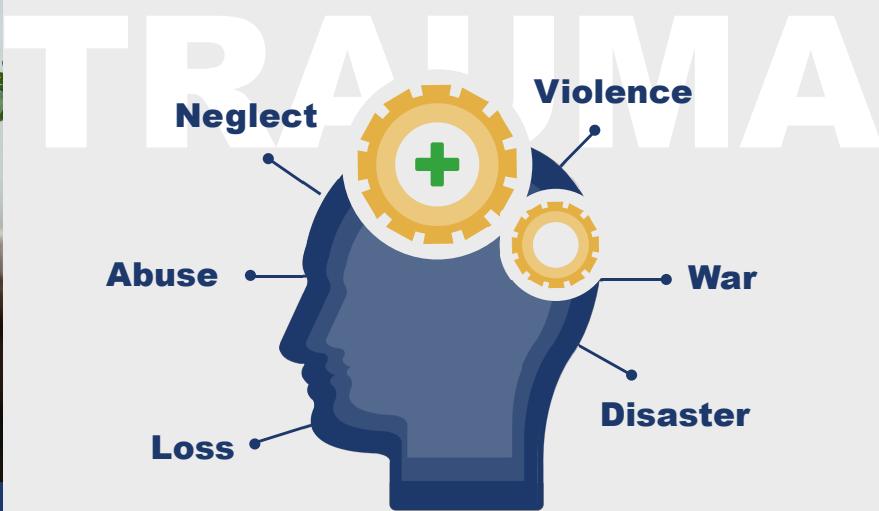
Disability Rights of West Virginia



Trauma-Informed Care

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Trauma-Informed Care is an approach in the human service field that assumes that an individual is more likely than not to have a history of trauma. It recognizes the presence of trauma symptoms and acknowledges the role that trauma may play in an individual's life. Trauma-informed care is a strengths-based framework that is grounded in an understanding of and responsiveness to the impact of trauma, that emphasizes physical, psychological, and emotional safety for survivors, and creates opportunities to rebuild a sense of control. For this reason, trauma-informed



Understanding and Responding to the Impact of Trauma

care is an important part to assisting professionals with developing behavior plans and addressing maladaptive behaviors.

As stated by SAMHSA's Concept of Trauma and Guidance for a Trauma-Informed Approach, "Trauma is a widespread, harmful and costly public health problem. It occurs as a result of violence, abuse, neglect, loss, disaster, war and other emotionally harmful experiences. Trauma has no boundaries with regard to age, gender, socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity, geography or sexual orientation. It is an almost universal experience of people with mental and substance use disorders. The need to address trauma is increasingly viewed as an important component of effective behavioral health service delivery".

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Trauma-Informed Care (continued)



The sources of trauma can come from a wide range of areas. A Report from 2013 conducted by Spectrum Institute reported that over 70% of people with disabilities report being victims of abuse. 90% of those surveyed reported that it was on multiple occasions. Areas trauma can stem from are frequently thought of as physical, emotional, psychological, and sexual areas. Trauma may also stem from areas of social (bullying/ name calling), exclusion, and institutionalization/ foster-care placements.

The behavioral pyramid explains that trauma creates emotion, which results in behavior. For this reason, when we are looking at addressing behaviors, we must seek to find the true cause. Trauma as an underlying cause of the behavior need not be ignored, or we will never truly address the issue. It was an ancient philosopher, Nichiren Daishonin, that stated "if you try to treat someone's illness without knowing its cause, you will only make the person sicker than before".



The Trauma Informed Care Project states "becoming "trauma-informed" means recognizing that people often have many different types of trauma in their lives. People who have been traumatized need support and understanding from those around them. Often, trauma survivors can be re-traumatized by well-meaning caregivers and community service providers".

With the inclusion of trauma-based care in our plans to assist in addressing problem behaviors, we can better reach the root cause of the issues. By understanding the causes, we can address those issues and provide key points for traumatic recovery. A connection can be made with others who have experienced the same events. We can empower the person by recognizing and working on the issues. We can provide the person with a sense of safety by recognizing the issues that trigger these past experiences and provide a safer environment.



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