

Tying it all together: Trauma Informed Care and Behavior

Below are examples of some challenging behaviors and trauma reactions:

“Difficult” Behaviors or Reactions	Common Trauma Reactions
Has difficulty getting motivated and following through with job training, treatment, education, etc.	Depression and diminished interest in everyday activities. Difficulty concentrating or remembering.
Avoids meetings with counselors and workers.	Avoidance of traumatic memories or reminders.
Lacks awareness of emotional responses, does not emotionally respond to others. Seems ‘turned off’.	Emotional numbing or restricted range of feelings.
Has an interpersonal conflict with attorney, DHS, judge, etc. Easily agitated. Is triggered by rules and structure (consequences, law enforcement, court). Has difficulty setting limits with children.	Irritability, restlessness, outbursts of anger or rage. Feeling unsafe, helpless and out of control.
Complains that the system is unfair, that they are being targeted or unfairly blamed.	Loss of a sense of order or fairness in the world.
Puts less effort into trying—does not follow through on appointments, does not respond to assistance.	Learned helplessness.

Adapted from: “Shelter from the Storm: Trauma-Informed Care in Homelessness Services Settings.” Hopper, E.K., Bassuk, E.L., Olivet, J. The Open Heath Services and Policy Journal, 2010, Volume 3

What other behaviors have you observed might be a reaction to trauma and/or generational oppression?

- What might you do to decrease trauma reactions (and “difficult” behavior?)
- How might generational oppression manifest in your work/court/case?
- How might trauma and generational oppression alter engagement and attentiveness?
- How comfortable are you talking about trauma and oppression? With clients? Staff?

What can you do to increase trauma informed practice and reduce the negative impact systems often have on clients?

Resources

Trauma-Informed Care for Children Exposed to Violence: Tips for Child Welfare Staff

<http://www.safestartcenter.org/pdf/Tip%20Sheet%20-%20For%20Child%20Welfare%20Staff.pdf>

Birth Parents with Trauma Histories and the Child Welfare System

http://nctsn.org/sites/default/files/assets/pdfs/birth_parents_trauma_history_act_sheet_final.pdf

Trauma Exposure in American Indian/Alaska Native Children

http://www.icctc.org/Resources/Trauma_AIs_Children_Factsheet2.pdf

Effects of Maltreatment on Brain Development

http://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/issue_briefs/brain_development/effects.cfm

Child Welfare Trauma Training Toolkit (National Child Traumatic Stress Network, 2008)

<http://www.nctsnet.org/products/child-welfare-trauma-training-toolkit-2008>

Bibliography: Trauma Informed Child Welfare (2011)

<http://www.nrcpfc.org/teleconferences/2011-11-16/trauma%20informed%20child%20welfare%20bibliography.pdf>

Trauma-Informed Care: Resources and Information (The Ann Institute)

<http://www.theannainstitute.org/TIC-RESOURCES.html>

Adverse Childhood Experiences study:

www.acestudy.org

Bessel Van der Kolk:

http://www.traumacenter.org/products/pdf_files/Preprint_Dev_Trauma_Disorder.pdf

TIC in your agencies (self assessment and implementation):

<http://www.annafoundation.org/CCTICSELFASSPP.pdf>