



# Trauma Informed Organizations



A program, organization, or system that is trauma-informed follows SAMHSA's four "Rs":

- 1 REALIZES** the widespread impact of trauma and understands potential paths for recovery
- 2 RECOGNIZES** the signs and symptoms of trauma in clients, families, staff, and others involved with the system
- 3 RESPONDS** by fully integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, and practices
- 4** Actively seeks to **RESIST** re-traumatization

## What does it mean to be trauma informed?

Trauma informed organizations make a commitment to understand trauma, how to respond to trauma, and how it affects those they work with. Being trauma informed is an organizational cultural change.

## Organizations that are considered trauma informed, have these things in common:

- Provide a safe environment, everything from well-lit parking lots and visible directions/signage to natural light, soft furniture, etc.
- Offer effective peer supervision
- Encourage all to find balance in life and work
- Promote self care
- Work to be transparent
- Ask, "What happened to you?" -- not, "What's wrong with you?"
- Continually offer professional development opportunities
- Value confidentiality
- Promote recovery and resiliency
- Continually change to meet the needs of those they serve

## Keep in mind: Trauma can be caused by many things.

abuse and/or neglect, as a child or adult  
**violence**  
 natural disasters long-term health problems **accidents**  
 loss of a loved one **witnessing abuse**  
**bullying** generational trauma

## Keep in mind: Trauma is common.

Trauma is a nearly universal human experience, so it makes sense that *everyone* working with kids and families should be trauma-informed.

Nationally, more than 46 percent of U.S. youth—**34 million children under age 18**—have had at least one ACE (Adverse Childhood Experience.)



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