Trauma-Informed Legal Interviews & Intakes

Presented by Network for Victim Recovery of DC
SERVES SURVIVORS OF ANY TYPE OF CRIME

From sexual assault to homicide and elder abuse.

FREE, HOLISTIC, TRAUMA-INFORMED SERVICES

Working together to increase access to services.

SURVIVOR-DEFINED JUSTICE

There's no "right" way to react to a crime.
We are a nonprofit that serves and supports African Immigrant and Refugee survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking in Washington DC.

TPC offers case management and crisis support for survivors, develops and facilitates community education workshops, professional trainings for community organizations and responders, and leads advocacy initiatives throughout the district.
JUST A NOTE

ON LANGUAGE
Victim v. Survivor

ON CONTENT
Will be covering case examples

SHORT & LONG-TERM SUPPORT - What’s next?
TODAY'S DISCUSSION

1) Review Trauma & Its Impacts
2) Discuss the Interview Purpose
3) Identify Interview Best Practices
REVIEW TRAUMA & ITS IMPACTS ON CLIENTS
BEST PRACTICES

Build Trust & Rapport

Respectful approach to victims

Recognize and honor the role of culture in victimization

Advocate for victims' choices and rights
WHAT IS TRAUMA?

“EXPERIENCING TOO MUCH, TOO FAST, TOO SOON IN SUCH A WAY THAT ONE’S ABILITY TO COPE IS OVERWHELMED. LEAVING ONE FEELING POWERLESS, OUT OF CONTROL AND/OR SEVERELY DISCONNECTED FROM ONE’S SELF, FAMILY, COMMUNITY, AND/OR BELIEFS.”

–Sandra Bloom, MD
TRAUMA PHASES

INITIAL CRISIS

LONG-TERM STRESS REACTION
THE CRISIS REACTION: TRAUMA RESPONSES

PHYSICAL

EMOTIONAL

EXTERNAL
LONG-TERM STRESS REACTION

RE-EXPERIENCING THE EVENT

ACTUAL OR IMAGINED
SELF-REINFORCEMENT OF TRAUMA

Isolation  Trauma
DISCUSS INTERVIEW PURPOSE
The Interview

Purpose

DATA COLLECTION

OBSERVATION & DATA INPUTTING

INTERPRETING INFORMATION

EMPOWERMENT TOOL

Others?
ASSUMPTIONS

REALIZES
RECOGNIZES
RESPONDS
RESISTS
REVISITS
IDENTIFY TRAUMA-INFORMED INTERVIEW AND INTAKE BEST-PRACTICES
TRAUMA-INFORMED INTERVIEW PRINCIPLES

SAFETY  TRUST & TRANSPARENCY  PEER SUPPORT

COLLABORATION  EMPOWERMENT & CHOICE  CULTURAL & HISTORICAL LENS
Trauma-Informed Interview Approach

1) AFFIRM
2) ASK WHAT THEY CAN REMEMBER
3) ASK ABOUT THOUGHT PROCESS
4) ASK ABOUT SIGHTS, SMELLS, SOUNDS
5) ASK HOW IT AFFECTED THEM
6) ASK WHAT WAS MOST DIFFICULT
7) ASK WHAT THEY CAN'T FORGET
TRAUMA-INFORMED INTERVIEW APPROACH

Clarify other information (details) after facilitation and collection of the psychophysiological experiential evidence.
TRAUMA-INFORMED INTERVIEW FRAMEWORK

BEFORE

1) Check non-verbals
2) Set an agenda
3) Make it standard
4) Identify concerns & comfort
5) Create choice
TRAUMA-INFORMED INTERVIEW FRAMEWORK

DURING

1) Explain why
2) Ask permission
3) Be clear
4) Mind the questions
TRAUMA-INFORMED INTERVIEW FRAMEWORK

AFTER

1) Review
2) Talk next steps
3) Express thanks
COMMUNICATION

ACTIVE LISTENING

CHECK ASSUMPTIONS & ASSOCIATIONS

KNOW BEST TIME
QUESTIONS

WHY MIGHT YOU NEED THEM?

EXPLAIN WHY

OPEN-ENDED
TRAUMA-INFORMED LANGUAGE
RECOMMENDATIONS

• Identify internal screening policies to identify trauma histories

• Offer trainings on trauma-informed service provision to anyone who will be interacting with clients

• Involve clients in identifying what they need from those of us in positions of power (social, professional, networking capital) to help implement the protective factors they identify

• Rethink ‘respect’
  • Allow space
  • Allow for emotional fluctuation
QUESTIONS?
FEEDBACK?

FOR FEEDBACK ON TODAY’S PRESENTATION, VISIT:
bit.ly/NVRDC-Feedback
CONTACT US

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