



One Human Service Provider's Perspective

I work in a community support program. Every day we see people who have been traumatized. It is tough to heal from the prolonged, repeated abuse that can happen in families. When I think about it, most of the people we work with are trauma survivors, and not just of one experience, but of many. I see how some of the things we do—the processes and procedures that have been around for decades—are a sort of barrier between us and them. Sometimes our approach creates a situation where we're not only *not* helping, but we're making support less accessible.

I learned about trauma-informed care several years ago. I talked with staff and we started to think through how this shift in our perspective could make a difference. We looked at our policies and procedures—and we changed quite a bit. We started listening to the people we serve and have worked to integrate their voices and choices into our everyday practices.

True collaboration is hard work, but making the effort has made all the difference. Trauma-informed care is the right thing to do for everyone!

— Kathi, Jefferson County

“We are creating a cohesive trauma-informed system of care in Wisconsin that advocates for ending the cycles of harm caused by adverse childhood experiences, leverages the information we have about childhood brain development, and respects past experiences of stress and trauma in order to build resilient and healthy communities.”

— First Lady Tonette Walker

National Resources

National Center for PTSD
www.ptsd.va.gov

National Center for Trauma-Informed Care
www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/nctic

National Child Traumatic Stress Network
www.nctsnet.org

Trauma-Informed Care Resources
www.theannainstitute.org/MDT.pdf

For more information or to be added to Wisconsin's TIC list serve, please visit:
www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/tic/

SHIFT



YOUR

PERSPECTIVE

Apply Trauma-Informed Care

EMPOWERING. ENGAGING. EFFECTIVE.



Department of Health Services
State of Wisconsin
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One Consumer's Perspective

"Wow!" That's all I could say after I left the new program. "Wow!" I wasn't labeled. I wasn't talked down to. I wasn't "less than" anyone else. ...and maybe for the first time in my life I actually felt like I mattered. I hope they know how much that means to me.

For years I've been in and out of programs. "Co-occurring disorders" is what most people called my depression and drinking. I was "treated" and I only felt worse. Then I find this program that is "trauma-informed." I felt safe and respected from the moment I walked in.

In this program people asked "What happened to you?" I hadn't really thought about that. Nobody ever asked before. But I had a really horrible childhood that I still have a hard time talking about. It's starting to make sense now—how my depression links back to what I went through as a kid and how I drink when those memories are too much to take. The people I work with in the trauma-informed care program talk about how understanding my trauma will help me to heal and find peace—and I'm seeing now how that can happen.

— Melissa, Milwaukee County

What is Trauma-Informed Care in Human Services?

Psychological trauma is a pivotal force that shapes people's mental, emotional, spiritual and physical well-being. Because trauma stems from violence, abuse, neglect, disaster, terrorism and war, nearly every family is impacted in some way. Trauma-informed care provides a new perspective where those providing the support shift from asking "What is wrong with you?" to "What has happened to you?" This change reduces the blame and shame that some people experience when being labeled. It also builds an understanding of how the past impacts the present, which effectively makes the connections that progress toward healing and recovery.

Trauma-informed care takes a collaborative approach, where healing is led by the consumer and supported by the service provider. Together, in a true partnership, people learn from each other. There's greater respect, progress toward healing, and greater efficacy in services.

Trauma-informed care in organizations impacts all the many aspects of service delivery—from how services are provided, to how the physical space is laid out. While the shift in perspective and organizational change doesn't happen over night, it will start to take root with dedication. With organizational management on board and some thoughtful discussion about what change needs to take place, it won't take long before staff and clients start to see positive change.

Ten Values of Trauma-Informed Care

- Understand the prevalence and impact of trauma
- Pursue the person's strength, choice and autonomy
- Providers must earn trust
- Healing happens in relationships
- Provide holistic care
- Share power
- Communicate with compassion
- Promote safety
- Respect human rights

- Wisconsin Trauma-Informed Care Advisory Committee

Your colleagues in Wisconsin believe Trauma-Informed Care is...

- Positive
- Respectful
- Compassionate
- Hopeful
- Effective
- Helpful
- Energizing/Reviving
- Motivating
- Making a difference
- Exciting