Trauma-Informed Organizations

Feedback from Regional Meetings

Illinois Imagines June and July 2013

**Intake/Screening**

Talk with the person; not the family; include family if person wants

Look at language used on our forms; make sure it is respectful

Ask individuals if they have a history of trauma; look at the wording—For example: History of trauma, sexual violence, anyone hurt you?

Ask about history of trauma; even if the person says no, assume they have; by asking the question you have made a difference.

Educate all staff on signs and symptoms of trauma

Ask the person, but do it in baby steps.

May have to explain trauma in terms of little t’s and big T’s

Make sure location is safe for individual to talk to someone.

Share safety and comfort rules

Ask self-advocate the question

Eliminate “R” word form all forms

Intake independent of family/guardian

Reserve the right of individuals to not answer questions

Do not assume anything

Active listening

Have self-advocates review forms and process

Have self-advocates help with intake process

Work into agency processes open-ended questions such as, “Have you been hurt?” or “Has anyone hurt you?”

Ask individuals what they need

Ask people when/where they don’t feel safe.

Know how HIPPA transfer of information to staff/departments supporting self-advocates who disclose history of trauma

Incorporate the AASD (Abuse Assessment Screen Disability) into all intake processes

Provide different styles to support people’s preferences (verbal, large print, languages, etc.)

Ask about past trauma experiences and follow up on the answers

Provide exit materials to everyone (resources regardless of whether they self-identify)

Open-ended question: What would you like to tell me?

Train employees on active listening techniques and to investigate answers that cause red flags

**Service Planning**

Encourage person to develop their own service plan

Include choices in the plan

Provide opportunities to have choices

Ask people for identifying words; i.e., what do you want to be called?

Provide supports and services around the trauma

Document how self-advocates want choices made

Ask, “How do you learn best?”

Client participates in the process

Provide an opportunity to educate staff members (fixed schedule for training)

My ideas go in my plan

Safety planning, when needed

Ask the person what they want in their plan

What I want people to know about my past

Be proactive, not reactive

Include clients in the risk assessment process which agencies are required to perform

More sensitive to different cases because all of them are important

Provide different styles to support people’s preferences (verbal, picture-based, language, large print, etc.)

Build choice into plans whenever possible

**Policies and Practices**

Have networking agreements with Rape Crisis Centers in the area

Big “T” Changes

Policies in place to respond appropriately to a disclose of sexual violence at disability service agencies

Policies should include current legislation

Include mission statement reflecting positive attitudes

State policies

Least restrictive environment

Making P and Ps accessible

Have self-advocates co-develop policies and train them

Reframe incident report and behavior plans

Reporting to outside authorities

Grievances

Use respectful language—disrespectful language will not be tolerated

Bully policy and procedure; actively addressed

Allow for flexibility of all types of accommodations

Self-advocates have a right to have a different staff work with them

Operate from the assumption that all people have experienced trauma

Provide staff/practices which are targeted to persons who have experienced trauma

Know how HIPPA transfer of information to staff/departments supporting self-advocates who disclose history of trauma

Know that many self-advocates love to work

More communication at work and in group homes

Emphasize confidentiality agency-wide

Educate All Often.

Open acknowledgment of trauma issues

Create proactive safe spaces and policies

Create clear policies on reporting abuse and inform all staff/clients who is responsible to hear reports.

Harm reduction approach

Train more employees and self-advocates to be kind and sensitive to the victim

Develop a policy on sexuality generally that includes training for staff and people with disabilities, as well as guidelines on dealing with parents/guardians

Policy to offer information and resources in multiple, accessible formats

**Self-Advocate Training**

How to speak up

Rights

Feelings

Recognizing unsafe behavior

Grievance procedures

Ask the person who experiences the trauma what they want

Create awareness by encouraging self=-advocates to identify the 4 small "t’’s that they have experienced and how steps can be taken to affect change to empower themselves.

Encourage self-advocates to share their experiences to help others who have experienced trauma.

Self-advocates can spread the word to make a difference/change

Empowerment and speaking up

Educate staff

Support empowerment group

Right to have a different staff assigned to work with you

What can we say to people to help them deal with bullies besides, “Ignore it.?

Provide crisis intervention resources for people involved in the training.

Identify proper/safe location for peer support group to meet

Self-advocates teach more

Provide opportunities to practice the skills learned.

Each know about what they need and not the staff

More training to be more compassionate and sensitive to the victim

Disability rights history

Cross-disability awareness, open up discussion of the 14 Social Security classes of disabilities

Have training available to become peer counselors or even rape crisis counselors

**Employee Training**

Train on ways to intervene; list websites; ask the experts (person with disabilities)

Train on Indicators of sexual violence

Sexual harassment

Individual specific training

Offer specific topics relevant to current issues in the agency

Train all new staff about trauma

Individualized planning for each person

Asking women about triggering events, places, and objects

If a person is not forthcoming, read between the lines

Individual has input into setting goals and objectives—this is their process!

Empowerment/understanding impact of trauma

Limit the facebook time and hold onto passwords

Bullying

Accumulation of the little t’s

People First Language

Personal attitudes

Self-advocate led supports

Understanding disability history

Choice, gifts, talents and informed choice.

Know how HIPPA transfer of information to staff/departments supporting self-advocates who disclose history of trauma

Enunciate trauma-informed perspective

Get staff involved in training. Don’t take no for an answer. Keep them motivated and engaged.

Provide training to service providers

Train staff on how to be helpful

Self-advocates do training of staff

Training should be frequent and ongoing

Train employees on active listening techniques and to investigate answers that cause red flags

Have it—and more than once a year

Important for context—self-defense, where to get help, etc.

We need to define the type of trauma and have guidelines in place based on the type of trauma and make sure employees in each department have the same training across the board (It’s more than one type of training!)

Training on how to support person-centered approaches and planning

Training on how to communicate appropriately with people who have certain disabilities

Encourage and support staff to address their own trauma issues

**Environmental Factors**

Scenario—change the van route; change van driver

Make changes based on what individuals need

Develop a workplace culture that is trauma-sensitive

Eliminate or reduce the environmental factors that cause trauma

Reduce triggers: sights, smells, locations, sounds, etc.

Zero tolerance for bullying

Building and facilities are safe

Become more aware and conscious of the environment we are offering to those who seek our services

Ask for self-advocate input

Look at power aspects in the organization

Be aware of possible triggers, i.e., --hearing-sound; touching-texture; smelling-smells; visual, etc.

As remodeling is being done and as new programs are being developed, keep in mind the need to provide privacy and comfortable spaces

Be aware of technology and safety concerns

To understand what I say to do and to learn about people

Place should be accessible and safe

Posters and other materials that show you are trauma-informed and know who/where to call

Technology needed to help the person communicate

Should be able to go anywhere and not just because of law

Freedom in the environment—movement

Not separate bathrooms for staff and people served

Hold focus groups or customer feedback to check on ways to make the environment more accessible or supportive

**Referrals**

Contact Rape Crisis Center to teach bullying classes

Refer persons with a history of sexual assault for counseling at Rape Crisis Center (if person wants)

Have a sheet of agencies to hand out

Networking agreements with local Rape Crisis Centers, disability agencies, law enforcement, medical professional, DSP’s/CILA’s

Know your resources and community

Cross-training

Know who to go to for everyone

Know about agencies that respond to trauma: help your team learn to respond to trauma

Know referrals so people can do things they enjoy (e.g., swimming)

Rape Crisis Center to help in crises

Ask for help to find the correct department

Equip for Equality

Ask about prior experience with any referral agencies

Remember proximity and practicality

Know specific contact person at referral site

Use community resources for help, you don’t need to recreate the wheel! Use others expertise.