**TRAUMA INFORMED PRINCIPLES**

Adapted from the American Psychological Association (2008); National Child Traumatic Stress Network (2012); National Center on Family Homelessness (2012); Hollywood Homeless Youth Partnership (2009) and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (N.D.)

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<th>WHY?</th>
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| Positive Relationships           | • Children who have experienced trauma may have difficulty with forming healthy relationships  
• Consistent, supportive adults can support healing and growth | • Staff are consistent, reliable, empathetic  
• Opportunities to recognize children’s strengths  
• Building trusting relationships with family |
| Understanding Trauma & Its Impact| • Trauma is widespread and can influence our thoughts, feelings, and behaviors  
• Understanding trauma and how it affects individuals and communities is the first step to putting knowledge into action | • Staff and management attend on-line or in-person trainings  
• Trained staff and management share information on trauma with other staff, management and parents  
• Considering role of trauma in individual interactions |
| Culture of Self Care             | • Working with traumatized children can cause secondary or vicarious trauma in providers  
• Working with traumatized children can remind us of our own trauma  
• Vicarious trauma harms staff and can limit effectiveness of programming  
• Culture of self care in the work place helps to minimize secondary trauma | • Seeking out supervision when possible  
• Practice mindfulness (checking in with own feelings, deep breathing, taking a break)  
• Staff have self-care plans |
| Promoting Safety                 | • Traumatized children often have experienced chaos and unpredictability.  
• They may expect bad things will happen to them and that others cannot be trusted  
• Trauma causes the brain to be overly sensitive to signals of danger. Reminders of trauma trigger automatic “survival brain” reactions.  
• Creating safety—routines, rituals, consistency, predictability, minimizing trauma reminders—allows children to relax and shift their energy from survival to healthy learning/development | • Having predictable, structured activities  
• Having secure entries, exits and restrooms  
• Staff interactions are consistent, have clear expectations and boundaries |
### Voice & Choice
- Trauma often involves a loss of control and feelings of helplessness.
- Children may believe they are powerless or may constantly challenge limits and authority.
- Creating a space for children to be heard and have a choice helps them regain a sense of control and feel empowered.

#### Why?
- Create opportunities for feedback and leadership.
- For young children or with safety issues, giving limited choice may be more appropriate (choice between 2 set options).

#### What Could It Look Like?
- Offering caregivers a “menu” of options so they can determine what works best for them.
- Building relationships with service providers and making “warm referrals”.

### Access to Resources
- Children and families may have multiple, interrelated needs (physical, emotional, spiritual) that are beyond the resources of one organization.
- Staff can work together with families and service providers to suggest options and support ongoing, “wrap-around” services.

#### Why?
- Activities that affirm positive cultural identity.
- Staff education on participant cultural background and culturally-appropriate resources.
- Materials in multiple languages.

### Cultural Competence & Promotion of Equity
- Healing and healthy development is rooted in cultural identity, it is important to recognize resilience and foster cultural pride and community connectedness.
- Programs are more effective when providers are knowledgeable of participants cultural background (beliefs, history, language, social customs) and their own assumptions/biases.

#### Why?
- Help children learn to name how they’re feeling.
- Help children use healthy coping skills for managing strong emotions.
- Help children learn healthy ways to resolve conflict.
- Model appropriate boundaries.
- Providing opportunities for leadership.
- Celebrating strengths and accomplishments.

### Social-Emotional Learning & Positive Youth Development
- Traumatized children may have a hard time identifying how they feel and coping with their feelings in a positive way.
- They may have difficulty forming healthy relationships (not trusting or too trusting).
- Adults can help children learn to identify their feelings and find healthier ways to manage them.
- They can also help them understand social cues, set healthy boundaries, and communicate more effectively.
- Recognizes young people’s strengths and assets with the understanding that trauma can prevent young people from recognizing their own strengths.

#### Why?
- Help children learn healthy ways to resolve conflict.
- Model appropriate boundaries.
- Providing opportunities for leadership.
- Celebrating strengths and accomplishments.