

Assessing Trauma-Informed Practice: Lessons Learned from a Trauma Audit

Presenters:

- **Dr. Carlene Gonzalez**, Senior Policy Analyst in the Family Violence and Domestic Relations (FVDR) Department, National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges
- **Malrie Shelton**, Network for Overcoming Violence and Abuse (NOVA)

Facilitator:

Jennifer Rose, Consultant, Futures Without Violence

Welcome to the Webinar

We will begin at 11:00am (PT) / 2:00pm (ET).

A recording and PDF version of the presentation slides will be available after the webinar.

Your line will be muted to cut down on background interference so please use the chat box to share your name, your organization, your location and any questions you have for our featured speakers.



DEFENDING CHILDHOOD

PROTECT HEAL THRIVE



- **US Department of Justice**
 - Office of the Attorney General
 - Office of Justice Programs
 - Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention
 - Office for Victims of Crime
 - National Institute of Justice
 - Office on Violence Against Women
 - Office of Community Oriented Policing
 - Executive Office of US Attorneys
- **US Department of Health and Human Services**
- **US Department of Education**



- Prevent children's exposure to violence.
- Mitigate the negative effects experienced by children exposed to violence.
- Develop knowledge about and spread awareness of this issue.



- **Research and Evaluation**
- **Direct Action in Communities**
 - Comprehensive Demonstration Project
 - Safe Start Program (www.safestartcenter.org)
 - OVW Children Exposed to Violence grants
- **Training and Technical Assistance**
- **Attorney General's Task Force on Children Exposed to Violence** (www.justice.gov/defendingchildhood/cev-rpt-full.pdf)
- **Action Partnerships with Professional Organizations**

How to use this technology

AUDIO:

- You can choose to connect via computer OR via telephone.
 - Should you choose to dial in, please follow the audio instructions on the screen or in the audio pop up:
 - Dial: **1-877-647-3411**
 - Enter the Participant Code: **914571#**
 - OR**
 - Dial: **1-719-867-0497**
 - Enter the Participant Code: **914571#**
- Closed Captioning is provided in today's presentation
- There will be time for Q & A at the end of the presentation.
- Please enter any questions you have in the Public Text Chat box.
- For **Adobe Tech Support**, please dial:
 - **1-800-422-3623**



Assessing Trauma-Informed Practice

Carlene Gonzalez, Ph.D.

Senior Policy Analyst, Family Violence and Domestic Relations

Malrie Shelton, MSSW, LCSW

Defending Childhood Initiative (DCI)

Objectives

- ▶ To discuss how trauma impacts the lives of children, youth and families
- ▶ To describe how the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ) has assessed the courts for trauma-informed practice
- ▶ To share resources on trauma-informed practice (including an info-graphic developed in collaboration with Futures Without Violence)

Poll Question #1: Who is joining us today?

Responses:

- ▶ Anti-Trafficking Agency
- ▶ Defending Childhood Site
- ▶ Child Protection
- ▶ K-12 Education
- ▶ Early Childhood Education
- ▶ Public Health/Health
- ▶ Justice (e.g., Law Enforcement, Lawyer, Court)
- ▶ Community-based Agency
- ▶ Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault
- ▶ Research
- ▶ National Policy Organization
- ▶ Tribal Government/Administration
- ▶ Tribal Community Organization
- ▶ Tribal Program
- ▶ City/County/State Government
- ▶ State Territory Coalition
- ▶ Federal Agency
- ▶ Student
- ▶ Other

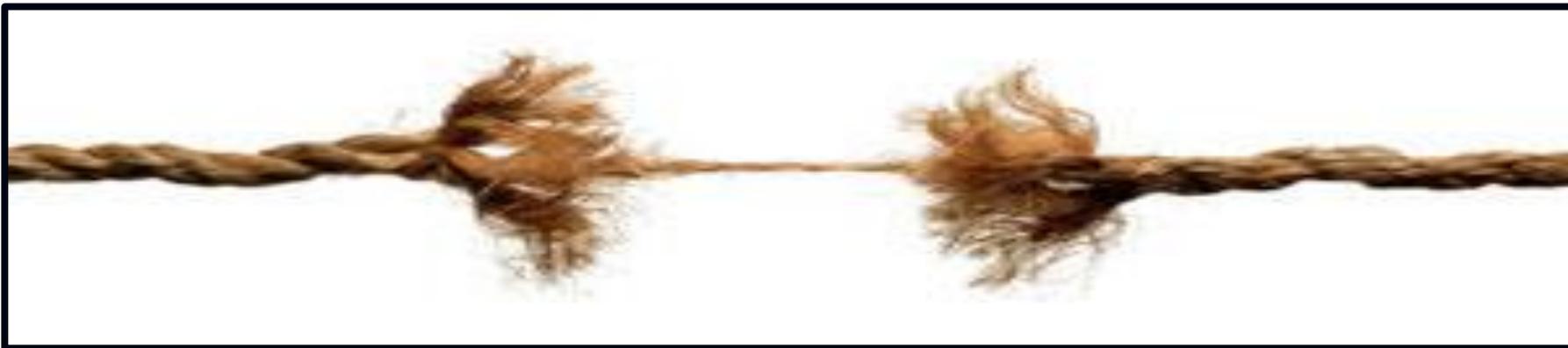
Poll Question #2: Have you ever participated in a trauma training?

Response:

- ▶ Yes
- ▶ No

Stress

- ▶ Although stress and trauma are related...
 - ▶ Stress can be positive
 - ▶ Stress can be tolerable
- ▶ *When stress becomes toxic or overloads a system... we see trauma.*

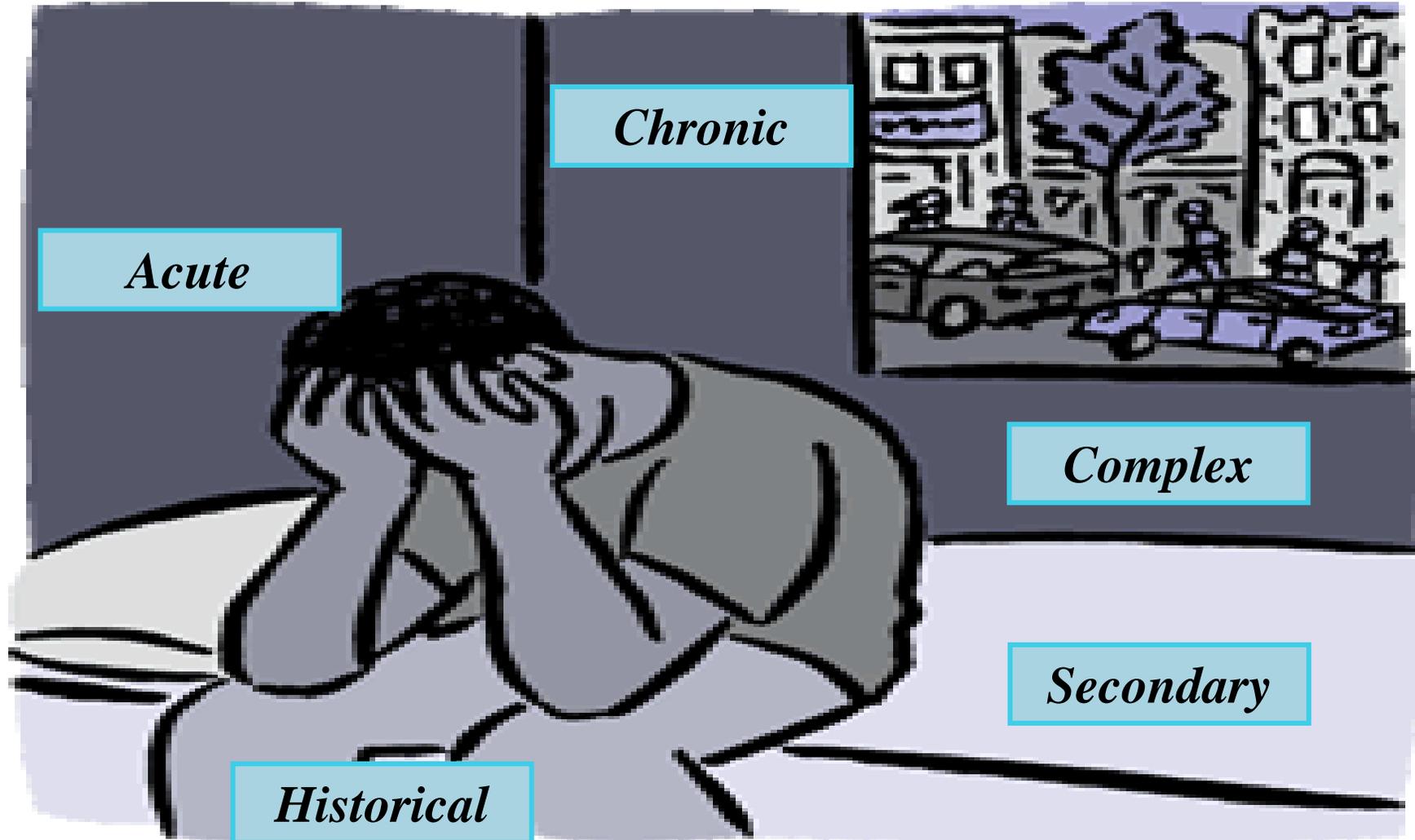


Defining Trauma

- ▶ Experiencing a serious injury to yourself or witnessing a serious injury to or the death of someone else
- ▶ Facing imminent threats of serious injury or death to yourself or others
- ▶ Experiencing a violation of personal physical integrity

Result = Overwhelming feelings of terror, horror, or hopelessness.

Types of Trauma



Traumatic Events

- ▶ *Definition:* An experience that causes physical, emotional, psychological distress or harm.
- ▶ Types of Potentially Traumatic Events
 - ▶ Abuse and Neglect
 - ▶ Domestic Violence
 - ▶ Community Violence
 - ▶ Accidents
 - ▶ Natural Disasters
 - ▶ War or Terrorism

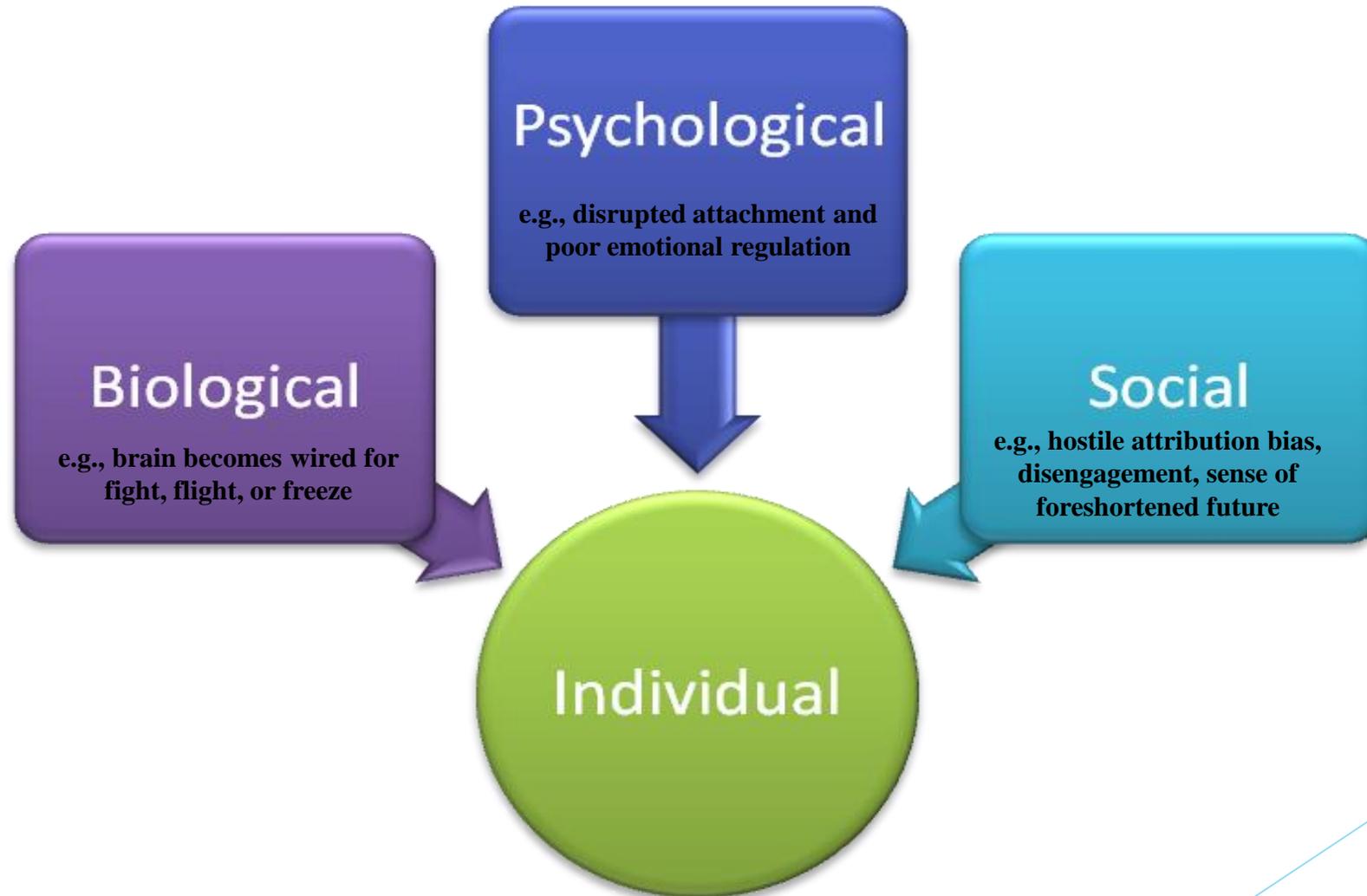


Trauma stress occurs when someone is exposed to traumatic events, and when this exposure overwhelms his/her ability to cope with what has been experienced.

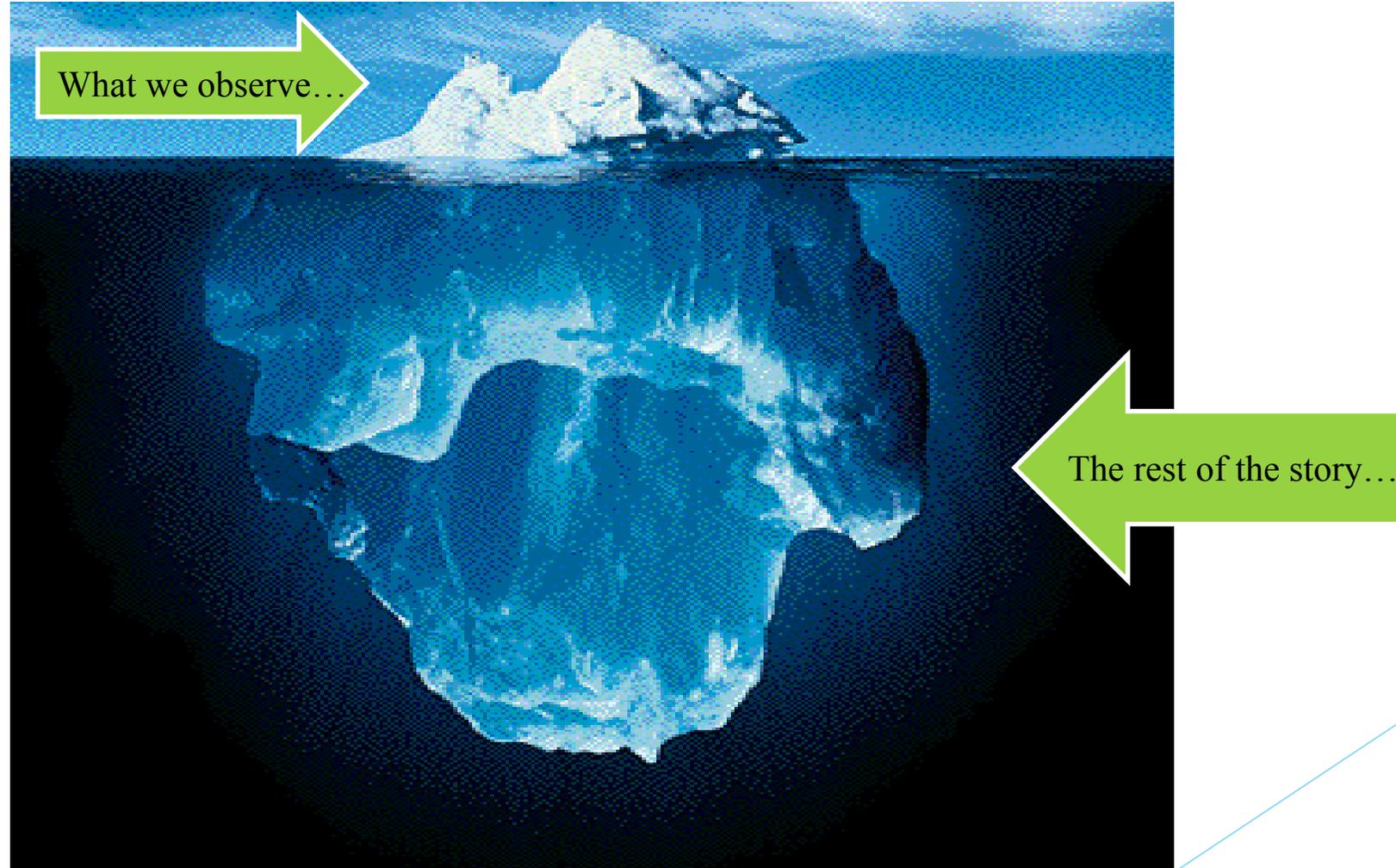
I Quit!



Implications for Human Development



Adversity involves potentially traumatic events that can have negative, lasting effects on one's health and well-being



What do we know about juvenile-justice involved youth?

- ▶ Compared to the general youth population, juvenile-justice involved youth have *higher* prevalence rates of trauma and adversity.
- ▶ 1/3 of juvenile justice-involved youth reported exposure to *multiple* forms of trauma each year
- ▶ Juvenile offenders with higher Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) scores demonstrated more...
 - ▶ Substance abuse
 - ▶ Self-harm behaviors and
 - ▶ School-related problems

Background about NCJFCJ's Trauma Audits

- ▶ The National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ) recognizes that juvenile and dependency courts are uniquely positioned to help identify traumatized child, youth, and families, as well as ensure provision of appropriate intervention services.
- ▶ Over the last few years, the NCJFCJ has offered guidance to judicial officers and stakeholders on the importance of trauma-informed care and services through publications such as:
 - ▶ [Ten Things Every Juvenile Court Judge Should Know about Trauma and Delinquency](#)
 - ▶ [NCTSN's Bench Card for the Trauma-Informed Judge and for Court-Orders Trauma-Informed Mental Health Evaluation of Child](#)

10 Things Every Juvenile Court Judge Should Know About Trauma and Delinquency

- ▶ A traumatic experience is an event that threatens someone's life, safety or well-being.
- ▶ Child traumatic stress can lead to Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).
- ▶ Trauma impacts a child's development and health throughout his or her life.
- ▶ Complex trauma is associated with risk of delinquency.
- ▶ Traumatic exposure, delinquency, and school failure are related.



10 Things (cont')

- ▶ Trauma assessments can reduce misdiagnosis, promote outcomes, and maximize resource.
- ▶ There are mental health treatments that are effective in helping youth who are experiencing child traumatic stress.
- ▶ There is a compelling need for effective family involvement.
- ▶ Youth are resilient.
- ▶ Next steps: The juvenile justice system needs to be trauma-informed at all levels.

NCTSN Bench Card for the Trauma-Informed Judge

NCTSN The National Child
Traumatic Stress Network

NCJFCJ
NATIONAL COUNCIL OF
JUVENILE AND FAMILY COURT JUDGES

NCTSN BENCH CARD
FOR THE TRAUMA-INFORMED JUDGE

- ▶ Asking trauma-informed questions can help identify children who need assistance.
 - ▶ Have I considered whether or not trauma has played a role in the child's behavior?
- ▶ It is critical to have complete information from all systems that are working with the child and family.
 - ▶ Developmental delays?
 - ▶ History of out-of-home placement?
 - ▶ Previous court contact?
 - ▶ Behavioral health history?

NCTSN Bench Card for the Trauma-Informed Judge

NCTSN The National Child
Traumatic Stress Network

NCJFCJ
NATIONAL COUNCIL OF
JUVENILE AND FAMILY COURT JUDGES

NCTSN BENCH CARD
FOR THE TRAUMA-INFORMED JUDGE

- ▶ Am I considering trauma as a I decide where a child is going to live and with whom?
 - ▶ Placement risks?
 - ▶ Disclosure?
 - ▶ Maintaining positive relationships?

- ▶ What should mental health assessments include?

Who participates in a trauma audit?

- ▶ NCJFCJ staff – varied expertise
 - ▶ Consultants – Clinical psychologists and other experts in the field
- ▶ Court Team
 - ▶ Judicial officers and court staff
 - ▶ Court stakeholders
 - ▶ Case workers, Probation officers, Attorneys, GALs, Domestic Violence Advocates, Court Appointed Special Advocates, etc.
- ▶ Time Commitment
 - ▶ On-site approximately three days
 - ▶ Focus groups, interviews, and training sessions

What information is collected?

Part I. Stakeholder Surveys (Off-Site)

Objective: To evaluate stakeholder knowledge and attitudes about trauma, as well as court processes and collaborative dynamics between stakeholders.

This survey gauged the following topics:

- Understanding and/or attitudes regarding trauma,
- Organizational policies,
- Current practices, and
- Overall impressions of the courthouse environment.

What information is collected? (cont')

Part I. Stakeholder Surveys (Off-Site)	Part II. Environment Rating Sheet (On-Site)
<p>Objective: To evaluate stakeholder knowledge and attitudes about trauma, as well as court processes and collaborative dynamics between stakeholders.</p> <p>This survey gauged the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understanding and/or attitudes regarding trauma,• Organizational policies,• Current practices, and• Overall impressions of the courthouse environment.	<p>Objective: To evaluate the physical environment of the courthouse (including courtrooms).</p> <p>Some of these features include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Noise level,• Lighting,• Temperature,• Cleanliness,• Traffic,• Safety, and• Child-friendly space.

What information is collected? (cont')

Part I . Stakeholder Surveys (Off-Site)	Part II. Environment Rating Sheet (On-Site)	Part III. Court Observations (On-Site)
<p>Objective: To evaluate stakeholder knowledge and attitudes about trauma, as well as court processes and collaborative dynamics between stakeholders.</p> <p>This survey gauged the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding and/or attitudes regarding trauma, • Organizational policies, • Current practices, and • Overall impressions of the courthouse environment. 	<p>Objective: To evaluate the physical environment of the courthouse (including courtrooms).</p> <p>Some of these features include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noise level, • Lighting, • Temperature, • Cleanliness, • Traffic, • Safety, and • Child-friendly space. 	<p>Objective: To evaluate stakeholder interactions during court hearings.</p> <p>Engagement was gauged on whether the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purpose of the hearing was explained, • Parents were addressed by name, spoken to directly, given the opportunity to be heard, schedules were taken into account for the next hearing, etc. • Next steps in the court process were discussed. <p>Treatment of colleagues, Use of non-technical language during hearings, and Acknowledgment of family strengths were also examined.</p>

Common recommendations?

Overall Court Environment and Procedures

- ▶ **Renovate signage in the courthouse.**
 - ▶ Size of signs
 - ▶ Multiple Languages
- ▶ **Designate a separate space for alleged perpetrators of domestic violence, especially when an active temporary protection order exists.**

Overall Court Environment and Procedures

(cont')

- ▶ **Staff Information Desks during peak hours (i.e., early morning, early afternoon).**
 - ▶ Can improve consumer engagement and assist in decreasing consumer's stress levels.
- ▶ **Explain the *purpose* of hearings in both delinquency and dependency court.**
 - ▶ Explaining the court process from multiple perspectives can improve retention.
 - ▶ Use non-technical language when communicating with children, youth, and families.

Common recommendations?

Trauma-Specific



▶ **Adopt the universal precautions model**

- ▶ Presume that all individuals associated with the judicial system are injured in some way.
- ▶ Develop environments, practices and policies that:
- ▶ Limit unnecessary arousal – be cognizant of trauma triggers

▶ **Develop a shared meaning on trauma and trauma-informed practice.**

- ▶ What does a trauma-responsive court look like? What practices and policies should be implemented?
- ▶ Can these practices be integrated and sustained on a long-term basis.

Trauma-Specific (cont')

- ▶ **Implement a system-wide trauma screening protocol and/or tool.**
 - ▶ This tool could identify the families *most* in need of services and support.
 - ▶ *All* inter-agency staff would learn how to administer and interpret a universal screening tool, as well as understand when children, youth, and family would need to be re-assessed.
- ▶ **Develop a list of trauma-informed and evidence-based (EB) treatment services, as well as referral information needed for these services.**
 - ▶ Increase court consumers knowledge of community providers who are trained in EB treatments.

Why a Trauma Audit in Shelby County?

- ▶ Shelby County is the largest county in Tennessee
 - ▶ In both population and geographic area
 - ▶ Includes Memphis and surrounding suburbs
 - ▶ Population: 926, 000
 - ▶ In 2015, more than 11,000 children and youth made contact with Memphis Shelby County Juvenile Court (MSCJC)



Driving Forces

- ▶ Memorandum of Agreement (2012) – Shelby County, JC and Department of Justice (MOA)
 - ▶ Due Process
 - ▶ Equal Protection – Disproportionate Minority Contact (DMC)
 - ▶ Protection From Harm/Detention Center
- ▶ Newly Elected Judge (2015) – Champion
- ▶ Partnerships, collaborations – DCI, NCJFCJ, JDAI

Recommendations for Shelby County

- ▶ Universal precautions
- ▶ Trauma Education and Training – all staff
- ▶ Environmental Changes
- ▶ Process to describe to stakeholders the vision of a trauma informed court

Activities/Outcomes

- ▶ Leverage federal funds to support recommendations on trauma education/training – DCI, FWV
- ▶ Grant Opportunity – community partners support, develop proposal to address juvenile justice
- ▶ Expansion of partnerships – UT, DCI
- ▶ DCI Public Awareness Campaign - Engage JC in campaign, allows process for them to roll out their vision

Race and Culture

- ▶ Candid conversations about implicit bias
 - ▶ Explicit bias is a *conscious* preference (positive or negative) for a social category.
 - ▶ Implicit bias is a preference (positive or negative) for a social category that operates *outside of our awareness*.
- ▶ Trainings, resources, and publications offered on the topic
 - ▶ The Lens of Implicit Bias (Marsh, 2009)
 - ▶ <http://www.ncjfcj.org/sites/default/files/the%20lens%20of%20implicit%20bias.pdf>
 - ▶ Video: Racial disparities and implicit bias (Marsh, 2016)
 - ▶ <http://www.ncjfcj.org/racial-disparities-and-implicit-bias>

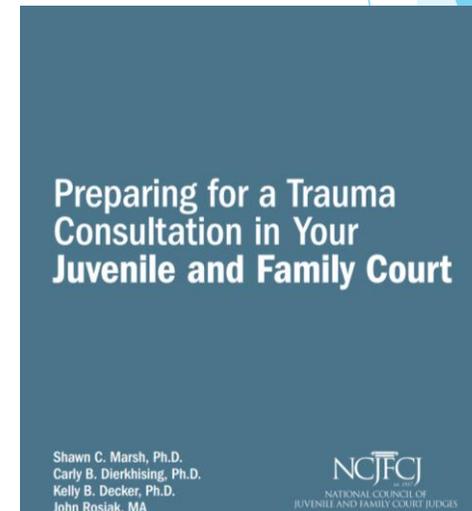
Cultural and Linguistic Competency (CLC)

- ▶ Identify and Understand your Service Population
- ▶ Promote Workforce Cultural Competence and Diversity
 - ▶ Attracting and Keeping the Right Staff
 - ▶ Cross-cultural awareness
 - ▶ Ensuring Accountability
- ▶ Allocate Budgetary Resources to Support CLC
- ▶ Develop a Shared Language about Trauma
 - ▶ Focus on Collaboration

Resources: National Child Traumatic Stress Network
www.nctsn.org/resources/topics/culture-and-trauma

Helpful Resources

- ▶ NCJFCJ has voiced commitment to trauma-informed court reform by offering continued training, technical assistance, and research support to judges and court stakeholders ([Marsh & Bickett, 2015](#)).
- ▶ Preparing for a Trauma Consultation in Your Juvenile and Family Court ([Marsh, et al., 2015](#))
- ▶ NCTSN's Service System Briefs
 - ▶ Creating Trauma-Informed Child-Serving Systems
 - ▶ Creating Trauma-Informed Law Enforcement Systems



Info-Graphic

▶ What can Juvenile and Family Courts do to Respond to Trauma?

▶ Promote: Safety, Healing, Self-determination, and pro-social connections

- ▶ Improve systems
- ▶ Seek to understand the whole story
- ▶ Identify environmental triggers
- ▶ Create a safe courthouse
- ▶ Be thoughtful about services
- ▶ Nurture voice and choice



Questions?

Carlene Gonzalez, PhD
Cgonzalez@ncjfcj.org

Malrie Shelton, MSSW, LCSW
Malrie.Shelton@shelbycountyttn.gov



Assessing Trauma-Informed Practice: Lessons Learned from a Trauma Audit



Please take a moment to take a short survey regarding today's webinar and future webinars.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/TQ2T26S>



This project was supported by Grant No. 2011-MU-MU-K011 awarded by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. Points of view in this document are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official positions or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.