

# Instilling Holistic Safety: How We Can Reimagine Our Approach Toward Safety in Corrections

National Institute of Corrections

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# Webinar Takeaways

- Analyze different correctional systems to determine what factors are contributing to a lack of safety.
- Explain to system stakeholders how health, value, personal agency, connectedness, and trust all contribute to safety so as to guide policy changes that reduce systemic harms.
- Articulate why and how lived experience groups – like correctional officers, people incarcerated, and survivors of crime – must be engaged to make system change successful.





# Moderator

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# REHABILITATION



**The action of restoring someone to health or normal life through training and therapy after imprisonment, addiction, or illness**



**TRAUMA**



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# Understanding trauma

## Trauma is commonly understood as..

an event that is experienced or witnessed by a person as harmful or life-threatening and that has **lasting consequences** on the person's mental, emotional, spiritual, physical, and social wellbeing.



## Yet this individualized understanding of trauma in the legal system misses:

- The **depth and range** of the impact of trauma
- The problems with the **system itself**, not the individual
- Opportunities to support the **men and women who work in institutions**, not just individuals who are incarcerated and are most commonly understood to be system-impacted



# Individuals confined and working within carceral institutions experience high levels of trauma

## PEOPLE INCARCERATED

## CORRECTIONAL STAFF

Trauma

99%

Report experiencing >1 traumatic event in their lifetime that involved violence directed towards them

73%

In one of the largest state systems had seen someone hurt or killed on the job

PTSD

60%

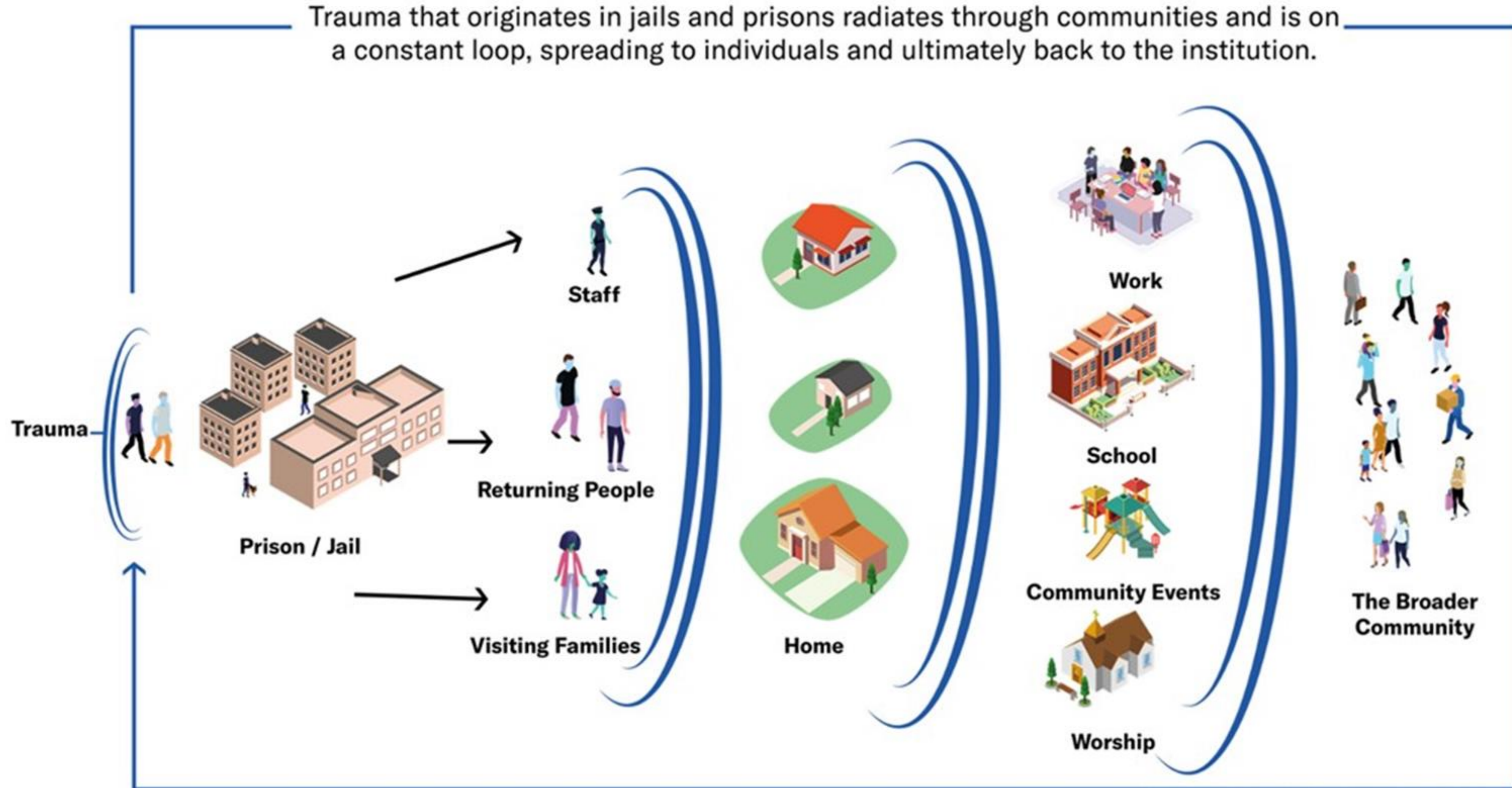
Experience moderate to severe symptoms for PTSD

34%

of correction officers in security roles meet the criteria for PTSD, 5x the national rate



# The reality is that trauma affects ALL of us



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**"THE ENEMY IS THE CORRECTIONAL  
ENVIRONMENT IN ITS ENTIRETY."**

**- Officer William Young**



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# Do I Have the Right to Feel Safe?

**Unified a diverse,  
never-before-seen  
coalition of  
stakeholders behind  
holistic safety.**





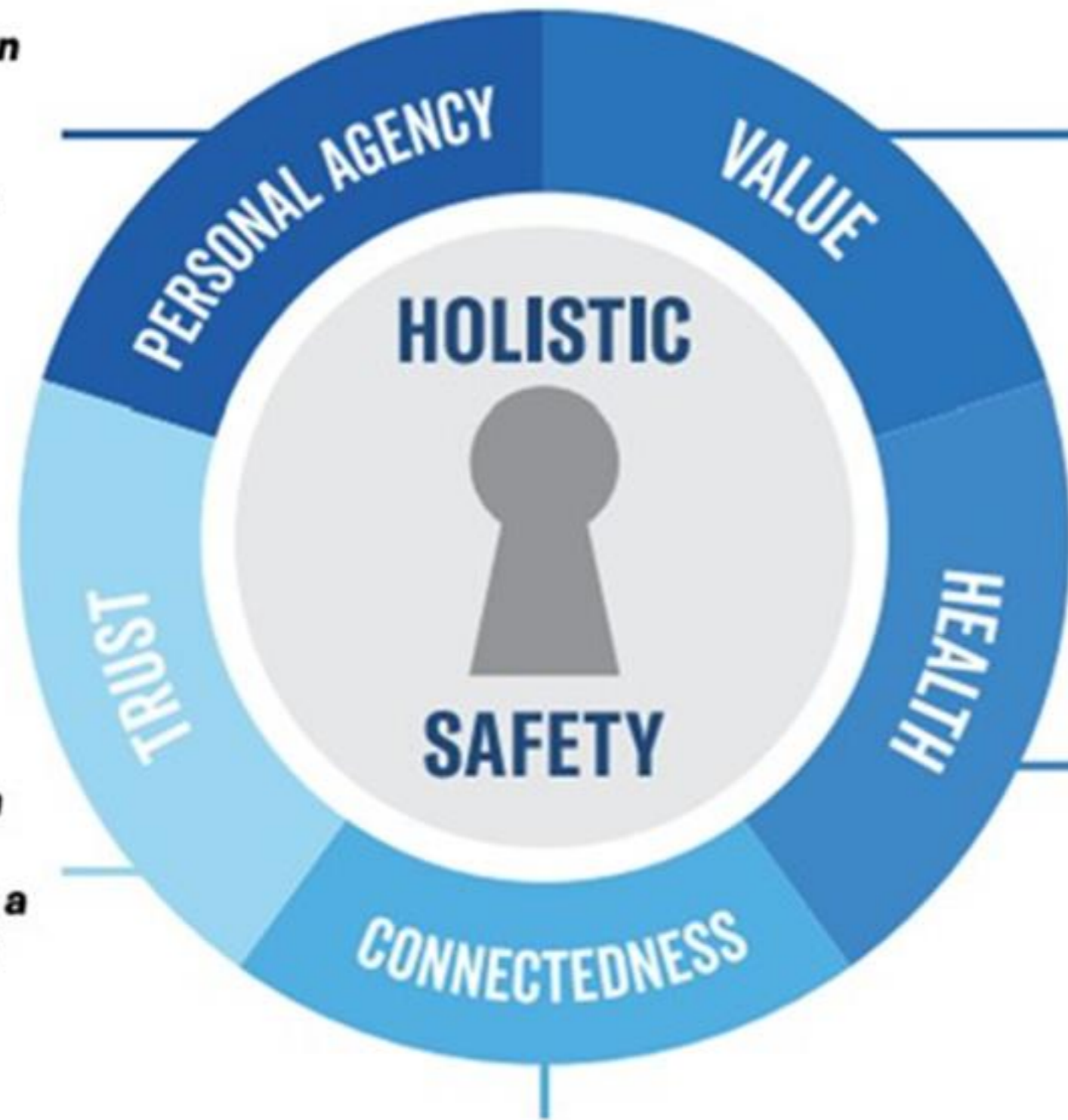
***HOLISTIC SAFETY* IS CREATING THE CONDITIONS FOR ALL  
COMMUNITY MEMBERS – INSIDE AND OUTSIDE OF  
CORRECTIONAL WALLS – TO BE AND FEEL PROTECTED,  
RESILIENT, AND WHOLE**



# A Being safe requires us to feel safe

*Our capacity to determine our own future, from making day-to-day choices to identifying and accessing the resources we need.*

*The idea that we must respect and invest in our shared humanity and individual strengths.*



*The physical, mental, and emotional wellbeing we need to thrive, not just be injury-free.*

*Our earned – not blind – belief in people to not only fulfill their responsibilities but to also act in a manner beneficial to themselves and others.*

*The concept that we are all intrinsically bound as human beings and we are served best when our ties are positive and strong.*

**Whether through lived experience or rigorous studies, we know when these areas are deficient, safety declines. Alternatively, when they are present, people incarcerated and staff thrive.**



## B People feel safe when they are part of the solution



- **People formerly incarcerated**
- **Families** impacted by incarceration
- **Union leaders**
- **Survivors of crime**
- **Community organizations** in areas most impacted by incarceration

**Staff and people incarcerated face a duality of harm, yet they are rarely engaged in solution-making spaces.**



**C** **When people are part of the solution,  
change lasts**



**This work is not just about the 'what'. It is also about the 'how'.**

**When we engage people incarcerated and staff in a process that centers their wellbeing and shifts how we notice, problem solve and act, we generate the buy-in needed for change to last.**



# The Holistic Safety Action Alliance (HSAA) is intended to put this framework in motion nationwide

## The concept

The HSAA is a year-long program in which a cohort of urban jail administrators from Cook and San Francisco County partner with corrections staff, people detained, and community experts to develop strategies to reduce the isolation experienced by all parties. Recognizing the impact of isolation on safety, administrators will aim to shift policies, practices and resource flows to address:

1. **Physical isolation.** How do we increase quality, out-of-cell time?
2. **Interpersonal isolation between staff and people incarcerated.** How do we combat the 'us vs. them' culture?
3. **Emotional isolation for staff.** How do we add supports to let staff thrive?
4. **Emotional isolation for people incarcerated.** How do we add supports to let people incarcerated thrive?

## HSAA Partners

The HSAA is guided by the premise that being safe requires us to feel safe and that people feel safe when they are part of the solution. Therefore, each institution will partner with:

1. **Other cohort institutions and administrators** through monthly meetings organized by Chicago Beyond to share progress and build community.
2. **Internal Advisory Councils** of frontline staff and people detained that they are creating to proactively influence reform efforts.
3. **Chicago Beyond's National Advisory Council**, comprised of expert leaders with experience being incarcerated or working in the system.

Throughout the year, Chicago Beyond will be providing structure, workshops, and connective tissue.





**Video on Holistic Safety**



## Together we can drive transformative change

- Take tangible actions aligned with the holistic safety framework to reduce isolation in your facilities.
- Establish a sustainable infrastructure for collaboration with people incarcerated, correctional staff and other people impacted by the system.
- Promote the culture shift to ensure holistic safety is understood, embraced and practiced



**THE POWER STARTS WITH US**



**What is one way you can center  
holistic safety?**

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## Stay connected



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*Do I Have the Right to Feel Safe?*



# Questions and Answer Time!

What questions do you have?

*Chat them now!*





# Selected Resource for Further Exploration



<https://chicagobeyond.org/doihavetherighttofeelsafe/>





# Thank you for participating!



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