

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's Center for Mental Health Services (CMHS)

IMPACT OF TRAUMA

More than half of the people served by mental health systems across the country are female, and the vast majority have histories of trauma. To date, fiscal year 2013 Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) data for Center for Mental Health Services (CMHS) grantees show approximately 74 percent of women have experienced violence or trauma, many from multiple sources. While people often recover from even severely traumatizing experiences, trauma can affect the brain by overloading the stress response system; mental health “symptoms” are often adaptations to these neurological changes. Unless recognized and addressed, trauma can affect every aspect of life, including health, behavior, ability to learn, and relationships. Additional statistics on women in the mental health system and information about the impact of trauma can be found in the first Federal Partners Report on Women and Trauma <http://nicic.gov/Library/025082>.

How a Trauma-Informed Approach Can Make a Difference

Services that are not trauma-informed may inadvertently do serious psychological damage through practices that replicate trauma dynamics. Trauma-informed approaches promote collaboration and healing, especially when coupled with access to trauma-specific treatment interventions. CMHS has provided national leadership in the emerging trauma-informed care movement. In 1994, the Dare to Vision Conference focused attention on women's experience of violence and re-traumatization in the mental health system. The subsequent cross-Center SAMHSA-funded Women, Co-Occurring Disorders and Violence Study developed and tested models for trauma-integrated care that have since been widely adopted. Currently, SAMHSA is developing a concept of trauma and principles of trauma-informed approaches that will provide consistent guidance to all health, behavioral health and human service systems as they move to becoming trauma-informed.



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Major Accomplishments 2010-2013

CMHS' National Center on Trauma-Informed Care (NCTIC's) working draft *Engaging Women in Trauma-Informed Peer Support: A Guidebook*, is the most downloaded resource from the TA Center, requested by over 30 health, human, and social service systems. This reflects increased recognition that integration of consumers/survivors/peers must be the cornerstone of implementing trauma-informed change strategies.

<http://www.nasmhpd.org/publications/engagingWomen.aspx>

CMHS' Jail Diversion Trauma Recovery - Priority Focus on Veterans Program supports implementation and expansion of local and statewide trauma-integrated jail diversion programs. Over 2,100 justice system personnel have been trained.

National Childhood Traumatic Stress Network hosted speaker series: 1) creating trauma-informed child-serving systems; and 2) terrorism, disaster and children.

NCTIC provided training and consultation on the implementation of trauma-informed approaches to over 20,000 people in 33 states. A frequently requested topic is the elimination of seclusion and restraint, reflecting the recognition that trauma-informed change strategies are essential to eliminating these harmful practices.

CMHS partnered with DOJ to develop principles and a best practices statement to reduce the use of restraints among pregnant women who are incarcerated.

New Directions and Collaborations

CMHS is collaborating with the National Institutes of Health Department of Bioethics Clinical Center on a peer support project to obtain qualitative input from adult women volunteers on desirable physician approaches to obtaining a trauma history during prenatal care.

CMHS' NCTIC is developing a core curriculum based on SAMHSA's concept paper on trauma and trauma-informed approaches to guide TA efforts.

CMHS is working with a number of local communities (including San Mateo, CA; Tarpon Springs, FL; and King County, WA) to create models for trauma-informed communities.

CMHS provides leadership on integrating peers in trauma-informed change strategies.

Additional Resources

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<http://www.samhsa.gov/nctic>
<http://www.nctsn.org>
<http://gainscenter.samhsa.gov/>
<http://www.samhsa.gov/dtac/>

The Trauma-Informed Care Initiative at the Women's Community Correctional Center of Hawaii

Child Traumatic Stress: What Every Policymaker Should Know

Responding to Crisis in the Aftermath of Disasters (DVD series)