San Antonio’s Trauma Informed System

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COVID-19-Associated Orphanhood and Caregiver Death in the United States

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A declaration from the American Academy of Pediatrics, American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Children’s Hospital Association:

As health professionals dedicated to the care of children and adolescents, we have witnessed soaring rates of mental health challenges among children, adolescents, and their families over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic, exacerbating the situation that existed prior to the pandemic. Children and families across our country have experienced enormous adversity and disruption. The inequities that result from structural racism have contributed to disproportionate impacts on children from communities of color.

This worsening crisis in child and adolescent mental health is inextricably tied to the stress brought on by COVID-19 and the ongoing struggle for racial justice and represents an acceleration of trends observed prior to 2020. Rates of childhood mental health concerns and suicide rose steadily between 2010 and 2020, and by 2018 suicide was the second leading cause of death for youth ages 10-24. The pandemic has intensified this crisis: across the country we have witnessed dramatic increases in Emergency Department visits for all mental health emergencies including suspected suicide attempts.

“Promote and pay for trauma-informed care services that support relational health and family resilience.”
7 of the top 10 leading causes of death are associated with ACEs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leading Cause of Death</th>
<th>Odds Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Heart disease</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Cancer</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Chronic lower respiratory diseases</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Accident</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Stroke</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Alzheimer's</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Diabetes</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Influenza and Pneumonia</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Kidney disease</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Suicide</td>
<td>12.2*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Without intervention, there can be a 20-year difference in life expectancy

Odds Ratios associated with 4 ACEs (CDC 2017, Felitti 1998)

Data: MMWR; November 8, 2019; Vol.68; No. 44

*<enter other reference here, 3 or more ACEs>, and Nadine Burke Harris/Center for Youth Wellness
Power to Prevent

Preventing ACEs could reduce a large number of health conditions.

- **21 MILLION**
  - CASES OF DEPRESSION
- **1.9 MILLION**
  - CASES OF HEART DISEASE
- **2.5 MILLION**
  - CASES OF OVERWEIGHT/OBESITY

**SOCIOECONOMIC CHALLENGES**
- Unemployment: -15%
- Less than a High School Education: -5%
- No Health Insurance: -4%

**HEALTH RISK BEHAVIORS**
- Current Smoking: -33%
- Heavy Drinking: -24%

We can overcome high ACEs

- **Good news:** Trauma-induced changes (including epigenetic changes) are reversible
- The brain is plastic, and the body wants to heal

“Trauma-informed care shifts the focus from: ‘What’s wrong with you?’ to ‘What happened to you?’”
Key Components of Trauma Informed Care

- Incorporating the approach to every aspect of the organization, creating a genuine culture change
- Demonstrating greater awareness of the impact of trauma on all individuals served by the program, organization, or system, including its own workforce
- An acceptance that trauma influences the effectiveness of all human services (care coordination, medical care, criminal justice, etc.)
- Solution-based service approach
- Recognizing the pervasiveness of trauma
- Changing the thinking from “What is wrong with this individual?” to “What happened to this individual?”
- Staff at all levels change their behaviors, actions, and policies in keeping with a TIC approach (Jennings, 2004)
What is a Trauma Informed System?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SYSTEM</th>
<th>RELATIONSHIP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(POLICIES, PROCEDURES, “THE WAY THINGS ARE DONE”)</td>
<td>(POWER, CONTROL, SUBVERSIVENESS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HAVING TO CONTINUALLY RETELL THEIR STORY</td>
<td>NOT BEING SEEN/HEARD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEING TREATED AS A NUMBER</td>
<td>VIOLATING TRUST</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROCEDURES THAT REQUIRE DISROBING</td>
<td>FAILURE TO ENSURE EMOTIONAL SAFETY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEING SEEN AS THEIR LABEL (I.E ADDICT, SCHIZOPHRENIC)</td>
<td>NONCOLLABORATIVE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NO CHOICE IN SERVICE OR TREATMENT</td>
<td>DOES THINGS FOR RATHER THAN WITH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NO OPPORTUNITY TO GIVE FEEDBACK ABOUT THEIR EXPERIENCE WITH THE SERVICE DELIVERY</td>
<td>USE OF PUNITIVE TREATMENT, COERCIVE PRACTICES AND OPPRESSIVE LANGUAGE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Initial Findings:
Everyone is trauma-informed
## San Antonio’s Trauma Informed System Development

| South Texas Trauma Informed Care Consortium | • 600+ members/12 Sectors  
|                                            | • Focus on **Why** |
| Institute for Trauma Informed Care         | • $1.2 M partnership- San Antonio and University Health  
|                                            | • Focus on **What** |
| Certifying Entity                          | • Ecumenical Center – Sets/assesses standards  
|                                            | • Focus on **Who** |
South Texas Trauma-Informed Care Consortium

The Consortium’s Vision:
A Certified Trauma Informed Care Bexar County

Tri-Chairs

Yvette Sanchez
The Children’s Shelter

Dr. Kathy Fletcher
Voices for Children

Dr. Colleen Bridger

[Logos for The Children’s Shelter, Voices for Children, and Colleen Bridger Consulting]
STTIC Sector Workgroups

Total Organizations = 300+
South Texas Trauma Informed Care Consortium

SOUTH TEXAS TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE CONSORTIUM

Working to mitigate the effects of Adverse Childhood Experiences by creating a Certified Trauma-Informed Care Bexar County.

The South Texas Trauma-Informed Care Consortium is a collaboration between The Children's Shelter, Voices for Children and City of San Antonio Metro Health Department. "The Partners". The consortium brings together community participants who are committed to addressing the impact of trauma. The Consortium's goals are:

- To educate the community about trauma, about the damage of trauma and re-traumatization, and about how widespread trauma-related damage is.
- To raise awareness of the importance of being trauma informed.
- To build a resilient community and mitigate the effects of trauma-related damage.

What is Trauma Informed Care?
### San Antonio’s Trauma Informed System Development

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| Certifying Entity                         | • Ecumenical Center – Sets/assesses standards  
|                                           | • Focus on **Who** |
Institute for Trauma-Informed Care

• $1.2 million Partnership between the City of San Antonio and University Health System

• Provide training and technical assistance at no cost to organizations aspiring to become trauma-informed care certified

• https://www.universityhealthsystem.com/health-wellness/institute-for-trauma-informed-care
Institute for Trauma Informed Care

**ACE Interface Training: Quarter 3**

- 21 total training sessions
- 118 attendees
- Reached 70 unique organizations
- Sectors represented - average 10 of 12
Institute for Trauma Informed Care

Marketing and Educational Materials

Institute banner for community events

Through the Lens of ACEs: Building Resilience

CRI Educational materials
San Antonio’s Trauma Informed System Development

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- Focus on Why

Institute for Trauma Informed Care
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- Focus on What

Certifying Entity
- Ecumenical Center – Sets/assesses standards
- Focus on Who
Certifying Entity – Ecumenical Center

• Partnership with Methodist Healthcare Ministries and the Ecumenical Center

• The Ecumenical Center works with the Consortium and the Institute for Trauma-Informed Care to:

  1) Develop certification standards

  2) Assess and certify organization as trauma-informed
TIC Levels of Certification

Level 1: Creating Safe Environments and Promoting Healthy workplaces

Level 2: Early Intervention / Identifying trauma – Self-actualization, Resilience

Level 3: Intensive Support – Support system specific
How does Trauma Informed Certification Work?

- The goal of Certification is to build a strong foundation and create shared language across community sectors.
- The Certification process is supportive, not punitive.
- There are no complicated point structures.
- There is no charge for certification.
- There is no singular model.
Self Evaluation Tool

- Training
- Leadership Support and Communication
- Agency TIC Policy Development and Implementation
- Internal Agency Trauma-Informed Workgroup
- Internal Assessment with Staff Input
- External Service Assessment
- TIC Plan of Action and Implementation
Organization Count per Sector

- Child Welfare/Foster Care (7)
- Higher Ed. (2)
- Education: Prek-12 (9)
- Early Childhood Edu. (2)
- Medical: Hospitals & Clinics (2)
- Housing & Homelessness (5)
- Faith-Based/Congregations (4)
- Philanthropy (2)
- Family Support Services (10)
- Mental/Behavioral Health (15)
- Local Gov. & Strategic Commun. (1)
- Other (5)

Legend:
- Number of Orgs
- Column1
TI Certification Interest Form – Agencies by size
Trauma-Informed San Antonio Organizational Structure

This structure defines the relationship and core functions of the project partners with the goals of communication, coordination, and oversight.

Trauma Informed Care Consortium Vision: A Certified Trauma Informed Bexar County

Governance Council

- **The Consortium**
  - 3 Tri-Chairs

- **The Institute**
  - 2 Members

- **Certifying Entity**
  - 1 Member

- **Community Representative**
  - 1 Member

Governance Council

- **Governance Council**
  - Govern and oversee the project
  - The Council defines and communicates to the world the project’s “who.” It is responsible for a decision-making process that is fair, community-inclusive, and transparent and ensures the project’s success. The Council oversees the partners’ progress and holds them accountable for their core functions.

- **The Consortium**
  - Educate the community on the importance of being trauma informed
  - The mission of the Consortium is to communicate the “why.” It informs the development and implementation of the project. The Consortium acts as the project’s ambassador, advisor, and community liaison.

- **The Institute**
  - Describe what it means to be trauma informed
  - The Institute is responsible for the “what” of the project. It provides training and technical assistance anchored in best practices and informed by the community’s culture and demographics. The Institute is the TIC expert and information

- **The Certifying Entity**
  - Recognize the organizations that are trauma informed
  - The Certifying Entity determines “who” is trauma-informed. It recognizes the organizations that meet the community-adopted standards.

- **Quality, Compliance, and Evaluation**
  - Evaluate effectiveness
  - Evaluate the core functions of the project to determine overall impact. Provide information for decision-making. This entity will be separate from the Governance Council.
Lessons Learned

Think Systemically

Create Common Definitions/Expectations

Trust but Certify

Staff Make the World Go Round

It is Complicated…but not Impossible