



Applying the Optimal Health Model Among Trauma-Sensitive Youth in SRAE Programs

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ADMINISTRATION FOR
CHILDREN & FAMILIES

FYSB Family & Youth
Services Bureau

Adolescent Pregnancy
Prevention Program



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Today's Goal

Increase Awareness of Effective SRAE Health Models and Teaching Practices for Trauma-Sensitive Youth

Learning Objectives

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able

- to:**
- Explain some of the needs of trauma-sensitive youth
 - Assess effective teaching practices when working with trauma-sensitive youth
 - Work effectively with trauma-sensitive youth to increase positive behavioral outcomes

What is Trauma?

“...a psychological, emotional response to an event or an experience that is deeply distressing or disturbing.”

(The Center for Treatment of Anxiety and Mood Disorders)

<https://centerforanxietydisorders.com/what-is-trauma/>

What Might Trauma Look Like?

“With grief, sadness is obvious. With trauma, the **symptoms can go largely unrecognized** because it **shows up looking like other problems:** frustration, acting out, difficulty concentrating, following directions or working in a group. For children who have experienced trauma, **learning can be a big struggle.**”

(The National Institute for Trauma and Loss in Children, 2018)

Complex Trauma

“Complex trauma is a type of trauma that occurs repeatedly and cumulatively, usually over a period of time and within specific relationships and contexts.”

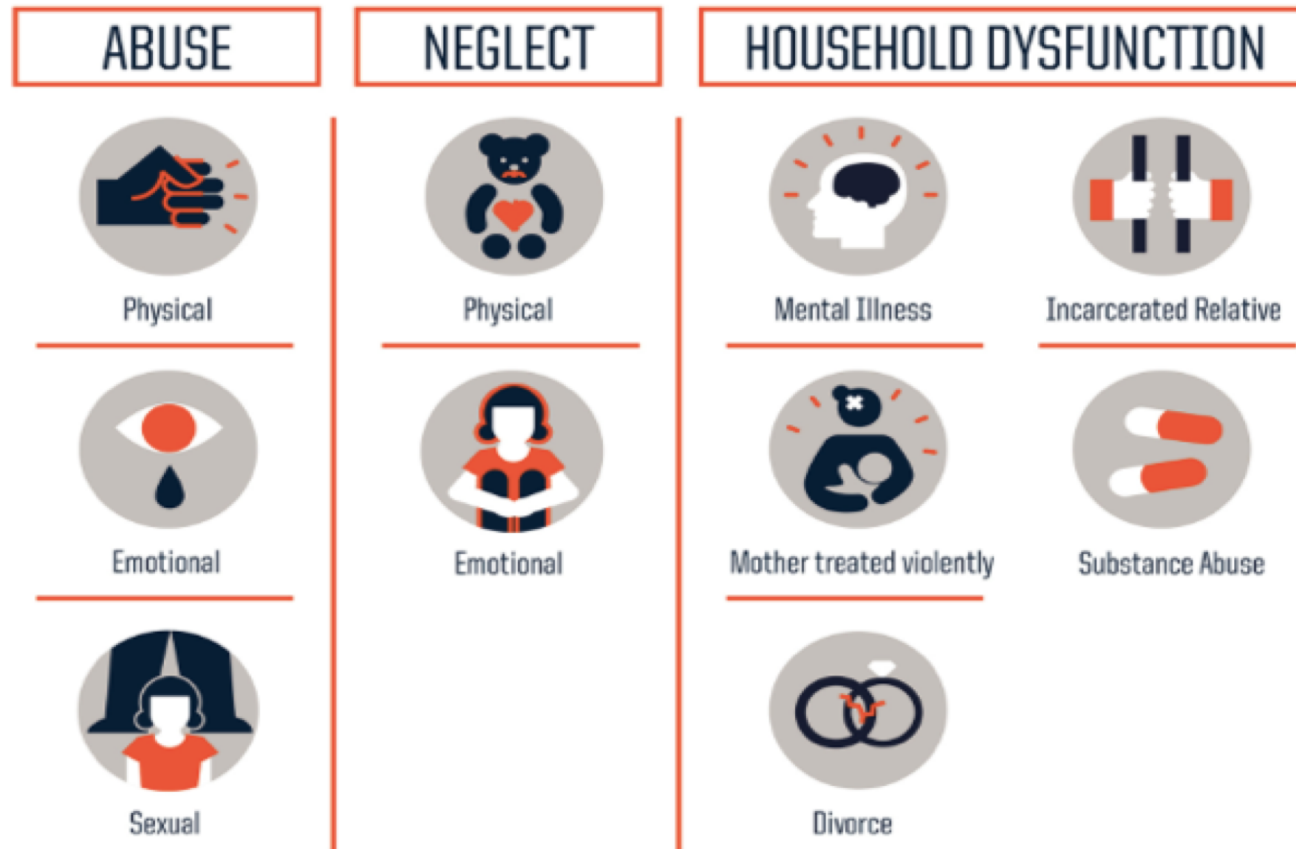
(Christine Courtois, 2012)

Child Traumatic Stress

“Children who suffer from **child traumatic stress** are those who have been **exposed to one or more traumas** over the course of their lives and **develop reactions that persist** and affect their daily lives after the event has ended...**Without treatment, repeated childhood exposure** to traumatic events **can affect the brain and nervous system and increase health-risk behaviors.**”

(The National Institute for Trauma and Loss in Children, 2020)

Examples Of Complex Trauma/Child Traumatic Stress



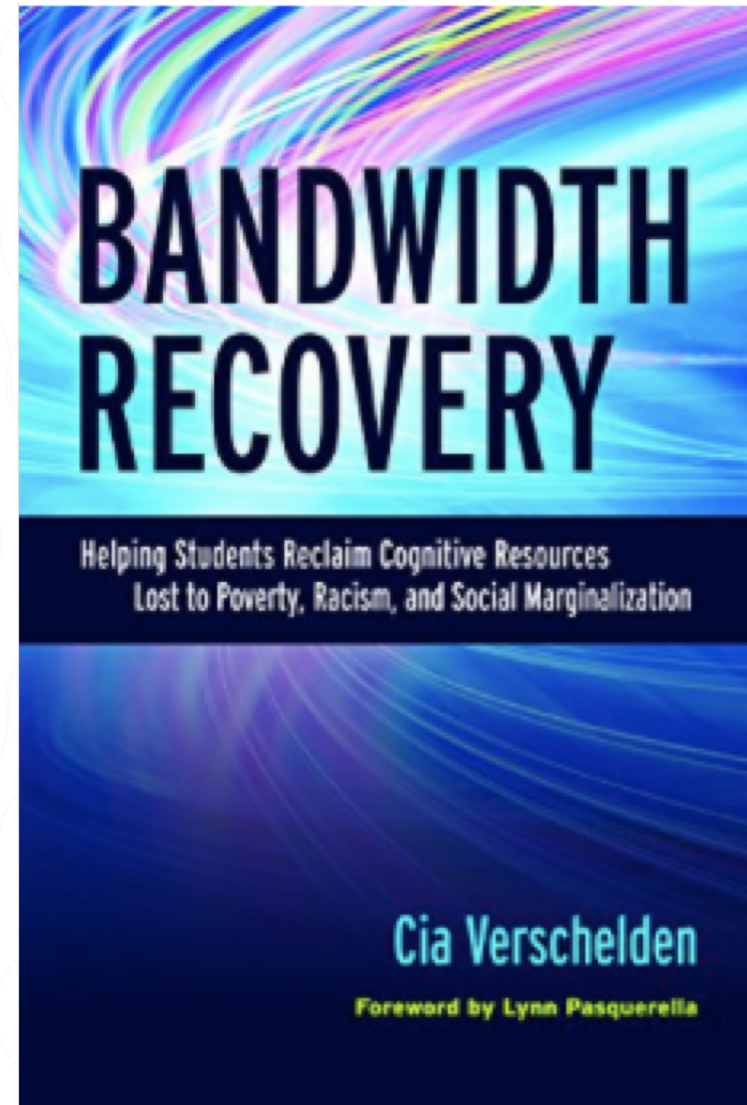
Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Youth with Complex Trauma or Trauma-Sensitive Youth

- Worry about what's going to happen next
- Need to feel they're good at something and can influence the world
- Self-regulation can be a major challenge
- You don't need to know what caused the trauma to be able to help

(The National Institute for Trauma and Loss in Children, 2018)

“Persistent worry about money, including lack of regular access to adequate food, shelter, health care, safety...takes up parts of the brain that are then not available for thinking, learning, and making good choices.”





Effective Practices When Working With Trauma-sensitive Youth

Juvenile Delinquency

“Delinquent girls have high rates of trauma experiences and PTSD symptoms...experiential measures of trauma are significant predictors of delinquency and involvement in health-risking sexual behavior.”

(Smith, Leve, & Chamberlain, 2007)

Longitudinal Study for the Youth in the Cook County Juvenile Temporary Detention Center

96% had experienced at least one trauma

84% had experienced more than one trauma

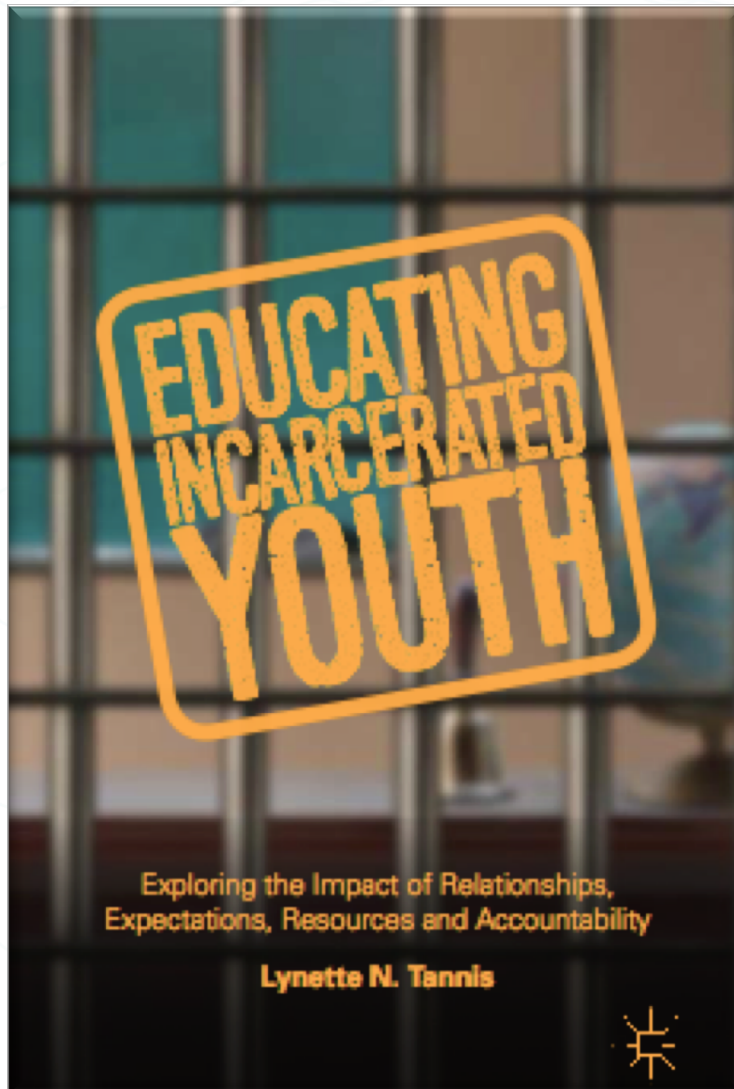
57% were exposed to trauma six or more times

Office of Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention; Abram et al, 2013

Effective Practices For Working With Trauma-Sensitive Youth

- Take time to build trust.
- Strive to make every interaction with youth an honest and respectful dialogue.
- Be open to alternative ways of understanding the youths' motivations that highlight their core values, goals, and competencies.
- If/when conflict or disagreements occur, be emotionally regulated and respectful.
- Remember there is no “one size fits all” strategy – each individual needs to be known and understood as the person he/she is capable of being.

Complex Trauma Treatment Network of the National Child Traumatic Stress Network. (2016). Complex trauma: In juvenile justice-system involved youth. Los Angeles, CA, & Durham, NC: National Center for Child Traumatic Stress.



- Relationships
- Expectations
- Resources
- Accountability

Poem: Breaking My Mother's Addiction

Poet: D.A.C. School: Granite YES School

Provided with permission from the Center for Educational Excellence in Alternative Settings (CEEAS)

What I know for sure is that my mother
loves me,

but her addiction might be forever.

What I know for sure is the sun
will come up tomorrow,
people will die, and life will keep
moving on.

I know that life is hard sometimes,
and some days I won't want to get up.
A child of an addict craving my mothers' love,
it makes my heart sick.

What I know for sure is I made a little girl
of my own.

I know I don't want to cause the same
pain I felt to my daughter in her life.

What I know for sure is I love my daughter
with my whole heart.

Running away will never work.

A mother cannot run away.

It only causes more pain.

Poem: Breaking My Mother's Addiction

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I also know forgiving my mother and then
myself
might take a long time,
but in the end, I need to remember
my mother did, still does, and always will love
me.

Now that I've grown up a lot, I've come to
realize
that I want to love my mother from
a distance.

I know that I can show my daughter that
I love her in a different way.
What I know for sure is I will
break the cycle of drug addiction.
My mother loves me, and because of me,
her addiction won't be forever,
and the sun will come up tomorrow.
I know if I break the cycle, then
through me,
her addiction won't last forever.



How can SRAE serve as an Optimal Health Model for Trauma-Sensitive Youth?

**“Trauma exposure has been linked to RSB
(Risky Sexual Behaviors).”**

(Werner et al, 2018)

Optimal Health Model

“Optimal health is a dynamic balance of physical, emotional, social, spiritual, and intellectual health...Lifestyle change can be facilitated through a combination of learning experiences that enhance awareness, increase motivation, and build skills and, most important, through the creation of opportunities that open access to environments that make positive health practices the easiest choice.” (O'Donnell, 2009)

Lessons Learned

Rose Demo



Rose Demo



Retaining Value





QUESTIONS?

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References

O'Donnell, M. P. (2009). Definition of Health Promotion 2.0: Embracing Passion, Enhancing Motivation, Recognizing Dynamic Balance, and Creating Opportunities. *American Journal of Health Promotion*, 24(1), iv-iv. doi:10.4278/ajhp.24.1.iv

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