

How Being Trauma-Informed Improves Criminal Justice System Responses



Training Description

SAMHSA's GAINS Center for Behavioral Health and Justice Transformation, operated by Policy Research Associates, Inc. (PRA), is known nationally for its work in regard to people with behavioral health needs involved in the criminal justice system.

Overview

Although prevalence estimates vary, there is consensus that high percentages of justice-involved women and men have experienced serious trauma throughout their lifetime. The reverberating effects of trauma experiences can challenge a person's capacity for recovery and pose significant barriers to accessing services, often resulting in an increased risk of coming into contact with the criminal justice system.

Objectives

How Being Trauma-Informed Improves Criminal Justice System Responses is a training program for criminal justice professionals to:

- Increase understanding of trauma
- Create an awareness of the impact of trauma on behavior
- Develop trauma-informed responses

Trauma-informed criminal justice responses can help to avoid re-traumatizing individuals, and thereby increase safety for all, decrease recidivism, and promote and support recovery of justice-involved women and men with serious mental illness. Partnerships across systems can also help to link individuals to trauma-informed services and treatment for trauma.

Program Participants

This highly interactive training is specifically tailored to community-based criminal justice professionals including:

- Community corrections (probation, parole, and pre-trial services officers)
- Court personnel
- Police
- Other human service providers

Learning Objectives

Upon completion of this program, participants will be able to:

1. Engage in a positive interactive process
2. Feel safe and comfortable in the learning environment
3. Discuss why criminal justice system professionals should learn about trauma
4. List examples of traumatic events
5. Define trauma
6. Discuss how trauma is often ongoing for many individuals involved in the criminal justice system
7. Describe the pervasive impact trauma can have on an individual's life
8. Describe how the impact of trauma can be experienced throughout life and affect various aspects of functioning and behavior
9. Describe how trauma relates to mental health and substance use disorders
10. Describe how certain behaviors may reflect a person's attempt to survive
11. Discuss how a history of trauma may result in problematic behavior, poor relationships, and justice involvement
12. Describe the cycle of violence as a response to childhood physical abuse
13. List examples of individual differences that may lead to resilience or increased vulnerability to trauma
14. List four things people need in their interpersonal interaction with officers: respect, information, safety, and choice
15. List approaches to responding to behavior
16. In response to "who is likely," reply with "there should be a universal assumption of trauma"
17. List and describe ways in which the criminal justice system may re-traumatize
18. Discuss how to improve policies and procedures to make them trauma-informed
19. List three key steps for moving toward trauma-informed policies and procedures