



An Overview of Trauma Sensitive Care and Understanding

What Is Trauma?

Trauma is any experience that leaves a person intensely threatened. It often triggers physical, psychological, and emotional symptoms. If left untreated, effects can last long after an event has occurred. Traumatic events can include:

- Loss of relationships
- Natural disasters
- Neglect
- Racism
- Physical and/or psychological abuse
- Domestic violence
- Sexual abuse/assault
- Medical trauma
- Community and/or school violence
- Refugee and/or war zone trauma
- Terrorism
- Grief

Trauma Sensitive Care:

Trauma Sensitive Care is an approach to understanding, recognizing, and responding to individuals who have experienced trauma. It is a way to relate to, connect with, and understand the ways that trauma has affected the lives of individuals in our lives.

Trauma Sensitive Care asks the vital question of “What happened to you?” not, “What’s wrong with you?”

- “What’s wrong with you?” places blame on the victim causing a defensive response.
- “What happened to you?” shifts responsibility to the abuser and starts to open a pathway of trust between caregiver and victim.

Trauma Sensitive Understanding:

<i>Traditional View</i>	<i>Transition to</i>	<i>Trauma Informed View</i>
Child is acting out	→	Emotionally dysregulated due to a traumatic event
Anger management problems	→	Scared: fight, flight, freeze
Willful and naughty	→	Maladaptive patterns
Uncontrollable	→	Seeking to get needs met
Pushing buttons	→	Lacking social skills
In needs of consequences to motivate	→	Negative template or worldview



EXPLOIT NO MORE

Discussing Sex Trafficking:

Tradition View	Transition to	Trauma Informed Language
Child/Youth/Adult Prostitute	→	Trafficked Person
Hooker	→	Victim of Exploitation
Pimp	→	Trafficker or Abuser
John/Trick	→	(Sex) Buyer

Further Resources on Trauma and Care:

- [How Childhood Trauma Affects Health Across a Lifetime](#); TED Talk by Nadine Burke Harris
- [Understanding Adverse Childhood Experiences](#); CDC Violence Prevention
- [Good Relationships are the Key to Healing Trauma](#); TED Talk by Karen Treisman
- More resources on trauma, human trafficking, and anti-trafficking organizations can be found at exploitnomore.org/education