TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE
Frequently Asked Questions

What is trauma?
Emotional, physical, or mental trauma occurs when a person is overwhelmed by an event or circumstance and responds with intense fear and helplessness. Trauma affects the developing brain and body and alters the body’s stress response mechanisms.

How long does it last?
Many people who have suffered trauma in childhood show signs of difficulty well into adulthood; this is normal. However, unresolved trauma can eventually manifest in many ways, including anxiety disorders, panic attacks or intrusive memories, and it also can lead to high-risk behaviors such as suicidal thoughts.

Can trauma affect my physical health?
Trauma impacts every area of human functioning — physical, mental, behavioral, social and spiritual. There is a relationship between trauma and physical health conditions such as diabetes, COPD, heart disease, cancer and high blood pressure.

Can I recover?
People can recover from trauma which will allow them to move forward with their lives. Trauma-Informed Care is a critical component of successful recovery.

Is trauma a national issue?
The Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) study conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Kaiser Permanente is one of the largest investigations ever conducted to assess associations between childhood maltreatment and later-life health and well-being. Almost two-thirds of the study participants reported at least one adverse childhood experience. Statistics also show that between 75 and 93 percent of youth in the juvenile justice system have experienced some degree of trauma.

What are communities doing about it?
Trauma is a costly public health concern that communities are trying to address. Unaddressed trauma can result in disease, disability, chronic social problems, economic effects and even early death. Until recently, treatment systems failed to understand the full impact of traumatic experiences. A movement for trauma-informed care has emerged to ensure that trauma is recognized and treated and that survivors are not re-victimized when they seek care.

What is Trauma-Informed Care?
Trauma-Informed Care involves interactions that emphasize physical and emotional safety, choice and empowerment for the person receiving services. The TIC approach engages people with histories of trauma and acknowledges the role that trauma has played in their lives. Treatment reflects that experience. For instance, a therapist will ask “what happened to you?” instead of “what’s wrong with you?”

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What is a Trauma-Informed Care community?
Trauma-Informed Care community is committed to a common goal of ensuring less trauma of any type (i.e. physical, emotional, accident/injury, political, natural disasters, violence, etc.). It is a community of people from all walks of life – education, juvenile justice, welfare, housing, medical practices, businesses, etc. – who have agreed to apply the Trauma-Informed Care Approach to their interactions with citizens. A program, organization, or system that is trauma-informed does the following:
- Understands the impact of trauma and potential paths for recovery
- Recognizes the signs and symptoms of trauma
- Integrates information about trauma into policies, procedures, and practices
- Seeks to actively resist re-traumatization

What is a Trauma-Informed Care approach?
There are six key principles that guide a Trauma-Informed Care approach and they may be applied across multiple settings.
1. Safety
2. Trustworthiness and Transparency
3. Peer support
4. Collaboration and mutuality
5. Empowerment, voice and choice
6. Cultural, Historical, and Gender Issues
Trauma-Informed Care builds on the best evidence available to promote consumer and family engagement, empowerment, and collaboration. Linkage to services that promote recovery and resilience for people impacted by trauma are part of the approach. Having one caring adult is one of the most effective interventions in a person’s life.

How do organizations build a Trauma-Informed Care system?
When the following specific strategies are ensured across every level within an organization it builds a trauma-informed care system:
- Universal screening and assessment procedures for trauma
- Inter-agency and intra-agency collaboration
- Referral agreements and networks to match individual's needs
- Mission and Values statements that endorse trauma recognition
- Consumer- and community-supported committees and trauma response teams
- Program policies and procedures that ensure trauma recognition and secure trauma-informed practices, trauma-specific services, and prevention of re-traumatization

How do I get help?
Let your provider know that you have experienced trauma, past or recent. It's OK to ask a lot of questions. A primary care physician is here to help provide education and resources to you.
Learn more about Trauma-Informed Care and the movement in communities across the nation at the National Center for Trauma-Informed Care website: samhsa.gov/nctic/resources.
If you would like more information about services at Lakeview Center, please call 850.469.3500.