



Video Transcript: Understanding Trauma & the Six Core Principles

Speaker 1:

Understanding trauma, adverse childhood experiences, also known as ACEs, and the six core principles of a trauma informed approach is essential to providing high quality adolescent health services. Many people experience trauma, including ACEs. Understanding the effects of trauma allows us to create safe and support environments for all. Recognizing trauma helps us to respond more compassionately and effectively to disclosures of traumatic experiences. Trauma refers to experiences that cause intense physical and psychological stress reactions. It can result from physical, psychological, or sexual abuse. Neglect, family violence, grief from the death of a loved one or other loss, a natural disaster, pandemic, or war or other emotional experiences. These events and circumstances may happen once or repeatedly over time. It is important to remember that trauma is also relative, meaning two people can experience the exact same event and that event may have a very different effect requiring a person-centered response.

Trauma can impact physical, mental, behavioral, social, and spiritual wellbeing. It affects young people's ability to learn as well as their understanding of healthy relationships and sexual behavior. Conventional ACEs include abuse, neglect, and household dysfunction. Expanded ACEs include experiencing racism, bullying, community violence, neighborhood safety, and living in foster care. All ACEs can contribute to trauma in the people you work with. You won't always know which people you interact with have a history of trauma. By incorporating a trauma informed approach into all the services you provide, you can create a safe, supportive, healing environment for all youth, parents, and caregivers, community partners, and staff. The six core principles in a trauma approach include safety, trustworthiness and transparency, peer support, collaboration and mutuality, empowerment, voice and choice, and cultural and historical awareness. Let's take a look at these principles in action in a youth serving program that has been working to enhance its trauma informed approaches.

First, the program established regular trauma informed supervision sessions for health educators. These sessions provide a safe space to explore challenging interactions they may have with youth, parents, and caregivers, community members, and partners. They also help health educators recognize how their own past trauma may impact their work, access organizational resources, identifies self care techniques, and be better equipped to create safe spaces. The program operates and makes decisions with transparency by documenting the values and rationale behind each decision and sharing that information with an advisory board. During program implementation, all youth receive a list of community resources. One resource is a local peer support group for youth with concerns about substance abuse in their family. Recently, the program expanded its advisory board to include youth relying on their input to make sure program services meet their needs. After piloting the program curriculum, youth advisory board members recommended that the program add a session on consent and expand its health education team to better reflect the community it serves.

Understanding trauma, ACEs, and the six core principles of a trauma informed approach is essential to providing high quality adolescent health services. By using a trauma informed approach, youth serving organizations and programs can create a safe, supportive, healing

environment for all. Visit RHNTC.org to learn more. This video was created by the Reproductive Health National Training Center, RHNTC. This video was supported by Office of Population Affairs Grant TPSAH 000006. The views expressed do not necessarily reflect the official policies of the Department of Health and Human Services, nor does mention of trade names, commercial practices, or organizations imply endorsement by the US government.