



# Implementing Trauma-Informed Care Within Organizations

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**MIHA**  
Mental Health America  
**B4Stage4**

# Housekeeping

- All participants are muted and unable to turn on their microphone
- Today's session is being recorded. A link to the recording will be sent to all participants within 5 business days.
- In order to have this webinar be more accessible we are providing closed captioning which can be enabled by clicking on the closed captioning option at the bottom of your screen. This will enable or disable closed captioning.
- We do NOT offer CEUs. You can receive a certificate of attendance from the link emailed with the recording.
- Please use the chat box or Q + A function for any questions. Also, call out where you are viewing from in the chat box. When using the chat box, make sure your message is set to the correct audience (panelist only or general)

# ACEs Quiz

You are encouraged to take the Adverse Childhood Experiences quiz.

<https://americanspcc.org/take-the-aces-quiz/>

# Presenters



**Guyton Colantuono**  
(he/him/his)



**Nia Brantly**  
(she/her/hers)



**Kat McIntosh**  
(she/they)

# Learning Objectives

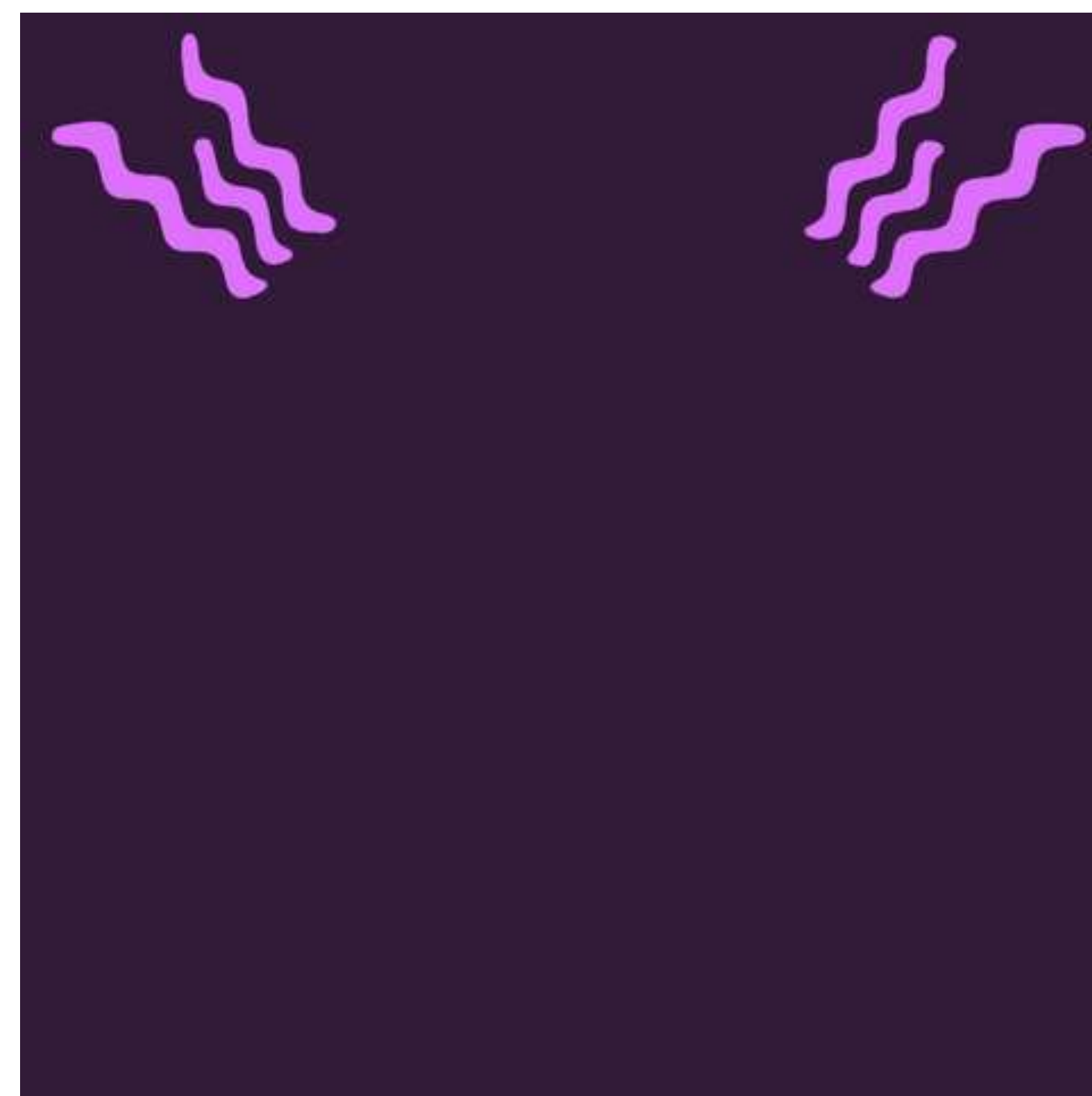
- *Understand trauma and the need for trauma-informed care*
- *Highlight unintentional situations where organizations can cause harm*
- *Showcase methods organizations can use to implement trauma-informed care*

# What is trauma?

Describes experiences or situations that are **emotionally painful and distressing**.<sup>1</sup>

- Overwhelms someone's ability to cope.
- Feelings of powerlessness.

**Center for Nonviolence and Social Justice, Drexel University)**



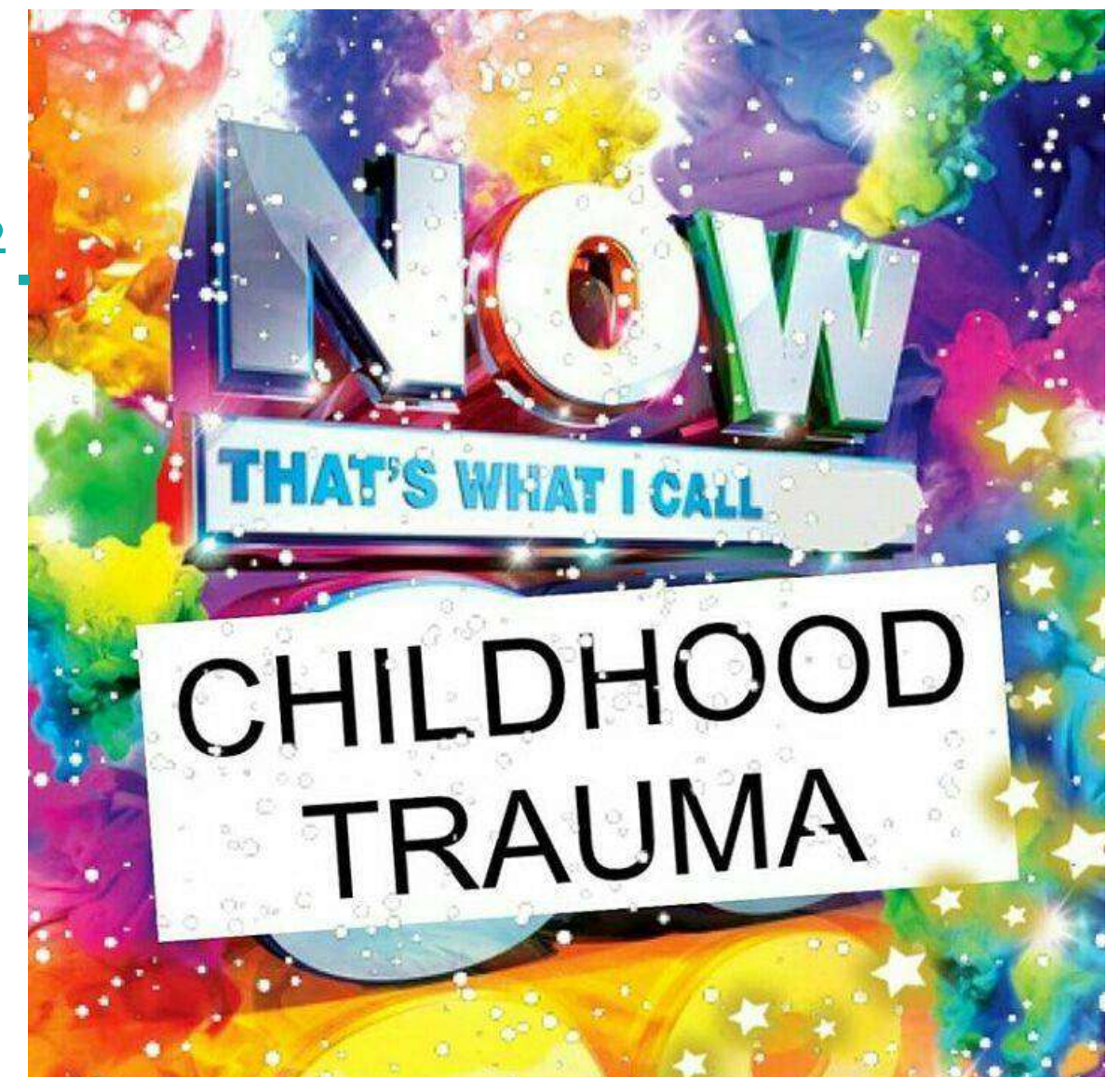
# What Do the Statistics Say?

Research shows that an average of:

- 47% - Physical abuse
- 37% - Sexual abuse
- 30% - Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)<sup>2</sup>

Studies also showcase that **60%** of adults **report experiencing abuse** or other difficult family circumstances during **childhood**<sup>3</sup>.

Results from a study on out-patients showed that the **two most reported trauma types** were **emotional abuse (59%)** and **physical neglect (54%)**<sup>4</sup>.



# Effects of Trauma

- Can have **immediate** and/or **delayed** reactions
- We may not be aware of all our trauma or their effects on us.
- Affects the **WHOLE** person: physical, emotional, cognitive, behavioral, and existential





## Physical

- Immune system and body's stress response systems may not develop normally.
- Develop **sensitivity to sounds, smells, touch or light**.<sup>5</sup>
- **Chronic pain** such as fibromyalgia
- Experience **dissociation** or **disconnection**

## Emotional

- **Over 50%** of persons who had experienced 3 or more forms of trauma developed **major depressive disorder** and had the criteria for PTSD.<sup>6</sup>
- Numbness, anger, denial, feeling vulnerable, anxiety

## Cognitive

- Intrusive thoughts and memories of the event, visual images of the event, nightmares, difficulty concentrating and remembering, disorientation and confusion.<sup>7</sup>
- Distortion of time and space
- Difficulty making decisions

# Poll

What are the events that cause trauma?

# Experiences of Trauma

There are many forms of trauma.

- Violence
- Abuse
- Disaster
- Loss
- Intergenerational trauma
- Life shifts

# Poll

Can trauma affect people differently?

# Experiences of trauma

- People exposed to the same trauma can react very differently.
- Different forms of trauma can cause mental health challenges such as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, dissociation, psychosis etc.
- Trauma can manifest emotionally, socially, and physically.

**You cannot go through your life without some form of trauma. Trauma informed care is needed because both members and service providers experience trauma. They also continuously interact with one another and there is the potential for conflict.**

# Experiences of Trauma

## Adverse Childhood Experiences

### Car Accident or Injury

- Mood swings ranging from anger to frustration to guilt.
- High levels of stress and anxiety.
- Nightmares and disrupted sleep patterns, such as insomnia
- New fears or phobias develop. Emotional Trauma

### Natural disaster

- Pandemic - "Post Covid Disorder"
- Prolonged trauma
- Adults with anxiety or depression Jan 2019 - 11.0%
- Adults with anxiety or depression Jan 2021 - 41.1%

# What does Trauma-Informed Care Mean?

*A program, organization, or system that is trauma-informed realizes the widespread impact of trauma and understands potential paths for recovery; recognizes the signs and symptoms of trauma in clients, families, staff, and others involved with the system; and responds by fully integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, and practices, and seeks to actively resist re-traumatization.*

*SAMHSA (July 2014)*

A **deliberate** act to **NOT** **exasperate** the “trauma” someone has *while they are trying to receive services.*

# Poll

Do organizations  
reinforce trauma?



# How do organizations enforce trauma?

## Physical Structures

### Do

- Welcoming
- Up to date resources (magazines/brochures)
- Fresh plants

### Don't

- Waiting rooms
- Metal detectors
- Security guards

## Engage with Members

### Do

- Realize the prevalence of trauma
- Recognize signs
- Have responsive system

### Don't

- Retraumatize

## Engage with Staff

### Do

- Recognize how trauma affects everyone

### Don't

- Bunch experiences together



# From Power Over to Power With.

## *Rainbow Services' Transformation to a Trauma Informed Culture*

*I was a residential worker then – there was definitely a lot of power over. A lot of control over client schedules, what they eat, what was best for them and their kids. It was so hard for staff! We were the ones who had to deal directly with participants, and in a super-uncomfortable, demeaning and demanding way. But we had no other choice – this was our job. The management at the time put a lot of pressure on staff. Participants were scared, angry, and avoided interacting with many staff when they could. Staff came and went. Participants were coming and going without the supports they needed. No one really felt good about the work we were doing or felt very hopeful for participants lives changing. We weren't seeing the successes we worked so hard for.*

**- Long-time Rainbow staff member**

# What do we do now?

- Reframe language from what's wrong with you to what happened to you
- Hire and listen to diverse perspectives (young people/BIPOC/LGBTQ+)
- Confront organizational culture and intentionally reshape them
  - *Ask members/consumers/staff what is your organization known for?*
  - *Ask your team and members their true feelings about your organization?*
  - *Have anonymous surveys*
- Provide training for board and staff
  - *Trauma-informed care*
  - *Peer support, Emotional CPR, Mental Health First Aid, Honest, Open, Proud*
  - *Non-violent communication*
  - *Cultural sensitivity training*

# Poll

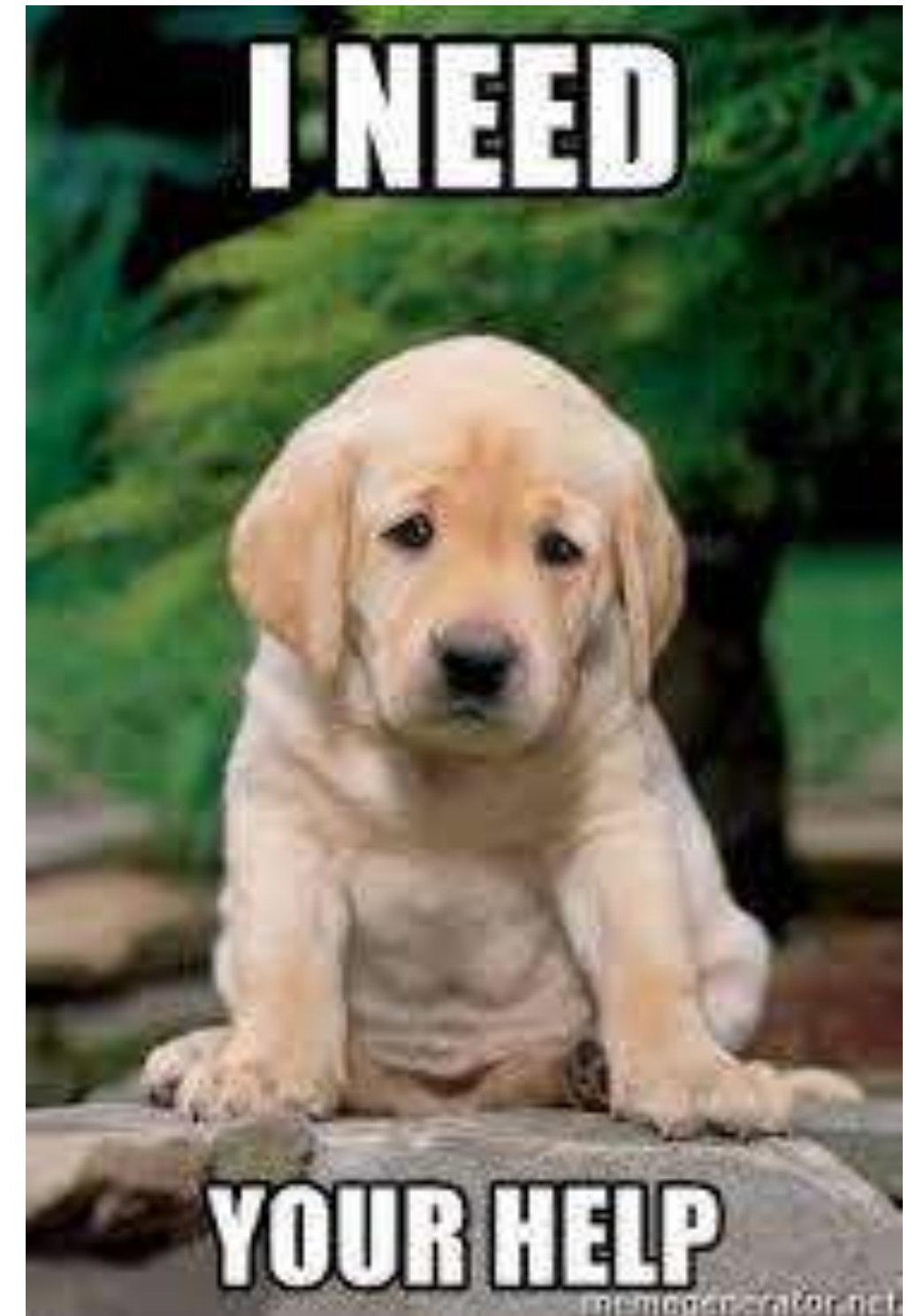
Do organizations  
reinforce trauma?

My agency is hesitant about this!

Can this work with our agency?

What about boundaries?

I have concerns about this approach.



# References

1. [www.nonviolenceandsocialjustice.org/FAQs/What-is-Trauma/41/](http://www.nonviolenceandsocialjustice.org/FAQs/What-is-Trauma/41/)
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# Contact Us



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**THANKS FOR COMING**

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