Shelter From the Storm Inside: Supporting Recovery, Safety, and Well-Being During the COVID-19 Pandemic

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Presenter Information

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US DHHS ACF FVPSA-Funded Special Issue Resource Center Dedicated to Addressing the Intersection of Domestic Violence, Trauma, Substance Use and Mental Health

- Comprehensive Array of Training & Technical Assistance Services and Resources
- Research and Evaluation
- Policy Development & Analysis
- Public Awareness
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Our Work is Informed by…

- Rights and Social Justice
- Physical and Emotional Safety
- Hope and Resilience
- Cultural, Historical, and Community Context
- Domestic Violence and Sexual Violence Advocacy
- Relationship and Connection
- A Trauma-Informed Approach
- Survivor-Defined Approach
Learning Objectives

▪ Become familiar with how the current pandemic can increase risk factors and decrease access to protective factors for people experiencing concerns related to substance use, mental health, as well as intimate partner and other family-based violence

▪ Identify strategies for supporting clients, teammates, and ourselves

▪ Become familiar with local resources that can aid in responding to the current pandemic
Bracing for the Storm: Increasing Risks and Reduced Resources

- Substance Use Disorder
- Mental Health Symptoms and Crises
- Intimate Partner Violence
- Child Abuse and Neglect
What kinds of risk factors are you seeing increase during this pandemic?
Common Risk Factors:
Loss of Income

Initial Unemployment Claims (FL)

https://oui.doleta.gov/unemploy/claims.asp
Common Risk Factors: Isolation
Common Risk Factors: Grief

- Ambiguous loss
- Anticipatory grief
- Complex and chronic loss
- Interrupted rituals and social connections that help cope with loss
- Increased risks for complicated grief
Common Risk Factors: Juggling Increasing Responsibilities and Needs
Mind-Body Practice: Grounding Exercise

Connect with the present moment and (internally) name:

5 things you can see
4 things you can feel
3 things you can hear
2 things you can smell
1 thing you can taste
Common Risk Factors: Stress

Stress, anxiety, and fear are all common reactions to crisis.

When does stress become traumatic?
Common Risk Factors: Growing Stress and Increasing Risks

According to the CDC, “Stress during an infectious disease outbreak can include:

- Fear and worry about your own health and the health of your loved ones
- Changes in sleep or eating patterns
- Difficulty sleeping or concentrating
- Worsening of chronic health problems
- Worsening of mental health conditions
- Increased use of alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs”

Common Risk Factors: Higher Risk of Stress

According to the CDC, “People who may respond more strongly to the stress of a crisis include:

- Fear and worry about your own health and the health of your loved ones.
- Older people and people with chronic diseases who are at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19.
- Children and teens.
- People who are helping with the response to COVID-19, like doctors, other health care providers, and first responders.
- People who have mental health conditions including problems with substance use.”

At the same time…
access to safe and supportive resources is becoming harder
Barriers to Safe Spaces: Work and School Closures
Barriers to Safe Spaces: Office-Based Support
Barriers to Safe Spaces: Peer-Based Support

- Mutual Aid
- Group Counseling
- Informal Drop-In
- Alumni Fellowship
- Faith Communities
COVID-19 Magnifies Inequity

All forms of marginalization are leading to increased risks in current pandemic

- Economic disenfranchisement
- Pre-existing conditions and inadequate healthcare access
- Homelessness and overcrowded housing
- Racial disparities
- Immigration status
- Digital divide
Mind-Body Practice: Fingerholds to Manage Emotions

- Middle Finger: Anger, Rage, Resentment
- Index Finger: Fear, Panic, Terror
- Ring Finger: Worry, Anxiety
- Thumb: Grief, Tears, Emotional Pain
- Small Finger: Lack of Self Esteem
Pause (please return in 10 minutes)
Resilience

Our inherent capacity to make adaptations that result in positive outcomes in spite of serious threats or adverse circumstances

NCDVTMH, 2013
(Adapted from Masten, 2001; Masten, 2009; Masten & Wright, 2009 and the Harvard Center on the Developing Child, 2017)
Ideas for What Can Help

Support strategies for
- Clients
- Teammates
- Ourselves
Caring for Ourselves

■ “Name it and claim it” recognize feelings
■ Physical wellness (sleep, eat, get active, hydrate, be mindful of caffeine intake)
■ Connect with loved ones
■ Connect with sources of solace
■ Decide how much media is helpful to read/watch and go to accurate public health sources for information

Connecting via Telehealth

- Expanding coverage for telehealth services by Medicare, Medicaid, and many private insurers
- Additional expansion needed for full reimbursement of phone-based services for people who cannot access video platforms
- Providers are temporarily allowed to use non-HIPAA compliant video conferencing platforms
- Recommended to still use confidential platforms whenever possible as well as informed consent to telehealth that provides information on potential risks.
- Confidentiality is a safety need
Telehealth: Safety for Survivors of DV

- Strive to use secure methods of communication
- Support informed decision-making and consent
- Safety plan
- Flexibility with appointment times and rescheduling
- Ask more yes/no questions to establish safety and confidentiality at the start of sessions
- Establish a safety code word or phrase so a survivor can discreetly communicate that they can’t talk right now or if they need help
- Use creativity around what is a safe and confidential space for a survivor to have their session
Accessing Medications

- Expanding access to medication assisted treatment (MAT) via telehealth (both video and telephone prescribing)
- Methadone: states can apply for blanket exceptions to allow 28-day take-home for clients who are stable and 14-day take-home for clients who do not meet ‘stable’ criteria
  - Can be prescribed without an initial in-person examination
  - Clients may need payment plans to be able to afford to pay in advance (for self-pay)
- Buprenorphine can now be prescribed via telephone-based evaluation to new and existing clients
Connecting with Mutual Aid

Connecting Virtually
- Online meetings and chats
- Phone-based (voice and text)
- Recovery apps
- Social media

Informational Materials
- Readings
- Podcasts
- Videos
Addressing the Digital Divide

Many systems are currently seeking to address the lack of access to digital resources. For potential resources, check out:

- City and county government
- School systems
- Library services
- Local internet providers
Help Address Basic Needs

- Resource advocacy is crucial for many people right now
- Seek out existing and expanding resources
- Phone-based case management follows same best practices as in-person services

(Zydowicz, 2008)
Supporting Mental Health

Support resilience using DBT’s ABC PLEASE

A: Accumulate positive emotions

B: Build mastery

C: Cope ahead of time

Linehan, 2015
Supporting Mental Health 2

Support resilience using DBT’s ABC PLEASE

- **PL**: Treat Physical illness
- **E**: Balance Eating
- **A**: Avoid mood Altering drugs
- **S**: Balance Sleep
- **E**: Exercise

Linehan, 2015
When someone is experiencing crisis and can’t tell us what they need

- One staff person leads
- Make a connection
- Be clear, calm, and focused
- Consider what people want for themselves
- Create space
- Take your time – as if you have all the time in the world
- Stay collaborative and offer choices
- Use simple, concise language
- Neither fuel nor challenge beliefs

Richmond et al., 2012
Listen

Offer action that is possible in the moment

Validate

Richmond et al., 2012
Supporting Parents and Caregivers

- Help recognize (and normalize) common stress reactions in children and teens
- Acknowledge complex feelings of wanting time with family while also feeling overwhelmed

Supporting Parents and Caregivers 2

- Offer realistic ideas and accessible resources for how to support children and teens in this crisis
- Support developmentally appropriate conversations about the current crisis
- Help parents consider their children's exposure to media (including social media)

Supporting Parents and Caregivers 3

- Help parents think about how they can reassure children while also role modeling positive coping
- Support routine while also recognizing what is realistic

Supporting Children and Youth

- Increase services for families, children, and youth (directly or via linkage)
- Increase engagement strategies and opportunities to connect with children, as well as support healthy parent-child attachment
- Collaborate with child and family advocates to support safety for children
Collaborate with Domestic Violence Advocates

- DV shelters remain open
- Expanded resources for safe shelter-in-place
- Tele-advocacy services
- Crisis services
- Safety planning
- Legal remedies and advocacy
- Children’s services and resources
Team-Based Support: What do you find supportive from coworkers?
Supporting Teammates

- Connect and communicate
- Recognize unique strengths and contributions
- Individualize
- Start the day with a check-in
- Build in time for peer support

What have supervisors and leaders put in place to support staff at your organizations?
Leading Teams In Times of Crisis

Recognize that we are all doing the best we can amidst a global crisis.

- Prioritize – what is absolutely essential?
- Clinical supervision
- Offer as much flexibility as is possible
- Everyone is stressed right now, adding to that stress isn’t going to produce better outcomes
- Focus on staff engagement
- Demonstrate your confidence and trust in staff
- Build in routines that support connection
Connecting with Resources
Resources: Financial

Emergency funds available by county, call 211 for more information

Florida Dept. of Children and Families ACCESS Program
www.myflorida.com/accessflorida/

Florida Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) www.FloridaJobs.org/LIHEAPHelp

Reemployment Assistance www.floridajobsresources.com

Food access programs www.feedingflorida.org/

Child/Teen food access programs https://summerbreakspot.freshfromflorida.com

Federal CARES Act https://home.treasury.gov/cares

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Resources: Healthcare Access

Florida Association of Community Health Centers
www.fachc.org/find-a-health-center

COVID-19 Resource and Information Guide (NAMI)
Resources: Mental Health

SAMHSA’s Disaster Distress Helpline
www.samhsa.gov/find-help/disaster-distress-helpline

The Safe Space (Vibrant Emotional Health)
www.vibrant.org/safespace/

Emotional Wellbeing During the COVID-19 Outbreak (Suicide Prevention Lifeline)

Mental Health and COVID-19 Resources (Mental Health America)
https://mhanational.org/covid19 and
www.virusanxiety.com/take-care
Resources: Guidance for Substance Use Treatment

I Save Florida Overdose Prevention [www.isavefl.com](http://www.isavefl.com)

COVID-19 Guidance for Bridge Programs and MAT Services (Public Health Institute) [www.bridgetotreatment.org/covid-19](http://www.bridgetotreatment.org/covid-19)

SAMHSA has published several guidance documents to support safety and continuity of care, including guidance for:

- Opioid treatment programs
- Outpatient MH and SUD treatment settings
- Withdrawal management for alcohol or benzodiazepines

[www.samhsa.gov/coronavirus](http://www.samhsa.gov/coronavirus)
Resources: Mutual Aid for SU and MH

Your Recovery is Important: Virtual Recovery Resources (SAMHSA)

www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/virtual-recovery-resources.pdf
Resources: Harm Reduction

COVID-19 Guidance for People Who Use Drugs and Harm Reduction Programs (Harm Reduction Coalition)

Practicing Harm Reduction in the COVID-19 Outbreak (Vital Strategies)

COVID-19 Guidance for People Who Use Substances (Yale Program in Addiction Medicine, Global Health Justice Partnership, and Crackdown, adapted from 3D Research)
https://yale.app.box.com/v/COVID19HarmReductionGuidance
Resources: Telehealth

The National Consortium of Telehealth Resource Centers: Tools and Resources (HHS HRSA)
www.telehealthresourcecenter.org/

Practice Guidelines and Resources (American Telemedicine Association)
https://thesource.americantelemed.org/resources/telemedicine-practice-guidelines/

Virtual Case Management Considerations And Resources For Human Services Programs (HHS ASPE)
https://aspe.hhs.gov/pdf-report/virtual-case-management
Resources: Specialized SU/MH Needs and Telehealth

Use of Telemedicine While Providing Medication Assisted Treatment (DEA)

Telehealth Tips: Suicidal Clients During COVID-19 Pandemic (Center for Practice Innovations at NYSPI-CPI)
Resources: Tech Safety & DV

Digital Services Toolkit
(National Network to End Domestic Violence)
www.techsafety.org/digital-services-toolkit
Resources: DV & COVID-19

COVID-19 Resources (NCDVTMH)
www.nationalcenterdvtraumamh.org/2020/03/covid-19-resources-for-advocates/

Resources on the Response to COVID-19 (NNEDV)

COVID-19 for Survivors, Communities, and DV/SA Programs (Futures Without Violence)
www.futureswithoutviolence.org/get-updates-information-covid-19/
Resources: Domestic Violence

Safety Planning (NDVH)
www.thehotline.org/help/path-to-safety/

www.fcadv.org
Resources: Sexual Violence and Child Abuse Hotlines

Florida Abuse Hotline:
1.800.96.ABUSE
(1.800.962.2873)

National Sexual Assault Hotline
800.656.HOPE
online.rainn.org

RAINN

Abuse | Bullying | Neglect

CALL IF YOU NEED HELP
No one has the right to hurt you.

CHILDHELP NATIONAL CHILD ABUSE HOTLINE
1-800-4-A-CHILD
(1-800-422-4453)
The Call is Confidential | We’re Here to Help
WWW.CHILDHELP.ORG
Resources: Family Support

Parent/Caregiver Guide for Helping Families Cope With the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (National Child Traumatic Stress Network)
Provides information on how to stay safe, connected to social supports, as well as lists common reactions by age and how to help children cope according to age.
www.nctsn.org/sites/default/files/resources/fact-sheet/outbreak_factsheet_1.pdf

Caring for Children in a Disaster (CDC)
Lists common reactions by age and how to help children cope
www.cdc.gov/childrenindisasters/helping-children-cope.html
Resources: Family Support 2

Coping After A Disaster (CDC)
An interactive coloring book that helps parents talk with children about crisis and supports healthy coping
www.cdc.gov/cpr/readywrigley/documents/RW_Coping_After_a_Disaster_508.pdf

American Academy of Pediatrics
An assortment of resources dedicated to parenting during COVID-19, including tips for different ages and special needs
www.healthychildren.org/

COVID-19 Resources for Parents
(Mental Health America)
https://mhanational.org/covid19##ForParents
Resources: Supporting Teammates

Supportive Practices for Mental Health Professionals During Pandemic-Related Social Distancing (South Southwest MHTTC)
https://mhttcnetwork.org/centers/south-southwest-mhttc/product/supportive-practices-mental-health-professionals-during

For Providers and Community Leaders: Helping People Manage Stress Associated with the COVID-19 Virus Outbreak (VA’s National Center for PTSD)
www.ptsd.va.gov/covid/COVID_providers_comm_leaders.asp

Virtual Team Bonding During COVID-19 (JustWorks)
https://justworks.com/blog/virtual-team-bonding-during-covid-19
Resources: Self-Care

Virtual Room of Refuge by Truman Medical Centers
https://mailchi.mp/751f8d07b5db/virtualroomofrefuge

Taking Care of Yourself During a Public Health Emergency by Northeast and Caribbean MHTTC
What Can We Do? Next Steps

- Acknowledge that things are not ‘business as usual’ and identify/take steps to respond to changing circumstances
- Get familiar with available financial assistance resources and compile a resource directory
- Keep reaching out and checking in with clients (and their children, if applicable)
- Connect with other providers to enhance safety and access to needed services
- Connect with coworkers, individualize support
- Check in with ourselves, take steps to enhance our stress resilience, reach out for help when needed


Stay connected and find out about future offerings

www.nationalcenterdvtraumamh.org/newsletter-sign-up/
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Additional Resources

www.NationalCenterDVTraumaMH.org
Resources for Mental Health and Substance Use Treatment and Recovery Support Providers

At the National Center on Domestic Violence Trauma & Mental Health (NCDVTMH), one of our priorities is to support collaboration between the domestic violence (DV) field and the mental health and substance use disorder treatment and recovery fields. Our work is designed to enhance system responses to survivors of intimate partner violence (IPV) who are experiencing the mental health and substance use-related effects of IPV and other lifetime trauma. A 2012 study conducted by NCDVTMH in partnership with the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors (NASMHPD) found that the majority of states who participated had a strong interest in further coordination and/or training on these issues.

The information that follows is intended to support mental health and substance use disorder treatment and recovery support providers in their work with survivors of IPV and their children. You will find toolkits, best practice guidelines, webinars, research reviews, and policy briefs to help inform your practice. These can be found below under:

- Research on the intersection of Domestic Violence, Substance Use and Mental Health
- Responding to IPV in the Context of Mental Health and Substance Use Treatment and Recovery
Coercion Related to Mental Health and Substance Use in the Context of Intimate Partner Violence: A Toolkit for Screening, Assessment, Brief Counseling in Primary Care and Behavioral Health Settings

Carole Warshaw, MD and Erin Tinnon, MSW, LSW
March 2018
SAVING LIVES: Meeting the Needs of Intimate Partner Violence Survivors Who Use Opioids

RESEARCH AND POLICY BRIEF | MAY 2019

By:
- Heather Phillips, MA
- Sally Schaeffer, MPA
- Rachel White-Domain, JD
- Gerdine Wiesner MILL

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Tools for Transformation: Becoming Accessible, Culturally Responsive, and Trauma-Informed Organizations

An Organizational Reflection Toolkit

Carole Warshaw, MD, Erin Tinnon, MSW, LSW, and Cathy Cave
April 2018
Thank You!
Question & Answer