Trauma Informed Design

How the design of supportive housing can impact how individuals build resiliency.
ACE Score

- 10 types of childhood trauma measured in the ACE Study.
- Five are personal -- physical abuse, verbal abuse, sexual abuse, physical neglect, and emotional neglect.
- Five are related to other family members: a parent who's an alcoholic, a mother who's a victim of domestic violence, a family member in jail, a family member diagnosed with a mental illness, and the disappearance of a parent through divorce, death or abandonment.
- Each type of trauma counts as one.
Almost two-thirds of adults surveyed reported at least one Adverse Childhood Experience – and the majority of respondents who reported at least one ACE reported more than one.
ACEs CAN HAVE LASTING EFFECTS ON BEHAVIOR & HEALTH...

Simply put, our childhood experiences have a tremendous, lifelong impact on our health and the quality of our lives. The ACE Study showed dramatic links between adverse childhood experiences and risky behavior, psychological issues, serious illness and **the leading causes of death**.

From: [https://vetoviolence.cdc.gov/apps/phl/resource_center_infographic.html](https://vetoviolence.cdc.gov/apps/phl/resource_center_infographic.html)
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HOW ACEs AFFECT OUR LIVES

BEHAVIORS
- LACK OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY
- SMOKING
- ALCOHOLISM
- DRUG USE
- MISSED WORK

PHYSICAL & MENTAL HEALTH
- SEVERE OBESITY
- DIABETES
- DEPRESSION
- SUICIDE ATTEMPTS
- STDS
- HEART DISEASE
- CANCER
- STROKE
- COPD
- BROKEN BONES

ACE SCORE
0 1 2 3 4 +
Dr. Nadine Burke Harris

- How exposure to early adversity affects the early childhood brain
- Impacts the brain:
  - Inhibits the prefrontal cortex that is required for impulse control and executive functioning
  - Nucleus incuba: pleasure and reward center of the brain (impacts substance use)
  - Amygdala: fear response center
- Folks exposed to high doses of adversity are more likely to engage in high risk behavior
- Even if you don't engage in high risk behavior you’re still more likely to develop heart disease or cancer
- Stress response system is impacted - constantly engaged - goes from being adaptive to health damaging
Jaak Panksepp wrote about an experiment in which a tuft of cat hair was placed in a cage filled with playing mice. The mice stopped playing. When the hair was removed, the mice were observed to never again reach their same level of play.

What does this mean for us?
What that looks like in programs that seek to be trauma-informed

- Safety
- Trustworthiness and Transparency
- Peer Support
- Collaboration and Mutuality
- Empowerment, Voice and Choice
- Cultural, Historical, and Gender Issues

“What looks like resistance is resiliency”

“People are not giving you a hard time; they are having a hard time”