



ILLINOIS HEALS: HELPING EVERYONE ACCESS LINKED SYSTEMS

Improving Services for Young Victims of Crime

ABOUT US

ABOUT THIS TRAINING

Our goals are outreach and education on the Illinois HEALS project, the R-C-E framework, and the ability of individuals, community groups, and others to help create and sustain better service provision to child victims, their families, and communities.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

As a result of this training, you will be better able to:

- **Recognize** and improve identification of victimization;
- **Connect** youth with services through intentional information sharing; and
- **Engage** with victims following victimization and harm.

CONTENT WARNING:

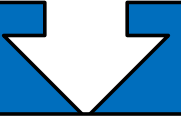
This program contains discussion of crime, victimization, and trauma.

ILLINOIS YOUTH VICTIMIZATION

- The number of Illinois children reported as victims is higher than the national rate for most age groups.
- Black/African-American children have the highest reported rate of victimization, while the lowest is Asian-American children.
- The most common types of reported child maltreatment are neglect, then physical abuse, followed by sexual abuse.
- The rate of substantiated reports of child abuse or neglect in Illinois is higher than the national rate.
- Girls were victimized at a higher rate than boys.

TRAUMA: THE THREE E'S**

Events. There are different types of traumatic events that children can be exposed to and there is a difference in impact between one-time and chronic events.

A large white arrow pointing downwards, indicating a flow from the 'Events' section to the 'Experiences' section.

Experiences. Not all children exposed to traumatic events will have the same response, and multiple factors can influence trauma response.

A large white arrow pointing downwards, indicating a flow from the 'Experiences' section to the 'Effects' section.

Effects: Child Traumatic Stress (CTS) is a psychological reaction with both emotional and physical effects that some children, including infants, may have in response to trauma. There are potential emotional and behavioral symptoms when CTS is not addressed.

THE NATURE & IMPACT OF TRAUMA

RISK FACTORS

Risk factors for trauma and traumatic stress include:

- Parental mental health, substance use disorder, and personal trauma history
- Exposure to domestic violence, child abuse, or neglect
- Socio-economic factors such as unemployment, poverty, and homelessness
- Geographical factors such as community violence.,
- Historical trauma (community and or family-based)

PROTECTIVE FACTORS AND RESILIENCE

Healthy relationships are the most important protective factor.

- Concrete resources and support systems
- Culture, community, and access
- Safe and supportive environments
- Strong communities



AN INTRODUCTION TO ILLINOIS HEALS

CLICK TO ADD TITLE

ILLINOIS HEALS: A MULTI-YEAR INITIATIVE TO ADDRESS CHILD AND YOUTH VICTIMIZATION



Illinois HEALS seeks to address the needs of child and youth victims and their families by identifying young crime victims, coordinating prevention and intervention services post-victimization, and building capacity within communities to provide needed services and support.

ILLINOIS HEALS:VISION



Alleviate the burden of finding services to address victimization by ensuring appropriate culturally accessible care and services are made available to all victims no matter whose door they first enter.

ILLINOIS HEALS: MISSION



Implement policies, practices, and programs that strengthen the capacity of Illinois's communities to recognize victimization and connect and engage young victims and families in needed services.

ILLINOIS HEALS: PROJECT OBJECTIVES

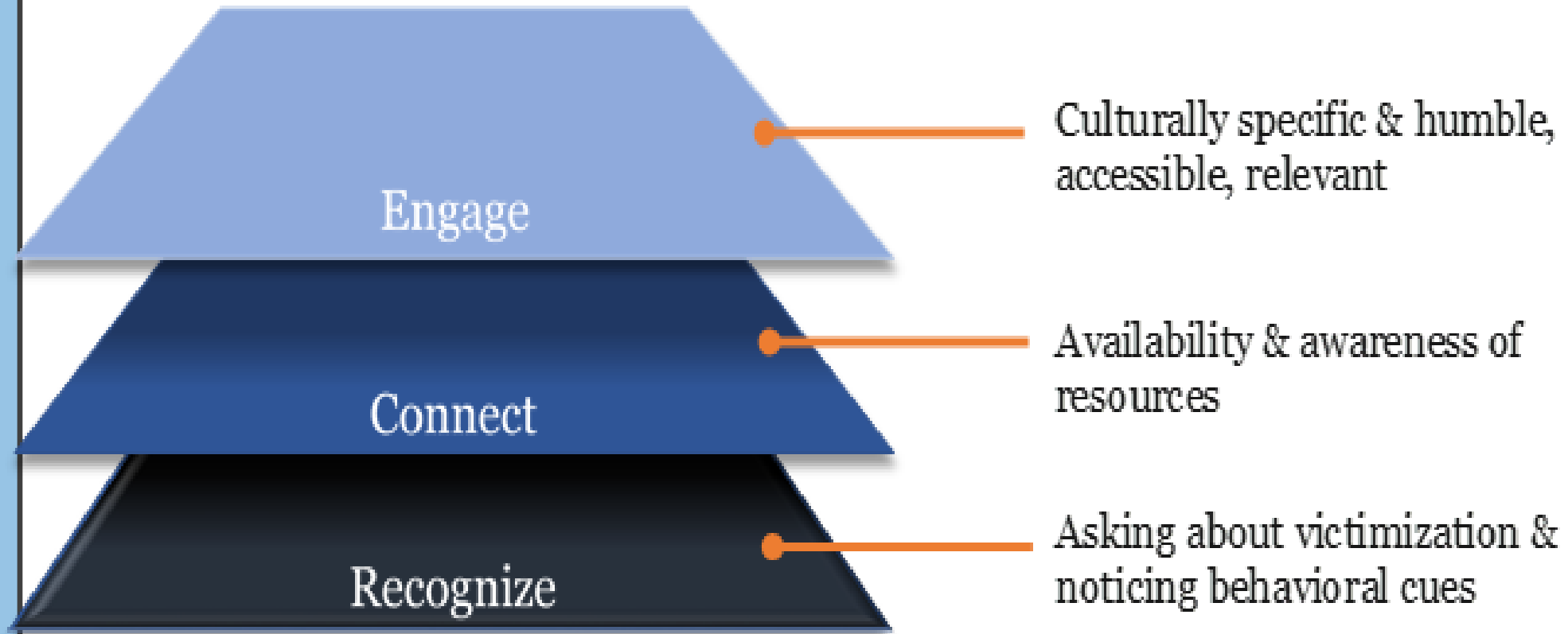
- Identify and promote healing for victims of crime
- Provide or coordinate prevention and intervention services to youth and families experiencing trauma and victimization
- Build capacity within communities to meet the needs of youth exposed to violence



RECOGNIZE – CONNECT – ENGAGE

A Framework

ILLINOIS HEALS: A RELATIONAL APPROACH



ILLINOIS HEALS: A RELATIONAL APPROACH

Support

Engaging

Culturally specific and humble,
accessible, relevant

Refer

Connecting

Increasing availability &
awareness of resources

Identify

Recognizing

Asking, noticing behavioral
cues



RECOGNIZE

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY RECOGNIZE?

How do you Recognize?
What are you looking for?
What does an organization or
system do to Recognize?



RECOGNIZE

Recognizing children and youth experiences with violence means becoming attuned to the varied ways in which victims express and cope with victimization. Relying on victims to disclose their experiences overlooks other ways in which adults can recognize something is wrong, such as through other verbal and behavioral cues[18] or a child's physical appearance or affect. These indicators can be a launching point for further follow up to better understand the nature and extent of victimization, its impacts, and the need for intervention.

WHAT ARE SOME CHALLENGES TO THE RECOGNITION OF TRAUMA AND VICTIMIZATION? FOR INDIVIDUALS? FOR SYSTEMS?

- Lack of knowledge of the signs of trauma
- Inconsistent screening
- Need for training, policies, and procedures
- Limited available services
- Bias
- Lack of trust

RECOGNIZING TRAUMA AND VICTIMIZATION

- Victimization of children, youth, and young adults can include abuse, neglect, bullying, dating violence, stalking, and trafficking.
- Some forms of victimization may be concealed or difficult to detect while others may be more obvious.
- Victims may show no physical signs of trauma and it may be more difficult to recognize.

RECOGNIZING TRAUMA AND VICTIMIZATION

Behavioral Signs of Trauma

- Appetite changes;
- Clinginess;
- Difficulty sleeping;
- Difficulty paying attention or concentrating;
- Headaches; and/or
- Increased aggression.

Emotional Signs of Trauma

- Anger or irritability;
- Anxiety;
- Depression;
- Emotional numbness; and/or
- Withdrawal or avoiding engagement with others.

RESPONSE TO TRAUMA

- When children have experienced trauma, their parents and caregivers often have as well.
- Use a “universal precautions” approach to working with those impacted by trauma.
- Respond without judgement, asking:
What happened to you?

NOT

What's wrong with you?

RECOGNIZING
TRAUMA AND
VICTIMIZATION:
STRATEGIES

What does “Recognize”
look like in our
community?

What ***could*** it look like?

- Development and implementation of training, policies and procedures
- Trauma-informed practices
- Universal screening
- Service availability and location within communities

RECOGNIZE:
PROGRAM
STRATEGIES

REMEMBER YOUR TOOLS:

- Awareness and understanding of trauma
- Knowledge of signs and risks of victimization
- Responding without judgment

RECOGNIZE



RECOGNIZE

The increased awareness of and ability to **Recognize** trauma can assist child victims of crime, help systems **Connect** them to resources, and **Engage** those victims and their families with interventions and services.



CONNECT

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY CONNECT?

How do you Connect?
What does an organization or
system do to Connect?



CONNECT

Violence impacts multiple facets of victims' lives, such as their physical and emotional well-being and professional and personal relationships. To address these impacts, individuals often must interact with numerous systems and providers to access needed services. The burden of seeking help often is placed on the victim and they encounter frequent barriers to successfully connecting to services. Many victims may be unaware if services exist, what services would meet their needs, or whether these services are accessible (e.g., language, transportation, and waitlist barriers).[21]

WHAT ARE SOME CHALLENGES IN CONNECTING VICTIMS TO SERVICES? FOR INDIVIDUALS? FOR SYSTEMS?

- Knowledge of and where to find services
- Understanding the types of services available and any requirements for those services
- Lack of communication and coordination across systems making it hard for both victims and providers to navigate

HOW CAN WE MAKE CONNECTIONS?

For an individual:

- Learning about trauma and trauma-informed responses
- Learning about protective factors and crisis response
- Awareness of available local resources and how to connect to those resources in a community

HOW CAN WE MAKE CONNECTIONS?

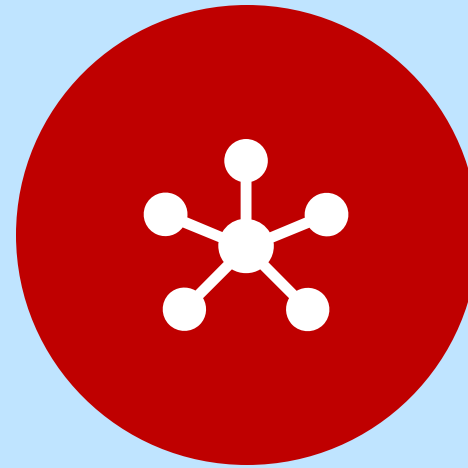
For systems and organizations:

- Implementing early and regular screening
- Training on trauma-informed response, protective factors, resilience, safety planning, and crisis response
- Organizational planning on trauma prevention, minimization, and intervention
- Increasing awareness of potential causes of additional traumatic stress
- Promoting awareness of available local resources and referrals for child victims and their families

IL HEALS PROGRAM CONNECTIONS



RESOURCE MAPPING



REFERRAL NETWORKS

OTHER CONNECTIONS

Can you think of
other examples?

CONNECTIONS

What does
“Connect” look like
in our community?

What ***could*** it look
like?

CONNECTIONS: PROGRAM STRATEGIES

- Wherever possible, connections should shift the burden to the system rather than the victim.
- The first point of contact should connect victims to services as directly as possible.
- Service providers should be ready to make that connection right away.
- Whatever connection is chosen should be as safe, accessible, and comfortable for the victim as possible.

CONNECTION: PROGRAM STRATEGIES

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;

Responds by fully integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, and practices; and

Seeks to actively resist re-traumatization.

CONNECTION: PROGRAM STRATEGIES

Key Principles*:

1. Safety
2. Trustworthiness and transparency
3. Peer support
4. Collaboration and mutuality
5. Empowerment, voice, and choice
6. Cultural, historical, and gender issues

REMEMBER YOUR TOOLS:

- Understanding and implementation of trauma-informed practice
- Knowledge of protective factors and resilience
- Awareness of local and national resources
- IL HEALS Resource Coordinators

CONNECT



CONNECT

Knowledge of how to **Connect** victims to available services for children and families can help victims and improve outcomes.



ENGAGE

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY ENGAGE?

How do you Engage?

What does an organization or
system do to Engage?



ENGAGE

Many young victims and their family members enter systems and the doors of service providers with a multitude of needs. Some have experienced several forms of victimization.[23] With few exceptions, all have current or past experiences interacting with at least one system (e.g., healthcare, schools), and others are involved with many (e.g., justice, child welfare, civil/family court). For some, these experiences have been positive. For others, these interactions have fostered distrust, making engagement in services more challenging.

WHAT ARE SOME CHALLENGES TO ENGAGING? FOR INDIVIDUALS? FOR SYSTEMS?

- Meeting basic and fundamental needs of the victims
- Family inclusion in the process
- Limited capacity and limited focus of services
- Where services are made available
- Lack of culturally accessible services

EFFECTIVE ENGAGEMENT

Key components:

- Cultural humility/responsiveness
- Needs assessment (victim and family) and case planning
- Program strategies for provision of services
- Trauma-informed response

RECOGNIZING AND MINIMIZING BIAS

Implicit and explicit biases are related but distinct and may reinforce each other.

- Explicit bias is **conscious** while implicit bias is **unconscious** and is the **attitudes** or **stereotypes** that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an **unconscious** manner.
- Implicit biases are pervasive – everyone has them – and implicit institutional biases also run deep.

CRACKING THE CODE

CRACKING THE CODE

- What forms of bias were discussed in this video?
- What is the significance of the speaker needing to think about what her reaction should be? Does that have any parallels in your work with families?
- What are your thoughts about the video? Is it applicable to your experience? Why or why not?

CULTURAL HUMILITY: MOVING TOWARD ACCESS, INCLUSION AND FAIRNESS

In all interactions:

- Challenge your assumptions
- Use inclusive language
- Consider access barriers and differences in access (e.g., race, language, wealth, and disability)
- Build trust
- Use trauma-informed practices at all stages of your engagement (e.g., orientation, safety planning, case planning, etc.)

ENGAGEMENT: NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND CASE PLANNING

- A simple but important approach is **People First**.
- Effective assessment keeps people engaged and is beneficial to their treatment.
- Normalize a child's feelings and reactions - give space for the rollercoaster of feelings, without jumping to "you need therapy/services."
- Your role is listener and helper, not investigator.
- Avoid re-victimization or re-traumatization.

ENGAGEMENT: PROGRAM STRATEGIES

What does “Engage”
look like in our
community?

What ***could*** it look
like?

ENGAGEMENT: PROGRAM STRATEGIES

Assess whether your services utilize “evidence-based practices,” which are research-based practices shown to be effective through rigorous scientific evaluation. In Illinois, this includes:

- *Healthy Families America*: a home visiting program for new and expectant families with children who are at-risk for maltreatment or adverse childhood experiences.
- *Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy*: a program for children and adolescents who have symptoms associated with trauma exposure, intended to post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and other behavioral concerns.
- *Child-Parent Psychotherapy*: a therapy model aiming to support family strengths and relationships.

HEALTH AND WELL-BEING OF STAFF

Trauma-responsive practice includes recognizing that those responding to child victims and their families are impacted both personally and professionally. These impacts are commonly referred to as:

- Burn-out,
- Secondary traumatic stress,
- Compassion fatigue, and
- Vicarious traumatization.

HEALTH AND WELL-BEING OF STAFF

Agencies can develop guidelines and practices to help identify and respond to staff indirect exposure to trauma.

Individuals within the community can learn skills and strategies for addressing symptoms through self-care.

REMEMBER YOUR TOOLS:

- Awareness and understanding of trauma and trauma-responses.
- Implementation of key components and systemic responses.
- Cultural humility and awareness and minimization of bias.

EFFECTIVE
ENGAGEMENT



ENGAGE

Like with “**Recognize**” and “**Connect**” knowledge of how to **Engage** with interventions and treatment options in a safe and trauma-informed way can assist child victims of crime and improve outcomes for those victims and their families.



CONCLUSION AND WRAP-UP



RECOGNIZE

The increased awareness of and ability to **Recognize** trauma can assist child victims of crime.



CONNECT

Knowledge of and the ability to
Connect victims to services and
treatment that can help.



ENGAGE

Opportunities to **Engage** with interventions and treatment options in a safe and trauma-informed way can assist child victims of crime and improve outcomes for those victims and their families.

RESOURCES

PUBLICATIONS

CONTACT INFORMATION

THANK YOU!

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