

TRAUMA INFORMED QUESTIONING

CAMPUS POLICE

CY 2021



OVERVIEW OF TRAINING

- Impact of Trauma
- Addressing Trauma
- Best Practices in Questioning Victims of Trauma
- Intimate Partner Violence
- Final assessment



4 COMPONENTS OF TRAUMA-INFORMED RESPONSE

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IMPACT OF TRAUMA

- Vulnerability, lack of trust
- Refusal to participate
- Response to interviewer
- Response to environment
- Hypersensitivity to noise, touch, environment
- Neurobiology of trauma and its impact
 - Memory gaps, disconnection, affect/presentation



IMPACT OF TRAUMA

- Surge in flight/flight chemicals can impact responses, as well as memories
- Tonic immobility
- Flat affect or inappropriate affect (laughing as an example)
- Non-linear accounts of the incidents
- Gaps in memory



ADDRESSING TRAUMA



KEY CONSIDERATIONS

- Be aware of impact of trauma/acknowledge the trauma
- Focus on enabling empowerment in the process for reporting party
- Ask what they remember about the incident—including smells and sounds
- Ask how the experience impacted them
- Be proactive in communication throughout the process but be aware of method of communication and tone
- Safety plan
- Consider impact on the responding party as well (shame, anger, suicide risk)



KEY CONSIDERATIONS

- Wait 1-2 sleep cycles to interview, if possible
- Don't ask narrow, specific questions
- Ask how the individual felt (feelings may help decode memories)
- Be patient/don't press
- Be aware that the questioning/interview may re-traumatize the individual
 - Be strategic and transparent in questioning
 - Be aware of the environment



KEY CONSIDERATIONS

- Equity, dignity and respect in the process
- Managing bias (assumptions on how someone “should” respond, impartial with compassion)
- Creating a safe space
- Way we take notes (paper, computer)/recording
- Type and deliver of questions (check for understanding of answers/statement)
- Frequent breaks if needed
- Be mindful of the location and timing of interview
- Role of investigator is not the same as the role of a support personnel



PROVIDING CHOICES WITH A GOAL OF EMPOWERMENT

- Ask general, open ended questions to provide the individual with control over how they share
- Remember it is their choice to report to police or file a formal report
- Be aware of ascribing your opinions, thoughts, or labels to their experience
- OK to ask for more details or for clarification
- Be aware of non-verbal cues-may need to come back to an area at a later time if the individual becomes more anxious



BEST PRACTICES IN QUESTIONING



KEY CONSIDERATIONS

- Tone (manage the setting, set the guidelines up front, provide overview of process)
- Be intentional in questions but not rigid
 - Plan ahead but be open to the flow of interview
 - Broad to specific
- Questioning process is gathering information—not making the decision
- How to address items that are contradictory to other statements/evidence
 - Not a “gotcha”
 - What you said doesn’t correspond with other information we have/help me to understand that/I am trying to understand all of this information
 - Errors of omission



TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE QUESTIONING

- Not interrogation or cross-examination—should be a conversation to gather information and perspectives
- Be intentional about who leads the interview/who investigates when possible
 - Gender
 - Age
 - Race and ethnicity
- Be flexible on the back end of the interview time—don't want to stop a conversation that is moving along. Don't schedule tightly on the back end.



TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE QUESTIONING

- Start open—give them the floor first
- Tell me more about that
- How did that impact you?
- What else do you want me to know/what else do I need to know?



INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE

Also referred to as dating and/or domestic violence



WHAT IS IT? WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

- Violence against Women Act (VAWA) outlined 4 elements that schools must address
 - Dating and domestic violence (two areas) are combined into Intimate Partner Violence for the purposes of serving students
 - Our policies state dating and domestic violence, in accordance with VAWA
- Existence of a relationship
- Combined with violence
 - Physical violence
 - Emotional violence (intentional, deliberate control)
 - Sexual violence



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PRONG I: PRESENCE OF VIOLENCE OR ABUSE



ATIXA TWO-PRONG ANALYSIS (COPYRIGHT)

PRONG 2: INTIMATE PARTNER RELATIONSHIP



UNIQUE FACTORS FOR INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE

- Status of relationship at the point of the report
- Lack of control over the relationship outside of our institution
- Impact on the relationship (investigation may exacerbate the situation)
- Desire to withdraw the complaint
- Development of safety plan/assessment of risk
 - Personal, financial, housing, physical harm
 - Beyond traditional remediation
- Be mindful of communication channels
- Impact of gender—if sex/gender is not part of the intimate partner violence, it would still be a violation under VAWA but might not be TIX



RESOURCES IN COMMUNITY

- Student Wellness Advocates
- Resources in the portal
- Campus Police/Protective Orders
- The domestic violence agency for Will County is:
Guardian Angel Community Services
Groundwork Domestic Violence Program 24 Hour Hotline: (815) 729-1228
TTY: (815) 741-4643 www.guardianangelhome.org



FINAL ASSESSMENT

- In order to receive credit for completion, please answer [this 5 question survey](#). This will serve as your attendance tracking for the session.
- Completion information will be provided to the Chief and Commander but individual answers will be kept confidential by the Title IX Coordinator. Any information shared from these surveys will be aggregated and not shared at the individual level.

