

# Indian Health Service Trauma Informed Care Training

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ANNUAL TRAINING FOR EMPLOYEES



# Objectives

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Upon completion of this training, participants will be able to:

Summarize the importance of Historical Trauma and Trauma Informed Care for American Indian/Alaska Natives (AI/AN).

# Historical Trauma and Trauma Informed Care

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DEFINITIONS, HISTORY, AND APPROACHES FOR EFFECTIVE CARE



# Definition: Trauma

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There are many definitions of trauma.

For this training, the following definition will be used.

Trauma is defined as an extremely distressing or disturbing experience.

# Definition: Historical Trauma

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Historical Trauma is the *cumulative* emotional and psychological wounding from massive group trauma across generations, including lifespan.

# Historical Trauma Experiences

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A brief history of policies impacting AI/AN are potential contributors to historical trauma among this specific population.

## Congressional Genocidal Policies Examples

- Tribes were removed from their original homelands and relocated.
- Tribes were forced to use single land ownership.
- Children were forced to attend boarding schools.
- Tribes were forced to choose between following the policy of the government or face extermination.
- Tribes were wards of the United States (U.S.) government.
- The U.S. government controlled and managed at it's discretion.

# Historical Trauma Experiences 2

## Boarding School Trauma History

- Forced removal and relocation of AI/AN children.
- Renaming Indian children from Indian to English names.
- Cutting the hair of Indian children, which was of great cultural significance.
- Discouraging or preventing the use of AI/AN languages, and practice of AI/AN religions or cultural practices.
- Physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, and forced labor were common.
- In June 2021, Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland announced the Federal Indian Boarding School Initiative. This is an effort to recognize the troubled legacy of federal Indian boarding school policies with the goal of addressing their intergenerational impact and to shed light on the traumas of the past.

# Lasting Impact of Historical Trauma

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- The historical traumatic experiences of AI/AN people resulted in mistrust with the U.S. government.
- Seeking care from Indian Health Service may be re-traumatizing or triggering for some people.
- A trauma informed care approach is a very important aspect of providing health care to AI/AN people.

# What is Historical Trauma Informed Care?

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Recognizing the importance of cross generational and ancestral ties in tribal communities and families.

Addressing cultural norms for trauma and healing, including traditional bereavement.

Examining the collective traumatic tribal history as well as traditional cultural wisdom and resilience.

An organizational structure and treatment framework that involves understanding, recognizing, and responding to the effects of all types of trauma.

# Definition: Trauma Informed Care

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The need for the healthcare system and providers to understand a patient's life experiences in order to provide effective health care.

# Trauma Informed Care

## Key Aspects

Recovery  
Oriented

Patient Driven

Cultural  
Humility/ Co-  
learning

Trauma  
Specific  
Services

# Benefits of Trauma Informed Care

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Better clinical care  
for patients.

Improves patients'  
adherence with  
visits/treatment.

Better health  
outcomes for our  
patients.

Improves health and  
wellness of  
providers.

Improves the  
working environment  
for providers, staff,  
and management.

Improves providers'  
ability to understand  
and work with the  
community.

# Changing Your Mindset

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Old Mindset	Trauma Informed Mindset
“What’s wrong with this person?”	“What happened <i>to</i> this person?”

Old Mindset	Trauma Informed Mindset
“What’s wrong with you?”	“What’s <i>strong</i> with you?”



# In Summary

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- Acknowledging historical trauma through trauma informed ways can restore balance and encourage a healthy lifestyle.
- Having knowledge of trauma informed care can better prepare you for interaction with patients and even family.
- Familiarity with trauma informed care improves your awareness of other's experiences.

# References

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3. NPAIHB. (January 2023). Indian Health Service. Retrieved June 25, 2024, from [https://www.npaihb.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/NPAIHB Thrive BoardinSchoolToolkit.pdf](https://www.npaihb.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/NPAIHB%20Thrive%20BoardinSchoolToolkit.pdf)