

**POLICING THROUGH A
TRAUMA-INFORMED LENS: AN
OVERVIEW**

SARAH PEKOC, MA

TRAUMA INFORMED SYSTEMS



1. Screen for trauma exposure and related systems
2. Use culturally appropriate evidence-based assessment and treatment
3. Make resources available
4. Engage in efforts to strengthen the resilience and protective factors
5. Address intergenerational trauma and its impact on the family system
6. Emphasize continuity of care and collaboration across systems
7. Maintain an environment of care for staff that minimizes secondary traumatic stress and increases staff resilience

(NCTSN, 2015)

FOSTERING RESILIENCE

- Acknowledge the trauma
 - Put it into words
- Liberatory response to violence
 - Safety and accountability
- Transformative justice
 - The conditions that allow violence to occur must be transformed and acknowledged- not avoided and ignored
 - Preventative, not reactive
 - Accountability and transformation, not retribution and punishment

“Without transforming the inequalities of power between us, and healing from the violence done in our own lives, the power we have against broader institutional violence is limited.” –Generation 5



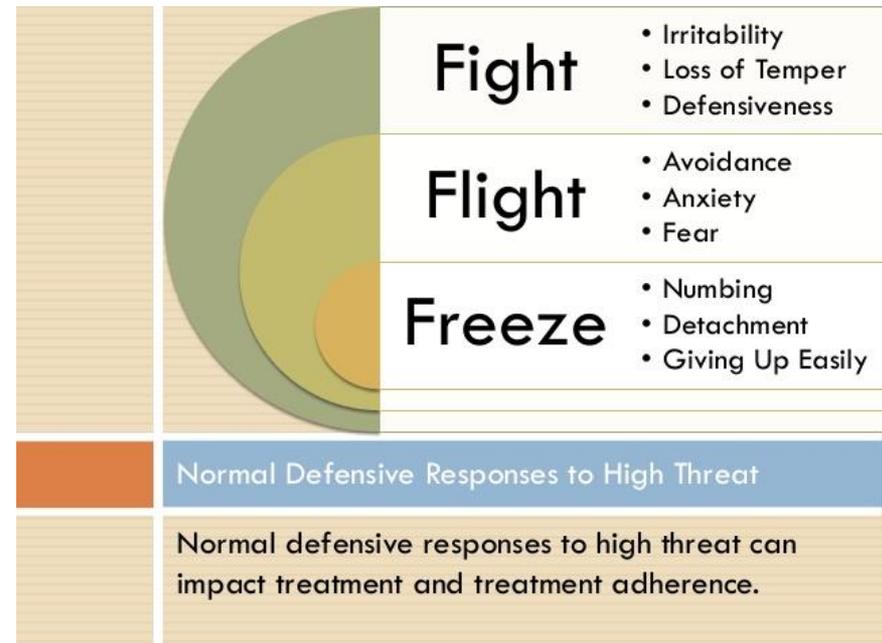
COMMUNITY COLLABORATION

- **Community policing**
 - Community partnerships
 - Victim impact panels
 - Family group conferences
 - providing an intermediate response between letting someone “off the hook” for wrongdoing and launching full criminal prosecution
- SARA (*a form of assessment*)
 - Scanning
 - Analysis
 - Response
 - Assessment



DE-ESCALATION

- Law enforcement can only de-escalate a situation if they are willing to do so: “We need more options”
- SLOW DOWN
- De-escalation is an abnormal response
- Remain calm, collected, and centered



SELF CARE

- “Law enforcement agencies must take measures to help their personnel combat the negative effects of occupational stress and vicarious traumatization.” – (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2011)
- Psychoeducation for all and mental health care when necessary
- Vicarious trauma may lead to difficulties with...
 - Making decisions
 - Managing boundaries and emotions
 - Feeling connected to what is happening around you



RESOURCES

Generation 5. (2016). Toward Transformative Justice.

National Child Trauma Stress Network. (2015). Creating Trauma Informed Systems.

National Institute of Justice. (2007). Restorative Justice: What's in it for Law Enforcement?

McCann & Pearlman. (1990) "Vicarious Traumatization: A Framework for Understanding the Psychological Effects of Working with Victims," Journal of Traumatic Stress

Tovar. (2014). Vicarious Traumatization and Spirituality in Law Enforcement. Federal Bureau of Investigation

US Department of Justice (2014). Community Policing Defined. Community Oriented Policing Services .

Wexler. (2015). A Special Set of Tools For Law Enforcement