



Bridging I/DD and Mental Health Systems

Shared Learning Groups

January 2024

Funded by the Administration for Community Living

# About Shared Learning Groups

- We will be hosting four meetings: one for Direct Support Professionals (DSPs), one for Clinical Professionals, one for people with lived experience, and one for Families of people with lived experience.
- The information in all four presentations is the same. We changed the discussion questions for each group.

# About Shared Learning Groups

- This presentation is a collaboration among The Link Center partners. Link Center Partners include people with lived experience, researchers, and people who work on policy issues.
- We will record and transcribe today's meeting. Transcribing means writing down all the words people say in the meeting. The materials will be emailed to you after the meeting. We encourage you to share.



**Perri Spencer**  
The Link Center  
Steering Committee

# Inherent Trauma

- Being unable to communicate wants and needs
- Lack of choices and autonomy (freedom to make choices about ourselves)
- Unmet support needs
- Being presumed incapable (people think we cannot do things)
- Ableism (discrimination against disabled people)

# Abuse and Safeguarding

- People with I/DD are at higher risk of abuse
- May not know what abuse looks like
- May not have tools to report abuse
- Are often denied sex education
- Need correct information and support to stay safe
- It is **NEVER** the victim's fault

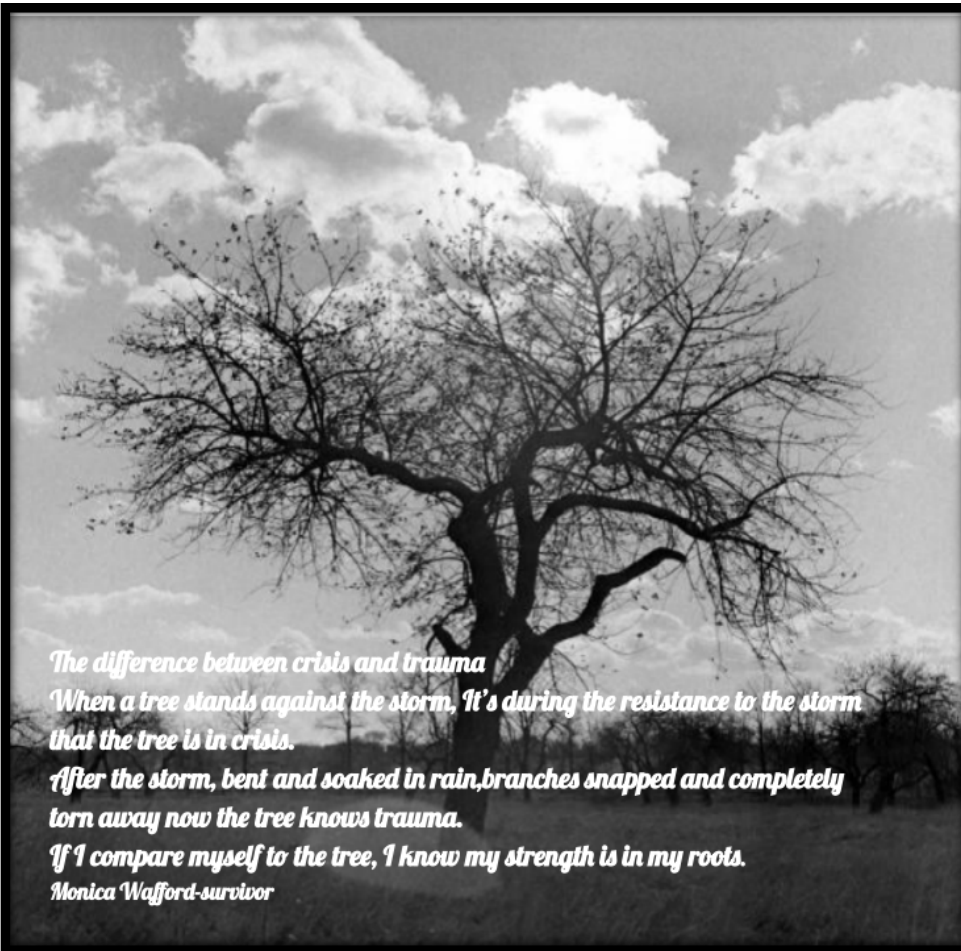
The difference between crisis and trauma.

When a tree stands against the storm, it's during the resistance to the storm that the tree is in crisis.

After the storm, bent and soaked in rain, branches snapped and completely torn away, now the tree knows trauma.

If I compare myself to the tree, I know my strength is in my roots.

-Monica Wafford, survivor





## Sharing Lived Experience

This meeting will be talking about ways people deal with trauma and strategies people use to address trauma. Take care of yourself and allow silence to be a safe space and feel empowered to do what's necessary for your comfort and care.



## Sharing Lived Experience

We celebrate our individuality, our diverse culture, and our singularity while we celebrate the discoveries realized in our collective humanity.

*We know that we are each unique with our own experiences in the world.*



## Sharing Lived Experience

We empathize with experienced traumas that hinder our resilience.

*Some people have experienced trauma that makes it hard to recover and move forward.*



## Sharing Lived Experience

We listen with open minds and compassion, without judgment or blame.



## Today's Agenda

- Introductions: Put your name and any group, association, or membership you may have in the chat.
- What is The Link Center?
- Why are we talking about “**Supports for Trauma**”?
  - What resources, trainings, and information are available to get information about supports for trauma?
- Group Exercise: What are some challenges and solutions to supporting people who have experienced trauma — this will focus on audience participation and ideas.



**What are your go-to resources,  
trainings, websites, and places to  
get information about supports for  
trauma?**

(Think about this...we will ask you again at the  
end of today's session)



# What is The Link Center?

# The Link Center Partner Organizations

## Leading Partners

- NASDDDS
- NADD
- NASMHPD

## Diversity, Equity, Inclusion

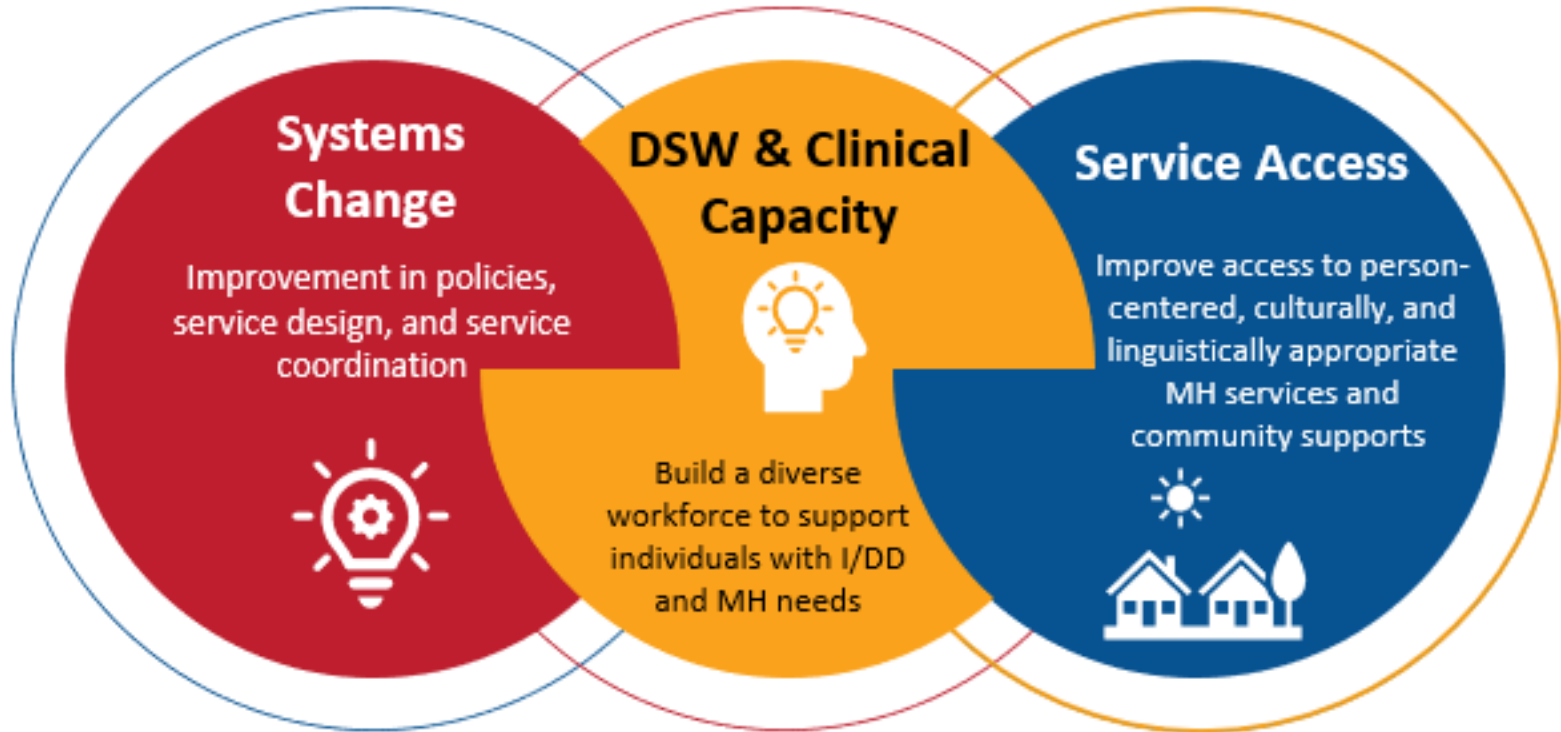
- Green Mountain Self Advocates
- Autistic Self Advocacy Network
- National Association of State Head Injury Administrators
- CommunicationFIRST

## Continuous Quality

- National Center for START Services
- Sonoran Center of Excellence
- OSU Nisonger Center

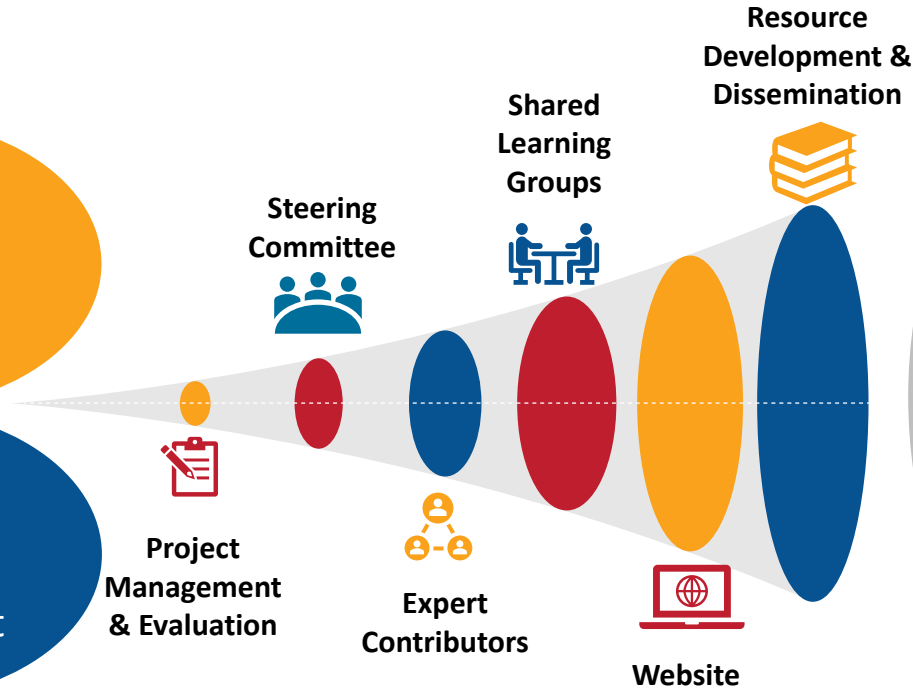


# Key Goals of The Link Center



Diversity  
Equity  
Inclusion

Continuous  
Quality  
Improvement



The Link Center's **OUTCOMES** are effective, equitable, understandable, and respectful quality care and services that are responsive to diverse cultural beliefs and practices, preferred languages, health literacy, and other communication needs, designed to increase and **SUSTAIN** self-determination, empowerment, and quality of life for people with co-occurring I/DD and MH disabilities.

# Today's Shared Learning Group



## Goals & Outcomes of the Shared Learning Group:

- We will share what we are doing at The Link Center related to **Supports for Trauma**

You will identify the importance of supporting some considering their trauma.

You will know where to find resources about **Supports for Trauma**

# Today's Shared Learning Group



## Goals & Outcomes of the Shared Learning Group:

We will get your input related to **Supports for Trauma**

The group will help identify needed resources and information that The Link Center can gather or work with partners to develop.

You will help us come up with ways to solve targeted challenges presented in the group exercise.



**Brian Sims, MD**

**NASMHPD**

National Association of State Mental Health Program  
Directors



## **Why are we talking about Supports for Trauma?**

# What is the issue/need - generally?

Trauma can happen to people of all ages, genders, races, ethnicities, and sexual orientations.

# What is the issue/need - generally?

- Women are two times more likely to develop Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) than men.
- Women report higher rates of sexual assault or child sexual abuse. Men are more likely to experience accidents, physical assault, combat, disasters, or be a witness to death/injury.

# What is the issue/need - generally?

- Black people are most likely to experience PTSD in their lifetimes.
- Minority youth are more likely to experience trauma, including historical trauma, immigration stressors, natural and man-made disasters, discrimination, and violence. Minority youth are less likely to access medical and mental health care.

# What is the issue/need - generally?

- Black and Latino young men experience violence, poverty, incarceration, lack of access to health care, marginalization, and low social status much more than other people.
- The historic and intergenerational trauma (trauma passed down from older people to younger people) American Indians and Alaska Natives experience increases their risk of experiencing trauma in the present day.
- LGBTQI+ individuals are nearly four times more likely to experience violent assault than their cisgender, heterosexual counterparts. Cisgender people are people who identify with the gender they were assigned at birth. Heterosexual people are people who are attracted to a gender different than their own.

# What is the issue/need – people with disabilities?

People with ID are three to four times more likely than people without ID to experience adverse events such as abuse, neglect, and medical trauma.

85-90% of adults who get mental health support have a history of trauma.

# SIX KEY PRINCIPLES OF A TRAUMA-INFORMED APPROACH

1. Safety
2. Trustworthiness and Transparency
3. Peer Support
4. Collaboration and Mutuality
5. Empowerment, Voice and Choice
6. Cultural, Historical, and Gender Issues

[Practical Guide for Implementing a Trauma-Informed Approach \(samhsa.gov\)](https://www.samhsa.gov/trauma-informed)

# What does this mean for families?

## Six Key Principles of Trauma-Informed Approach

### **1. Safety:** *feeling physically and emotionally safe*

How can you ensure that your loved one feels safe in their physical settings and with others around them?

**Example:** Does your loved one always have private places that they can go to calm, self-regulate, or de-escalate?

**Lived Experience Video:** <https://vimeo.com/107476472>

# What does this mean for families?

## Six Key Principles of Trauma-Informed Approach

### **2. Trustworthiness and Transparency:** *being open and honest with the goal of building trust*

How can you create a mutual, trusting relationship with your loved one?

**Example:** Encourage them to share their story (as much as they want to) so you can understand what happened to them and you know how to support them better.

**Lived Experience Video:** <https://vimeo.com/107478500>

# What does this mean for families?

## Six Key Principles of Trauma-Informed Approach

### **3. Peer Support:** *building mutual, healing relationships with equals*

Does your loved one have others in their life who may have experienced trauma and can understand their experience?

**Example:** They have someone they can call when they need to talk about how they are feeling in the moment and they give them guidance and support since they have been there, too.

**Lived Experience Video:** <https://vimeo.com/107478502>

**Resource:** [Learn How to Become a Peer Supporter of a Person who was Abused - SARTAC \(selfadvocacyinfo.org\)](https://selfadvocacyinfo.org)

# What does this mean for families?

## Six Key Principles of Trauma-Informed Approach

### **4. Collaboration and Mutuality:** *sharing power and decision-making*

Are you judgement-free, do you respect and try not to control you your loved one?

**Example:** Regularly ask your loved what is important to them so you can find ways to better support and help them meet **their** goals.

Lived Experience Video: <https://vimeo.com/107476474>

# What does this mean for families?

## Six Key Principles of Trauma-Informed Approach

**5. Empowerment, Voice, and Choice:** *recognizing people's strengths and experiences supporting self-advocacy, choice, and self-empowerment*

Do you feel like your loved one has places where they make their own decisions, and you see their strengths and respect their choices even if you don't agree?

**Example:** Your loved one chose to stay at their apartment alone and not go to come to your family home for the holidays while you may not agree, you support their decision and asks what they need or want to do to celebrate.

**Lived Experience Video:** <https://vimeo.com/107476470>

# What does this mean for families?

## Six Key Principles of Trauma-Informed Approach

**6. Cultural, Historical, and Gender Issues:** *moving past cultural stereotypes and biases, offering gender-responsive services, using the healing power of cultural connections, and recognizing and addressing historical trauma, and gender identity*

Do you understand **all** your loved one's experiences even as a marginalized person?

**Example:** Because they shared their concern with you, you know that when they hear or see news about police brutality towards a Black person, it makes them anxious and you ask if they want to talk about it.

### Resources:

[Culturally-Sensitive Trauma-Informed Care | Patient Centered Care and Trauma Informed Care for Pediatric Patients - HEALTHCARE TOOLBOX](#)

Tracing the Trauma Thread from our Ancestors to Present Healing:

<https://youtu.be/m1ZeM650i64?si=img2M4Wnc2I9yg4u>



**Max Barrows**  
Green Mountain  
Self-Advocates



# Resource: Managing Triggers



Bridging I/DD and Mental Health Systems

## **Group Exercise**



My son is 30 years old and has a brain injury that makes it difficult for him to concentrate and regulate his mood. He talks a lot about moving out of our family home into his own apartment like his older brother. I tend to encourage him to continue living with me and his father because I am fearful that someone will take advantage of him again. I know that we won't always be around to protect him, but I also fear that because he doesn't trust many people, he would just stay in his apartment by himself and withdraw.

What should I do?



**What are your go-to resources,  
trainings, websites, and places  
to get information about  
supports for trauma?**

(Put in the chat)

An orange starburst graphic with a black outline, containing the text 'Website Coming Soon!'.

Website  
Coming  
Soon!

Until the website is available, you can reach us by  
email at:

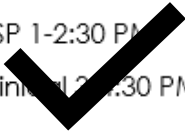
[thelinkcenter@nasdds.org](mailto:thelinkcenter@nasdds.org)

# Upcoming Shared Learning Groups: Year One

(all group meetings listed are Eastern Time)

**OCT 24, 2023**

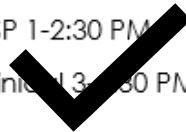
- DSP 1-2:30 PM
- Clinical 2-3:30 PM



SUPPORTING SOMEONE  
IN CRISIS

**JAN 23, 2024**

- DSP 1-2:30 PM
- Clinical 3-4:30 PM



SUPPORTS FOR TRAUMA

**APR 23, 2024**

- DSP 1-2:30 PM
- Clinical 3-4:30 PM



SUPPORTING  
SOMEONE THROUGH  
A TRANSITION

**AUG 20, 2024**

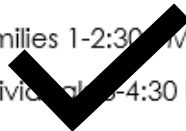
- DSP 1-2:30 PM
- Clinical 3-4:30 PM



SUPPORTING THE  
WHOLE PERSON

**OCT 25, 2023**

- Families 1-2:30 PM
- Individuals 3-4:30 PM



**JAN 24, 2024**

- Families 1-2:30 PM
- Individuals 3-4:30 PM



**APR 24, 2024**

- Families 1-2:30 PM
- Individuals 3-4:30 PM

**AUG 21, 2024**

- Families 1-2:30 PM
- Individuals 3-4:30 PM

**COMBINED SHARED LEARNING GROUP MEETING: TBD**

# Resources

- Houck EJ, Dracobly JD. Trauma-Informed Care for Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities: From Disparity to Policies for Effective Action. *Perspect Behav Sci.* 2022 Sep 28;46(1):67-87. doi: 10.1007/s40614-022-00359-6. PMID: 37006597; PMCID: PMC10050265.
- Prevention Institute. (2014). Making connections for mental health and wellbeing among men and boys in the U.S. <https://www.preventioninstitute.org/sites/default/files/publications/Making%20Connections%20for%20Mental%20Health%20Wellbeing%20among%20Men%20and%20Boys.pdf>
- Pumariega, A. J., Jo, Y., Beck, B., & Rahmani, M. (2022). Trauma and US minority children and youth. *Current Psychiatry Reports*, 24(4), 285-295. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11920-022-01336-1> 32.
- Roberts, A. L., Gilman, S. E., Breslau, J., Breslau, N., & Koenen, K. C. (2011). Race/ethnic differences in exposure to traumatic events, development of post-traumatic stress disorder, and treatment-seeking for post-traumatic stress disorder in the United States. *Psychological Medicine*, 41(1), 71-83. <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0033291710000401> 31.
- U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. (n.d.). How common is PTSD in adults? [https://www.ptsd.va.gov/understand/common/common\\_adults.asp](https://www.ptsd.va.gov/understand/common/common_adults.asp) 40 Practical Guide for Implementing a Trauma-Informed Approach References 30.
- Valentine, S. E., Livingston, N. A., Salomaa, A. C., & Shipherd, J. C. (n.d.). Trauma, discrimination and PTSD among LGBTQ+ people. U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. [https://www.ptsd.va.gov/professional/treat/specific/trauma\\_discrimination\\_lgbtq.asp](https://www.ptsd.va.gov/professional/treat/specific/trauma_discrimination_lgbtq.asp)

# Acknowledgements

- **Perri Spencer**, The Link Center Steering Committee
- **Max Barrows**, Green Mountain Self-Advocates
- All of the partners at The Link Center for contributing to the preparation of and content for this meeting

Please scan the QR code below or click the link in the chat to fill out our survey. Your feedback helps us improve future sessions.

