



DIGITAL DIALOGUE

WORKFORCE SUPPORT



Supporting Child Welfare Staff: The Critical First 3 Months



Speakers

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on Child Abuse
and Neglect*



GUEST

Cambria Rose Walsh

Project Co-Director

Center for Child Welfare Trauma-Informed Policies,
Programs, and Practices (TIPS Center)



GUEST

Alan O'Malley-Laursen

Program Manager for Youth Behavioral Health
Olmsted County Child & Family Services



MODERATOR

Jean Swift

Project Director, CANTASD

Trauma-informed Guidelines for Organizations

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Secondary Traumatic Stress in Child Welfare Practice: Trauma-Informed Guidelines for Organizations

By

The Chadwick Trauma-Informed Systems Dissemination and Implementation Project

December 2016

Includes:

- Hiring
- The first 3 months
- Cumulative effects
- Critical incidents
- Evaluation

Hiring Phase

An opportunity to engage potential new workers and define the realities of the job and organizational supports

- “Duty to warn”
- Application process
 - Supplemental questions specific to secondary traumatic stress (STS)
- Prior to interview
 - Requested to view “realistic job preview”
- Interview
 - Questions/discussion specific to STS

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Hiring Phase (continued)

Additional points:

- Emphasize that “the work is not done alone” and identify the points of support.
- Reiterate the realities of job, and ask how they will handle these.
- Convey a culture of affirmation and caring.
- Provide in-depth information regarding supervision/critical debriefing protocols and supports available like EAP, wellness plans, and peer support groups.

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The Critical First 3 Months

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- Preparing for the first day
- Orienting new staff to a trauma-exposed work environment
- Supporting an employee through their first 3 months

Preparing for the First Day

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- Assess the current climate and culture in the organization.
- Identify workforce champions.
- Prepare a welcome and wellness packet.



Orienting to the Work Environment

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- Introduce STS and other concepts used when a workforce is exposed to trauma:
 - STS: Signs and symptoms
 - Compassion satisfaction
 - Emotional resilience
 - Primary trauma
- Highlight the importance of enhancing physical and psychological safety.

Support During the First 3 Months

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- Incorporate new employees into the team.
- Provide education and awareness.
- Monitor workload assignments.
- Provide trauma-informed supervision.
 - Reinforce normalcy and the expectation that—
 - The work will elicit strong emotional response,
AND
 - The new worker needs to share these struggles with
supervisor/peers.

Beyond the First 3 Months

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Key elements in supporting staff on an ongoing basis include:

- Individual assessment
- Building resiliency
- Support systems (includes professional development and supervision)
- Coverage and caseloads
- Empowerment and advocacy
- Involving employees in decision making process
- Recognition, team building, and peer support

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Additional Resources

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- Realistic Job Previews
<https://www.childwelfare.gov/learningcenter/video-series/rjp/>
- Multi-Dimensional Human Services Workplace Stress micro-presentation
<http://cantasd.org/explore-topics/secondary-traumatic-stress/>
- Virtual Expo session: *Restore, Refresh and Re-energize: Organizational Responses to Secondary Traumatic Stress*, available through [capLEARN](#)
- Child Welfare Information Gateway
<https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/responding/trauma/secondary/>
- National Child Welfare Workforce Institute
<https://www.ncwwi.org/>

Thank You and Next Steps

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- Download the handouts to learn more. Click on the files in the “Handouts” box on your screen.
- Do you have innovative ideas, questions, or concerns about workforce support? Tell us about your work. Send an e-mail to **hello@CANTASD.org** with “Workforce Support” in the subject line.

Participant Feedback

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Thank you for your participation!

How useful was this session?

Additional Comments: hello@CANTASD.org

