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# RHYTTAC Issues@aGlance

## What is Trauma?

Young people seeking services through runaway and homeless youth programs across the country most likely have experienced many different types of trauma. These experiences can range from abuse and neglect, sexual trauma, witnessing violence in the home or neighborhood, or the loss of a loved one. It is important that those providing day-to-day support and care become more trauma informed and understand the impact trauma has on the behavior, development, and relationships of the youth we serve.

### What are the effects of Trauma?

- Trauma can result in impairment in development and functioning in the areas of:
- Attachment
- Biology
- Ability to regulate their mood
- Dissociation
- Behavioral control
- Cognition
- Self-concept

In addition, without the security provided by safe and permanent connections, these youth must shift resources normally earmarked for growth and development to self-protection in order to simply survive their environments. Left unaddressed, these impairments can place young people on a trajectory of life-long risk for serious mental health concerns, substance abuse and dependence, and leave them susceptible to further traumatization.

### What is Trauma Informed Care?

“Trauma Informed Care is a strengths-based framework that is grounded in an understanding of and responsiveness to the impact of trauma, that emphasizes physical, psychological, and emotional safety for both providers and survivors, and that creates opportunities for survivors to rebuild a sense of control and empowerment.”<sup>1</sup>

### Tips for Integrating Trauma-Informed Approaches in Programs for Runaway and Homeless Youth

- Increase trauma awareness within the agency by providing trauma specific trainings. For example, agencies can sign up for access to over 91 free trauma e-learning courses on the RHYTTAC e-learning site ([rhyttac.ou.edu/rhyttac-e-learning](http://rhyttac.ou.edu/rhyttac-e-learning)).
- Ensure your agency places an emphasis on the physical and emotional safety of the clients and providers.
- Increase your client’s level of self-sufficiency by assisting them to reduce feelings of being emotionally overwhelmed and to make new meaning of their trauma history and current experiences.
- Become skilled in providing trauma informed care using trauma specific intervention techniques that are anchored in the strengths-based perspective.

### How do agencies evaluate Trauma Informed Care?

It’s important to determine if your trauma informed services are increasing your youth’s safety, well-being, self-sufficiency, and ability to establish permanent connections. The best support for determining this is to utilize your available resources. Some examples of resources include publications on trauma, training and technical assistance events, e-learning trainings on trauma, and consultation and support from peers. There is a discussion available on the RHYTTAC Community of Practice ([rhyttac.groupsites.com](http://rhyttac.groupsites.com)) for consultation and support from over 650 of your peers on trauma. Since providing services to youth who have experienced trauma is emotionally demanding, consultation and support from co-workers and colleagues are essential to cope with the emotional demands of providing trauma informed care to runaway and homeless youth.



After evaluating your agency's ability to provide trauma informed care, it will be beneficial to engage in a meaningful discussion on how to improve the agency's ability to provide services that are trauma informed. The amount of time you invest in these activities will have a substantial return on investment and it will have a measureable impact on your ability to provide safety, well-being, self-sufficiency, and help youth establish permanent connections.

**Additional Resources:**

**10 Reasons for Integrating Trauma-Informed Approaches in Programs for Runaway and Homeless Youth**

Hollywood Homeless Youth Partnership

[www.hhyp.org/downloads/HHYP\\_10Reasons\\_Flyer.pdf](http://www.hhyp.org/downloads/HHYP_10Reasons_Flyer.pdf)

**RHYTTAC's Interactive tour of Trauma Informed Care Resources**

Runaway and Homeless Youth Training and Technical Assistance Centers

[www.rhyttac2.ou.edu/articulate/trauma-informed-treatment-resources/](http://www.rhyttac2.ou.edu/articulate/trauma-informed-treatment-resources/)

**The ARC Framework for Runaway and Homeless Youth Serving Agencies**

Hollywood Homeless Youth Partnership

[www.hhyp.org/downloads/HHYP\\_ARC\\_Framework.pdf](http://www.hhyp.org/downloads/HHYP_ARC_Framework.pdf)

**Trauma Informed Consequences for Homeless Youth**

Hollywood Homeless Youth Partnership

[www.hhyp.org/downloads/Trauma-Informed-Consequences.pdf](http://www.hhyp.org/downloads/Trauma-Informed-Consequences.pdf)

**Some well-known trauma-focused interventions as identified by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration ([www.samhsa.gov](http://www.samhsa.gov)) include:**

**Addiction and Trauma Recovery Integration Model (ATRIUM)**

[www.samhsa.gov/nctic/healing.asp#atrium](http://www.samhsa.gov/nctic/healing.asp#atrium)

**Essence of Being Real**

[www.samhsa.gov/nctic/healing.asp#essence](http://www.samhsa.gov/nctic/healing.asp#essence)

**Risking Connection**

[www.samhsa.gov/nctic/healing.asp#risking](http://www.samhsa.gov/nctic/healing.asp#risking)

**Sanctuary Model**

[www.samhsa.gov/nctic/healing.asp#sanctuary](http://www.samhsa.gov/nctic/healing.asp#sanctuary)

**Seeking Safety**

[www.samhsa.gov/nctic/healing.asp#seeking](http://www.samhsa.gov/nctic/healing.asp#seeking)

**Trauma, Addictions, Mental Health, and Recovery (TAMAR) Model**

[www.samhsa.gov/nctic/healing.asp#tamar](http://www.samhsa.gov/nctic/healing.asp#tamar)

**Trauma Affect Regulation: Guide for Education and Therapy (TARGET)**

[www.samhsa.gov/nctic/healing.asp#target](http://www.samhsa.gov/nctic/healing.asp#target)

**Trauma Recovery and Empowerment Model (TREM and M-TREM)**

[www.samhsa.gov/nctic/healing.asp#trem](http://www.samhsa.gov/nctic/healing.asp#trem)

**For more information:**

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**Visit us on the web:** [www.rhyttac.ou.edu](http://www.rhyttac.ou.edu)

<sup>1</sup> Hopper, E.K., Bassuk, E. L., & Olivey, J. (2010). Shelter from the storm: trauma-informed care in homelessness services settings, *The Open Health Services and Policy Journal*, 3, 80-100.