

Training Description

SAMHSA's GAINS Center for Behavioral Health and Justice Transformation, operated by Policy Research Associates, Inc. (PRA), is known nationally for its work in regard to people with behavioral health needs involved in the criminal justice system.

Overview

Although prevalence estimates vary, there is consensus that high percentages of justice-involved women and men have experienced serious trauma throughout their lifetime. The reverberating effects of trauma experiences can challenge a person's capacity for recovery and pose significant barriers to accessing services, often resulting in an increase risk of coming into contact with the criminal justice system.

Objectives

How Being Trauma-Informed Improves Judicial Decision-Making is a training program for court professionals to:

- Increase understanding of trauma
- Create an awareness of the impact of trauma on behavior
- Develop trauma-informed responses

Trauma-informed court responses can help to avoid re-traumatizing individuals, and thereby increase safety for all, decrease recidivism, and promote and support recovery of justice-involved women and men with serious mental illness. Partnerships across systems can also help to link individuals to trauma-informed services and treatment for trauma.

Program Participants

This highly interactive training is specifically tailored to community-based criminal justice professionals including:

- Judges
- Court personnel
- Other court professionals

Learning Objectives

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

1. Discuss why court professionals should learn about trauma
2. List examples of traumatic events
3. Define trauma
4. Discuss how trauma is often ongoing for many individuals involved in the criminal justice system
5. Describe the pervasive impact trauma can have on an individual's life
6. List examples of the types of trauma reported by women and by men
7. List attributions that women and men ascribe to traumatic events
8. Describe how the impact of trauma can be experienced throughout life and affect various aspects of functioning and behavior
9. Describe how trauma relates to mental health and substance use disorders
10. Describe how certain behaviors may reflect a person's attempt to survive
11. Discuss how a history of trauma may result in problematic behavior
12. Discuss how some behaviors and symptoms related to trauma can be a challenge
13. Understand that there should be a universal assumption of trauma for justice-involved individuals
14. List and describe ways in which the court system may re-traumatize trauma survivors
15. Define vicarious trauma, its impact on court professionals, and strategies to address vicarious trauma
16. Discuss how to improve policies and procedures to make them trauma-informed