Introduction to Restorative Practices

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Learning Objectives

1. Understand ACEs and their relationship with the need for restorative practices
2. Develop an understanding of what restorative practices are and how they fit into our child welfare system
3. Hear from crossover youth about two key components of restorative practices
4. Learn about specific restorative practices including Nonviolent Communication, Circles, and Restorative Justice Conferencing
Connection

“The energy that exists among people when they experience being seen, heard, and valued. When they can give and receive without judgment.”

Brené Brown
Adverse Childhood Experiences

Prevalence of ACEs by Category for CDC-Kaiser ACE Study Participants by Sex, Waves 1 and 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACE Category</th>
<th>Women Percent (N = 9,367)</th>
<th>Men Percent (N = 7,970)</th>
<th>Total Percent (N = 17,337)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ABUSE</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Abuse</td>
<td>13.1%</td>
<td>7.6%</td>
<td>10.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Abuse</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>29.9%</td>
<td>28.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual Abuse</td>
<td>24.7%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>20.7%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>HOUSEHOLD CHALLENGES</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother Treated Violently</td>
<td>13.7%</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
<td>12.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household Substance Abuse</td>
<td>29.5%</td>
<td>23.8%</td>
<td>26.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household Mental Illness</td>
<td>23.3%</td>
<td>14.8%</td>
<td>19.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parental Separation or Divorce</td>
<td>24.5%</td>
<td>21.8%</td>
<td>23.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incarcerated Household Member</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NEGLECT</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Neglect&lt;sup&gt;3&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>12.4%</td>
<td>14.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Neglect&lt;sup&gt;3&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>9.2%</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
<td>9.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Trauma Responsive Environments

❖ To address ACEs (trauma), we need trauma-responsive environments

❖ Research shows that children and adults with histories of maltreatment often respond excessively to minor triggers and have nervous systems running on high alert more frequently (Streeck-Fischer & van der Kolk, 2000)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gm9CIJ74Oxw
Hand Model of the Brain
Adverse Childhood Experiences

Trauma

Need for Emotional and Physical Safety

Non-Judgmental Interactions

Restorative Practices

People and environments that do things WITH kids rather than TO them or FOR them
Emotional Safety

The National Center of Domestic Violence, Trauma, & Mental Health defines it as:

“A feeling that your inner most thoughts, feelings and experiences are, and will be, honored as one honors themselves. You need not prove, nor impress; you just simply are. When it is present you feel open, even, at ease, and fluid with the spontaneity of a healthy child.”
Restorative Practices

- Seeks to build social capital, positive relationships, and healthy connections *(proactive)* and repair and restore relationships after harm has been done *(responsive)*
“Individuals are happier, more cooperative, and more willing to make positive changes when people in authority are willing to do things WITH them instead of TO or FOR them.”
Social Discipline Window

Adapted by Paul McCold and Ted Wachtel
Restorative Practices and Child Welfare

- Staff within group homes are more likely to rely on calling the police to handle challenging behaviors than a relative would do in the family home (Reducing Offending By Looked After Children, Nacro 2012)
- Rate of reporting for low-level criminal activity in care is far higher, thereby increases a youth’s likelihood of being unnecessarily criminalized
- Need to train group home staff on RP so they can use these approaches instead of only relying on the juvenile or criminal justice system
Restorative Practices and Child Welfare - Research Studies

- In Norfolk, the number of children living in residential care charged with criminal offences has dropped by 52% over the past two years following the introduction of restorative practice in children’s residential care (Rules of Engagement- Changing the heart of youth justice, 2012)

  - Recorded offenses in the home dropped from 147 in year 1 to 50 in year 3 (66% decrease)
  - Number of youth offending dropped from 32 youth during year 1 to 16 during year 3 (50% decrease)
Crossover Youth Forums

IMPORTANCE OF SAFETY AND FEELING SAFE:

❖ “If anything could change from the group home systems, just the security and safety of girls.”

❖ “I think we should decide where we feel safe at because there have been places I didn’t feel safe at and I told them and they was basically like there’s nothing we can do about that when in reality there is. They can do something about it.”

❖ “That’s a good question because I’ve been thinking about that for a long time. But if I had one magic power, it would be for DCF case managers to have that magic eye for placing children in the right home. For me personally, that’s my number one because if I had a good home, I probably would not be doing the stuff that I ended up doing. I’m pretty sure a lot of kids would want that too... just a nice home to live in.”

Facilitator: “So what does a good home look like?” “Somewhere I can feel comfortable. Like I ain’t gotta feel... it’s just a home. When you walk into your home, you just put your stuff down and feel safe. You go lay down on your bed if you want to, it’s your home. It’s where your heart at. Not like when you walk in, and it’s like [deep sigh] back against the wall. I don’t know who these people are, I don’t want to talk to, don’t say nothing to me. I don’t care what you do.”
They make me go to counseling, like too much.” Facilitator: “what’s too much?” “Like twice a week for like a lot of years.” Facilitator: “Do you think it helped at all?” “Not really because I’m still in the predicament I’m in right now. I mean some therapists were pretty good but a lot of them weren’t.” Facilitator: “What made them good?” “I don’t know, I just felt like they were listening and it was comfortable and other people would just talk to me and it was just like, I don’t know, I feel like they were trying to mess with my mind and not really trying to help me, I don’t know how to explain it. There was one psychiatrist I was with and he would say these questions as if I was on TV and he would ask how do you feel about this, da da da da da, like a robot. So I stopped talking to him.”

“I like the staff here [DJJ residential program], you know they may aggravate you and get on your nerves and stuff. But they really trying to benefit you, they really care about you and this program. They sit down and talk and that’s what you should have with your real parents. I’m happy about that.”
Restorative Circles - Proactive or Responsive

- Oakland Schools Circle
- Restorative Welcome and Re-Entry Circle
Restorative Conferencing

- Why We Need RJ
- Colorado High School - RJ
Closing Thoughts

- It’s up to us to change how we interact with others around us
- We must get serious about deeply training ourselves to respond in a way that creates EXPLICITE emotionally safe environments
- Schools, juvenile justice systems, and other systems all over the country and world are using RJ and RP
  - Let’s build these practices into our child welfare system in the State of Florida