



# Effective Training for Trauma-Informed Care

Kuhn, T. M., Cyperski, M. A., Shaffer, A. M., Gracey, K. A., Adams, M. K., Billings, G. M., & Ebert, J. S. (2019). Installing trauma-informed care through the Tennessee Child Protective Services Academy. *Psychological Services, 16*(1), 143.

## WHAT IS THIS RESOURCE?

This article explores how the Tennessee Department of Children’s Services, in partnership with Vanderbilt University, improved its trauma-informed approach by creating the Child Protective Services Academy. The article discusses the CPS Academy’s training structure, development, and design.

## WHAT ARE THE CRITICAL FINDINGS?

### TRAINING CONTENT

#### Topics

- The Child Welfare Trauma Training Toolkit
- Fostering wellness
- Counter responses
- Motivational interviewing
- SBIRT (Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment)
- State-specific topics

#### Emphasis on the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service’s (SAMHSA) four assumptions of trauma-informed care:

1. Realize
2. Recognize
3. Respond to trauma
4. Resist re-traumatization

### TRAINING IMPACT

#### Participant Benefits

- 94.2% satisfied with the first year of the Academy
- Rewarding and relevant to their work
- Gained knowledge related to trauma-informed care
- Gained a broader trauma-informed skillset

#### Partnership Successes

- Strengthened collaboration between the academic partner and the child welfare department
- Engaged leadership in the project early and often
- Used evidence-based best practices

## WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS FOR OUR WORK?

Child welfare agencies should engage in trauma-informed training to prepare their staff to work with families who have experienced multiple traumas. Effective trauma-informed trainings engage agency leadership and incorporate:

- Adult learning approaches
- Experiential activities
- Intervals between training events
- Coaching
- Ongoing consultation

Additionally, training should accommodate the specific needs of the organization. These efforts result in agencies using a trauma-informed lens to view the work and engage with families.