

# Trauma-Informed Care

## REACHING OUT TO YOU

### What is Trauma?

The American Psychiatric Association's *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual* (DSM-IV) defines a "traumatic event" as one in which a person experiences, witnesses, or is confronted with actual or threatened death or serious injury, or threat to the physical integrity of oneself or others. A person's response to trauma often includes intense fear, helplessness, or horror (APA, DSM IV-TR, 2000, fourth edition, Washington, DC). Trauma can result from experiences that are "private" (e.g. sexual assault, domestic violence, child abuse/neglect, witnessing interpersonal violence) or more "public" (e.g. war, terrorism, natural disasters).

Trauma is a central mental health and substance abuse concern and the one "common denominator" of all violence and disaster victims. Clearly, different individuals react to trauma in their own way, depending on the nature of and circumstances surrounding their traumatic experiences. For example, trauma associated with repeated childhood physical or sexual abuse can become a central defining characteristic to a survivor's identity, impacting nearly every aspect of his or her life. However, whether the cause of the trauma is a hurricane, loss of a loved one, sexual assault, child abuse, or domestic violence, or other incident(s), the trauma experience is one thing that all victims share ([www.witnessjustice.org](http://www.witnessjustice.org)).

Trauma survivors and consumers in programs and services that incorporate the Trauma-informed Care approach are likely to have histories of physical and sexual abuse and other types of trauma-inducing experiences, and this often leads to mental health and other types of co-occurring disorders such as health problems, substance abuse problems, eating disorders, HIV/AIDS issues, and contact with the criminal justice system. When a human service program takes the step to become trauma-informed, every part of its organization, management, and service delivery system is assessed and potentially modified to include a basic understanding of how trauma impacts the life of an individual seeking services. Trauma-informed organizations, programs, and services are based on an understanding of the vulnerabilities or triggers of trauma survivors that traditional service delivery approaches may exacerbate, so that these services and programs can be more supportive and avoid re-traumatization.



## Northeast Behavioral Health Care Consortium

72 Glenmaura National Boulevard  
2nd Floor  
Moosic, PA 18507

Phone: 570-344-2005  
Fax: 570-344-5806  
E-mail: [mail@nbhcc.org](mailto:mail@nbhcc.org)  
[www.nbhcc.org](http://www.nbhcc.org)

Trauma-specific interventions are designed specifically to address the consequences of trauma in the individual and to facilitate healing. Treatment programs generally recognize the survivor's need to be respected, informed, connected, and hopeful regarding their own recovery; the interrelation between trauma and symptoms of trauma (e.g. substance abuse, eating disorders, depression, anxiety, etc.); and the need to work in a collaborative way with survivors (and also with family and friends of the survivor) and with other human services agencies in a manner that will empower survivors and consumers (<http://mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/nctic/trauma.asp>).

If you have experienced a traumatic event in your life or you're unsure about an event, please reach out to your doctor, therapist, caseworker, or other individual who you can trust. You may also contact Community Care Behavioral Health at **1-866-668-4696** in order to obtain information about services available in your community. You also may refer to your Member Handbook for further information. If you do not have a handbook please ask your provider to obtain a copy for you or call NBHCC at 570-344-2005.

Below are some national resources that you may also contact:

[Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline](#)

800-4-A-CHILD (800-422-4453)

[FEMA Disaster Aid Hotline](#)

800-621-FEMA

[National Center for Missing and Exploited Children](#)

800-THE-LOST (800-843-5678)

[National Center for Victims of Crime](#)

800-FYI-CALL (800-394-2255)

[National Domestic Violence Hotline](#)

800-799-SAFE (800-799-7233) and 800-787-3224 (TDD)

[Mental Health America](#) (f/k/a National Mental Health Association)

800-969-6MHA (6642)

[National Organization for Victim Assistance](#)

800-TRY-NOVA (800-879-6682)

[National Resource and Training Center on Homelessness and Mental Illness](#)

617-467-6014

[National Sexual Assault Hotline](#)

800-656-HOPE (800-656-4673)

[National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#)

800-273-TALK (800-273-8255)

[OVC Victim and Family Assistance Call Center](#)

800-331-0075

[Witness Justice](#)

800-4WJ-HELP (800-495-4357)

[SAMHSA's National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information](#)

800-729-6686