



# Implementing Trauma Informed Practices

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IN THE HOMELESS SERVICE SYSTEM

MARCH 17, 2022



# Trauma Informed Approach

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## **\* Trauma Informed Approach - Defined**

\*Hopper, E.K., Bassuk, E.L., & Olivet, J. (2010) Shelter from the Storm: Trauma Informed Care in Homelessness Services Settings – from [traumainformedoregon.com](http://traumainformedoregon.com)

“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.”

# Trauma Informed Approach

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## **\* Trauma Informed Approach - Defined**

\*from [traumainformedoregon.com](http://traumainformedoregon.com)

There is not a common definition of trauma informed care, but the field should strive to create a definition that includes the following:

An awareness of the prevalence of trauma;

An understanding of the impact of trauma on physical, emotional, and mental health, as well as on behaviors and engagement to services;

An understanding that current service systems can re-traumatize individuals.

# Trauma Informed Approach

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## **Trauma Informed Approach & Implicit Bias**

**An understanding of the impact of trauma on physical, emotional, and mental health, as well as on behaviors and engagement to services.**

It is important to recognize that individuals from different socio-economic backgrounds, and/or those who have had negative experiences in the past with government agencies (including law enforcement and the DA's Office), social services, medical care providers, or other institutions, may be distrustful of engaging with services.

**An understanding that current service systems can re-traumatize individuals.**

Service systems should consider and acknowledge the point of view/needs/concerns of all patients, regardless of background and/or negative prior experience, actively resist re-traumatization, and reduce implicit bias.

# Trauma Informed Approach

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## \* Trauma Informed Approach - Defined

\*Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (2012) SAMHSA'S Working Definition of Trauma and Principles and Guidance for a Trauma Informed Approach; from [traumainformedoregon.com](http://traumainformedoregon.com)

A program/system/organization that is trauma informed includes the 4 “**Rs**”:

1. **REALIZES** the widespread impact of trauma and understands the potential paths for recovery;
2. **RECOGNIZES** the signs and symptoms of trauma in clients, families, staff, and others involved in the system;

# Trauma Informed Approach

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A program/system/organization that is trauma informed includes the 4 “**Rs**”:

3. **RESPONDS** by fully integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, and practices;
4. And seeks to actively **RESIST** re-traumatization.

# Core Values

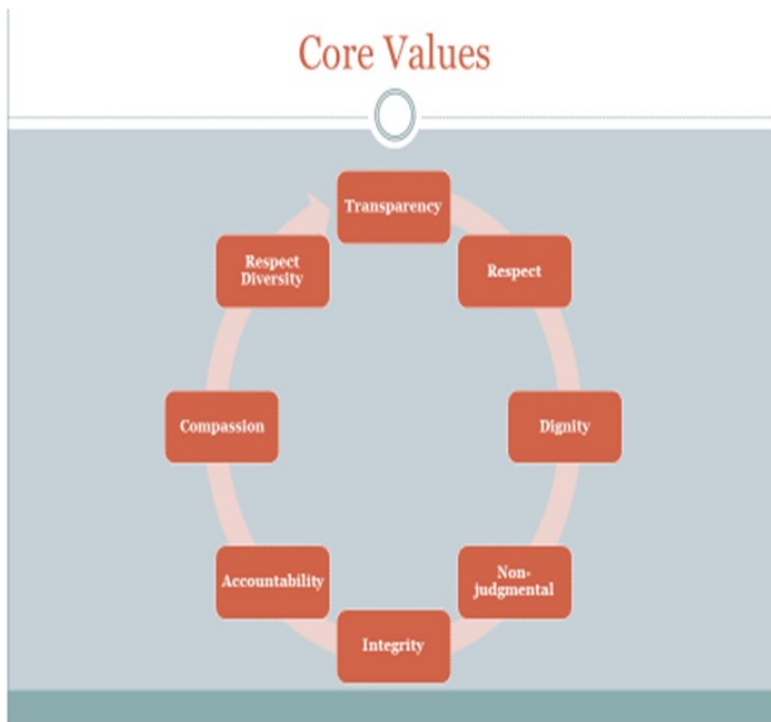




# Core Values

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## TRANSPARENCY



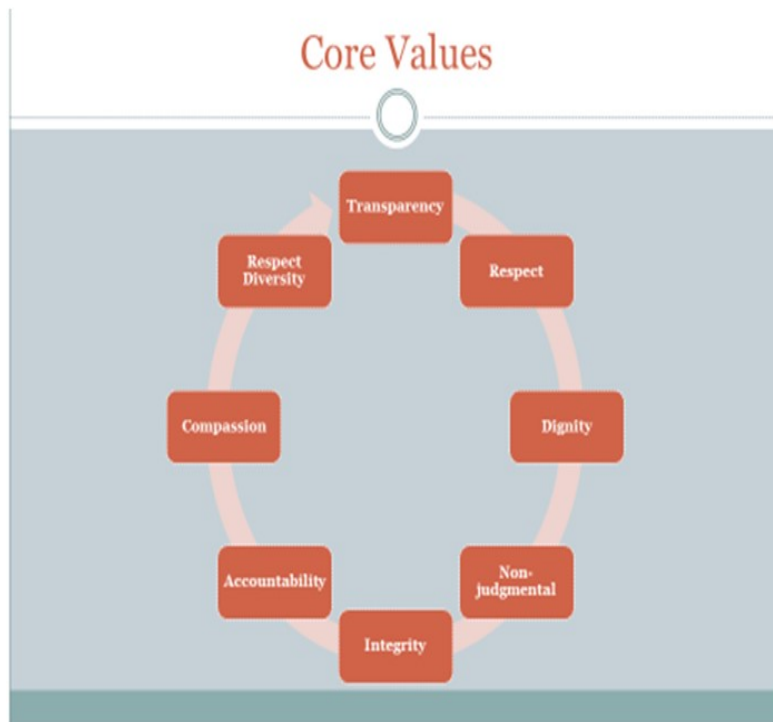
Transparency in this context relates to a provider's ability to treat the traumatized individual with complete genuineness and open disclosure of treatment modalities used. It is important for the client to feel partnered with and the provider to be open to working in a partnership. Transparency facilitated by the helping professional increases the client's sense of safety.

# Core Values

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## RESPECT

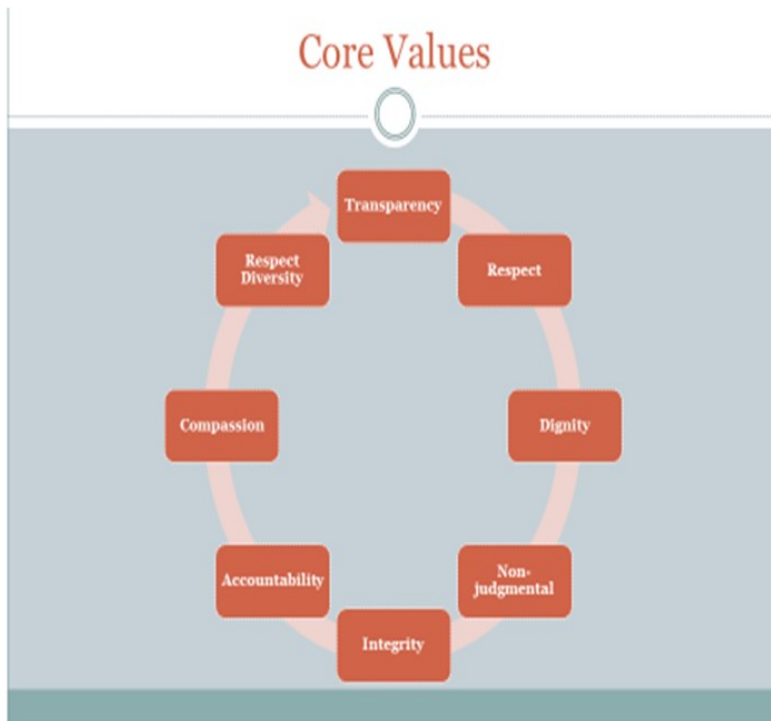
Respect- It is important to treat every client with respect, offering validation and empathy



# Core Values

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## DIGNITY



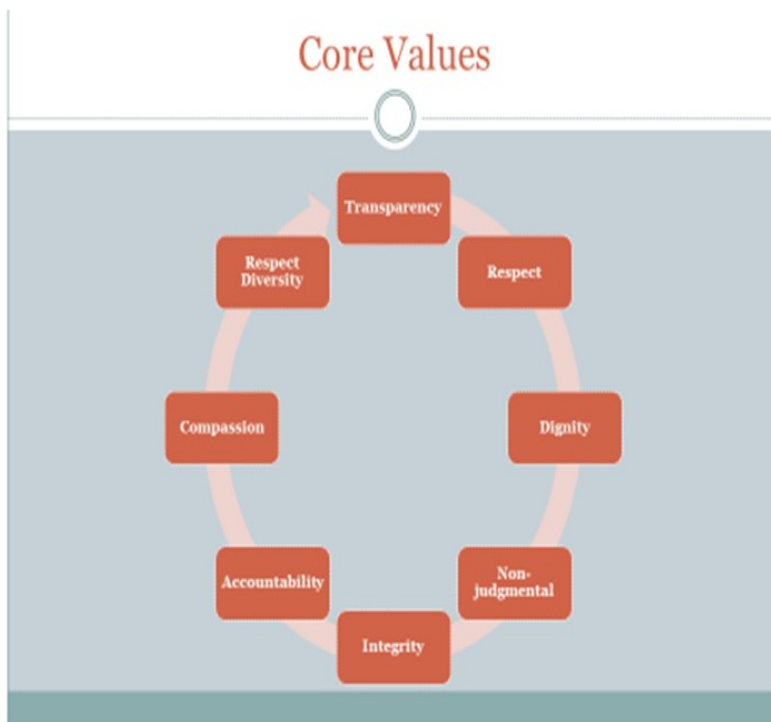
Dignity- Treating a person with dignity is imperative in the effectiveness of trauma informed care, as most individuals who have been traumatized are often under represented and mistreated. It takes courage to seek help and when treated with dignity a person feels valued

# Core Values

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## NON-JUDGMENTAL

Non-judgmental- As a helping professional it is important to withhold judgment. Since trauma is a subjective experience, providers who are trauma informed will succeed by suspending judgment and meeting the client where they are.

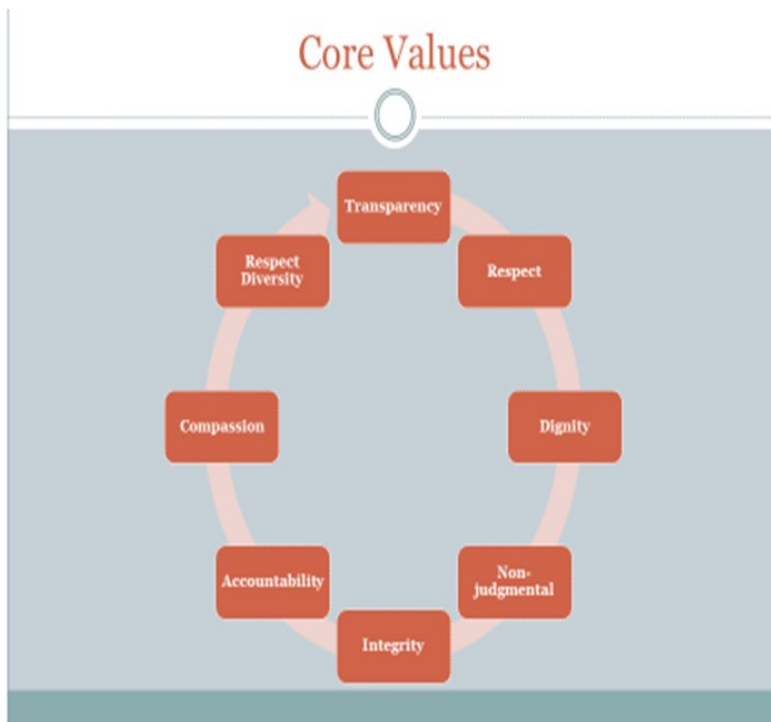


# Core Values

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## INTEGRITY

Integrity- Operating in a way that is with the utmost ethical and moral consideration

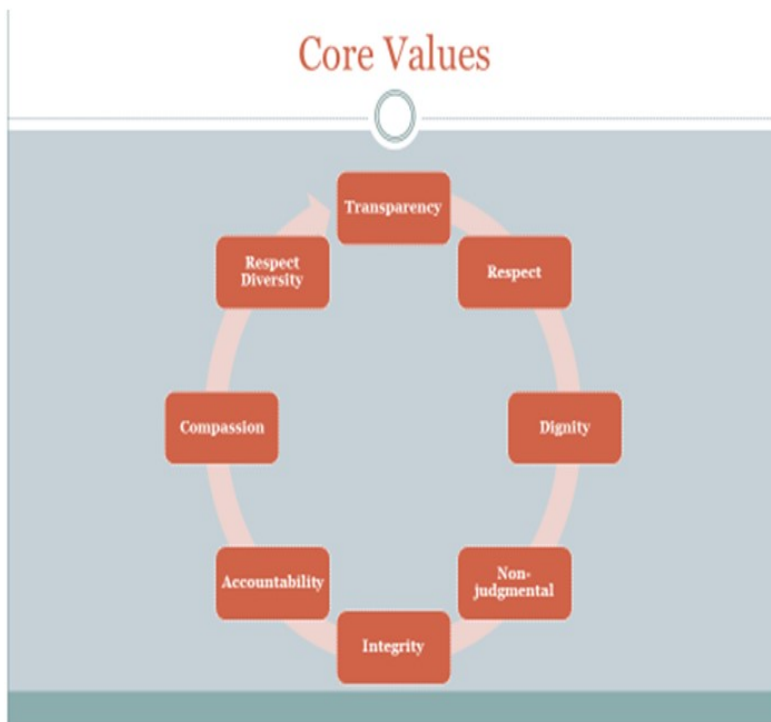


# Core Values

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## ACCOUNTABILITY

Accountability- Holding yourself and fellow providers accountable to demonstrate continued trauma informed care and all of its core values

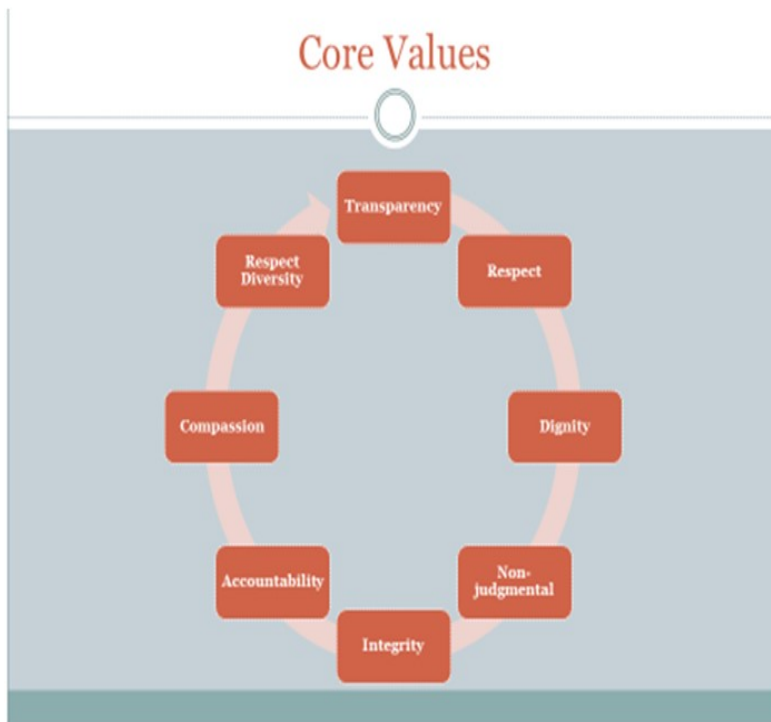


# Core Values

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## COMPASSION

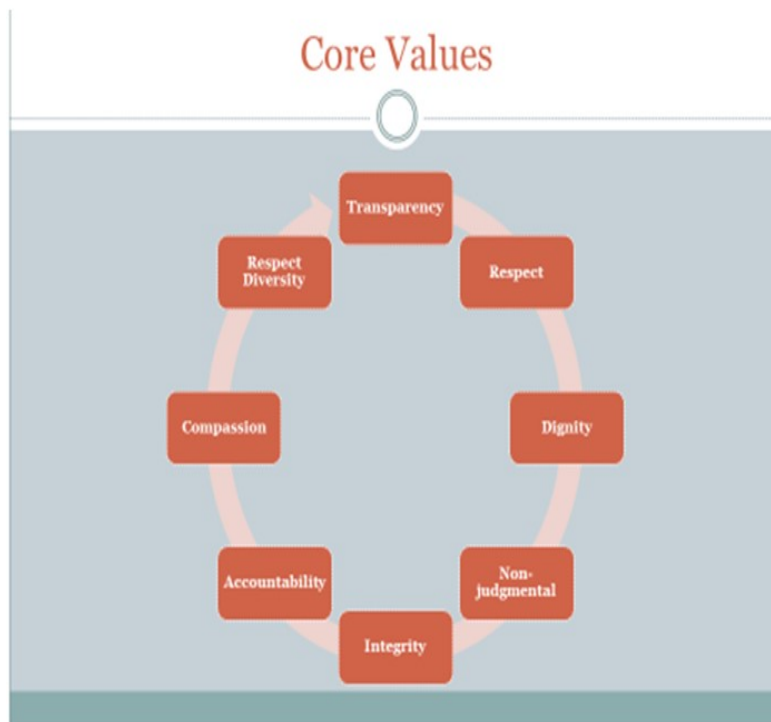
Compassion- Treating each client with compassion, creates a sense of safety and mutual respect.



# Core Values

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## RESPECT DIVERSITY



Respect Diversity- Understanding the diverse nature of each client and the unique needs of each. Ability to think “outside the box” and meet diverse client’s needs.



# Conclusion from “Trauma and the Brain” Video:

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1. “Trauma response is the brain in survival mode.”
2. “Repeated abuse can make trauma symptoms worse.”
3. “In response to trauma, people will behave in unexpected ways.”
4. “Remember, trauma is a normal human response to abnormal events.”

# Trauma Informed Approach

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For me. . .

A trauma informed approach is not something that can be satisfied by checking a row of boxes, or just learning about what it is. . .

A trauma informed approach is a change in the way we look at our work, a shift in perspective, a change in attitude, an aspiration we work to achieve every day, and commitment to seeing our roles and the communities we serve through a trauma informed lens.

# Concerns About Law Enforcement Involvement

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Under Marsy's Law, Proposition 9, and the California Constitution, a victim of crime has the right to have their opinions about prosecution of their case to be heard and considered.

It is the policy in the Family Protection Division of the District Attorney's Office to make efforts to contact all victims prior to making an issuing decision in any cases submitted for our review. The purpose of the contact is to provide the victim an opportunity to express their feelings about whether or not criminal charges should be filed, what they want to see happen as a result of the conduct, to ensure that any questions they might have about the process are addressed, and to provide information regarding victim's services.

Encourage victims to provide accurate contact information to law enforcement so the issuing deputy district attorney can successfully get in touch with them for the reasons above.

# Trauma Informed Approach

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**Victims have a right to be heard, and we have an obligation to listen.**

# Trauma Informed Approach

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**Domestic Violence Victims**

**&**

**Homeless Clients**

How can the similarities assist us in how to have a trauma informed approach when dealing with these members of our community?

# Trauma Informed Approach

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**What are the similarities?**

# Domestic Violence Victims and Homeless Clients

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**DV Victims:** DV Victims are frequently distrustful of the District Attorney's Office for fear that their interactions with the office may lead to their loved one being incarcerated.

**Homeless Clients:** Homeless clients may be distrustful of services they perceive as being an extension of the government or in a position of authority.

# Domestic Violence Victims and Homeless Clients

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**DV Victims:** May have mental health issues.

**Homeless Clients:** May have mental health issues.



# Domestic Violence Victims and Homeless Clients

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**DV Victims:** May have found themselves recently without stable/safe housing.

**Homeless Clients:** May have found themselves recently without stable/safe housing.

# Domestic Violence Victims and Homeless Clients

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**DV Victims:** May have children, and be worried that their current situation might cause their children to be taken away.

**Homeless Clients:** May have children, and be worried that their current situation might cause their children to be taken away.

# Domestic Violence Victims and Homeless Clients

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**DV Victims:** May have alcohol/chemical dependency issues, or have a loved one with alcohol/chemical dependency issues.

**Homeless Clients:** May have alcohol/chemical dependency issues, or have a loved one with alcohol/chemical dependency issues.

# Trauma Informed Approach

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**How can the similarities help us understand how to use a trauma informed approach?**

# Trauma Informed Approach

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We contact all victims on all cases before any decisions are made regarding issuing charges.

We ask for their input, what they want to see happen. What are their goals with this situation?

Find common ground with them when we can.

Promise them we will always be honest with them, even when it is not what they want to hear.

# Trauma Informed Approach

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Let them know we will continue to listen to their input, even if their opinions change.

Let them know we respect their opinion, even if we may not be able to do what they want us to. Sometimes just knowing that they have been heard goes a long way.

Tell them that we will always give them an update after every court appearance, and advise them of all future dates.

# Trauma Informed Approach

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Give them the opportunity to exercise choice when we can, to help re-establish their sense of power and control over their own lives.

Prepare them emotionally for testifying in court, by finding out what they need to help them get through the process.

Make sure we offer them advocate services as early as possible in the process.

# Trauma Informed Approach

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Understand that they may not trust authority figures or law enforcement.

Understand they may need transportation, assistance finding a shelter, child care.

Return calls as soon as possible, always within 24 hours, and when we have sufficient time.

Practice active listening and mirroring technique – again, a victim knowing they have been heard goes a long way.



# Trauma Informed Approach

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Ask how they are doing, if they are okay? Check in on them every now and then for just that reason.

Let them know we care about them, not just by our words, but by our actions.

Help them understand that the main goal is to ensure their safety, even if we disagree as to how to accomplish that – it is not about controlling them or breaking up their family.

# Trauma Informed Approach

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Understand although we may have dozens of cases in our lives at any given time, they only have this one.

When we talk to them, they should feel theirs is the only case on our mind.

# Trauma Informed Approach

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Imagine getting serious medical results from your doctor, and how you would want your doctor to talk to you – the information we give to our victims/clients can be that serious to them.





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