

## TRAUMA AMONG MULTIPLY MARGINALIZED YOUTH

### Topic

In this video, Lydia X. Z. Brown, explains how the lives of multiply marginalized youth “are always marked by trauma”. Lydia discusses the many types of trauma experienced by these youth on a regular basis such as ableism, racism, sexual abuse, bullying, police violence, as well as trauma from involvement in state systems that are charged with helping. Suggestions for supporting multiply marginalized youth are provided.

### Relevance of Topic to System-Involved Youth with Disabilities

Trauma is constant in the lives of multiply marginalized youth with disabilities. For example, young people with disabilities are three times more likely to experience physical abuse than youth without disabilities; and more than 90% of people with developmental disabilities will experience sexual assault in their lifetimes – a rate that is about seven times greater than for people without disabilities. Further, the likelihood of experiencing assault and other harms tends to be higher for people who are members of other marginalized groups based on race, class, gender identity, sexuality, or other characteristics.

State systems are often a source of the violence and trauma experienced by youth with disabilities and other marginalized identities. These systems, which exist to support and help youth, can cause trauma not only through physical harm such as when staff engage in assault, but also through the use of practices such as solitary confinement, and denial of basic needs. Further harm is done when systems don’t believe youth and/or view them as unable to participate in making decisions that affect their lives. These potential harms may be such a part of the culture and the way business is done, that they may not be readily evident to the employees working in these systems. Professionals who take the time to listen to youth and consider how the “typical” way of doing business may be traumatizing, can play an important role in genuinely helping young people to get the support they need.

### Recommendations for Creating Systems Change

- Give youth agency and autonomy.
- Ensure the needs and desires of the youth are at the center of the services and practices provided.
- Respectfully honor the *whole* person.
- Modify practices that contribute to discrimination, marginalization, and/or stigmatization, and promote trauma-informed practices that focus on creating safe spaces for all individuals.
- Believe, trust, and work in partnership with young people

### Learn More

[We Can’t Address Disability without Addressing Race](#)

[Race-Based Trauma among Emerging Adults](#)

[How Safe are Americans with Disabilities?](#)

[Crimes against People with Disabilities](#)

[Violence, Abuse and Bullying affecting People with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities](#)



[Providing Services and Support for LGBTQI2-S Youth](#)

[Well-being of Marginalized Young Adults](#)

## Presenter Information

**Lydia X. Z. Brown** is an advocate, attorney, and strategist whose work focuses on interpersonal and state violence against disabled people living at the intersections of race, class, gender, sexuality, nation, and language. They founded and direct the Fund for Community Reparations for Autistic People of Color's Interdependence, Survival, and Empowerment, and co-edited *All the Weight of Our Dreams: On Living Racialized Autism*. Lydia holds adjunct lecturer positions at Georgetown University and at American University. They serve on the American Bar Association's Commission on Disability Rights and chair the ABA's Civil Rights and Social Justice Section's Disability Rights Committee. To learn more about Lydia's work, go to [Laboring for Disability Justice & Liberation website](#)

