

SECONDARY TRAUMA AND SELF-CARE

Topic

In this video, Sue Badeau, the National Director of Training and Technical Assistance at Justice for Families (J4F), describes the risk that professionals face for experiencing secondary traumatic stress (STS) as a result of working with youth and families with trauma histories. Strategies and tools are provided to help organizations and professionals in the juvenile justice system prevent STS.

Relevance of Topic to System-Involved Youth

More than 80% of young people involved with the juvenile justice system have experienced trauma, and many have experienced multiple forms of trauma. Children and youth involved with multiple systems (e.g., the justice system, child welfare, mental/behavioral health and special education systems) are often exposed to multiple forms of trauma, and this can affect them in many areas of their life. Professionals working in this field, as well as parents and caregivers are at very high risk of experiencing Secondary Traumatic Stress (STS) and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Sometimes STS and PTSD are not diagnosed or treated properly, and this can lead to decreased job performance and satisfaction, burn-out, high levels of turnover and other adverse outcomes. Knowledge, skills, and resiliency-focused practices can improve professional and personal well-being can be improved, and job performance.

Relevance to Youth with Disabilities

There are large numbers of youth with disabilities who have experienced trauma. Sometimes youth with trauma histories respond to people and situations in ways that can be challenging for others supporting them who are unfamiliar with the impact of trauma. These trauma-induced behaviors add stress to the work environment. Professionals, parents, and caregivers working with youth with trauma histories are at risk for experiencing secondary Traumatic Stress (STS). Learning more about STS and trauma will reduce staff burnout and turnover, because staff and supervisors will be more aware of what is happening and can develop skills and get the support they need to stay well. When professionals and families have knowledge of trauma and strategies for reducing the risk of STS, this leads to increased opportunities for youth to heal, grow, and reenter their families, homes, and communities successfully

Recommendations for Creating Systems Change

- Provide staff and supervisors with training, tools and strategies for recognizing and addressing STS and building resilience for themselves and those they supervise.
- Utilize reflective supervision and supportive consultation models of supervision.
- Provide employees and families, parents and caregivers with opportunities for peer-to-peer support.
- Offer support groups and other activities (such as wellness, arts, and multi-sensory activities) for families and staff to increase self-care and build resilience.
- Offer resources for staff and families, parents and caregivers to receive therapy for unresolved personal trauma history.

Learn More

American Bar Association- [Secondary Traumatic Stress in Juvenile Court](#)



National Institutes of Health Journal Article- [Assessment for STS in Juvenile Justice Workers](#)

Juvenile Justice Information Exchange- [Resilience and Trauma-Informed Care](#)

The National Child Traumatic Stress Network Resources:

- [Creating Trauma-Informed Justice Systems](#)
- [Toolkit for Providers: Intersection of Trauma & Disability](#)
- [Trauma in Children with Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities](#)
- [STS Competencies for Supervisors](#)

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Menakem, Resmaa. *My Grandmothers Hands: Racialized Trauma and the Pathway to Mending our Hearts and Bodies*. Central Recovery Press; Illustrated edition (September 19, 2017)

Presenter Information

Sue Badeau is the National Director of Training and Technical Assistance at Justice for Families (J4F), a national organization committed to ending the youth incarceration epidemic. J4F is founded and run by parents and families who have experienced the juvenile justice system with their children. Sue writes and speaks to public & private agencies, prison systems, courts, parent groups and community groups. To learn more about Sue and J4F, go to

<https://www.justice4families.org/>

