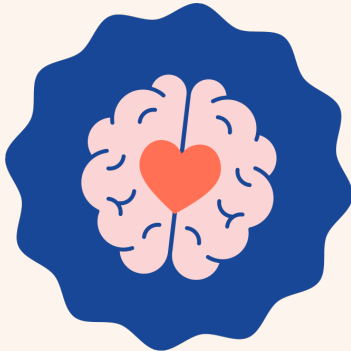


Be kind to
to your
mind

Managing Our Self To Be
Our Best Self



Presented by: Courtney Gibbs



Workshop Outcomes



03.

Develop Coping
Skills & Techniques

01. Understand
The Effects of Community
Violence

02. Understand
Trauma & Triggers

04.

Create a Self-
Wellness Plan

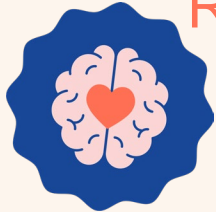
Icebreaker Activity





The “Why”

Research is a Journey



Throughout this YPAR process there may be times where the conversations become uncomfortable and uneasy, and may trigger past traumas.

Creating a Safe Space



We want to cultivate an inclusive and welcoming space where we feel comfortable sharing our feelings and receiving feedback.

The Cycle of Community Violence

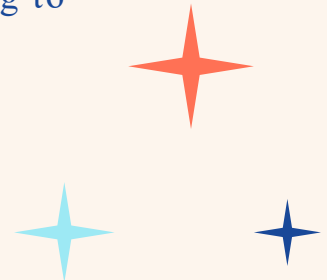


Exposure to Community Violence

Research shows that chronic exposure to community violence has been linked to adolescents antisocial behavior, including physical fights, gang involvement, delinquency and the use of weapons.

Constant exposure to community violence can create a pervasive sense of fear and anxiety, impacting an individual's sense of safety and security. This fear can persist even after the immediate threat has passed.

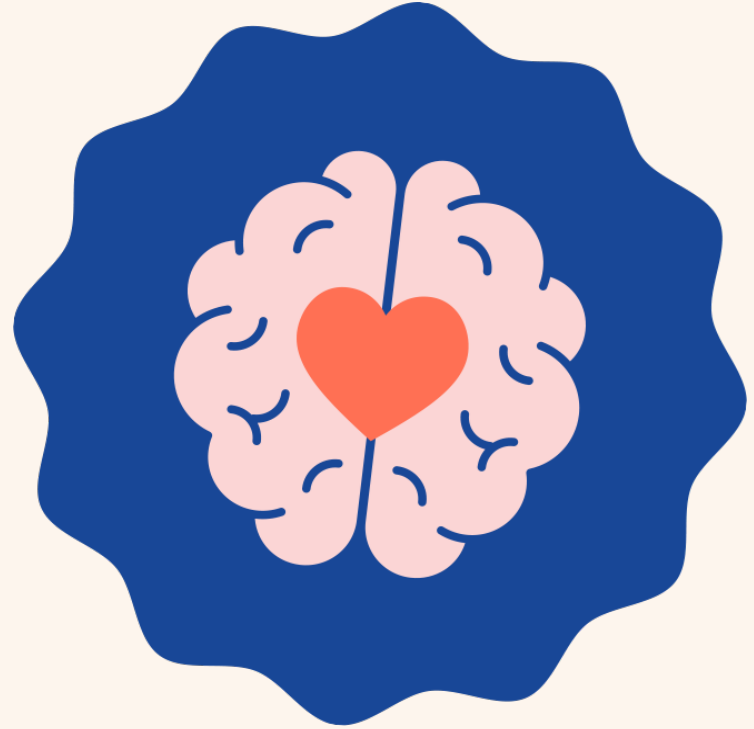
Exposure to community violence can have profound and lasting effects, leading to trauma in individuals and communities.



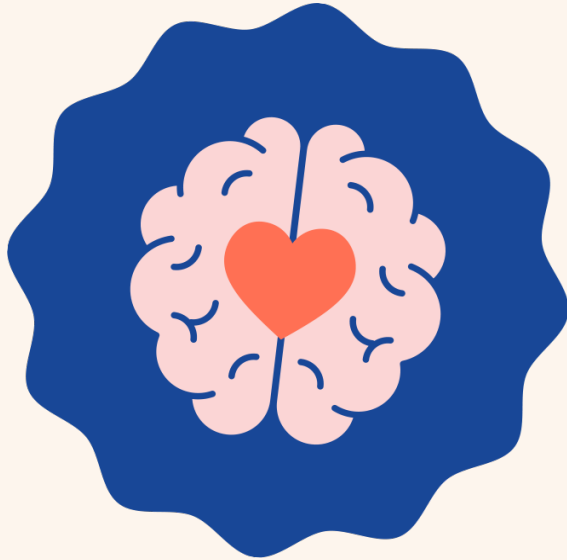
What is Trauma ?

Trauma refers to an emotional or psychological response to a distressing or disturbing event or series of events.

These events are typically perceived as physically or emotionally harmful or life-threatening, and they can overwhelm an individual's ability to cope.



The Types of Trauma



Single-event Trauma: Involving a one-time occurrence, such as accidents, natural disasters, or violent assaults.

Community Trauma: The trauma that affects social groups that have been long subjected to violence due to historic and ongoing social inequities, such as racism and oppression of power.

Developmental/Childhood Trauma: Occurring during critical periods of development in childhood, potentially impacting emotional, cognitive, and social functioning.

Silent Trauma: Silent traumas are the non-fatalities, the muggings, robberies, stabbings, and gang-related incidents that are 120 times more common than the loud traumas.

The Impact of Trauma

- Difficulty identifying, expressing, and managing emotions, and may have limited language for feeling states.
- Often internalize and/or externalize stress reactions and as a result may experience significant depression, anxiety, or anger.
- Witnessing a traumatic event that threatens life or physical security of a loved one can also be traumatic.
 - This is particularly important for young children as their sense of safety depends on the perceived safety of their attachment figures.

Common reactions to trauma can include: flashbacks, nightmares, hypervigilance, dissociation, and emotional numbing.

Understanding Trauma & The Impact on the Brain

Prefrontal Cortex: Responsible for functions like decision-making, impulse control, and emotion regulation, can be impacted by trauma. This can lead to difficulties in regulating emotions, maintaining focus, and making rational decisions.

Amygdala: A part of the brain involved in processing emotions and fear responses, becomes hyperactive in response to trauma. This heightened activity can lead to increased emotional arousal, hypervigilance, and an intensified fear response to triggers associated with the traumatic event.

Stress Response: Trauma triggers the body's stress response system, leading to an increase in stress hormones like cortisol and adrenaline. Prolonged exposure to high levels of stress hormones can have adverse effects on the brain's structure and function, affecting memory, mood regulation, and overall mental health.



Trauma & The Impact on the Brain

Fight-Flight-Freeze Response: The body's natural response to threat, trauma activates the sympathetic nervous system, preparing the body to fight, flee, or freeze. This response can cause physiological changes such as **increased heart rate, rapid breathing, heightened alertness, and muscle tension.**

Dissociation: In some cases, trauma can lead to dissociative responses, where individuals feel disconnected from themselves or their surroundings as a defense mechanism against overwhelming emotions or sensations.



Recognizing Your Triggers

Self-Reflection and Awareness: Notice when you feel intense emotions like fear, anxiety, anger, or sadness, and try to identify what might have triggered those feelings.

Emotional Responses: Notice your emotional responses when triggered. Do you feel sudden and overwhelming emotions without an apparent cause? Are there specific topics or discussions that consistently make you feel distressed or uneasy?

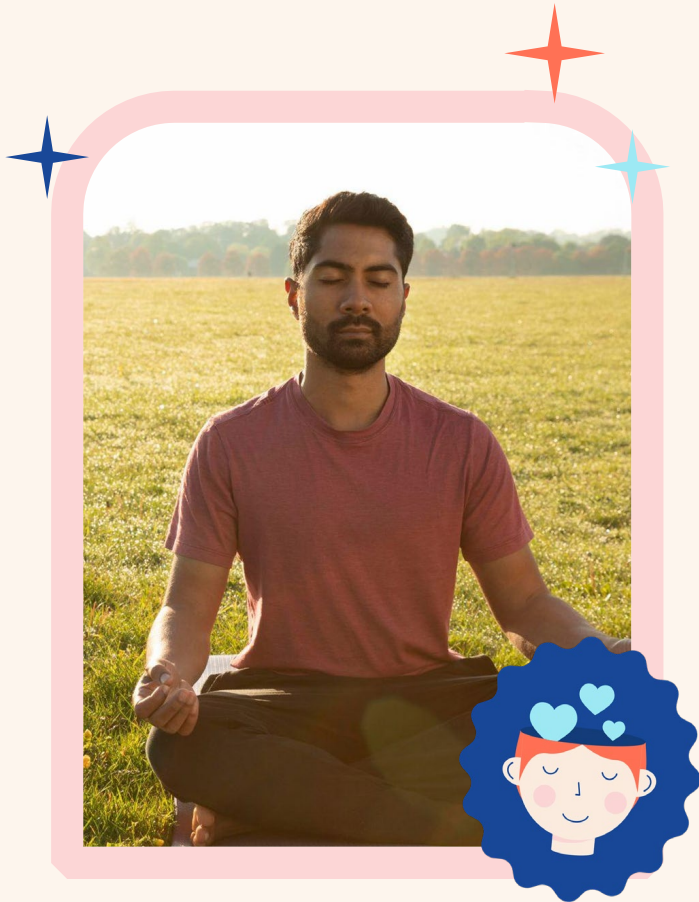
Physical Sensations: Pay attention to physical sensations that arise when you feel triggered. These may include increased heart rate, sweating, shallow breathing, muscle tension, or a sense of feeling detached or numb.

Addressing the Impact of T r a u m a

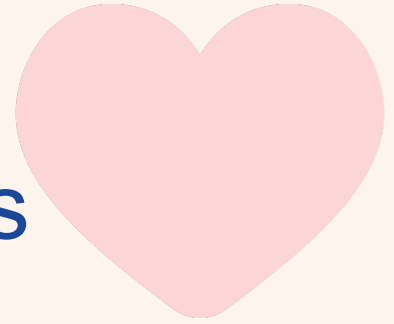
Trauma-Informed Support: Providing trauma-informed care and support services can help individuals and communities affected by community violence.

Community Programs and Resources: Implementing community programs that address violence prevention, conflict resolution, and trauma recovery can contribute to building resilience and fostering healing within communities.

Advocacy and Policy Changes: Advocating for policies that address the root causes of community violence, improve safety measures, and provide resources for violence prevention and trauma intervention can make a significant impact.



Developing Coping Skills



- **Awareness:** Recognizing stressors and understanding emotional reactions are essential for developing coping skills.
- **Practice:** Regularly practice coping techniques to make them more effective and accessible when needed.
- **Flexibility:** Have a range of coping skills allows individuals to adapt to different situations and stressors.



Examples of Coping Skills

Emotion - Focused Coping: These skills focus on managing and regulating emotions.

- **Examples:** Mindfulness and meditation, deep breathing exercises, journaling, engaging in hobbies or activities that bring joy, practicing gratitude and positive affirmations

Social Support: Seeking support from friends, family, or support groups can be a crucial coping skill. Examples include:

- **Examples:** Talking to trusted individuals about challenges, joining support groups or communities, participating in social activities



Examples of Coping Skills

Physical Coping Skills: Engaging in physical activities or practices that promote relaxation and well-being.

- **Examples:** Regular exercise or physical activity

Cognitive Coping Skills: These involve managing thoughts and perspectives related to stressors.

- **Examples include:** Cognitive restructuring (changing negative thought patterns), reframing situations in a more positive light, practicing self-compassion and self-acceptance

Seek Help: Know when to seek professional help from therapists, counselors, or mental health professionals when coping skills alone may not be sufficient.



Let's Practice !



★ Making Self-Wellness a Priority

Self-Care

Engaging in self-care is one of the most important steps in maintaining a strong sense of self and a high degree of mental well-being.



“I have come to believe that caring for myself is not self-indulgent. Caring for myself is an act of survival.”

— Audre Lorde



Prioritizing Self-Care and Your Mental Health

*

Control the controllables: Focus on what's in your control

Say "no" or "unplug" when you need to

Prioritize rest

Do things that bring you joy



Activity 1: Self-care journal



Instructions

1. Set a time for reflection.
2. Bring a notebook, put some calm music and prepare your favorite drink.
3. Answer these questions:

0 1.

What patterns do you notice (if any) from your responses?

0 2.

Is there anything general you think you can do to facilitate self-care?

0 3.

What steps can you take to prevent burnout in the future?



Activity 2: Self-care checkup



Instructions

Using the key provided below, rate how well, or how often, you think you perform each activity.

It's important to remember the list is not exhaustive - some activities may not appeal to you at all, or you may feel that others are missing.

If you think of ideas that you'd like to add to the list, use the spaces provided.

1	I rarely do this	I don't do this well
2	I sometimes do this	I'm average at doing this
3	I do this often	I do this very well
<input type="checkbox"/>	I'd like to do this more often	I'd like to become better at this



Activity 3: Self-care check-in



Self-care areas	Rating	What can I do to meet this need?
Quality time with family		
Time alone		
Friendships		
Relaxation and peace		
Emotional health		
Physical health		



Building a Wellness Plan



Let's Practice!



Feeling
Good!



✦ Activity 4:
R.A.I.N

R Recognize

A Accept

I Investigate

N Nurture



What emotion
are you
feeling?



Statement of
acceptance



Why do you
feel this way?



How can
you cope with?



Activity 5: Guided journal



1.

Two things in your life or the world around you that are changing

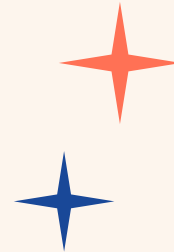
1. Write here...

2. Write here...

2.

One thing you're thinking about, but not quite ready to talk about yet

Write here...



Activity 6:

Exercise 5-4-3-2-1



5 things you can
See

1	
2	
3	
4	
5	



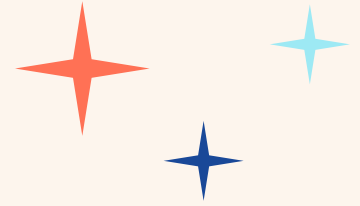
4 things you can
Hear

1	
2	
3	
4	



Activity 6:

Exercise 5-4-3-2-1



3 things you can
Feel

1

2

3

1 things you can
Taste

1

2 things you can
Smell

1

2



Route to mindfulness

Slow
down

Listen to
the stillness

Sink
in

Inquire

Feel the
harmony

See the
invisible

State of
mindfulness



Activity 8: Weekly self-care



Physical self-care	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
Happy skincare routine	♥						
Eat healthy meals							
Go for a walk outside							
Listen to your favorite music							
Read a good book							
Note and self reflection:	Write here...						



Activity 9: Mood tracker



Things that spark joy

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.



My mood this month

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

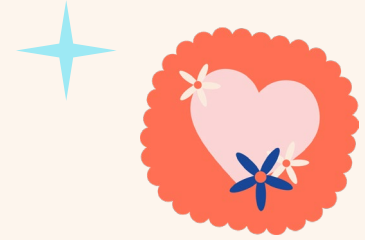
● Happy

● Upset

● Sad

● Confused

Activity 10: Self-care vision board



Instructions

This exercise involves creating a self-care vision board. A vision board is a visual representation of a particular concept using images, illustrations, and/or words.

Thus, a self-care vision board is a collection of images and words that reflect ideas for self-care. Self-care activities are those things we do to take care of our mental, emotional, and physical health. Follow the following four steps to create your self-care vision board



1. Brainstorm self-care activities




2. Collect images for your vision board



3. Collect words for your vision board



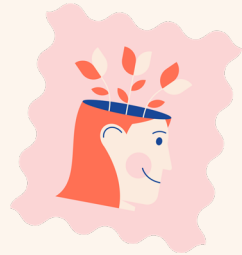
4. Put your vision board together



Activity 11: Positive talk

Instructions

Write in the balloons reasons why you are awesome:

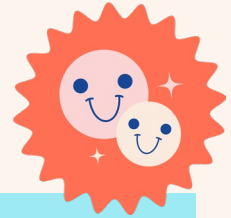


I am awesome
because...



Activity 12:

Yin / Yang self-compassion



Yin self-compassion		Yang self-compassion	
Aspect	Action	Aspect	Action
Comforting What can I do to take care of my emotional needs?		Protecting What can I do to stop others from harming me or to stop the harm I inflict on myself?	
Soothing What can I do to make myself feel physically calmer?		Providing What can I do to give myself what I need?	
Validating What can I say to myself to validate my own feelings?		Motivating How can I motivate myself with kindness and support rather than criticism?	





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Learn more about Safety 7 at https://www.childtrends.org/project/centering_youth_experiences_youth_participatory_action.