

# The Impact of Violence and Trauma: What the Task Force Should Know About Trauma Research and Clinical Services

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Dr. Alicia Boccellari  
*University of California, San Francisco*  
*Founder, Trauma Recovery Center*

# Key Questions

- What is trauma?
- What is the relationship among unaddressed trauma and the overlap between serious violent victimization and perpetration?
- What does research show can be done to help people heal/recover from trauma that is associated with serious violent victimization and long sentences?

# What is Trauma?

Trauma results from an event, series of events, or set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or life threatening and that may have lasting adverse effects on the individual's functioning and mental, physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being.

- SAMHSA

# Adverse Childhood Experiences Study: ACES

(CDC.gov)

- One of the largest investigations of **childhood abuse / neglect and household challenges and later-life health and well-being**
- Conducted at Kaiser Permanente from 1995 to 1997 with two waves of data collection
- Over 17,000 HMO members from Southern California receiving physical exams completed confidential surveys regarding their **childhood experiences and current health status and behaviors**

# Adverse Childhood Experiences are Common

<b>Household Challenges</b>	
Substance abuse	27%
Parental separation / divorce	23%
Mental Illness in household	17%
Mother treated violently	13%
Incarcerated household member	6%

<b>Abuse</b>	
Physical	28%
Sexual	21%
Psychological	11%
<b>Neglect</b>	
Emotional	15%
Physical	10%

# Adverse Childhood Experiences Score

Number of categories (not events) is summed...

Ace Score	Prevalence
0	36%
1	26%
2	16%
3	10%
4 or more	13%

# *ACE's: Childhood Experiences Affect health later in life...*

## **Adverse behaviors:**

- Alcoholism and alcohol abuse
- Illicit drug use
- Smoking
- Early initiation of smoking
- Early initiation of sexual activity
- Multiple sexual partners

## **Reproductive outcomes:**

- Unintended pregnancies
- Adolescent pregnancy

## **Future violence:**

- Risk for intimate partner violence

## **Adverse health outcomes:**

- Depression
- Suicide attempts
- Fetal death
- Sexually transmitted diseases (STDs)
- Health-related quality of life
- Obesity
- Ischemic heart disease (IHD)
- Liver disease
- Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)

## **Adverse social outcomes:**

- Homelessness

# Trauma Research Findings

- Childhood trauma is believed to have long term impact in the frontal, temporal, and parietal regions of the brain, and how information is processed (Cook et al, 2009)
- Being abused or neglected as a child increases the likelihood of arrest as a juvenile by 59% (Widom, 1995)
- Arrest rates of trauma-exposed youth are up to 8 times higher than community samples of same-age peers (Saigh et al, 1999; Saltzman et al, 2001)

# Trauma, Victimization, Violence, & Criminal Justice Involvement

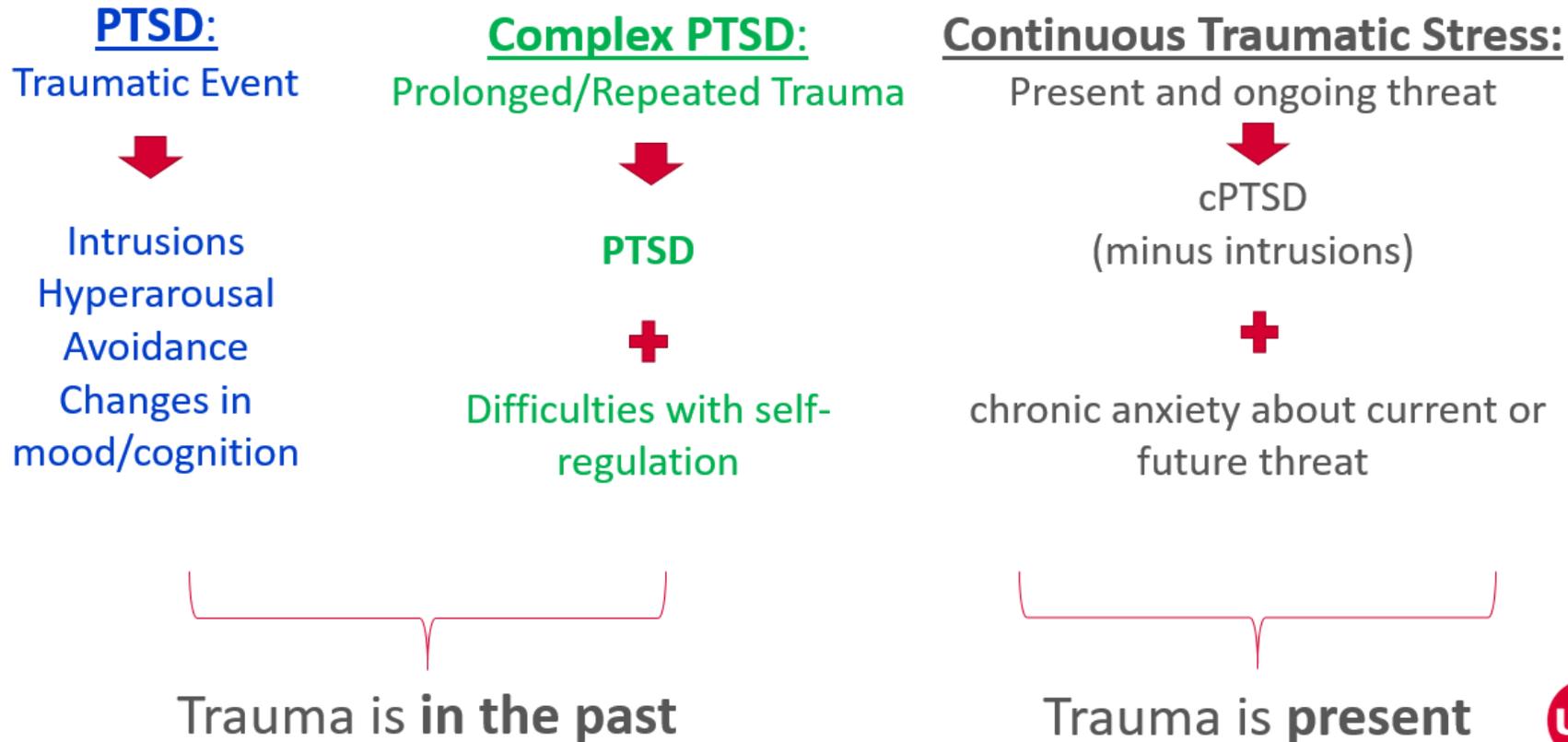
**People with 4 ACEs compared to People with 0 ACEs were:**

- 14x more likely to be a victim of violence in the last year
- 15x more likely to be a perpetrator of violence in the last year
- 20x more likely to have been incarcerated in their lives

# Complex PTSD Symptom Clusters

<p><b>Problems with affect regulation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Anger</li><li>• Fear</li><li>• Shame</li><li>• Sadness/depression</li><li>• Disgust/revulsion</li></ul> <p><b>Problems with safety and impulse control</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Suicidality</li><li>• Self-injurious behavior</li><li>• Danger to others</li><li>• Alcohol and substance abuse</li><li>• Eating disorders</li><li>• High-risk behaviors</li><li>• Criminal behavior</li></ul> <p>Loewenstein et al, 2014</p>	<p><b>Problems with attention and state stability/dissociation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Depersonalization/derealization</li><li>• Dissociative amnesia</li><li>• Spontaneous trance</li></ul> <p><b>Problems with identity and self-perception</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identity confusion</li><li>• Unstable self-image/sense of self</li><li>• Body image problems</li><li>• Dissociative identity disorder</li></ul> <p><b>Problems with body image/somatization</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Eating disorders</li><li>• Somatic symptom disorders</li><li>• Nonepileptic seizures: other conversion disorder symptoms, somatic symptom disorder</li><li>• Medical neglect</li></ul>	<p><b>Problems with systems of meaning</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The self is seen as irreparably damaged, bad, shameful, and blameworthy</li><li>• Pervasive mistrust of others</li><li>• Belief in responsibility for events one cannot control</li><li>• Intense focus on control</li><li>• The world is seen as completely dangerous and untrustworthy</li><li>• Taking the perspective of the abuser/rationalization of perpetrator behavior</li></ul> <p><b>Problems with relationships and attachments</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Insecure or disorganized attachments</li><li>• Pervasive mistrust of others</li><li>• Problems with stable attachments</li><li>• Problems with intimacy</li><li>• Attachment to/enmeshment with perpetrators</li><li>• Repeated unsafe or violent relationships</li></ul>
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# PTSD v cPTSD v CTS



# Research from 6 States

- Only **20% of crime survivors** were aware of victim's restitution funds
- Only **4% of survivors' needs** were addressed by the current victim services system
- Ethnic and racial minorities had the highest number of unmet needs.

# Vanessa - What Happened?

- 50-year-old African American woman
- Mother of 4, grandmother of 6
- Works full time as a security guard, and a part-time hair stylist
- Drive by shooting:
  - Vanessa's 31-year-old daughter was killed
  - 18-year-old son and 3-year-old grandson seriously injured

# Vanessa - What Happened?

Additionally:

- Vanessa's son-in-law had died 6 months earlier
- Vanessa needs to quit her jobs to care for her expanded family of 3 children and 6 grandchildren

# Vanessa – The Aftermath of Violence

- Flashbacks, nightmares, insomnia
- Panic attacks, fainting spells
- Fear of driving her car
- Loss of 35 lbs.
- Increase in High Blood Pressure, worsening of Diabetes
- Afraid to have her children/grandchildren leave the house
- Dealing with her “overwhelming” grief as well as needing to be “strong” for her family as her children/grandchildren grieved
- Suicidal ideation but a commitment to live for her children/grandchildren

# Pillars of trauma-informed care

Emphasis on assertive outreach and engaging survivors into services

Clinical case management to address all basic needs (medical, financial, housing, legal, etc.)

Evidence-based psychotherapy to target symptoms of psychiatric distress and increase interpersonal safety

Culturally responsive services

Integrate mental health, medical, social services

Coordinate care across complex systems: medical, mental health, social services, law enforcement and criminal justice

## Promising Outcomes:

# Results from Trauma Recovery Center (TRC) Evaluation

- Increased the rate of sexual assault survivors receiving **mental health follow-up from 6% to 71%**
- Improvement in health and functioning
  - 74% show an improvement in mental health
  - 51% show an improvement in physical health
  - 52% show a decrease in alcohol use
- Increased access to mental health services **72% TRC vs 38% usual care**
- Increased cooperation with police – **69% increase** in police reports filed
- Cost comparisons
  - TRC services significantly more cost-effective than usual care **\$66.81 per unit of TRC services vs \$101.84 per unit FFS providers.**
  - The TRC model **cost 34% less** than usual care.

# Vanessa - Interventions

- Home visits by TRC
- Mental health services for Vanessa (trauma-focused therapy, support group, medication, grounding techniques)
- Mental health services for her children & grandchildren
- Help in returning her children/grandchildren to school
- Connection to childcare assistance
- Assistance with meals
- Filed VCP application
- Filed State Disability

# Vanessa - Interventions

- Obtained Medi-Cal for the family
- Connection to primary care
- Section 8 housing
- Legal advocacy with SF Police & DA
- Donation of SUV - *Car impounded as evidence*
- Fund raising for family-donation of clothes, gifts for children/grandchildren
- Legal help to get custody of all the grandchildren
- Reconnection to her church

# Vanessa – 1 year later

- Decrease in flashbacks, nightmares, improved sleep. No panic attacks.
- Able to leave house, drive her car
- Better managing high blood pressure & diabetes
- TRC helped move family to new housing outside of SF
- Safe community, big back yard, children can walk to school
- Vanessa has returned to work as a hair stylist
- Perpetrators never arrested

*“I can function again. I went to TRC crying out for help, and their doors were open. They helped me find the strength to go on.”*

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