

Safe Places, Thriving Children: Embedding Trauma-Informed Practices into Alternative Care Settings

Mr Lubos Tibensky

Programme Advisor, Content Leader for MHPSS International Office CEE/CIS/Middle East SOS Children's Villages International

Latvia, 2022



00 000 0000





SOS Children's Villages



Our vision

Every child belongs to a family and grows up with love, respect and security.

Our mission

We build families for children in need, we help them shape their own futures, and we share in the development of their communities.

We work in 136 countries and territories around the world







Project: Safe Places, Thriving Children:

Embedding Trauma-Informed Practices into Alternative Care Settings



Project coordinator

SOS Children's Villages International

Project partners

- SOS Children's Villages Belgium
- SOS Children's Villages Bulgaria
- SOS Children's Villages Croatia
- SOS Children's Villages Greece
- SOS Children's Villages Hungary
- SOS Children's Villages Serbia
- Centre for Excellence for Children's Care and Protection (CELCIS)

Time frame

March 2020 – July 2022

Funding

The project is co-funded by the Rights,

Equality and Citizenship (REC)

Programme of the European Union and

SOS Children's Villages.









Content



- Reflection activity.
- Introduction to methodology behind the project.
- Three lines of intervention.
- Key messages from young people with care experience.
- Policy recommendations.











Choose one of these symbols

















Each symbol represents a specific person



8 years old child living in alternative care.



10 years old child living in a safe family.



15 years old gay Roma teenager.



41 years old professional who works in alternative care.











Answer from the perspective of the person you have chosen

Put one finger down if...

you feel safe when you go to bed.

you have a person to support you.

you can buy whatever you want.

you don't have to worry about the next day.

you have a warm meal prepared for you.











How many fingers do you still have left?



8 years old child living in alternative care.



10 years old child living in a safe family.



15 years old gay Roma teenager.



41 years old professional who works in alternative care.







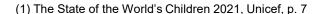


Mental health



Mental health is widely stigmatized and misunderstood: It is, in fact, a positive state of well-being and a foundation that allows children and young people to build their futures. (1)











Why do we need trauma-informed practices?



Children and young people that lost parental care are more likely to experience Adverse Childhood Experiences than their peers.



Jaritz et al., 2008; Anthony et al. 2019 Bellis et al., 2019







Definition of complex trauma



- Is usually interpersonal i.e. occurs between people.
- Involves 'being or feeling' trapped.
- Is often planned, extreme, ongoing and/or repeated.
- Often has more severe, persistent and cumulative impacts.
- Involves challenges with shame, trust, self-esteem, identity and regulating emotions.
- Has different coping strategies. These may include alcohol and drug use, self-harm etc.
- Affects emotional and physical health, wellbeing, relationships and daily functioning.







Key findings from scoping



"A traumatised child is extra vulnerable. Understand this." (Quote from young person, scoping exercise, 2020)

"This topic seems to be avoided by social workers. It seemed irrelevant to them, even though as a young person this is always haunting you."

(Quote from young person, scoping exercise, 2020)

"In my training, I was never told how childhood trauma has an impact on the child's development and adult life."

(Quote from professional, scoping exercise, 2020)









What are trauma-informed practices?



Trauma-informed practices incorporate 3 key elements:

Acknowledgement of the prevalence and impact of trauma on lives of people and understanding potential paths for healing.

Recognizing how trauma affects all clients, staff and others involved with the program, organization, or system.

Responding by integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, practice, and settings.

(SAMHSA, 2012)







Principles of trauma-informed practices



- Trauma recovery is only possible within consistent caring relationships.
- 2. Trauma needs to be understood from a **child developmental** and **ecological perspective**.
- 3. The trauma recovery journey should be a partnership.
- 4. Trauma-informed practices are grounded in **children's rights**.
- 5. The **understanding** of children's trauma needs to be reframed from a "deficit" model to an "adaptive" model.

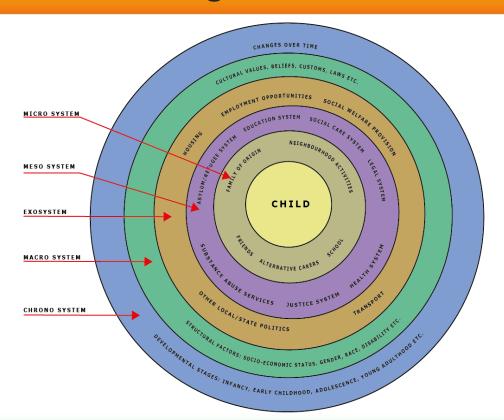






Bronfenbrenner's ecological model













Three lines of intervention

An efficient way to embed traumainformed practices into alternative care settings and organisations









Project objective



To embed a trauma-informed care approach into child protection services, so as to better support children and young people affected by ACEs, and thereby increasing their chances to develop to their fullest potential.

How we achieve this:

Face-to-face trainings

Online awareness- raising modules

Organisational Development workshops

Policy recommendations

Participation of young adults with alternative care experience







Key project outputs



Practice Guidance



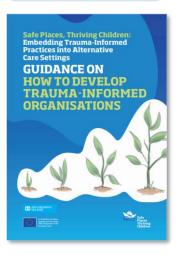
Training Manual



E-learning modules



Organisational Development



A Culturally Sensitive Approach



Available on https://www.sos-childrensvillages.org/trauma-informed-practices in English, Bulgarian, Croatian, Dutch, French, Greek, Hungarian and Serbian.







E-learning modules



The topics for the modules are:

adverse experiences and trauma can affect care-experienced children and young people (core module)

Working with families who have been affected by trauma

Children and young people with disability and mental ill health affected by trauma



2

Understanding the ways that

3

4

5

6

Understanding the meaning of trauma and trauma-informed practices for children and young people in alternative care (core module)

Supporting care-experienced children and young people who have been affected by trauma

Supporting unaccompanied and separated refugee and migrant children







National trainings



Methodology:

- Adult learning principles
- Participation of young adults with care experience as co-trainers

Block 1

Day 1:

Understanding trauma and Adverse Childhood Experiences

Day 2:

Understanding our human trauma response

Day 3:

Complex trauma and the impact on children's development

Block 2

Day 4:

Skills for understanding

Day 5:

Being trauma-informed: Helping a child who is hurting

Day 6:

The impact of trauma on those that work with children, and developing trauma-informed organisations









Values of a trauma-informed organisational culture



- Safety
- Trustworthiness
- Choice
- Collaboration
- Empowerment

Adapted from M. Harris and R. Fallot







Key messages from young people



All homes should feel like home.

It is important to teach me how to love in a correct and safe way. What is love?
System don't hurt
me no more.

- We are not problematic, we are adapting.
- Our behaviour is a normal reaction to an abnormal experience.
- We need help, not punishment.
- The greatest work results should come from your heart, not from your salary.
- Alternative care is not just a place to live; it should also be a place of mental growth.
- Look behind me and make an effort to find me my story could be yours.









Key messages from young people



Safe Places, Thriving Children - Key messages from Young People









Policy recommendations



RECOMMENDATION 1

Acknowledge the impact trauma has on children by integrating trauma-informed practices into the provision of alternative care, to enable children to build caring and stable relationships with the adults that work with and for them, thereby ensuring children live in an environment that gives them the best chance to develop to their strongest selves.

RECOMMENDATION 3

A trauma-sensitive and motivated workforce that knows how to protect and care for children's mental health, and is supported to do so.

RECOMMENDATION 2

The realisation of the right to mental health for all children and young people in alternative care - child protection services have the duty to uphold this right.

RECOMMENDATION 4

Systematic and meaningful child and youth participation to tailor the care offered to the real and individual needs of each child.









For more information:

https://www.sos-childrensvillages.org/trauma-informed-practices

Thank you!









