

Module 1, Appendix B

Scenarios for Small Group Exercises: Trauma-Informed Responses

Facilitator's Note: Print enough copies of the scenarios you choose for everyone in your class. If you are going to use all of the scenarios, print out and then cut them so that you can give one scenario to each small group.

Adult Women's Prison

You work in a medium-security unit. Jessie, a 19-year-old female inmate, approaches you and tells you she needs to go to medical. She has fresh cuts and bruises on her face. You ask Jessie what happened and she says that she fell. An older inmate enters the area and glares at Jessie. Jessie says, "never mind," and starts to walk away.

What are some examples of a trauma-informed response?

Youth Facility

You work in a 24-bed unit of a large youth facility. Last week, a former resident called the administration and said that he had been sexually abused by a staff member when he was there last year. He said he didn't feel safe reporting while he was there. You are tasked with reviewing the reporting mechanisms at the facility. There is a grievance box — a locked box that is checked every other day by a residents' rights officer. The box is on the wall outside the staff office. The telephone system is such that staff must dial an outside line from the staff office and transfer the call to a resident phone once it goes through. To send out mail, residents hand the letter to staff along with a payment of tokens they earn in the program. Certain letters are free — such as to primary family and attorneys, but still have to be stamped and mailed out by staff.

What are some examples of a trauma-informed solution?

Adult Men's Facility

You work in a large state prison as a Unit Sergeant. An inmate asks to speak to you and tells you that an inmate in his dorm raped him last night. You just received PREA training and know that you are supposed to inform the Officer in Charge about any reports of sexual abuse immediately. The Officer in Charge tells you that she is in the middle of a meeting with the Warden and will be there as soon as possible, but advises that in the meantime, you should pull in the victim and alleged abuser until she and an investigator can get there. You instruct an officer to arrest the alleged abuser and bring him to the holding cell area. Standard procedure for any incident is to place all involved parties in a holding cell until the investigation begins. There are two holding cell areas. One of them is being used today as a testing room for GED students, leaving only one area with available holding cells.

What are some trauma-informed options?

Adult Lockup

You are an officer at a police lockup and you are on transportation duty. You are charged with transporting a detainee to the county hospital sexual assault forensic exam site. You used to be a patrol deputy and you've taken rape victims here before. You know that, in your state, sexual abuse victims have a right to see an advocate. You call the rape crisis center before you leave to let them know you are coming. You remember that the advocate usually talks to the victim before the exam and they use a room that has an external window, no internal windows, and is adjacent to an outside corridor.

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What might be some ways to meet the crisis intervention needs and legal rights of the survivor to meet privately with a rape crisis counselor?

Community Confinement Facility

You are the day shift supervisor at a community confinement facility. There are twenty beds and ten sleeping rooms. For the past few days, the night shift staff member has noted that a young, male resident has left his room and been found sleeping on the couch in the day room. Each night, the night shift staff member has found him when he checked the day room on rounds, awakened him, and sent him back to his room. The young man complained, but he went. The night shift staff has now written him up for being out of his room after lights out three times in a week. This young man has a very strict parole officer who insists on knowing when one of his charges is written up more than two times.

What might be going on and what could you do?

Adult Jail

You are an intake staff at a county jail. During an intake interview with a woman who was transferred from the city jail, she tells you that she was raped at the city jail by a male trustee. She tells you that she did not report it and she does not want you to call the police or tell the staff at the jail because her experiences with them have always been bad. She goes on to tell you that she was raped as a teenager and, when she reported it, the city police detective didn't believe her and interrogated her about being a gang member because she described the two rapists as both wearing red baseball caps and bandanas.

How do you proceed? What is a trauma-informed response?

Youthful Offender in an Adult Facility

You are an investigator in an adult prison. You have completed an investigation of staff sexual misconduct against a 17-year-old boy who is housed in the prison. You began the investigation and turned it over to internal affairs. While cooperative with the investigation, the youth has been belligerent and difficult to talk to from the beginning — clearly seeing all staff and anyone in a uniform as an enemy. The District Attorney has just informed you that she will not file charges and is closing the case.

What arrangements can you make to tell the victim? What do the PREA standards say? What is a victim-centered response?