

TRAUMA INFORMED CARE

SUPPORT HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

WHY IT MATTERS

Trauma is a part of life. Heartache, loss, pain and broken relationships are just some of the experiences we might share; and the communities we serve are no different. While HFK does not specialize in Trauma Informed Care, we recognize that each culture, story, and place has its own personal and system-level experiences of healing and oppression. It is our intention to be a part of the healing journey in our own lives and in those we serve. We would like you to be aware that challenging situations may arise when you serve, and we hope to share some tools to build healthy relationships. We ask that you keep in mind that a child's behavior may be a result of them learning to survive trauma, and that's a strength!

TOOLS FOR ENGAGEMENT

- Spend time asking, listening, and engaging with house parents, teachers, and staff.
 - "How can we partner with you this week to further the consistency to help the kiddos grow and heal where they are at individually?"
 - Discuss and brainstorm with the team ways you can collectively participate in that partnership during the week.
- Consider that a child's behavior is not only a reaction but a way to cope with the past.
- In order to keep consistency in care, when "difficult behaviors" arise, find an adult from your service site who can step in and talk with the child(ren).
- If you check-in with a child, give some physical space and meet them at their eye-level. Ask "what happened?" rather than "what's wrong?"
- When acknowledging the children, avoid being outcome-oriented. Instead encourage and celebrate their efforts, presence, participation, and/or emotions!
- Encourage Spanish speakers to help connect with kids playing outside the group.
- Remember that children might not participate in certain activities for a variety of reasons. Be flexible and ask them what other activities they would like to do.
- When a team member opens up about their own trauma, thank them for their bravery and acknowledge that that trauma is painful and hard. Normalize that we all have our own unique stories of hardship. Check in with your team member by asking "how can we support you right now?"

REFLECTION

- Consider what hardship(s) and trauma(s) you are carrying with you as you serve.
- Think of ways to take care of yourself as you care for others.
- Have kindness toward yourself and others if you get activated or triggered during your service experience.

Questions? Email us at: info@hereforkids.org.

