



2023 CONFERENCE ON ENDING HOMELESSNESS

BEST THEORETICAL PRACTICES
FOR SERVING AND CONNECTING
WITH INDIVIDUALS EXPERIENCING
HOMELESSNESS

**DOWNTOWN
AUSTIN
COMMUNITY
COURT**

**JENNIFER
SOWINSKI**

LCSW-S

**KATHARINE
BALLEW**

LCSW



DOWNTOWN AUSTIN COMMUNITY COURT



Rehabilitative court established in 1999

- Eighth Community Court established in the United States
- First Community Court established in Texas

Primarily a social service organization for homelessness

- Intensive and compassionate wrap around services
- Individuals served have tri-occurring issues:
 - Physical health
 - Mental health
 - Substance use

Critical Safety Net



INTRODUCTION TO DACC



https://youtu.be/CO61x2R_3kU

HOMELESS SERVICES



**Intensive
Case
Management**

**Walk-In Case
Management**

**Outreach &
Engagement**

**Clinical
Diversion
Program**

CASE MANAGEMENT





CASE MANAGEMENT

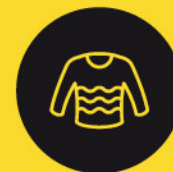
Services



Phone Number & Mailing Address



Counseling



Emergency Hygiene Products & Clothing



Incentives

- Bus passes, gift cards (CM clients)



ID Documents



Legal System Navigation



Detox



30-60-90 Day Substance Use Residential Treatment



Peer Support Specialists



CASE MANAGEMENT

Services



Housing Programs

- PSH, RRH, Bridge, and Transitional



Assisting with All Navigation from Homelessness to Stable Housing



Increasing Client Income

- SOAR (SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access,
& Recovery)
- Supportive employment



Crisis Intervention



Family Reunification



Transportation



CASE MANAGEMENT

DACC has assisted in helping connect 525+ clients to housing since 2015 through Intensive Case Management.

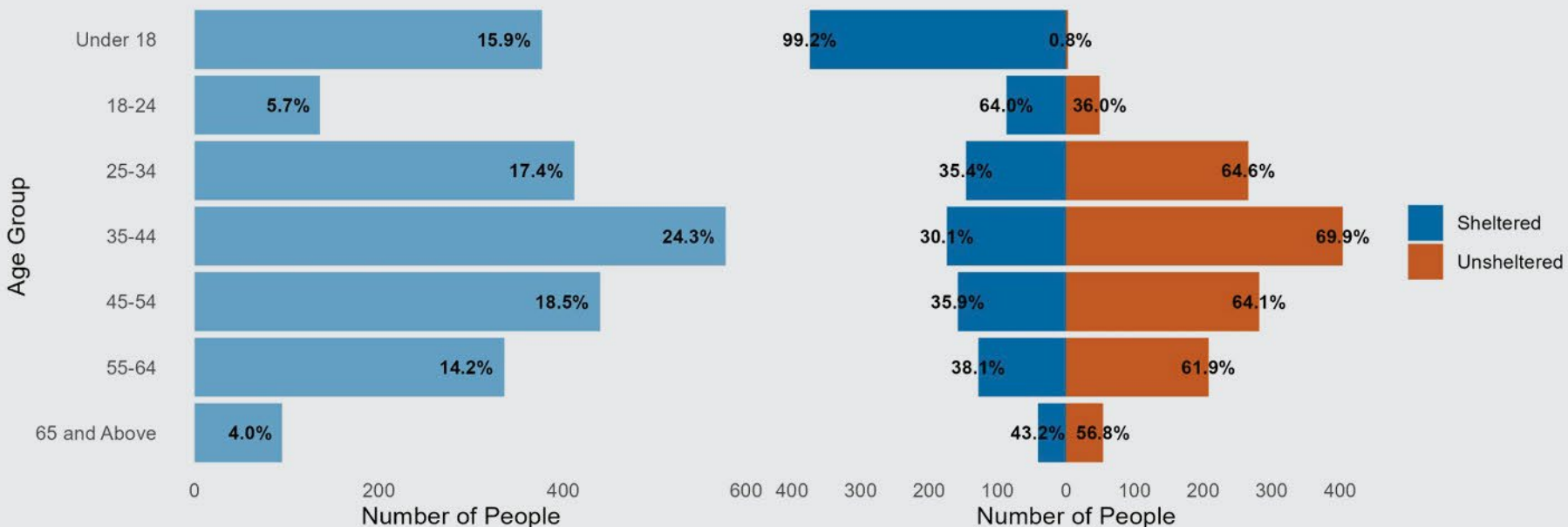
525+
CLIENTS



HOMELESSNESS IN AUSTIN/TRAVIS COUNTY

Age Distribution, Point in Time Count 2023

Age Distribution, Point in Time Count 2023



Total: 2,374

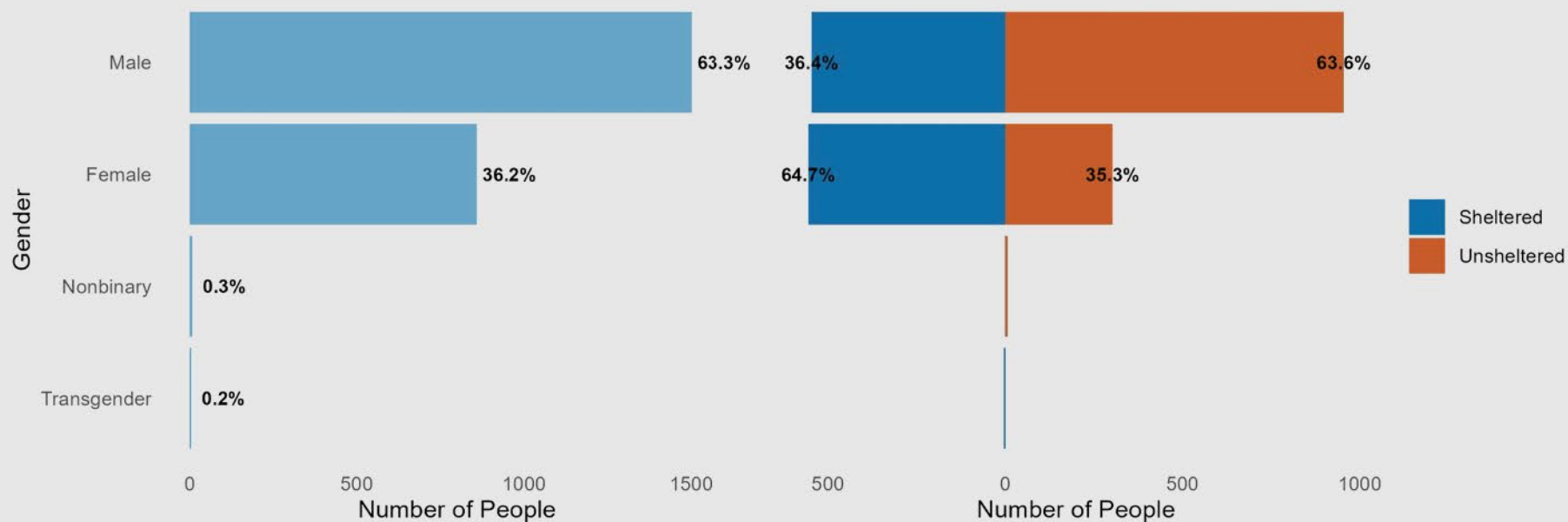
2023 Austin/Travis County Point in Time count total: 2,374 individuals



HOMELESSNESS IN AUSTIN/TRAVIS COUNTY

Gender Distribution, Point in Time Count 2023

Gender Distribution, Point in Time Count 2023



Total: 2,374

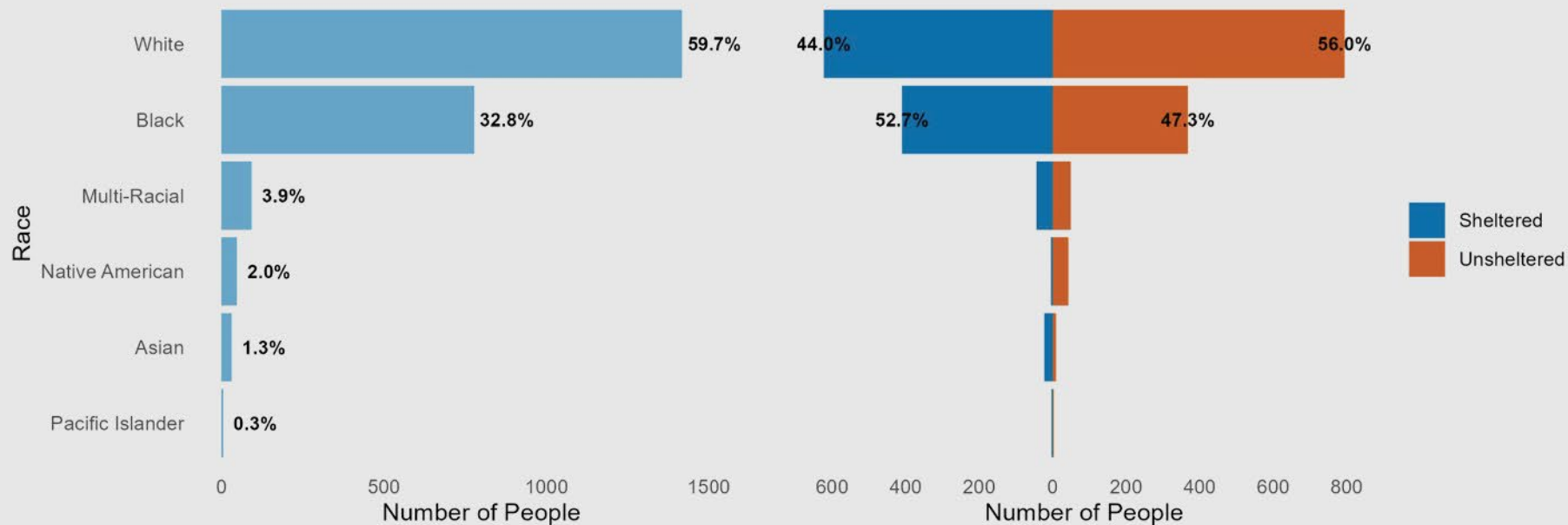
2023 Austin/Travis County Point in Time count total: 2,374 individuals



HOMELESSNESS IN AUSTIN/TRAVIS COUNTY

Racial Distribution, Point in Time Count 2023

Racial Distribution, Point in Time Count 2023



Total: 2,374

2023 Austin/Travis County Point in Time count total: 2,374 individuals



WHO WE SERVE

- **Mental health**
- **Substance use**
- **Medical issues**
- **Traumatic brain injury (TBI)**
- **Intellectual/developmental disability (IDD)**
- **Foster care**
- **Trauma**



HOMELESSNESS IS A HOUSING PROBLEM

Median gross rent versus PIT count (per capita)

Dashed lines indicate a linear regression of per capita PIT counts onto median gross rent between 2007 and 2019 for a sample of U.S. regions.



Bands indicate 95% confidence intervals for the slope of the regression line. Figure forthcoming in Colburn & Aldern (2022).



HOMELESSNESS & MENTAL HEALTH

Mental Health

- Nationally, over half of adults in PSH had a mental disorder (2015).
- 51%-59% of households experiencing homelessness in Austin reported a disabling mental health condition.

Poor mental health
can make it harder
to cope with
housing problems

Housing problems or
homelessness can
make your mental
health worse



HOMELESSNESS & SUBSTANCE USE

Substance Use

- ECHO's 2022 Needs and Gaps report found that 22%-36% of households reported a disabling substance use condition.
- Can be a coping mechanism for dealing with trauma and/or mental/physical health symptoms



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jj4maao-9XI>



HOMELESSNESS & MEDICAL ISSUES

Top Homeless Health Issues

Medical issues

ECHO's 2022 Needs and Gaps report found that 35-44% of households reported a disabling chronic health condition.



Premature Death



Chronic Diseases



Accidental Injuries



Hunger & Nutrition



Mental Health



Permanent Disability



Chronic Illness



Infectious Diseases



Chronic Pain



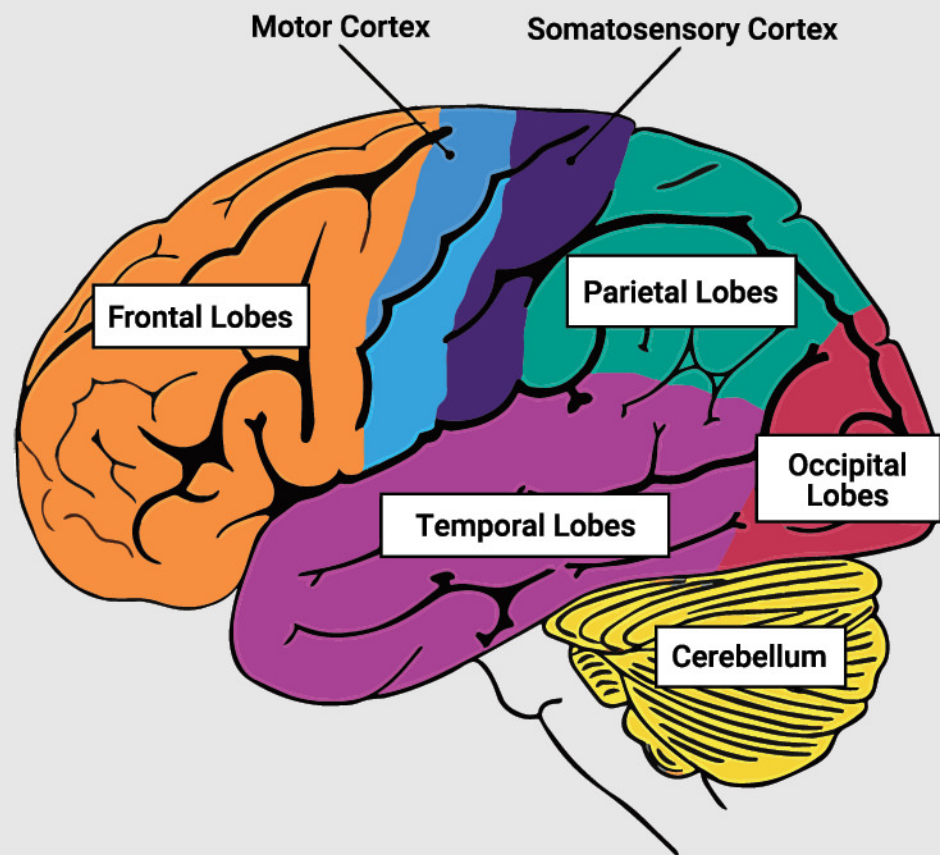
HOMELESSNESS & BRAIN DISORDERS

Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)

- High rates of TBI among people experiencing homelessness; most occurred before the onset of homelessness

Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD)

- ECHO's 2022 Needs and Gaps report found that 13%-19% of households reported a disabling developmental condition.

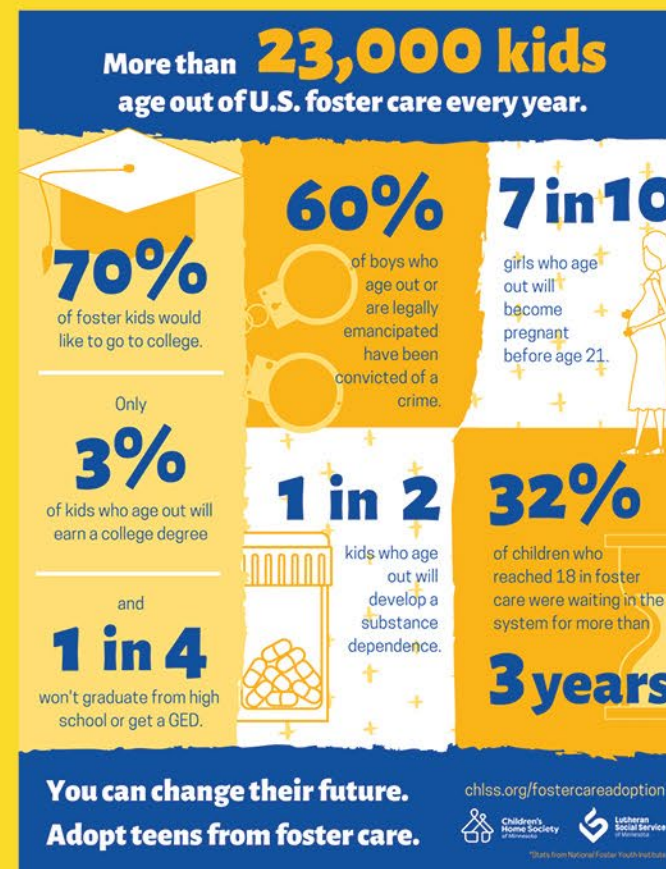




HOMELESSNESS & FOSTER CARE

The child welfare system is sometimes described as a highway to homelessness.

- According to the National Foster Youth Institute
 - An estimated 20 percent of young adults who are in care become homeless the moment they're emancipated at the age of 18
 - Nationwide, 50% of the homeless population spent time in foster care.



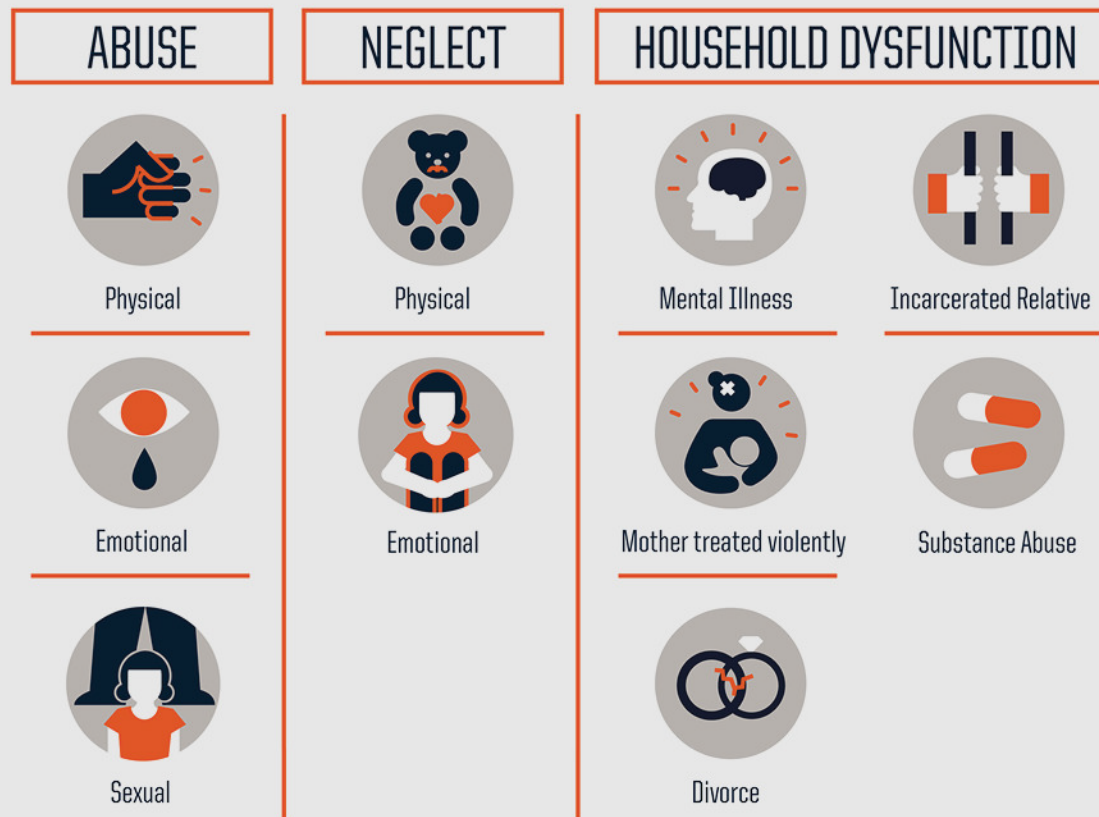


HOMELESSNESS & FOSTER CARE

ACES- a scale to measure negative early life experiences.

- Studies have found the higher the ACE score, the greater the risk of experiencing risky health behaviors, chronic health conditions, low quality of life potential, and early death

Overall, 68 percent of men and 76 percent of women experiencing homelessness and in substance use treatment reported experiencing a trauma-related event.





HOMELESSNESS & FOSTER CARE

Trust

Empowerment

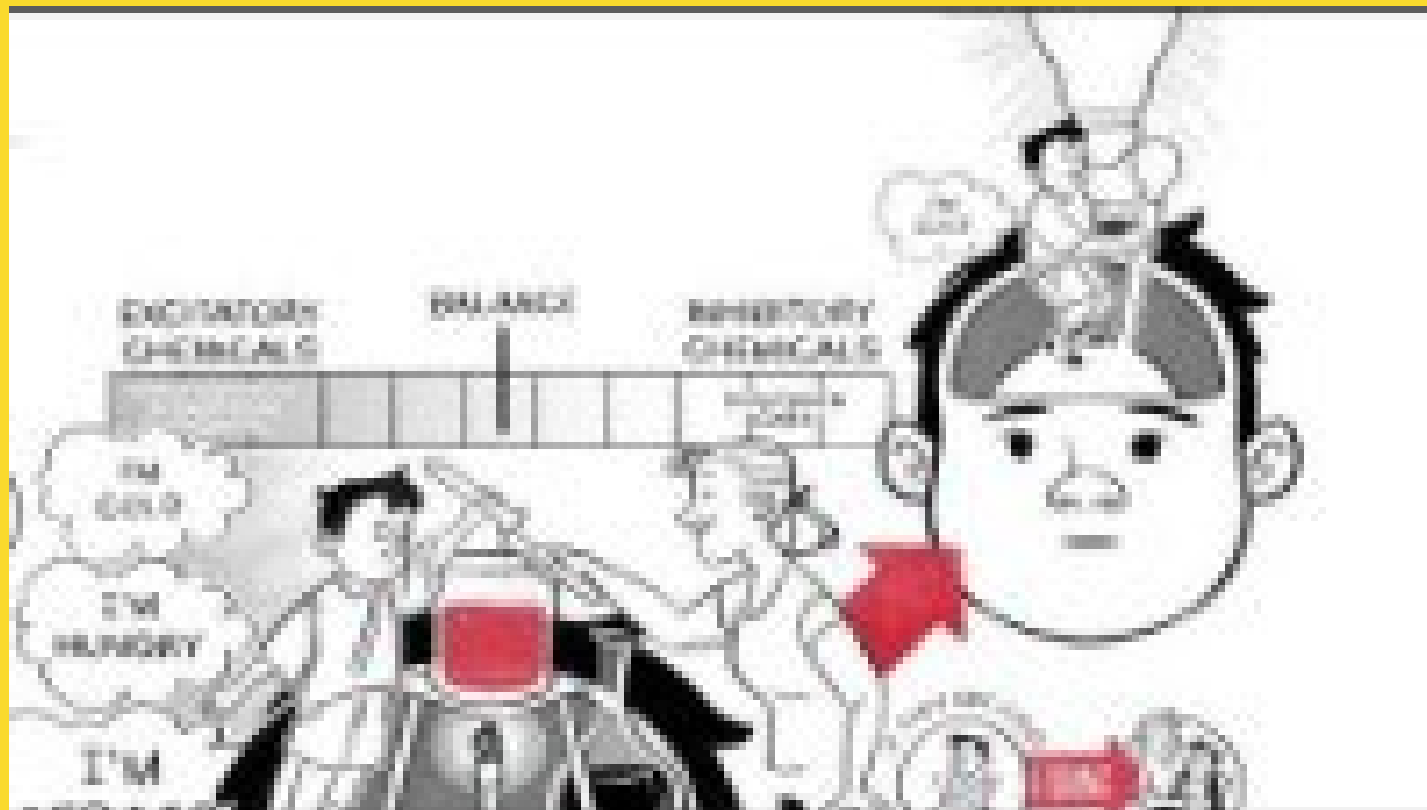
Relationship-building





TRUST-BASED RELATIONAL INTERVENTION

TBRI® is an attachment-based, trauma-informed intervention that is designed to meet the complex needs of vulnerable children. TBRI® uses Empowering Principles to address physical needs, Connecting Principles for attachment needs, and Correcting Principles to disarm fear-based behaviors. While the intervention is based on years of attachment, sensory processing, and neuroscience research, the heartbeat of TBRI® is connection.



<https://youtu.be/FWScSJKjn1A>

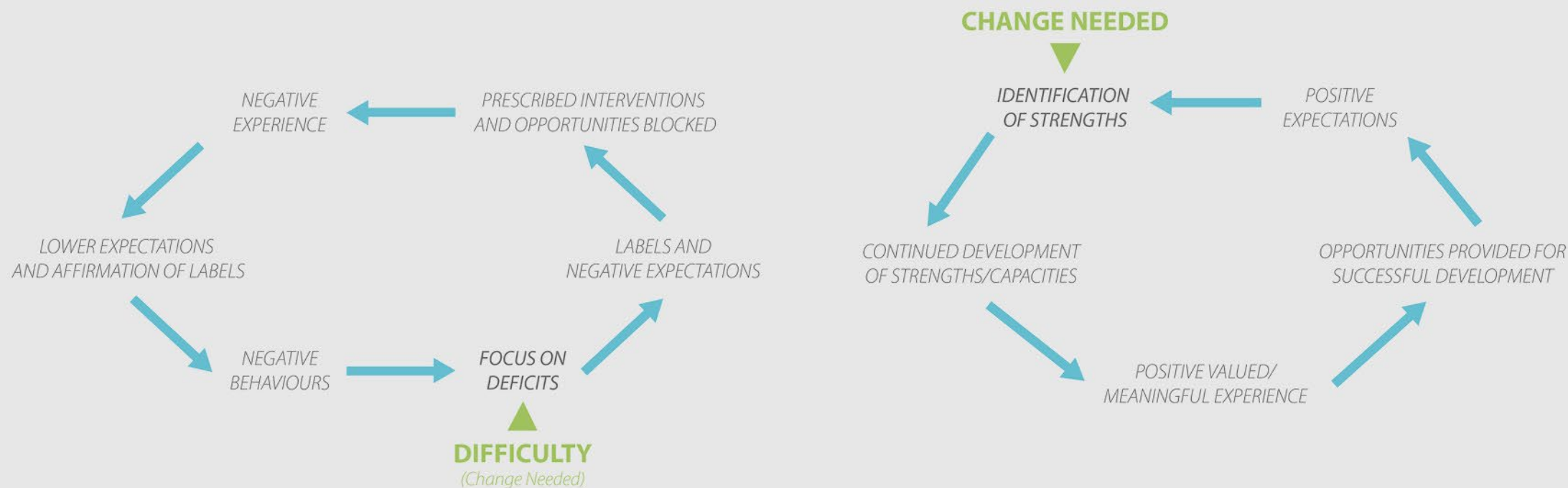


TRAUMA-INFORMED APPROACH





STRENGTHS-BASED & EMPOWERMENT APPROACHES





CRITICAL TIME INTERVENTION

The Critical Time Intervention Model

CTI is carried out in **three distinct phases spanning nine months** as described below.

Phase	Transition	Try-Out	Transfer of Care
Timing	Months 1-3	Months 4-7	Months 8-9
Purpose	Provide specialized support & implement transition plan	Facilitate and test client's problem-solving skills	Terminate CTI services with support network safely in place
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• CTI worker makes home visits• Accompanies clients to community providers• Meets with caregivers• Substitutes for caregivers when necessary• Gives support and advice to client and caregivers• Mediates conflicts between client and caregivers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• CTI worker observes operation of support network• Helps to modify network as necessary	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• CTI worker reaffirms roles of support network members• Develops and begins to set in motion plan for long-term goals (e.g. employment, education, family reunification).• Holds party/meetings to symbolize transfer of care

HARM REDUCTION & PEER SUPPORT



WHAT'S HARM REDUCTION?

Bike Helmets	Designated Driver
Face Masks	Methadone
Naloxone	Nicotine Patch
Syringe Exchange	Safety Belts
Speed Limits	Sunscreen

ALL OF THE ABOVE!



MINDFULNESS

12 Ways to Practice

01

Take a mindful
brainbreak

02

Practice
breathing
techniques

03

Check in with
your emotions

04

Use senses to
observe an
object

05

Take a mindful
walk

06

Recite
positive
affirmations

07

Spend time
writing in a
journal

08

Mindfully listen
to music

09

Practice yoga
or stretch

10

Draw, color,
or doodle

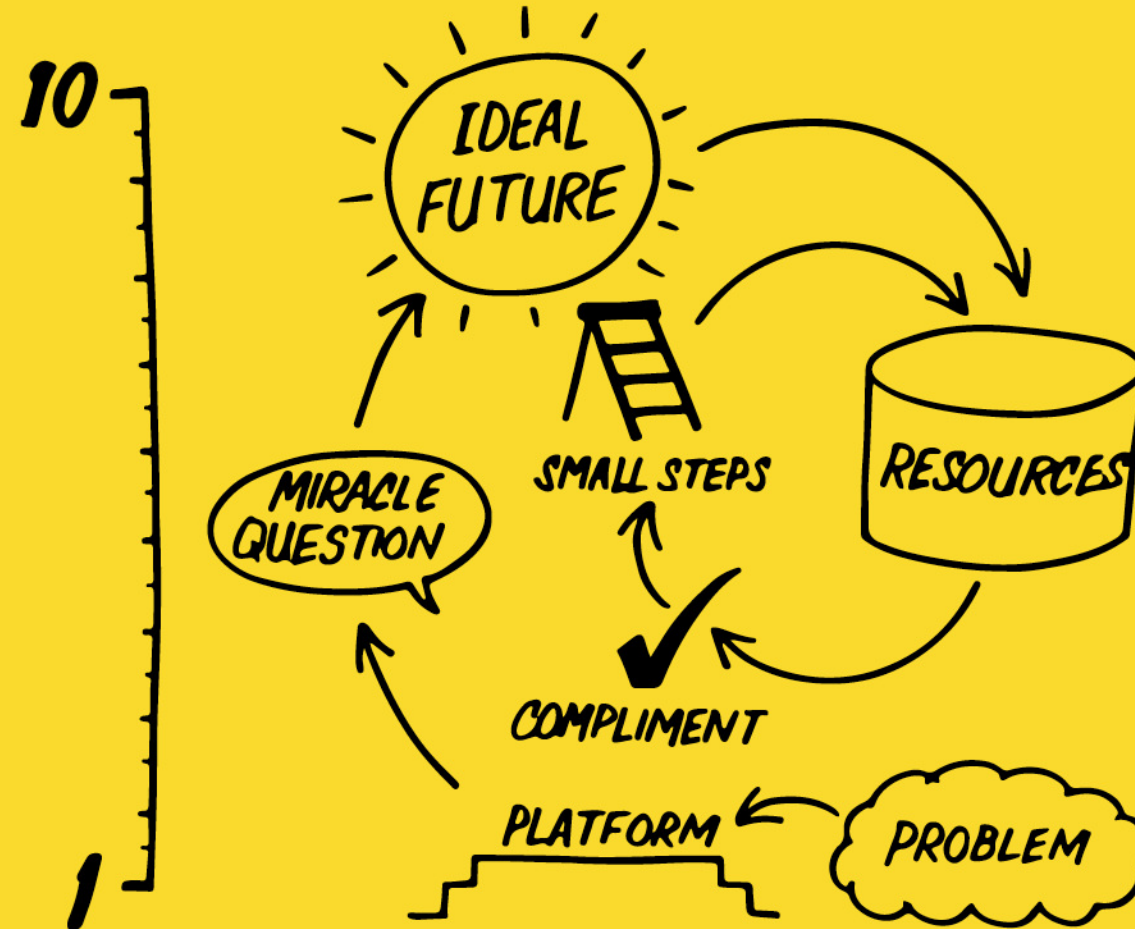
11

Read guided
imagery for
relaxation

12

Spend extra
time outside

SOLUTION-FOCUSED BRIEF THERAPY





MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING

MI is a collaborative, goal-oriented style of communication with particular attention to the language of change. It is designed to strengthen personal motivation for and commitment to a specific goal by eliciting and exploring the person's own reasons for change within an atmosphere of acceptance and compassion.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SsNgZ47o2I4>



**COMPASSION,
TRUST, SAFETY,
CONNECTION**



QUESTIONS?

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DACC