



SUPPORTING SEXUALLY AND GENDER DIVERSE YOUTH THROUGH TRAUMA- INFORMED CARE

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ROADMAP

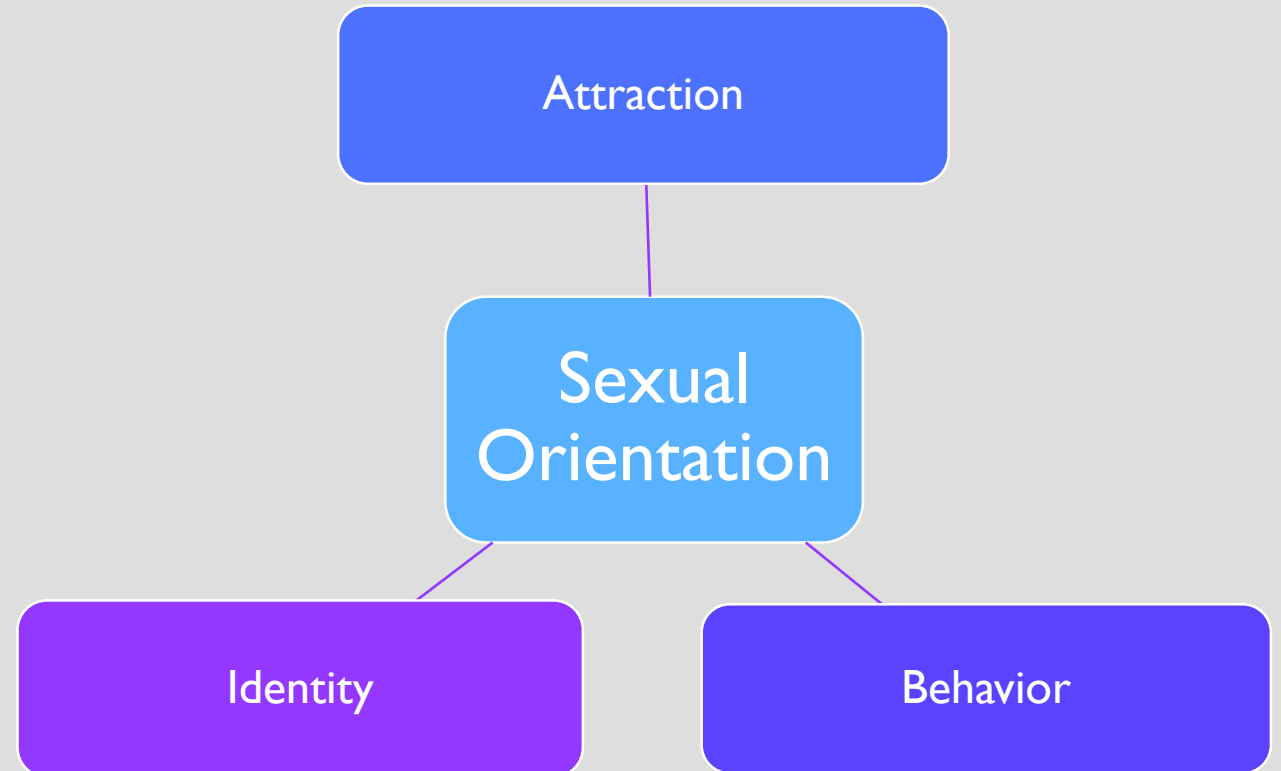
- Describe Trauma-Informed Care (TIC)
- TIC and its use with gender and sexually diverse youth
- Considerations for practitioners



SOME DEFINITIONS

Two-spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning, queer, intersex, asexual (2SLGBTQIA+).

Gender is best described as a continuum that includes a range of identities.

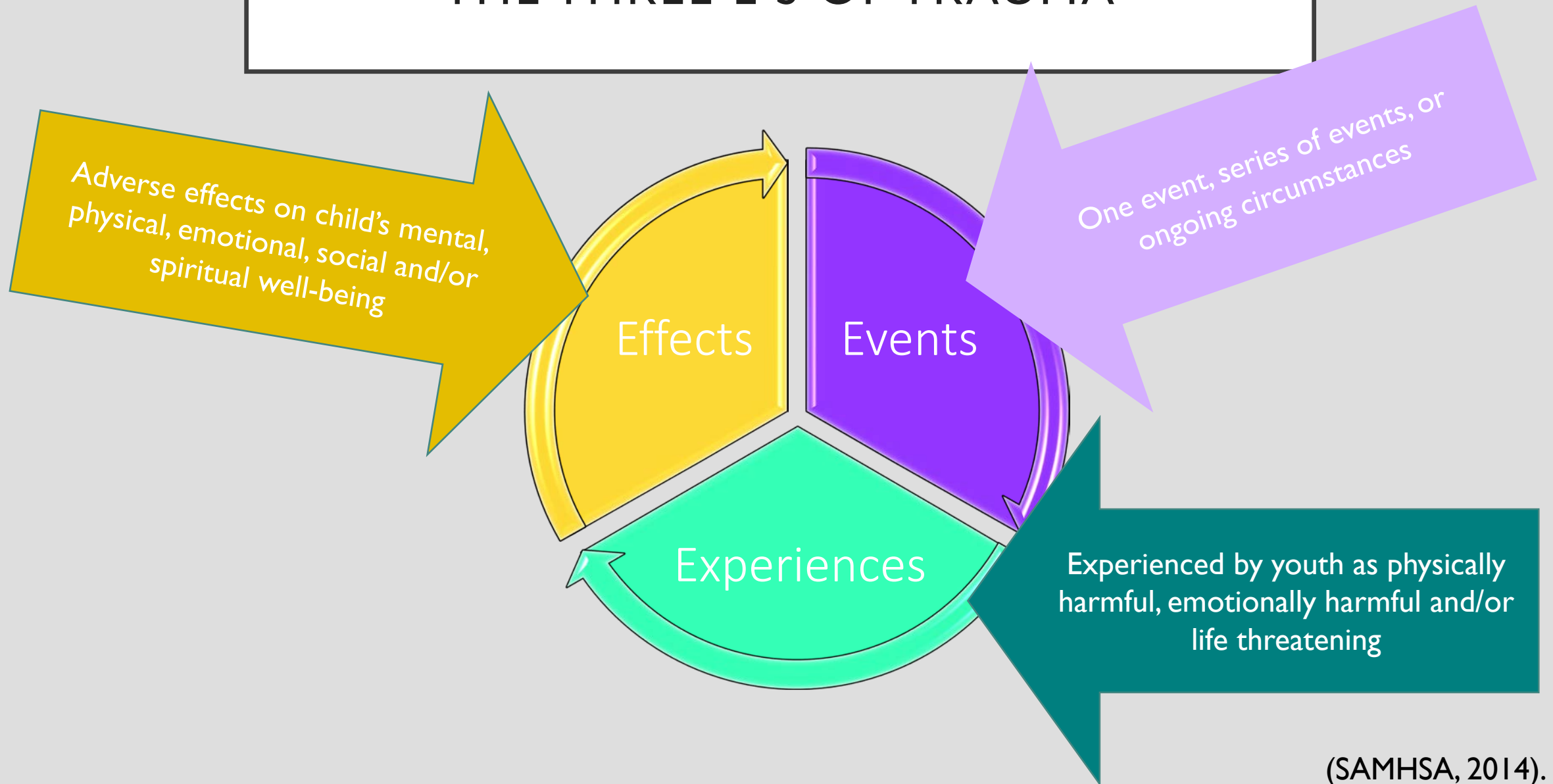


(APA, 2015b; Egale, n.d.; Ellis, 2020; Poirier et al., 2008)

WHY THIS
MATTERS



THE THREE E'S OF TRAUMA



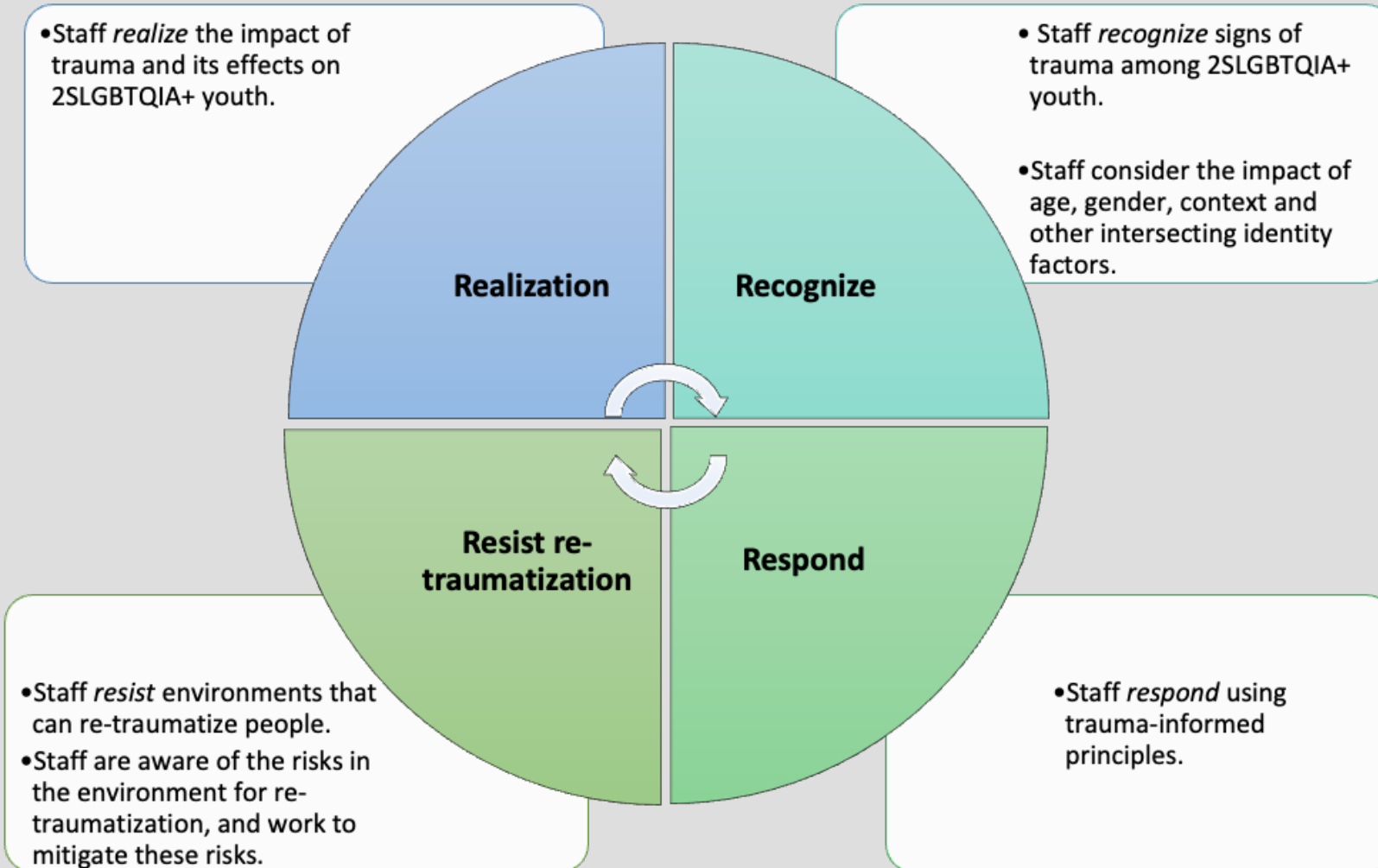
(SAMHSA, 2014).



TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE

When an approach is trauma-informed, it means that practitioners engage in actions that recognize the signs and symptoms of trauma, explore paths for recovery, and encourage agency, mutual respect, and collaboration (SAMHSA, 2014).

THE FOUR R'S



HOW DO WE USE THE FOUR R'S WITH
SEXUALLY AND GENDER DIVERSE
YOUTH?

REALIZE

Understand

how secondary
adversity impacts
2SLGBTQIA+
youth.



Advocate

for an inclusive
environment



Consider

accessibility



RECOGNIZE



Support families to enhance 2SLGBTQIA+ acceptance



Provide ongoing training

RESPOND



Connect



Build trust

Ally symbols

Follow youth's lead



Demonstrate respect.

Use inclusive language

Honour pronouns



Shift the conversation.

RESIST



Foster self-awareness



Keep learning



Advocate for affirming and accepting environments



Involve youth



Trigger warnings

(Building Competence + Capacity, n.d.; McCormick et al., 2018; National Resource Center for Mental Health Promotion and Youth Violence Prevention, n.d).

CONSIDERATIONS FOR PRACTITIONERS

- Safety
- Trustworthiness and transparency
- Peer support
- Collaboration and mutuality
- Empowerment, voice, and choice
- Cultural, historical, and gender issues

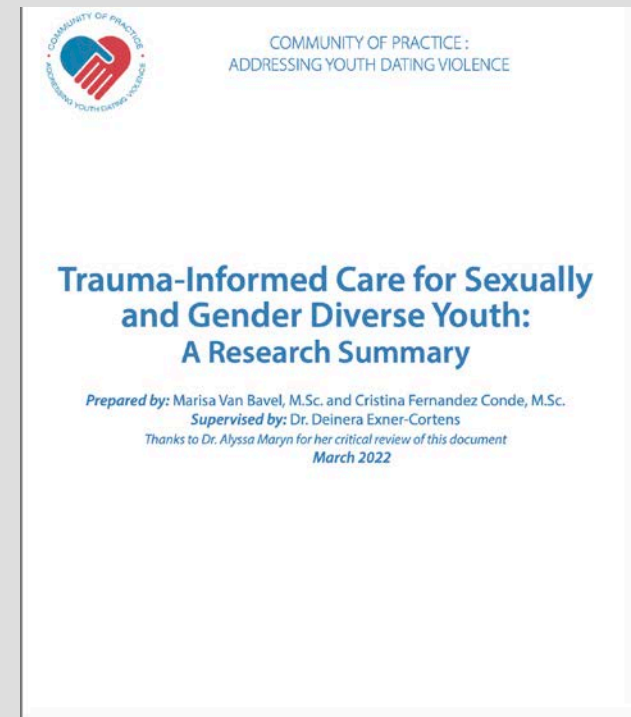


FOR MORE INFORMATION

<https://youthdatingviolence.prevnet.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Trauma-Informed-Care-2SLGBTQ-Youth.pdf>

Supervised by: Dr. Deineria Exner-Cortens

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Nova Scotia Rainbow Action Project

Board Training
March 13th, 2022



Introducing Myself & W2A



- Fae Johnstone (she/they)
 - Executive Director of Wisdom2Action
 - 2SLGBTQ+ educator, activist and consultant
 - BSW/MSW
- Wisdom2Action
 - Consulting firm and social enterprise
 - Focused on 2SLGBTQ+ issues, mental health, GBV and children's rights.
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Systemic Roots of Violence Against 2SLGBTQ+ Youth



- 2SLGBTQ+ youth's health and well-being is shaped by social, political and economic factors.
- Through systemic homophobia, biphobia, transphobia and other forms of discrimination, 2SLGBTQ+ youth experience heightened risks of:
 - Homelessness
 - Poor mental health
 - Isolation
 - Violence

What we know: GBV and 2SLGBTQ+ Youth



84% of trans people
in Canada avoid
public spaces

25% of youth don't
feel safe at home

34% of youth
experienced physical
sexual harassment

64% of trans / non-binary
youth have experienced
sexual harassment

63% of bisexual girls and
women have experienced
physical or sexual assault

Understanding GBV and 2SLGBTQ+ Youth



Gender-Based Violence is not homogenous. It has a unique impact on 2SLGBTQ+ youth. In 2018, W2A asked 2SLGBTQ+ youth how they see GBV impacting them.

Sexual Violence
(sexual assault and intimate partner violence)

Street Harassment
(lack of public safety)

Unsafe Family Contexts
(amongst trans, gender-diverse, and racialized youth)

Violence in Schools
(bullying, verbal, physical, social violence, lack of support)

Negative Perceptions
(negative portrayals of 2SLGBTQ+ communities, lack of positive role models)

For more information:

wisdom2action.org/gbv

Understanding Systemic Homophobia, Biphobia, Transphobia and Misogyny



When we speak about violence, we must recognize that violence is not limited to physical forms - that psychological, social, political and economic GBV harm our communities too.

Supporting 2SLGBTQ+ Youth Impacted by GBV and other forms of violence



Creating Inclusive Environments

Physical safety

- Discrete and prioritizing confidentiality
- Promotes comfort – no “institutional” look, e. g. barred windows, etc.

Organizational safety

- Partnerships the organization has that may make service users uncomfortable

Interpersonal safety

- Intentionally inclusive language
- Culturally humble lens and response to GBV
- Being mindful of perceived worker power/privilege
- Strengths-based language (avoid deficit-based language)

Trauma-Informed Care



“A traumatic event involves a single experience, or enduring repeated or multiple experiences, that completely overwhelm the individual’s ability to cope or integrate the ideas and emotions involved in that experience.”

- **Klinic**

How do you bring a trauma-informed approach into your work?

Features of a trauma-informed approach:

- Realizes the widespread impact of trauma and understands potential paths for recovery
- Recognizes the signs and symptoms of trauma in clients, families, staff, and others involved with the system
- Responds by fully integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, practices, and settings
- Resists re-traumatization of community members and staff

Safety Planning



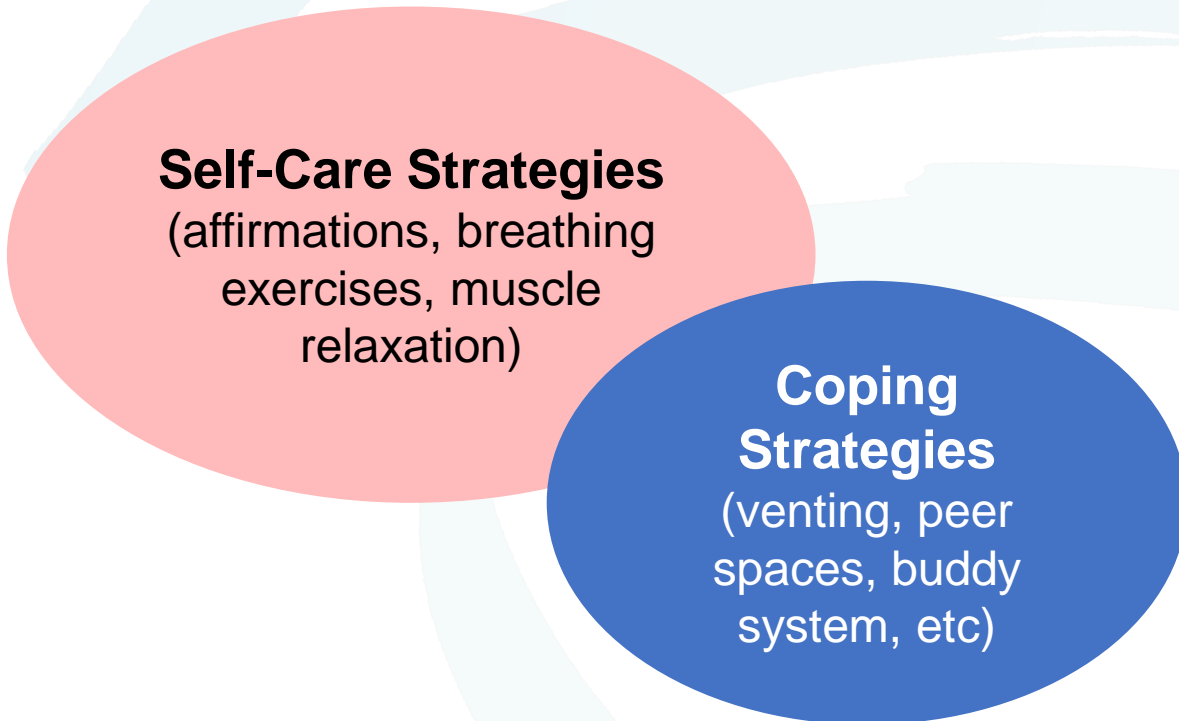
- What is Safety Planning:
 - Helping folks identify strategies to protect themselves and put into action during moments of crisis or risk.
- Start by acknowledging what the youth has already done to keep themselves safe
- Identifying safe places and people
- Identifying mechanisms to calm ourselves and cope with mental distress after
- Following up and providing resources – what other supports are available
- Provider supporting you to keep yourself safe.
- <https://www.ourspectrum.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/SPECTRUM-Trans-and-Gender-Diverse-Mental-Health-Wellness-and-Suicide-Prevention-Toolkit-2.pdf>

POLL: Does your organization actively engage in safety planning with clients/community members?

Coping Strategies

Many 2SLGBTQ+ people face significant rates of GBV, such that street harassment and other forms of GBV become the norm, rather than the exception, thereby necessitating coping and wellness strategies as a means of reducing harm and maintaining well-being

Coping and wellness strategies can include:



Self-Care Strategies
(affirmations, breathing exercises, muscle relaxation)

Coping Strategies
(venting, peer spaces, buddy system, etc)

Key Messages



- Many 2SLGBTQ+ youth face ongoing, near-daily violence and discrimination. For many, this becomes a ‘new normal’.
- As providers, we can:
 - Squarely place blame where it belongs (i.e., not on them)
 - Provide tools for support and safety (safety planning, coping mechanisms)
 - Advance safer spaces and 2SLGBTQ+-specific interventions in our workplaces

Thank you!

Contact Us:

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- www.wisdom2action.org
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