

# Trauma-Informed Practice in Treatment Programs for Sexual Offending

JILL S. LEVENSON, PH.D., LCS

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Research clearly indicates that as the number of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) increases, the risk for a wide range of health, mental health, and behavioral problems in adulthood also increases in a robust and cumulative fashion. Trauma-informed practitioners recognize the role of early adversity in the development of sexually abusive and criminal behavior. Maladaptive coping and thinking that result from child maltreatment and family dysfunction can distort one's view of self, others, and the world. By exploring and understanding addiction, violence, and criminal behavior through the lens of early trauma, clinicians can infuse trauma-informed practices into existing evidence-based cognitive behavioral interventions. Staff working with offenders will learn how to incorporate treatment and supervision methods that mitigate re-offense risk by facilitating a strengths-based and trauma-informed model of service delivery.

This full day session will offer a new paradigm for thinking about treatment goals: enabling client accountability (not simply offense culpability), correcting distorted cognitive schema about self and others (not just distortions about sexual abuse), enhancing general, sexual, and emotional self-regulation capacities (which translates to relapse prevention), engaging in positive relationship -building and healthy communication skills (reducing intimacy deficits), and improving the ability to understand the perspectives of others (AKA empathy).

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## LEARNING OBJECTIVES: FULL DAY (6 HOURS)

1. Become informed about cross-disciplinary research describing the impact of early childhood trauma on cognitive, social, emotional, and behavioral development, including criminality and sexual deviance.
2. Define SAMHSA principles of trauma-informed care and components of trauma-informed practices.
3. Conceptualize SOTX goals and dynamic risk factors through the lens of trauma.
4. Describe a new strengths-based relational approach in the context of risk-needs-responsivity principles of correctional rehabilitation.
5. Focus on risk reduction through improvements in functioning related to accountability, self-regulation, empathy, relationship skills, and cognitive schema.

*This presentation is appropriate for social workers, mental health counselors, marriage and family counselors, psychologists, victim advocates, addiction specialists, probation/parole officers, and other correctional and forensic staff. By encouraging the adoption of trauma informed service delivery systems, we can respond to the social service and mental health needs of offenders in a way which helps reduce future risk for maladaptive, self-destructive, aggressive, and abusive behavior.*

*Workshop Schedule:*

*9:00 am – 10:30*

*Introduction to SAHMSA's principles of trauma-informed care  
The role of adversity in the development of criminal behavior*

*10:30-10:45 BREAK*

*10:45-12:15 noon*

*Shifting perspective to a trauma-informed lens*

*12:15-1:15 pm LUNCH*

*1:15-2:45*

*Translating to Practice: Implementing strengths-based, trauma-informed clinical practices for sex offenders in a correctional or outpatient setting:*

*Strategies for helping improve self-regulation, empathy, accountability, and distorted cognitive schema*

*2:45 – 3:00 BREAK*

*3:00 – 4:30*

*Implementing strengths-based, trauma-informed clinical practices:  
The therapeutic alliance and corrective experience*

Date: May 31, 2019 in Helena, Montana

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About the Presenter:

Jill Levenson, PhD, LCSW, has been working in the sexual abuse field for over 30 years as a professor, researcher, and treatment provider. She has published extensively and conducted trainings across the country and abroad. In 2017 she co-authored (with David Prescott & Gwenda Willis) the book *Trauma-informed Care: Transforming Treatment for People who have Sexually Abused*, published by Safer Society Press.

**For more information, contact Dr. Levenson at [Levenson.jill@gmail.com](mailto:Levenson.jill@gmail.com)**

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