

# TRAUMA MATTERS

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A publication produced by The CT Women's Consortium and the CT Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services in support of the CT Trauma Initiative.

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## WHY TRAUMA MATTERS.....

Welcome to the first issue of this newsletter, *Trauma Matters*. Never in our nation's history has the subject of trauma been more timely or relevant. While some faced the effects of trauma for the first time after the disastrous events of last autumn, far too many have already experienced its force – through childhood sexual abuse, domestic violence or community violence.

Well before this past fall, Connecticut had recognized and started to address the considerable consequences of trauma. Each year, the CT Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) serves some 70,000 adults who suffer from severe mental illness and/or addiction. Research has shown that a majority have a history of exposure to trauma and that many are struggling with post-traumatic stress disorder. In an effort to create a systematic way of identifying and treating survivors, the CT Trauma Initiative was formed in the spring of 2000.

The purpose of this newsletter is to keep the behavioral health community, trauma survivors, and other interested persons informed about current efforts to address trauma as a public health issue. We intend to explore policy and program development issues, keep you informed about upcoming events and opportunities for training, and tell you about the agencies and people involved in the CT Trauma Initiative.

We look forward to sharing this information with you and we welcome your feedback.

*Carol Huckaby*  
Editor

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### Getting into Trauma Matters

- Do you want to be placed on our mailing list?
- Is there an event or topic you would like covered in this newsletter?
- Would you like to arrange for someone from the CT Trauma Initiative to speak to your organization?

Please call *Trauma Matters* Editor Carol Huckaby at 203.498.4184, x25 or e-mail her at [chuckaby@womensconsortium.org](mailto:chuckaby@womensconsortium.org). For more information, visit [www.traumamatters.org](http://www.traumamatters.org)

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### DMHAS Trauma Initiative Mission Statement

*The Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services will deliver behavioral healthcare that is sensitive and responsive to the needs of trauma survivors.*

### Connecticut Women's Consortium Mission Statement

*To Improve Behavioral Health Care for Women & Their Children*

### A Guiding Principle of the CT Trauma Initiative

*People who have survived psychological trauma, in particular interpersonal trauma can and do recover when provided services that are sensitive to their special needs.*

## TIMELINE OF TRAUMA INITIATIVE EVENTS

### 2000

#### March

- Trauma consultants from Maine and New York brought in for consultation and advice

#### May-June

- Trauma Speak-Outs & Focus Groups
- Formation of Trauma Collaborative Task Force

#### September-October

- Trauma Trainings with Ellen Nasper
- DMHAS produces policy paper on trauma sensitive services
- "From the Heart: Women Speak Out About Trauma" published by The CT Women's Consortium
- "No More Secrets" Video presented at first Trauma Council meeting

#### December

- Consortium and Coalition produce CD from material in "From the Heart" and provide to legislators

### 2001

#### May

- Regional Forums "From Testimony Into Practice: Creating Trauma-Sensitive Services"

#### October

- CT Women's Conference spotlights subject of trauma with nationally recognized speakers

#### December

- Presentation on CT Trauma Initiative to International Society of Traumatic Stress Studies

## WHO'S DOING WHAT

### CT Trauma Initiative

A joint effort by DMHAS, The CT Women's Consortium, Center for Trauma Response Recovery and Preparedness and the CT Trauma Coalition to deliver behavioral health care that is sensitive and responsive to the needs of trauma survivors

### Trauma Collaborative

**Task Force** (formerly *Trauma Advisory Committee*)

DMHAS & Consortium senior staff members, trauma survivors, advocates, and agency representatives who help in planning policy, clinical services, support services, community education and research

### Trauma Council

A multidisciplinary group of professionals and consumers invited by The CT Women's Consortium to events featuring updates on the progress of the CT Trauma Initiative and presentations from guest speakers on various aspects of trauma

### CT Trauma Coalition

A group of trauma survivors and service providers sponsored by DMHAS and The CT Women's Consortium with the goal of providing education, support and advocacy through participation in meetings and the production of a quarterly newsletter and an anthology of survivor writing and art.

## FALL FOCUS ON TRAUMA

A capacity crowd of 350 heard from nationally known trauma experts at the *CT 2001 Women's Conference: Defining a Vision for Women's Behavioral Health* at the Farmington Marriott in late October. Attendees at the two-day statewide conference listened to Laura Prescott, founder of Sister Witness International, on her personal experience of trauma, Ken Hardy on cultural issues in treating trauma, and Sharon Melnick on parenting behaviors of adult trauma survivors. Trauma treatment experts speaking at the conference included Lisa Najavits, Mary Harvey, Maxine Harris, and Julian Ford. Agency professionals in Connecticut will have the opportunity to learn more about some of these models over the next few years as the CT Trauma Initiative training program rolls out.

## CONNECTICUT GOES GLOBAL

Our state efforts received wider attention with a presentation at the 17th Annual Meeting of the International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies held in New Orleans in December 2001. The panel presentation explored the challenges of "Developing a Multi-component Trauma Initiative in a State Mental Health System." Panel participants included Judith Ford, Director of Women's Services, CT DMHAS; Julian Ford, Department of Psychiatry, University of Connecticut Health Center; and Ellen Nasper, Clinical Director of the Greater Bridgeport Mental Health Center.

The panelists considered the diverse factors that promote and complicate changing a public system of mental health care to provide appropriate trauma treatment. Judith Ford described the CT Trauma Initiative and discussed systemic issues. Ellen Nasper addressed changing treatment cultures at an agency level. Julian Ford presented Trauma Recovery Group Education & Therapy (TARGET), an approach to treatment that combines psycho-education and skill development.



## TRAUMA RESPONSE & RECOVERY TRAINING

Some 90 mental health and substance abuse clinicians and case managers are increasing their understanding of traumatic stress and developing skills to educate clients about the immediate and long-term effects of traumatic events. They are attending the *"Trauma Response and Recovery: Principles and Techniques"* training package that began in early 2002 and consists of four day-long presentations (January 29 or February 5, March 11, April 9, and April 16). Distinguished speakers for this program include: Robyn Anderson-Turner, ADRC/Coventry House, Julian Ford, Ph.D. of the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Connecticut Health Center, Ken Hardy, Ph.D. of Syracuse University, and Ellen Nasper, Ph.D. of Greater Bridgeport Mental Health Center. This training provides mental health and substance abuse counselors and case managers with an advanced introduction to the clinical and scientific knowledge base essential to effective care.

- The first part of the package -- "Foundations of Trauma" -- focuses on the effects of trauma on body, mind, and spirit. Topics include the relationship of trauma to other disorders myths, misconceptions and common questions about treatment and recovery, the effects of trauma on the brain, and the provider's role in trauma-informed services.
- Next in the package is *"Therapeutic Relationship: Trauma and Culture"* which provides parameters of a multicultural, systematic approach to trauma-sensitive services. Issues of class, race, and gender and how they shape the provision of behavioral health care are addressed, as well as culturally competent ways of relating to clients.
- Lastly, *"Trauma Education Intervention"* offers a 3-session model for brief treatment of survivors/bereaved persons in the first three months following exposure to trauma. The purpose of this training is to prepare clinicians to safely and effectively educate clients about the impact of trauma and to help clients begin to apply a set of 7 practical skills for coping with and reducing the adverse impact of acute post-traumatic stress reactions.

For those who complete this training, there is an additional opportunity for ongoing consultation: Online discussion board and supervision provided by a clinical supervisor with expertise in treating trauma. Without leaving the agency, eligible staff can participate via the internet in case conferences focused on trauma-related questions and concerns. If you are interested in future offerings of this training package, please contact Carol Huckaby 203-498-4184 Ext. 25 or 860-418-6846.

### MAY 10, 2002 CONFERENCE

#### PSYCHOLOGICAL TRAUMA: MYTHS AND REALITIES

A statewide trauma conference on the consequences of trauma has been developed for social service staff, psychotherapists, addictions counselors, psychologists, social workers, psychiatrists, consumers, and others who work with traumatized people. The conference will address myths and realities in understanding and responding to the needs of survivors of acute and chronic traumatic events. The goal of the conference is to provide information about traumatic stress and the needs of trauma survivors. The day will include a keynote address by an internationally acclaimed trauma expert, two lively panels that will offer opportunities for audience participation and a video in which three survivors share their experience. Registration for the conference is free of charge but attendees must register in advance because of limited seating. For additional information, including registration, please visit the website, [www.dmhas.state.ct.us](http://www.dmhas.state.ct.us) or call 860-262-5061.

#### TIMELINE OF TRAUMA INITIATIVE EVENTS

##### 2002

##### January

- Intensive training program in Trauma Treatment Model began at Birmingham Group & Morris Foundation with Julian Ford and "No More Secrets" survivor panel

##### January 29

- Launch of multi-session "Trauma Response & Recovery: Principles & Techniques" training package

##### February 4

- Meeting for executives and clinical directors of non-profit substance abuse treatment agencies on trauma treatment model training

##### March

- First issue of quarterly "Trauma Matters" newsletter
- Meeting for executives and clinical directors of Local Mental Health Authorities on trauma treatment model training
- Connecticut Trauma Coalition releases "Survival in Writing and Art 2001: Testaments to Healing Through Creativity."

##### May 10

- Upcoming Trauma Conference on "Psychological Trauma: Myths and Realities" co-sponsored by the Connecticut Psychological Association, DMHAS and the UConn Health Center with Christine Courtois, Ph.D. as keynote speaker

