

TRAUMA AND COPING

**COMPETENCIES: EMPOWERMENT AND ADVOCACY;
EMOTIONAL AND MENTAL HEALTH**

INTRODUCTION

Trauma awareness and its impact on quality of life are growing. Trauma comes in many forms and can arise from a broad range of situations or experiences that occur throughout the lifespan. This infographic will help you understand what trauma is, identify triggers that cause trauma-related distress, and consider a variety of strategies available to you in your support of someone with Autism who is experiencing behaviors triggered by past trauma. Overcoming past or present trauma can be a difficult process, but many people are able to do so. These individuals can serve as a source of inspiration to those who have yet to overcome their trauma experience.



DEFINING TRAUMA

Trauma is a mental health condition that results from experiences that we feel entirely helpless in, such as a car accident or being sexually abused as a child.

OBSERVATION

Do you feel a person you support has shared events with you that led to trauma?

How is the person expressing this?

- Behavior
- Description of an event
- Sudden change in behavior
- Easily triggered by specific people, places or situations

REPORTING

Do you know the process for reporting suspected abuse or discrimination against the person you support?

PROFESSIONAL HELP AND REFERRAL

Do you have colleagues who are trained specifically in trauma-informed care?

Do you feel the individual needs professional support, such as therapy and/or legal assistance?

WHAT YOU CAN DO NOW!

- 1** Ask your supervisor whether your agency provides training or information on trauma-informed care and ask if you can learn more.
- 2** Some people with Autism experience trauma due to the social-communication differences of autism. Can you observe this in someone you support, or has she expressed experiences involving challenges with social expectations or communication that might have been traumatic? How can you support her in social situations that might be triggering due to past trauma experiences?