

G i r a s  l

Apoyo para el bienestar de los inmigrantes
Supporting the Wellbeing of Immigrants



The University of Texas at Austin
Texas Institute for
Child & Family Wellbeing
Steve Hicks School of Social Work

Trauma-Informed Practices with Immigrant Children

Monica Romo, LCSW

ABOUT GIRASOL

Our Mission

Girasol provides trainings, consultations, and resources to build a network of trauma-informed professionals that support immigrant families.

Our Values

Social Justice, Connection & Growth

OUR VISION

A GLOBAL COMMUNITY THAT PRIORITIZES THE MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING OF ALL IMMIGRANT FAMILIES.



The Girasol Program

Girasol strives to achieve its vision by working to create a global community of trauma-informed professionals. In so doing, we are ensuring access to integrated systems of support and resources for the well-being of all immigrant families.

WE GET IT DONE WITH THESE 4 PROGRAM AREAS



We provide professionals with trainings and consultation services.



We collaborate and maintain a statewide network of social workers and mental health professionals working in immigration.

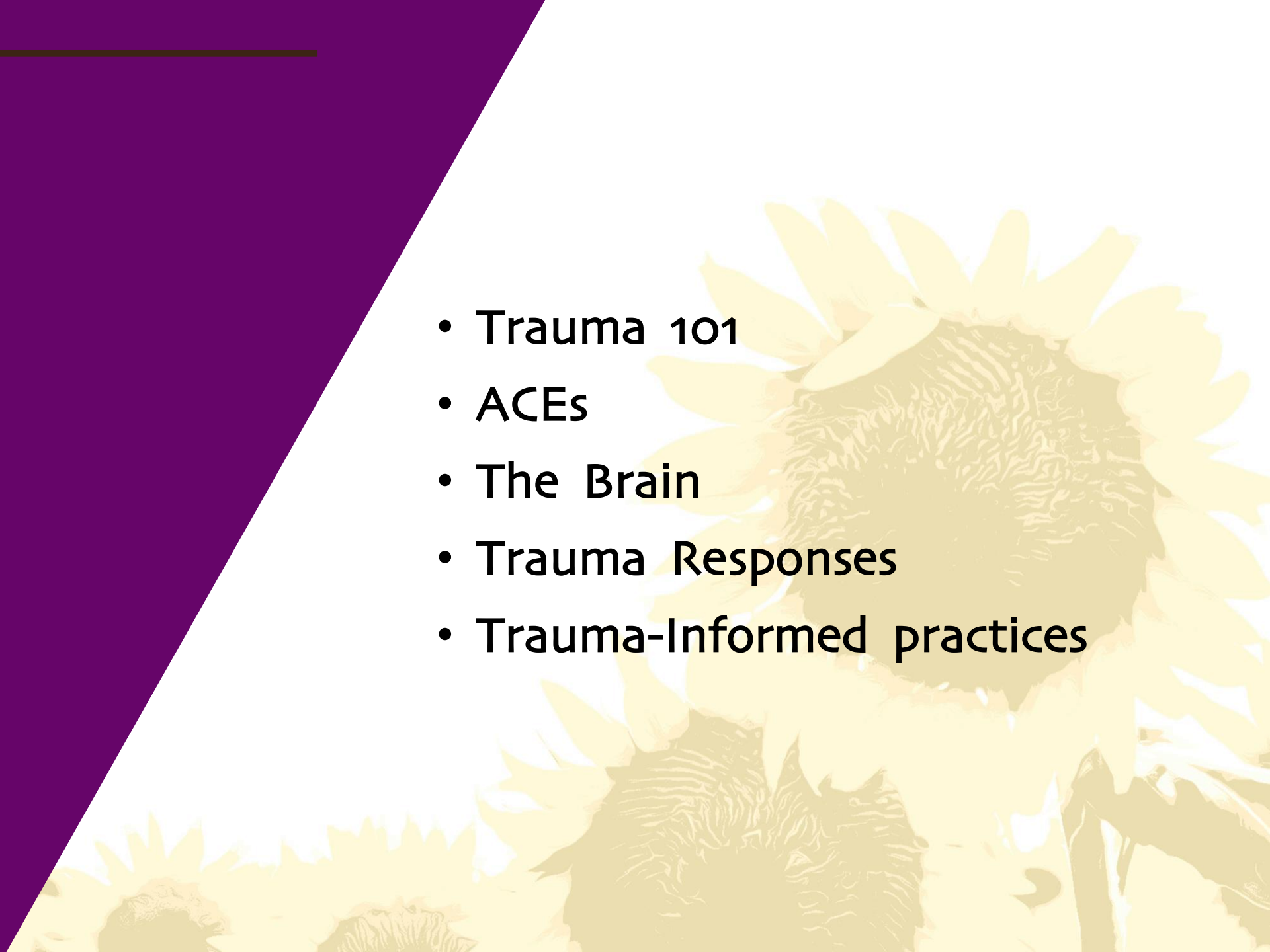


We provide social work students with volunteer and advocacy opportunities.



We maintain and update the Navegando Austin website, a comprehensive list of available immigration resources.

AGENDA

- Trauma 101
 - ACEs
 - The Brain
 - Trauma Responses
 - Trauma-Informed practices
- 
- A large, stylized sunflower is the central focus of the background, rendered in a light yellow and white color scheme. The sunflower's head is dark and textured, with many rays extending outwards. The background is a gradient of light yellow and white, with a dark purple diagonal shape on the left side.

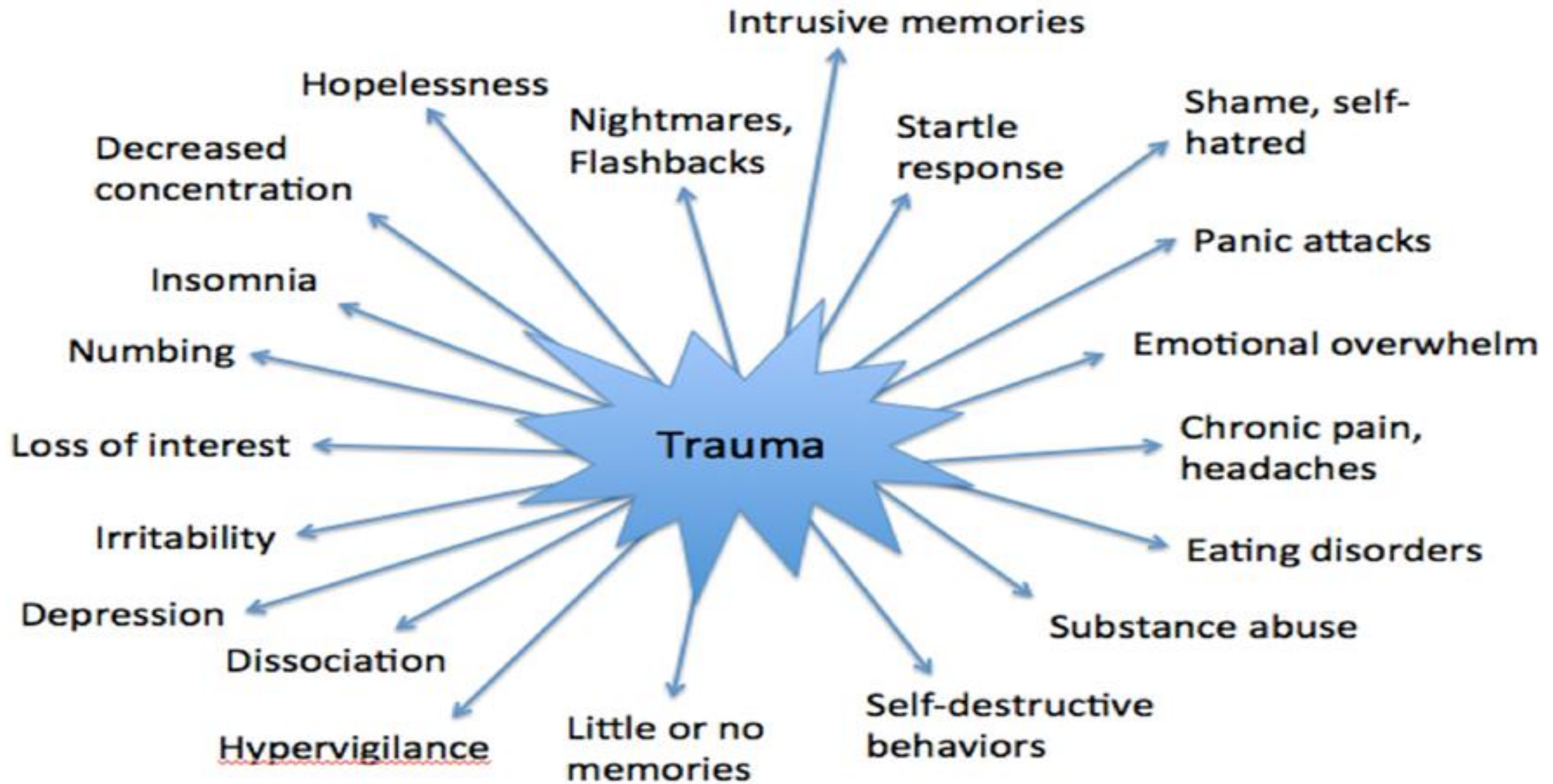
TRAUMA

Response to an event or events that are perceived as threatening the life or safety of a child or someone important to that child, causing an overwhelming sense of terror, helplessness, and horror. When these experiences are internalized, it impacts the perception of safety along with the views of self, others, and the world.

Acute Trauma

Chronic Trauma

Complex Trauma



Adapted from Janina Fisher

WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE IN CHILDREN?

Behavior

- Anger and aggression
- Hyperactivity and poor impulse control
- Depression and isolation
- Clinginess
- Changes in sleep and appetite
- Illness

Learning

- Poor concentration
- Poor problem-solving skills
- Restlessness
- Memory loss; inability to recall or store new information
- Disassociation – “daydreaming”

Relationships

- Difficulty trusting
- Poor boundaries
- Dependency on others – helplessness

Immigrant Children Triple Trauma Paradigm

Pre-Migration

Extreme poverty
Violence
Abuse & neglect
Real or Perceived Abandonment
Exploitation
Natural disasters
Discrimination

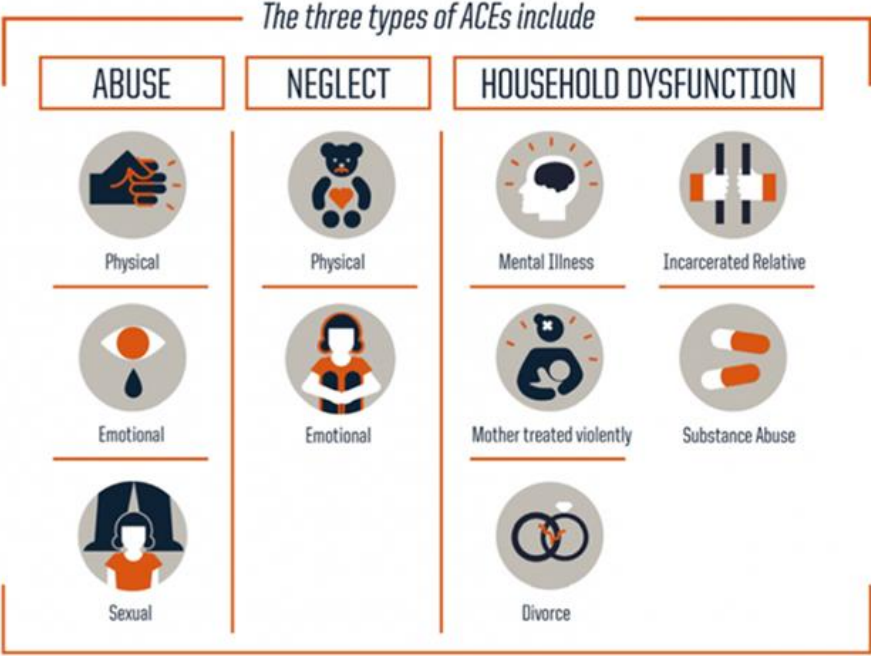
Migration

Dangerous journey
Human trafficking
Other Crimes
Abandonment
Discrimination
MPP; Title 42

Post Migration

Apprehension
Separation from loves ones
Detention
Loss & grief
Cultural shock
Court proceedings
Fear of deportation
Lack of Social Support
& Community Resources
Discrimination

ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES (ACEs)




WHAT IMPACT DO ACEs HAVE?

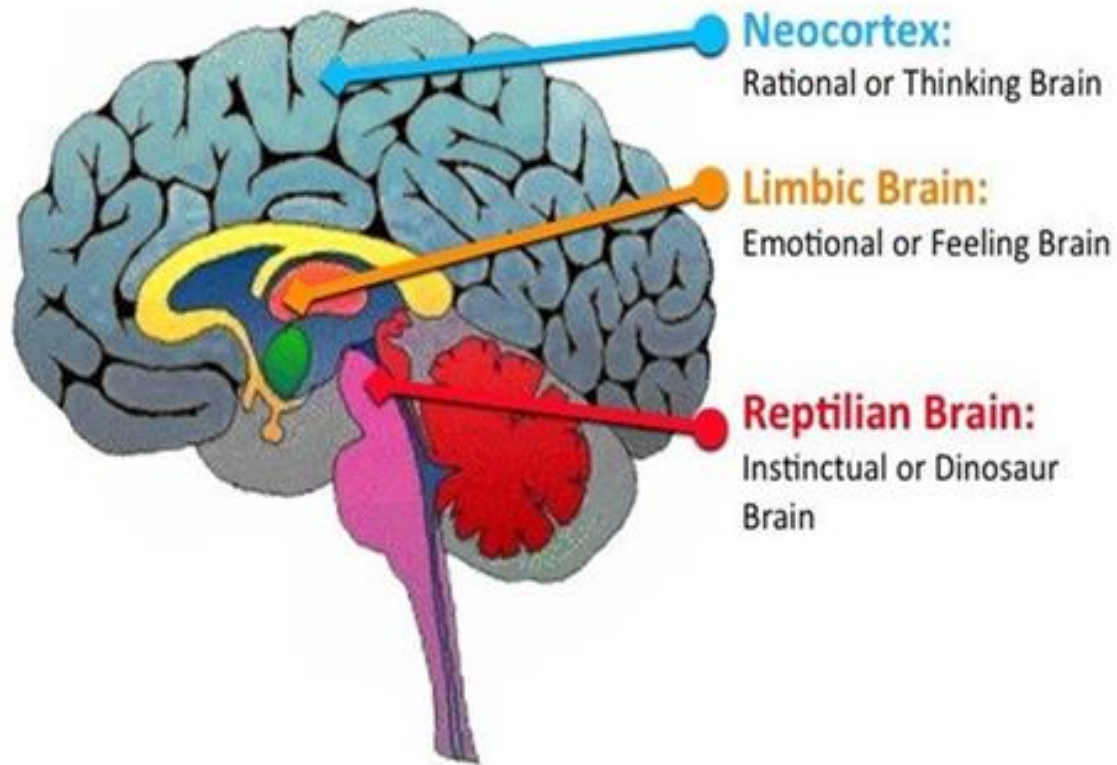


“Missing from the ACEs framework, however, is the role of pervasive and systematic oppression that afflicts certain racialized groups and that leads to persistent threat and deprivation. ...the consequence of a limited ACEs framework is that clinicians and researchers fail to address the psychological violence inflicted on children from increasingly restrictive immigration policies, ramped up immigration enforcement, and national anti-immigration rhetoric.”

-Barajas-Gonzalez, Ayón, Brabeck, Rojas-Flores, Valdez, 2021



THE BRAIN



Parts of the Brain

Brainstem – survival

- Automatic functions such as breathing, heart rate, digestion

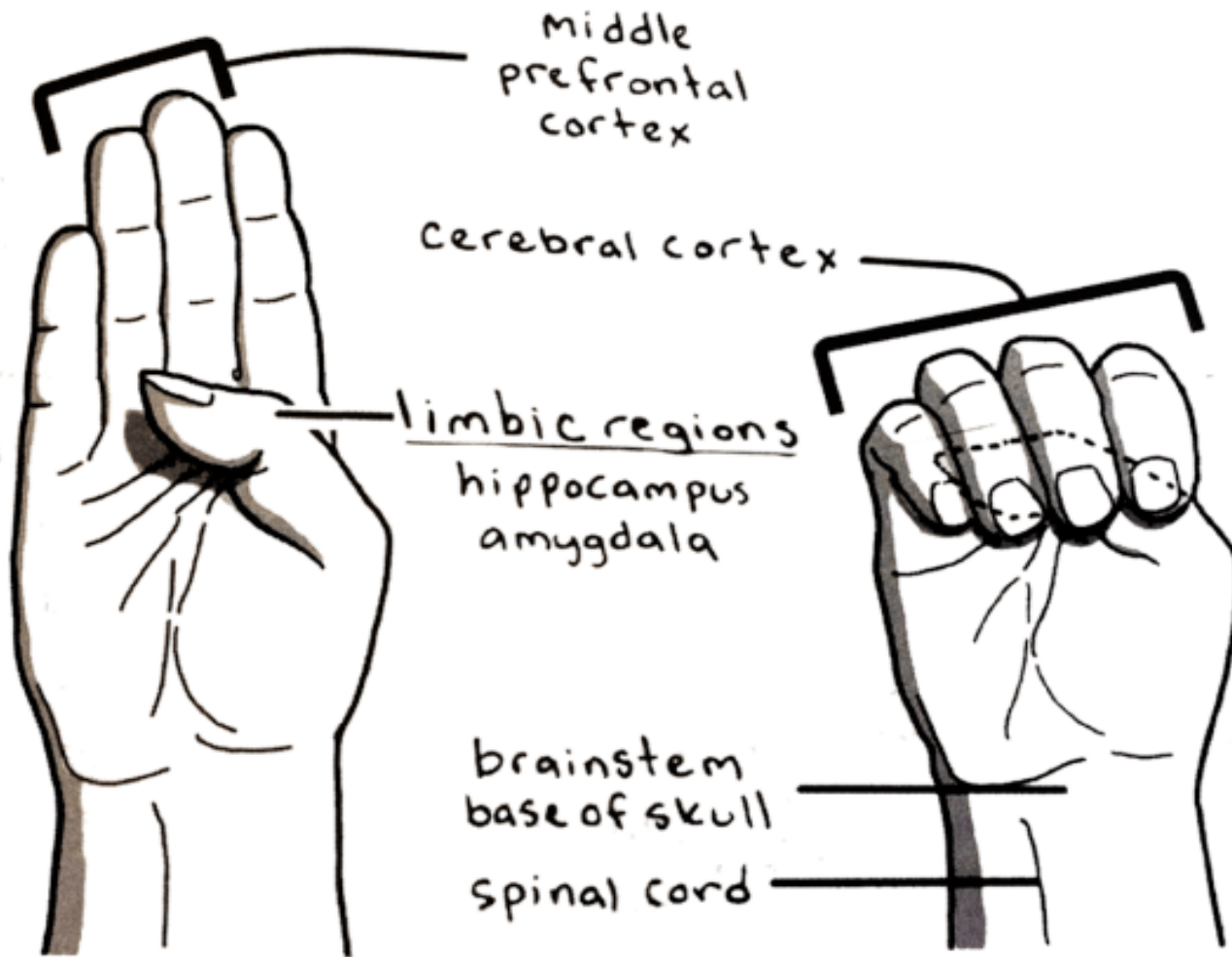
Limbic System – emotions

- Alarm system

Neocortex – thinking

- Higher level functions such as problem-solving and planning

DR. DANIEL SIEGEL'S HAND BRAIN MODEL



TRAUMA RESPONSES



- RAGE
 - ANGER
 - IRRITABILITY
- } ATTACK



- PANIC
 - FEAR
 - ANXIETY
- } RUN



- SHUT-DOWN
 - DETACHED
 - STUCK
- } HIDE

TRAUMA-INFORMED PRACTICES



THE 4 R'S OF TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE

Recognizing the presence of trauma symptoms and acknowledging the role trauma may play in an individual's life and behavior.

Realize the widespread impact of trauma

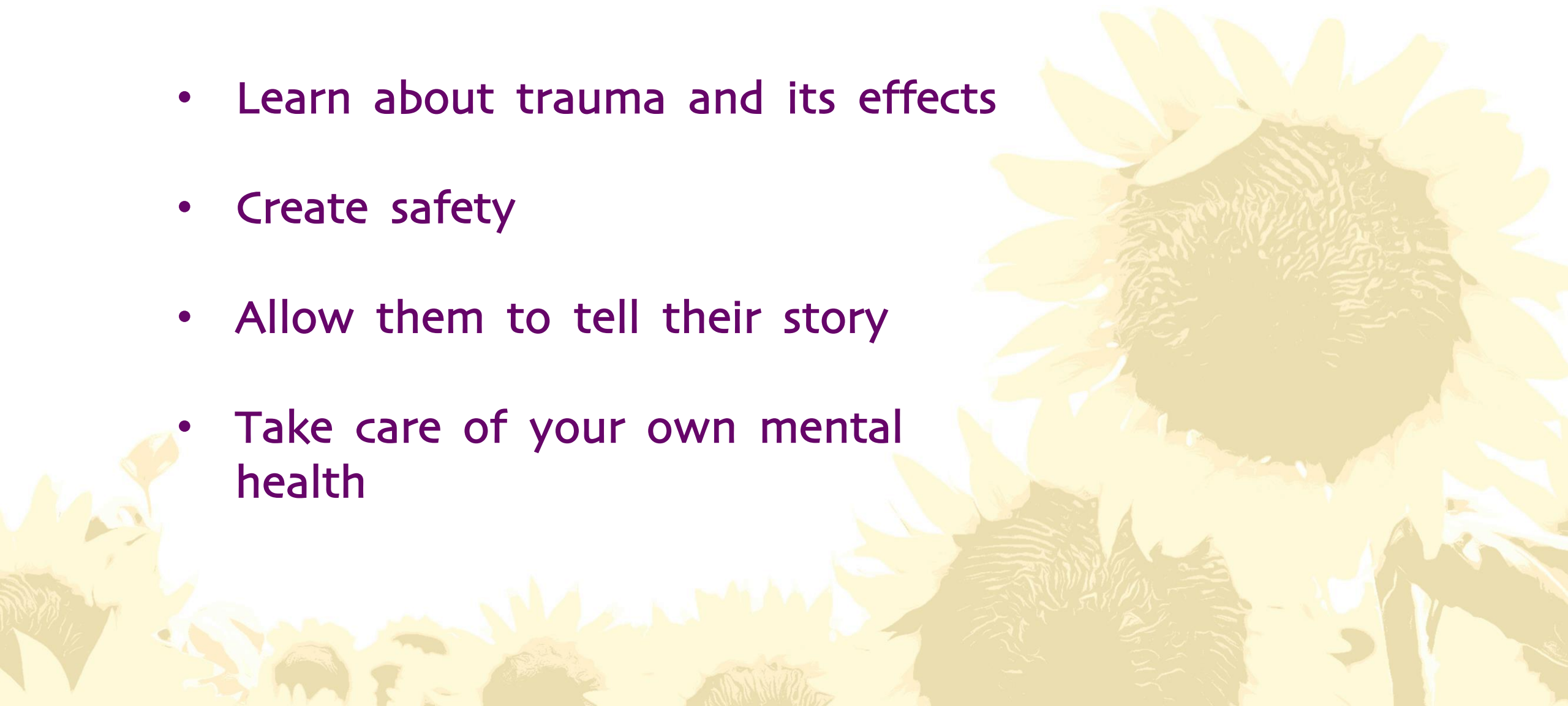
Recognize the signs and symptoms of trauma and the role it may play in an individual's life and behavior

Responds by integrating knowledge about the effects of trauma into policies and practices

Resists re-traumatization

TRAUMA-INFORMED JOURNALISM

- Learn about trauma and its effects
- Create safety
- Allow them to tell their story
- Take care of your own mental health



“ It’s important that reporters speak to their interviewee and see a person there, not just a source of information. By humanizing, rather than objectifying, the people reporters talk to, they are more likely to build rapport and gain trust.”

- Melissa Stanger, LMSW

“ Trauma-informed journalism means understanding trauma, understanding what a trauma survivor is experiencing before you show up at their door, and understanding how your actions [as a journalist] will impact them after you pack up and leave. ”

- Tamara Cherry



RECOMMENDATIONS

- Tell stories that humanize immigrants
- Cover stories that highlight the immigrant experience
- Take a holistic approach & include stories about immigrant communities already in the US.
- Include immigrant voices, not just the “experts”
- Limit the use of derogatory, dehumanizing language

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