Creating an Organizational Change Framework for Secondary Traumatic Stress Informed Practice

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STS Organizational Change: What We Will Learn Today

- To understand the impact of Secondary Trauma, Compassion Fatigue, and Burnout on Individuals and Organizations
- To develop strategies for supervision, policy, assessment, and self-care
- To implement an organizational change framework that support staff wellness and resilience
Impact on the Individual

Prior Trauma

Direct Exposure

Secondary Trauma

Compassion Fatigue

Systems Failure

Burnout

Traumatic Grief/Loss

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From: Erika Tullberg, MPA, MPH, ACS-NYU Children’s Trauma Institute
86% reported signs of STS among their staff or colleagues:

- Pessimism/Negativism about clients (63%)
- Pessimism/Negativism about coworkers (63%)
- Avoidance of certain clients/families (40%)
- Concentration/attention problems (39%)
- Decreased collaboration (38%)
- Excessive absenteeism (18%)
Key findings:

- In a typical week, 50% of frontline providers identified seeing upwards of 50 clients, and 64% of respondents indicate that they are exposed to dangerous situations as part of their job.

- Respondents identified the following top three organizational stressors and/or challenges as affecting STS symptoms:
  - productivity expectations (71%),
  - staffing constraints (70%)
  - Budgetary/financial problems (64%)

- Less than 50% felt leaders understood impact of STS on job satisfaction and performance

- Only 38% had access to reflective or process oriented supervision
Key findings:

- Only 12% use standardized tools to assess STS at the individual or org level (ProQol-IV most widely used) (up from 9% in 2009)

- Caseloads are increasing: 60% reported having caseload of 10+ trauma clients a week in 2009; 86% in 2013

- 98% of organizations report that STS programming is needed (up from 56% in 2009). Clinical and casework supervisors most in need.

- Individual supervision, group supervision, EAP referrals, debriefings most popular remedies for STS
Understanding the transactional relationship between individual and organizational stress:

- Stress is an inevitable and integral component of growth, development, and performance of individuals and organizations.

- Are stress and distress resulting from traumatic events, non-traumatic but long-term difficult circumstances, (such as long work hours) inevitable?

- Successful adaptation to stress enables us to live and work with vitality and vigor.
Transactional Relationship in Organizational Health

Organizational methods of risk reduction protect people by altering the structure, function, and relationships throughout an organization by managing demands on people and/or enhancing support people receive

Individual risk reduction aims to change the individual’s cognitive and behavioral ability to manage various demands and build individuals skills in responding to the inevitable and necessary demands

(Quick, et al 2013)
Levels of Organizational Distress and Risk Reduction

- **Primary** risk reduction concerns managing the demands and source of stress in organizations
  - Organizational distress is the degree of deviation from a healthy productive level of functioning

- **Secondary** risk reduction concerns strategies for altering how a person responds to inevitable and necessary demands and stressors

- **Tertiary** risk reduction is intended to heal individuals in distress
  - distress occurs when the neurobiological stress response is not well managed or goes awry

*(Quick, et al 2013)*
Organizational Management: What Works?

**Addressing Barriers to staff self-care:**
- Create a culture of support and resilience

**Supervision/Administration:**
- Training and support for supervisors and managers
- Productivity vs. staff self-care

**Risk management/safety:**
- Policy changes organizations can make to reduce exposure (e.g., looking at caseload mix)

**Organizational support:**
- Assessment, training, prevention, and interventions at the organizational and individual levels
Implement Workplace Strategies

Supportive Work Environment

Resilience Building Activities

Organizational Support

Training/Reflective Supervision

Team Building Activities

Buddy System

Celebrations

Vacation Leave Time
Do we always need to share all the gory details?

- Step One: Self Awareness
- Step Two: Fair Warning
- Step Three: Get Consent
- Step Four: Low Impact Disclosure
Denial Treadmill

Workers and Administrators often fear discussing their symptoms for fear of being perceived as not having the “Right Stuff”

- Deny or suppress vulnerabilities
- Appearing strong may increase case assignments
- Decreased disclosure or retracting concerns creates a vicious cycle of stress and vulnerability

He had the stuff heroes were made of...
Professional Quality of Life Scale (ProQol)

- Compassion Satisfaction
  - Positive aspects of working as a helper

- Compassion Fatigue
  - Negative aspects of working as a helper

- Burnout
  - Inefficacy and feeling overwhelmed

- Work-related traumatic stress
  - Primary traumatic stress direct target of event
  - Secondary traumatic exposure to event due to a relationship with the primary person

(B. Hudnal IStamm, 2009)
Individually, personally
  • It can help you plan where to put your energy to increase resilience

Organizational planning
  • It can help organizations find ways to maximize the positive aspects and reduce the negative aspects of helping

Supportive Supervision
  • The ProQol can be used as information for reflective supervision
Building Resilient Teams

http://bit.ly/1MGYcXb

THE RESILIENCE ALLIANCE
Promoting Resilience and Reducing Secondary Trauma Among Child Welfare Staff

ACSN-YU CHILDREN'S TRAUMA INSTITUTE
SEPTEMBER 2011

Reactivity Color Zone

Be cool monitor your heat level

HANDOUT

8
Three-Prism Focus for a Positive Workplace

THE INDIVIDUAL
- Get to know your co-workers, supervisors, managers
- Build confidence and support when a job is well-done
- Give feedback in a constructive, not overly critical, way

THE SUPERVISOR
Supervisors hold the key to a good work environment.
- Clearly articulate expectations of your workers
- Get your team on your side
  - Motivate employees through enthusiasm
  - Encourage and reward workers
- Set a good example
- Treat people fairly and consistently
- Compliment in public and criticize in private
- Help workers see the contribution they are making toward the mission of the agency
- Encourage and support workers’ development

THE JOB
- Use objective criteria to give rewards
- Make sure work is assigned fairly
- Recognize success!
Facts about Optimism

Optimism is the skill of focusing on the positive — without denying the negative — and channeling one’s energy towards what is controllable.

Optimistic people:
- Tend to have greater motivation, greater resilience, more positive moods, higher achievement and a greater sense of control
- Tend to feel and perform better
- Tend to have more positive relationships
Developing an Organizational Change Framework

- Assessment
- Goal Setting
- Strategic Planning
- Implementation
Some agencies implementing STS strategies and programs reported that nothing was being done to evaluate program need or effectiveness.

Cost, time, and practicality concerns are most often cited as barriers to the implementation of STS interventions, though many organizations report willingness.

Organizational Assessment is an essential element in implementing and tracking a STS Change Framework.
Secondary Traumatic Stress Informed Organizational Assessment (STSI-OA)

Purpose:

➤ To operationalize the organization’s role in creating a STS informed culture

➤ Describe characteristics of a STS informed organization

➤ Assist organizational members in identifying areas of STS risk, and highlight where the organization is doing a good job of promoting resiliency

➤ Provide a blueprint for individualized training

➤ Track progress towards desired change over time

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Creating a STS informed organizational culture is:

- A collaborative process
- Intentional
- Requires the *prioritization* of organizational and staff well-being
- On-going, Iterative

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My Organization promotes resiliency building activities that enhance:

- Basic Knowledge
- Monitoring impact of STS
- Common Mission
- Sense of Hope
- Specific skills to enhance professional competency
- Strong Peer Support
- Healthy coping strategies to manage job demands

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My Organization Promotes a sense of safety

- Protects Physical Safety
- Be mindful of sharing trauma details with coworkers
- Assess Psychological safety of workers
- Active Leadership Risk Management
- Training on De-escalation and safety
- Critical Incidents response

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Defined practices for psychological safety
Physical Safety
Resilience building activities
Enhancing Safety Planning
Risk Management for STS
Leadership Models Practice

- Encourages self-care
- Practices self-care
- Supervisors promote safety
- Supervisors promote resilience practices
- New hires to Sr. staff
- Staff give time to attend training on resilience building and STS management

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Training and Self-Care

- Formal training on risk reduction and self-care
- Enhanced physical safety
- Release time for staff to attend self-care activities and STS training
- Training on STS management

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Assessment and Evaluation

- Routine Assessment
- Routine monitoring of case load
- Responsive to outcomes and results
- Seeks feedback from workforce
- Seeks knowledge from literature and new trends in risk reduction and resilience building

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Results

Overview

You scored a 68 on the STSI-OA. For domain scores, hover the cursor over the section of the pie that represents that domain. The possible range of scores on this measure is 0 - 160. The STSI-OA taps into STS friendly activities in the areas of resilience-building, psychological and physical safety, policies, leadership practices, routine practices, and evaluation and monitoring. You rated your organization highest in the area of Organizational Policies and lowest in the area of Evaluation & Monitoring.

You can use this total score, as well as the domain profiles to track progress over time as your organization implements STS-informed policies and practices. It is recommended that you save this report to compare to future results.

If you are interested in training on how to use the STSI-OA to create organizational change, please contact Ginny Sprang, Ph.D. at sprang@uky.edu.

Score Breakdown

Section 1 - Resilience Building: 71%
Section 2 - Safety: 25%
Section 3 - Organizational Policies: 100%
Section 4 - Leadership Practices: 14%
Section 5 - Routine Organizational Practices: 38%
Section 6 - Evaluation and Monitoring: 6%

Org. Change Model:
What Color is your house?
Thank you!
Resources & Contact Information:

- **Children’s Institute, Inc.**
  - [www.childrensinstitute.org](http://www.childrensinstitute.org)

- **National Child Traumatic Stress Network**
  - [www.NCTSN.org](http://www.NCTSN.org)

- **NCTSN Learning Center**
  - [http://learn.NCTSN.org](http://learn.NCTSN.org)

- **Leslie Anne Ross, Psy.D.**
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