



# Sharing Lived Experience vs. Telling Our Story

Training Peer Providers Working with  
Commercially Exploited Youth

Riverside University Health System  
Behavioral Health

What makes me uniquely qualified to facilitate this workshop?

# Experience & Recovery



# HISTORY OF PEER SUPPORT

# Peer Support in Riverside

- MHSA 2004
  - 1% Tax on Millionaires
  - Specialty Mental Health Services
- Early Peer Support
  - Parent Partners
  - Family Advocates
- Acting on the Law
  - Pre-Employment Training for Consumer Peers
- Champions for System Change

# What is a Peer Support Specialist?

- People with lived experience
- People who live in wellness & recovery
- People who can model wellness for others
- People who share their story in a meaningful way
- People who have been trained in the practice of Peer Support

# Where Does BH Use Peers?

Adult Outpatient Services

Mature Adult Services

TAY Children's Services & Drop-in Centers

New Life - AB109/SAPT

PROP 47 Services Grants

Long Term Care – Crisis Outreach Teams – Contract Svc Providers

Navigation Centers

RBV – CSEC Services Grant

Integrated Health Centers (FQHC)

Family Room Clinics

Workforce Trainings

Research & Technology

Conferences

HHOPE Outreach Teams

# How Are PSSs Utilized?

- Engagement
- Navigation
- One-on-One Support
- Groups
- Skill-Building Classes
- Income Generation
- Community Outreach
- Perspective in Staff Meetings



# PSS Roles in Clinics

- Be the evidence
- Role model
- Facilitate Groups
- Support consumers to learn new ways to wellness
- Provide training to all staff in "hopeful" interactions
- Create and model a recovery environment
- Allow the person they are serving to take the lead

# Peer Support is a Practice

- Must be certified
- Not just a “warm body”
- Role is defined by the SAMHSA
- Statewide Certification Pending SB10-2019
- RUHS-BH is the gold standard

# Does Riverside County have Commercially Sexually Exploited Youth?

# THE STATISTICS

- Riverside County is a “hotspot” for exploitation
- Recent report from CDSS
- 27% of the population are minors
- Over 127 victims have been officially identified by Riverside County DPSS
- 70-85% of victims are, or have had contact with a county system

# THE CHALLENGE

- Historically the focus has been on the exploitation rather than the issue(s) that resulted in the vulnerability to be exploited
- Therapeutic models historically haven't utilized "lived experience" TAY PSS within serving CSEC populations.
- All systems working together

What is RUHS- Behavioral Health doing to combat these statistics?

# **Adding TAY Peer Support to Teams Working with Commercially Exploited Youth**



RBY

RESILIENT BRAVE  
YOUTH

**AN INNOVATION PROGRAM**



RBY was developed to serve  
Commercially Sexually Exploited  
Youth throughout Riverside  
County through an innovation  
grant.

# THE PURPOSE

- Confront the challenges of engagement
- Promote trauma informed care among multiple agencies.
- Increase interagency collaboration resulting in better outcomes for exploited youth and families.
- “Meet the youth where they are at” by utilizing TAY PSS and Parent Partners within the TF-CBT model to effectively treat trauma in a field based approach.

# Training New Staff

# TAY Peer Support Certification

- 72 Hour course where participants learn:
- Recovery/Resiliency
- Pathways to wellness
- Self-care
- The Authentic Self
- Connecting
- Cultural Responsiveness
- TAY Culture
- Working With Challenging Situations
- Understanding Trauma
- Substance Abuse
- Sharing their experience

# What is a Recovery Environment?

<b>Non-Recovery Environment</b>	<b>Recovery Environment</b>
<b>Low expectations</b>	<b>Hopeful with high expectations</b>
<b>Stability/maintenance is the goal</b>	<b>Recovery is the goal</b>
<b>There is no clearly defined exit</b>	<b>Clear exits; graduates return/share</b>
<b>Little or no access to information</b>	<b>Easy access to information</b>
<b>Compliance is valued</b>	<b>Self determination, critical thinking, and independence are valued</b>
<b>Coercion is used to achieve compliance</b>	<b>People become the experts in their own care</b>
<b>People are protected from trial/error learning</b>	<b>People take risks and have “right to fail”</b>
<b>One-size- fits-all treatment approach</b>	<b>Wide range of programs and non-program options</b>
<b>People live in “treatment centers”</b>	<b>Opportunities for community integration with choice</b>
<b>People are judged by their level of motivation</b>	<b>Restoring hope creates new choices</b>
<b>Medication is the primary tool</b>	<b>Medication is one of several tools</b>
<b>Emphasis is on treatment</b>	<b>Peer support and self-help are valued</b>

# Trauma Informed Care

- **There are five primary principles for trauma-informed care.**
- Safety. This includes creating spaces where youth feel culturally, emotionally, and physically safe as well as an awareness of an individual's discomfort or unease.
- Transparency and Trustworthiness.
- Choice.
- Collaboration and Mutuality.
- Empowerment.



# Motivational Interviewing



Being non  
judgemental

Reflective  
listening

Being  
collaborative

Expressing  
empathy

Reducing  
resistance to  
change

Increasing  
self-efficacy

Exploring  
uncertainties

Eliciting  
change talk

Increasing  
readiness to  
change

# Counter Transference

# Subjectivity and Identification

- Over relating with the youths experiences.
- Engaging in Sympathy rather than Empathy.
- Breaking policies/ethics/ and boundaries due to countertransference.
- Doing the work for them rather than empowering them.
- As a TAY Peer provider with lived experiences of trauma and exploitation it is often easy to see yourself in the youth you serve.
- However, although experiences maybe similar we recognize that everyone is on a different journey and they are in their own process.
- The consumer may not hold the same feelings/emotions as we do towards similar lived experiences.
- TAY PSS are trained to identify countertransference.

# Secondary wounding

# TAY Peer Supports Don't:

- Denial and disbelief: "That can't be real"
- Discounting: "That's not that bad, it could have been worse!"
- Blaming the victim: "You chose to stay!"
- Ignorance: "You should just get over it!"
- Generalization: "You're just being dramatic!"

# TAY Peer Supports Offer:

- Lived Experience
- Hope
- Recovery
- Empowerment
- Mutuality
- Respect
- Holistic Care
- Resiliency
- Advocacy



# Senior TAY Peer Support Specialist



# My Role on The RBY Team

- Train & Support Peer Staff.
- Public Speaking & Lived Experience.
- Training RCAHT/Sheriffs on engaging exploited youth.
- Provide BH services to survivors of sexual exploitation.
- Being the evidence that recovery is possible.

Be The Person You Wished You  
Had!

# Questions?



# Getting Started

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