

**Working collaboratively**

**The Juvenists 3 October 2013**

I’ve probably mentioned multiple times in these blogs that, as a result of my research findings, I’ve suggested we set up a professional network for children exposed to family violence in Waitakere.

I thought I’d share with you today some excerpts from websites on similar projects overseas – actually they are all American (I haven’t found anything similar elsewhere which doesn’t mean they don’t exist). All have a slightly different client base (traumatised children generally; children exposed to family violence; mothers and their children impacted by violence). But the message seems to be the same – it is essential that we collaborate and work collectively if we are to improve outcomes. All initiatives are thoroughly based in research, well trialled and evaluated.

**1. The National Child Traumatic Stress Network**

**Creating Trauma-Informed Systems**

Creating trauma-informed service systems is a vital part of the work done by Network members, and is essential for NCTSN’s mission of raising the standard of care and improving access to services for children, families, and communities impacted by trauma. Members of the NCTSN Trauma-Informed Service Systems working group have collaborated on developing a definition of a trauma-informed child- and family-service system, shown below. The group believes that this definition accurately reflects the professional complexity and multifaceted nature of a trauma-informed child- and family-service system. By sharing this definition the group hopes to strengthen the dialogue about the creation of trauma-informed systems, and anticipates that the definition will evolve—together with the work of Network members and affiliates.



**What is a Trauma-Informed Child- and Family-Service System?**



A trauma-informed child- and family-service system is one in which all parties involved recognize and respond to the impact of traumatic stress on those who have contact with the system including children, caregivers, and service providers. Programs and agencies within such a system infuse and sustain trauma awareness, knowledge, and skills into their organizational cultures, practices, and policies. They act in collaboration with all those who are involved with the child, using the best available science, to facilitate and support the recovery and resiliency of the child and family.

A service system with a trauma-informed perspective is one in which programs, agencies, and service providers: (1) routinely screen for trauma exposure and related symptoms; (2) use culturally appropriate evidence-based assessment and treatment for traumatic stress and associated mental health symptoms; (3) make resources available to children, families, and providers on trauma exposure, its impact, and treatment; (4) engage in efforts to strengthen the resilience and protective factors of children and families impacted by and vulnerable to trauma; (5) address parent and caregiver trauma and its impact on the family system; (6) emphasize continuity of care and collaboration across child-service systems; and (7) maintain an environment of care for staff that addresses, minimizes, and treats secondary traumatic stress, and that increases staff resilience.

[www.nctsn.org/resources/topics/creating-trauma-informed-systems](http://www.nctsn.org/resources/topics/creating-trauma-informed-systems)

**2. Safe Start Initiative**

The Safe Start Initiative is funded by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. The goal of the Safe Start Initiative is to broaden the knowledge of and promote community investment in evidence-based strategies for reducing the impact of children's exposure to violence.

**Safe Start Promising Approaches II Sites**

Eight Promising Approaches II sites, funded in 2010, will provide evidence-based or theory-based interventions to prevent and reduce the impact of children's exposure to violence in their homes and communities. These interventions will address the needs of children and youth ages 0-17 who have been exposed to violence and their families through a comprehensive and collaborative approach that uses the current knowledge base to address children's exposure to violence.

<http://www.safestartcenter.org/about/>

**3. The Greenbook Initiative**

|  |
| --- |
| In June, over 300 professionals around the country working on issues related to the intersection of domestic violence and child maltreatment convened in Jackson Hole, WY to share their strategies for transforming the way child welfare agencies, domestic violence organizations, courts, other service providers, and communities respond to families in need. Attorney General Eric Holder kicked off the National Summit with remarks demonstrating his commitment to families experiencing domestic violence and child maltreatment on a personal and professional level. Listen to his Remarks (link to:<http://www.ovw.usdoj.gov/> )In 1999, the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ) published Effective Interventions in Domestic Violence and Child Maltreatment Cases: Guidelines for Policy and Practice. This publication, commonly referred to as “the Greenbook” due to its green cover, is helping child welfare, domestic violence service providers and family courts work together more effectively to serve families experiencing violence. Since the Greenbook’s release, dozens of communities around the country have used it to improve their policies and practices and developed enhanced coordination among courts and social service agencies to better serve families in need.From 2000-2007, the United States Departments of Health and Human Services and Justice funded six demonstration sites across the country. The demonstration sites joined battered women’s organizations, child protection agencies, the courts, and other partners in implementing the Greenbook’s recommendations. NCJFCJ, Family Violence Prevention Fund and the American Public Humane Association provided technical assistance to the sites. Every local site was evaluated individually, and a comprehensive national evaluation was conducted at the completion of the initiative. To read the evaluations go to <http://www.thegreenbook.info/init.htm>. Many lessons were learned and products such as training curriculums, community assessment tools and multimedia materials were developed and collected to assist others in doing this work. These items are available on this website. Please visit “Tools and Resources” and the individual demonstration sites for site specific products.Thank you for visiting the website!<http://www.thegreenbook.info/> |
|  |

Let’s hope we’re ready to collaborate in responding to children exposed to family violence here in Waitakere - and NZ in general!

Kia manahau tō rā - have a lovely day,

Deborah Yates

WAVES