

TOPEKA RESCUE MISSION MONTHLY REPORT MAY 2023

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BRINGING AWARENESS TO TRAUMA



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Kourtney Barr

Director of Trauma
Education &
Development

This month we honor Trauma Awareness Month with a conversation with Kourtney Barr,

TRM's Director of Trauma Education and Development. She leads the charge of equipping our staff and volunteers with trauma-informed education and training in order to be more effective in serving all those who come to us, even those experiencing the effects of significant trauma.

What is trauma awareness?

Trauma awareness seeks to:

- Realize the widespread impact of trauma and understand paths for recovery.
- Recognize the signs and symptoms of trauma in patients, families, and staff.
- Integrate knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, and practices.
- Actively avoid retraumatization.

What are the 3 types of trauma?

There are three main types of trauma: Acute, Chronic, and Complex

- Acute trauma results from a single incident.
- Chronic trauma is repeated and prolonged such as domestic violence or abuse.
- Complex trauma is exposure to varied and multiple traumatic events, often of an invasive and interpersonal nature.

Kourtney says: “We know that when individuals seek services through TRM, the harsh truth is that chronic and complex trauma is likely a part of their story. Knowing this creates a call for response from us not only as TRM staff but Christfollowers. When we are called to serve the least of these, we have a responsibility to be knowledgeable about the one we are serving. This is where we utilize Trust-Based Relational Intervention (TBRI) to dive deep into what trauma is, changes that have occurred in a person’s brain, body, biology, behaviors, and belief-systems, and how we can connect and build trust with those who are hurting. We desire to look at the whole person and begin to unpack and understand the layers of pain and harm that has in part led them to the front doors of TRM.”

TBRI with TRM Staff

- Training-- All TRM staff receive 8 hours of Trust-Based Relational Interventions (TBRI) training upon hire with refresher training throughout the year. TBRI is an attachment-based, trauma-informed therapeutic model that trains caregivers to provide effective support and treatment for at-risk individuals.
- Connection groups-- Connection groups create a safe place for staff to share in their successes and hardships of incorporating TBRI into the ministry, while continuing to refresh our minds with new literacy and skillsets.
- Workforce Development (WFD)-- WFD helps our staff members translate the knowledge of trauma-informed care from the classroom setting to the ground level, using the new skills and tools in daily work life and interactions with those we serve. The Trauma Education & Development Team members walk alongside all departments helping with the implementation of TBRI skills, development of trauma-informed goals, and provision of resources needed to reach those goals.



TBRI with Guests staying at our Shelters

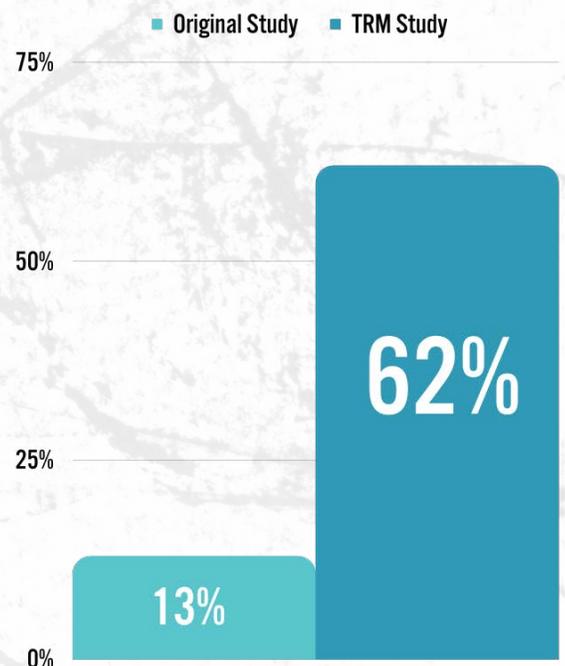
- Guest programming—Trauma focused programming is offered to our guests to begin the process of understanding what trauma means and how it may be affecting them today. These classes are designed to gain deeper understanding and awareness of themselves and be able to create the change needed to shift the trajectory of their lives.

Trauma Education Department Internal Study

An internal study was conducted to showcase through quantitative data what we were seeing through qualitative feedback of serving our guests each day. The study was in alignment with the Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) study conducted by Kaiser Permanente and the CDC in the late 90s. The original study surveyed a population of 17,000 individuals living in southern California, all having health insurance, the majority being college educated, over the age of 50, and primarily white. The study consisted of answering ten yes or no questions relating to childhood traumas, as well as demographics, and health complications they may be experiencing.

“This original population surveyed in our opinion did not represent the at-risk population of individuals we serve here at TRM. We surveyed over 100 people experiencing homelessness: both sheltered and unsheltered. The prevalence of ACE scores of 4 or more within our population surveyed was 496% higher in comparison to the population surveyed by Kaiser and the CDC.” – Kourtney Barr

ORIGINAL STUDY VS. TRM STUDY



ACE SCORE OF 4 OR MORE

“It is staggering to think that the population we serve is almost 500% more likely to have significant levels of trauma than the average population. Now that we know better, we can do better. Homeless is a term that is often used to describe a group of people, or a problem, or an “eye-sore,” but each person we serve has a name. They have a story...some so horrific it may make you cringe or want to turn away. And we are called to serve even still, through the addiction, through the mental illness, through the past demons they face daily. Trauma is often caused through relationships and the only way that trauma can heal is through safe and healthy relationships. One of my favorite quotes is from Desmond Tutu that says, ‘At some point we have to stop pulling people out of the river and figure out why they are falling in.’ At the Topeka Rescue Mission, we metaphorically pull so many people out of the river. We see individuals at their lowest when they enter our doors, or we outreach them on the streets. But there is always a why. Was it childhood trauma, a bad relationship, a job loss? Our goal is to figure out ‘why’, lean into the discomfort of it, process it and help individuals make strides towards ending generational cycles of trauma, abuse, poverty, and addiction. Is it easy? No. But there is no easy way to do hard things.” – Kourtney Barr

In conclusion, Kourtney says: “We want to not only be a ministry that is trauma-informed, but also trauma-responsive. We have a unique opportunity to create secure relationships with the ones we serve; completing in adulthood what may not have been completed for them in childhood. This is a long-game approach to generational trauma and poverty, but we believe that every life we serve is worthy of that investment of time. Whether that be 3 days, 30 days, or 30 years. They are worthy of the investment. Will you join us in the fight against trauma?”

We would like to thank all those who give your time, prayers, and financial support to help us in our goal of ministering to each of our guests and community members who are experiencing trauma. With your help we can continue reaching into the darkness and shining a light of hope, healing, and compassion. Thank you for your continued support! †



“I don’t view Trauma education as ‘just one more thing to do.’ I see it as THE thing to do. We don’t believe there is trauma that God cannot overcome. At TRM, we want to be talking about the hard things that others don’t want to talk about, but in a safe manner.” - La Manda Broyles, TRM Executive Director

WAYS YOU CAN SUPPORT THOSE EXPERIENCING TRAUMA



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Topeka Rescue Mission Ministries
PO Box 8350
Topeka, KS 66608

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Consider a recurring monthly gift.

Set up monthly auto payment online, it’s quick and easy!

Pray

Pray for our staff, guests, and all those we serve!



Volunteer

Contact our volunteer services to get started!

Email: volunteer@trmonline.org

LEARN MORE ABOUT COMBATING TRAUMA

To learn more about trauma initiatives utilized at TRM, visit:

trmonline.org/traumaintervention



For more information on ACE or to take a survey yourself please visit:

traumadissociation.com/ace

