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Questions/Chat

- Raise Your Hand if you have a question
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COVID-19 Chicago CoC Weekly Webinars

- All Chicago has created a COVID-19 Response Team and is actively working to support our many partner agencies during this challenging and quickly changing time.

- Agenda items are established from topics that shelters, housing providers, people of lived experience, outreach, and other partners, raise as important for engagement and collaboration.

- The COVID-19 Chicago CoC Weekly webinars has an alternating agenda.

- The upcoming schedule is:
  - Friday, July 31 – All Chicago/DFSS/CDPH
  - Friday, August 7 – Peer Sharing Webinar: Topic TBD
Presenters

Elijah Wood
Associate Director,
Northern California

Afure Jemerigbe
Host Home Youth Case Manager
Supporting & Empowering Youth During COVID-19
PSY & COVID-19

15 Webinars in 15 Weeks:

- Public Health Updates from Experts in the Field
- Trauma-Informed Care
- The Importance of Direct Cash Transfers
- Rapid Re-housing
- Host Homes
- New Funding Streams
- Supporting Youth in Rural Areas
- Learnings from the HIV/AIDS Movement
- Structural Racism & Barriers to Access
- Investing in Black Queer and Trans Leadership
- Supporting Sex Workers

Components:

- Youth on almost every panel
- Highlight work providers are doing
- Relay information from experts to providers
- Spotlight new innovations in service delivery
- Subject material was chosen based off a survey sent out to providers
Key Insights for Supporting Youth

1. Ensure that your organization practices Trauma-Informed Care internally and externally.
2. Identify your community’s strengths and work across organizations to fill in gaps.
3. **Center youth** (or your clients) in your approach to service provision. Intentionality is key.
4. Utilize new funding and policy waivers to bolster your services.
Trauma-Informed Care

**What it Means to be Trauma-Informed**

A program, organization, or system that is trauma-informed:

- Realizes the widespread impact of trauma and understands potential paths for recovery.
- Recognizes the signs and symptoms of trauma in clients, families, staff, and others involved with the system.
- Responds by fully integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, and practices, and seeks to actively resist re-traumatization.

**Steps to Create a Trauma-Informed Workplace**

- Create more meaningful interactions with staff, check in on each other, start a book club, allow check ins and checkouts about feelings/barriers at meetings, acknowledge how change and physical distancing affects folks' productivity.
- Engage in culturally and identity-affirming meditation.
- Check in on family, friends, and loved ones, including the youth we serve, through meaningful and intentional communication.
Community Collaboration

- **Collective trauma requires collective care.** We must acknowledge this trauma in one another and the privileges each of us carries, and work to care for one another by dismantling the systems that lead to inequity.
- Make sure youth can stay connected. **Utilize funding** to get phones, internet, and other digital ways for youth to stay connected to their support systems and resources they need.
- Coordinate mutual aid and **lean into partnerships.** We cannot do this alone.

“Mutual aid is saving lives. Now we are all working to love each other and share resources. We have to reframe how to move through the world and continue to redistribute resources for folks like we are right now for COVID-19.”

-Julia Terry, Director of Programming, Choosing Our Roots, Anchorage, AK
Youth (or Client) Voice

- Center your youth, staff, and the community you serve. Ask folks what they currently need and work to meet those needs right now. **This is not the time to keep doing what you have always done.** Now is the time to stop, name, pivot, and act.

- **Work on systemic change.** Get involved with coalitions and campaigns that are Black-led, trauma-informed, and are authentically serving the community.

  “The isolation is so real for our youth. Youth often think, 'no one understands me.' now they have physical distancing. before covid-19, we always had community activities for youth, now we just bring them online. We're always engaging with our youth, 'let's do a zoom call, let's get online, let's text.'”

  - Graham Thomas, Program Director, Larkin Street Youth Services, San Francisco, CA
Building Capacity to Serve & Innovating

- **Research financial support** available in your community. Research extending length of stay waivers, additional rental assistance available, as well as funding for intersecting needs such as employment, transportation, and access to food.
- Educate youth about COVID-19 and **use a harm reduction model**. Ensure youth know the best ways to reduce transmission of the virus and work to reduce anxiety around our current reality.
- **Utilize new opportunities** to create more affordable housing stock.

*If this current crisis has proven anything, it’s that there is a limit to our ideas around helping people. There needs to be an evolution in our approach and an extension of trust to the people we serve.*

-Gabriel Maldonado, MBA, Executive Director, TruEvolution, Los Angeles, CA
Discussion with Afure Jemerigbe, Case Manager at Sacramento LGBT Community Center
Thank You!

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