

The Future of Healing: Shifting from Trauma Informed Care to Healing Centered Engagement

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From time to time, researchers, policy makers, philanthropy and practitioners join together in a coordinated response to the most pressing issues facing America's youth. I've been involved for long enough to have participated in each of these roles.

Resilience

I recall during the early 1990s experts promoted the term "*resiliency*" which is the capacity to adapt, navigate and bounce back from adverse and challenging life experiences. Researchers and practitioners alike clamored over strategies to build more resilient youth.

Youth development

In the early 2000's the term "*youth development*" gained currency and had a significant influence on youth development programming, and probably more importantly how we viewed young people.

Youth development offered an important shift in focus from viewing youth as problems to be solved to community assets who simply required supports and opportunities for healthy development.

Since that time, a range of approaches have influenced how we think about young people, and consequently our programmatic strategies. I have, for the most part, attempted to nudge and cajole each of these approaches to consider the unique ways in which race, identity and social marginalization influences the development of youth of color.

Trauma informed care

More recently, practitioners and policy stakeholders have recognized the impact of trauma on learning, and healthy development.

In efforts to support young people who experience trauma, the term "*trauma informed care*" has gained traction among schools, juvenile justice departments, mental health programs and youth development agencies around the country.

Trauma informed care broadly refers to a set of principles that guide and direct how we view the impact of severe harm on young people's mental, physical and emotional health. Trauma informed care encourages support and treatment to the whole person, rather than focus on only treating individual symptoms or specific behaviors.

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