

Trauma Informed Practices for Law Enforcement and Prosecution

STOP Technical Assistance to Administrators Resource (STAAR) Project, ALSO
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Goals

- Explore ways to address sometimes overlooked STOP purpose areas
- Identify opportunities to continue to drive change
- Discuss implementation and administration

Every State is Unique

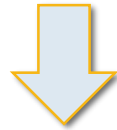
- In how much is awarded, implementation, administrator's roles, etc.

Serious Impact of Trauma

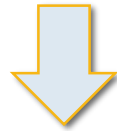
- Impact upon the behavior before, during and after the traumatic event
- Affects how memories are encoded and retrieved
- Our bodies do not control how the brain and body responds
- Frequently misinterpreted by responders

Hypothalamus-Pituitary-Adrenal Axis

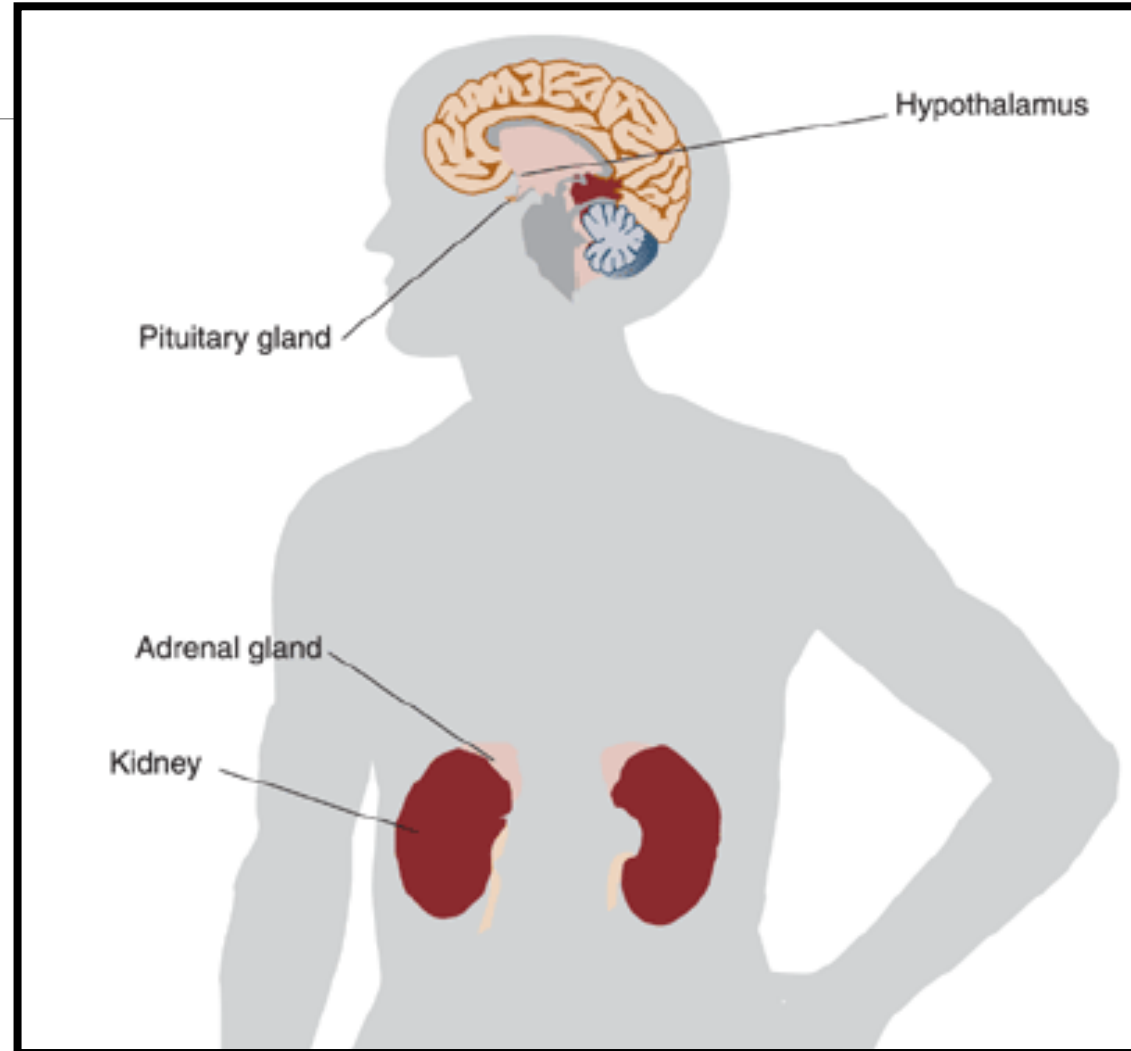
Amygdala
Detects Threat



Activates
Hypothalamus



Hormone
Tsunami



The Impact of Trauma

- Freeze
- Tonic Immobility
- Collapsed Immobility
- Rational thought, data-driven processing overwhelmed

Trauma and Memory

- The amygdala, fear center, along with norepinephrine, enhances the storage of memories in other brain regions (that process sensations, etc.).
- Context and sequence memories are poorly encoded
- Emotional memories are strongly encoded

Long Term Consequences

“...trauma produces actual, physical changes, including a recalibration of the brain’s alarm system, an increase in stress hormone activity, and alterations in the system that filters relevant information from irrelevant. We now know that trauma compromises the brain area that communicates the physical, embodied feeling of being alive.”

B. Vanderkolk, *The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind and Body in the Healing of Trauma*

Penguin Books (2015)

Why the Trauma Informed Response?

- Better interviews and better evidence
- Give context to behavior
- Help with memory
- Give prosecution tools to recreate reality of experience
- Mitigate secondary trauma and the long-term health impacts of trauma
- Promotes healing
- Not understanding leads to bad outcomes and potentially long-term, devastating consequences for the victim and community

Best Practices: Letting Knowledge Inform the Response

- Change the manner we interview survivors
- Investigate the offender
- Change the manner we present cases to the jury

Best Practices - Letting Knowledge Inform the Response

- How do those two professions change?
 - Legislation changes
 - Agency policy changes
 - Training – imparting knowledge and providing practical guidance

- How can STOP Administrators drive the change?

Maybe we should start by unpacking how we see ourselves

Are we pass through conduits for money?

Or are we leaders who can drive positive change?

The Goal- Deliver Training to Law Enforcement and Prosecutors on the Trauma Informed Response

The “Conduit” Model

- RFPs come in from individual agencies to fund training for their agencies
- The subgrantee sets the agenda, finds the trainer, and controls the audience
- Reports back cost and attendance
- Goal met

The “Policy Driver” Model

- The Policy Driver begins by Thinking Strategically, setting bigger goals
- The Policy Driver Acts Tactically, by recognizing or creating opportunities to act, fund, and direct actions that move toward that goal

Thinking Strategically

- The Goal of the Policy Driver: Improving the community's response to survivors of domestic and sexual violence

- Training law enforcement and prosecutors on the trauma informed response plays a part in reaching the strategic goal

Think Strategically – Setting the Big Goal

- Identified needs – Seeking input when creating STOP implementation plans
- STOP purpose areas
- Identified best practices
- Pulling these together to set the Strategic Goal: Improving the community's response to survivors of sexual violence.

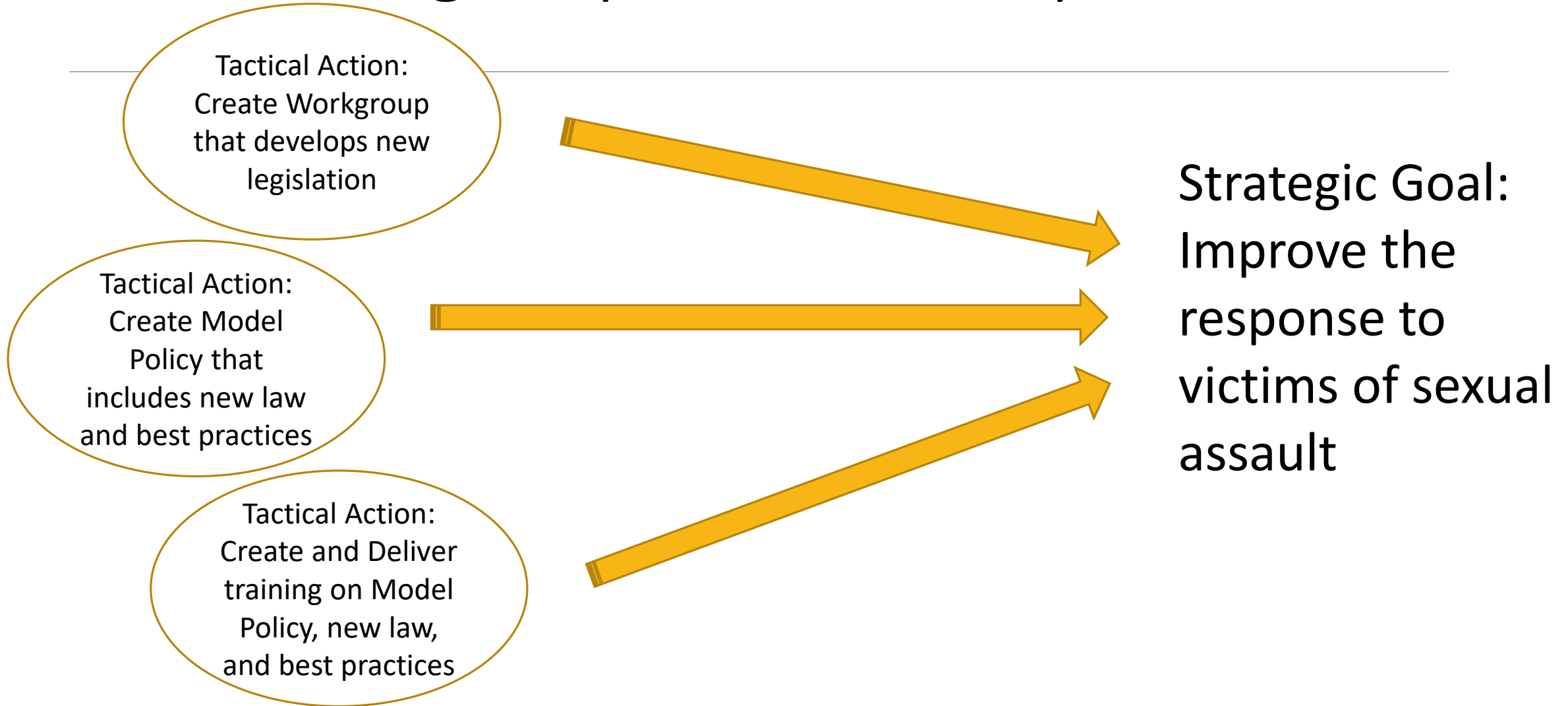
Acting Tactically – Recognizing Opportunity

Several things come together over time:

- A crisis in handling, or mishandling, of SAKs
 - Backlogs
 - Kits possibly destroyed
 - Possibly untested kits (investigations ended too soon)
 - Handling and tracking going forward
- Identification of a trauma informed response as a best practice

The result is **OPPORTUNITY FOR POSITIVE CHANGE**

Think Strategically, Act Tactically



Acting Tactically – Developing and Promoting Legislation (Purpose Area 14)

- The resolution of the SAK issue has/had to come from the state legislature
- Many groups will have a stake in what that legislation looks like
 - Law enforcement
 - Victim service providers
 - Medical Care providers
 - Forensic Labs
 - Courts
 - Civil Rights Advocates

Acting Tactically – Developing and Promoting Legislation (Purpose Area 14)

Putting together a workgroup group to develop legislation

1. Identify a leader
 - An existing partner – Statewide Coalition
 - 10% set aside
2. Create the Multi-disciplinary Workgroup
3. Set measurable goals and timelines – Grant Administration
 - Identify and invite stakeholders to join in process
 - Hold meetings
 - Draft legislation, stakeholder review, redraft
 - Advise legislators of the effort

Acting Tactically – Developing and Promoting Legislation (Purpose Area 14)

- Several new laws were passed this way, including The Sexual Assault Kit Evidence Submission Act, which mandated new procedures for Forensic Nurse Examiner programs, police, and the State Police Lab

Acting Tactically – Developing Policies for LEA and Prosecutors (Purpose Area 16)

New laws will include new obligations from law enforcement and other stakeholders, necessitating new policies, opening door to creating a Statewide Model Policy

1. Identify a Leader
2. Create the Multi-Disciplinary workgroup
3. Include best practices – trauma informed response – in the Policy

Acting Tactically – Developing Policies for LEA and Prosecutors (Purpose Area 16)

- A new model policy for responding to sexual assault was created, which was one of the first grounded in the science of the neurobiology of trauma

Acting Tactically – Training Law Enforcement and Prosecutors(Purpose Area 16)

Implementing new laws and policies can only be done through training, training, and still more training

1. Regional, statewide trainings
2. Trainings delivered more locally, even to individual agencies
3. Train-the-Trainer model

Acting Tactically – Training Law Enforcement and Prosecutors(Purpose Area 16)

Implementing new laws and policies can only be done through training, training, and still more training

1. Skills based, combine the theoretical with the practical
2. Skill based – give the tools to prosecutors to recreate the reality of the experience

Applying the Model – Where do the ideas come from?

- Look to other Purpose Areas, and where they can intersect
 - Officer involved domestic violence (Model Policy)
 - Protection order enforcement (Model Policy; Update Legislation)
 - Data collection – classification and tracking (Model Policy; Update Legislation; Demonstration Sites)
- Meet periodically with stakeholders
- Watch introduced legislation

Applying the Model – What to keep in mind

- Aim High! Set a strategic goal
- It only works through real collaboration and partnership
- Implementation through measurable outcomes – big and little

Questions?

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