

# The Impact of Trauma

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Nampa Police Department



Have you had previous training on the neurobiology of trauma/impact of trauma?

A) Yes

B) No

**Why is it  
important to  
learn about  
trauma?**



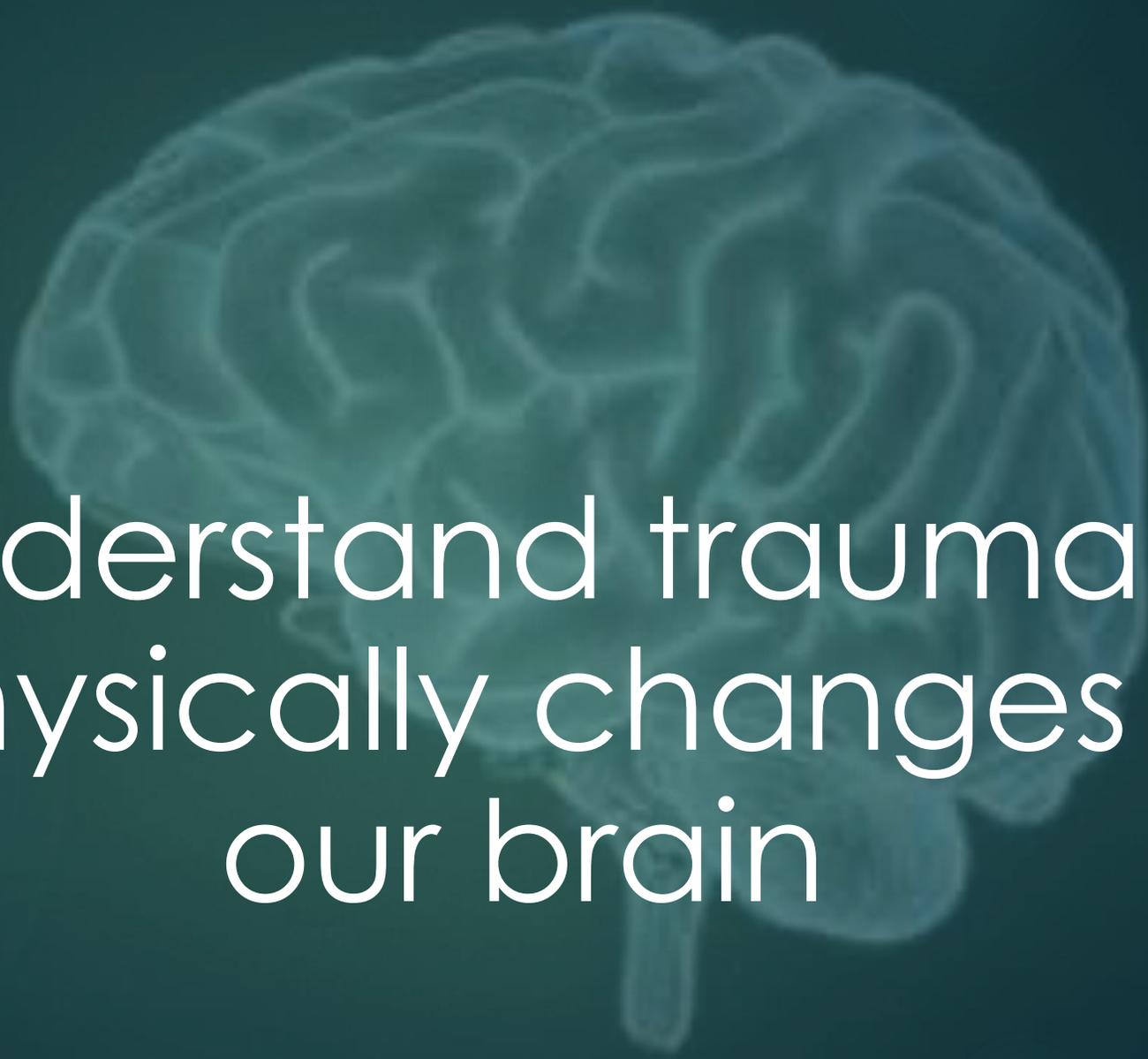
- 
- Better interviews and better evidence
  - Give context to behavior
  - Help with memory
  - Mitigate secondary trauma and the long-term health impacts of trauma
  - Promotes healing

**NOT UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACT OF TRAUMA CAN LEAD TO BAD OUTCOMES AND POTENTIALLY LONG-TERM, DEVASTATING CONSEQUENCES FOR THE VICTIM AND COMMUNITY.**

# What is Trauma?

A TRAUMATIC EVENT IS DEFINED AS EXPOSURE TO ACTUAL OR THREATENED DEATH, SERIOUS INJURY, OR SEXUAL VIOLENCE.

AMERICAN PSYCHIATRIC ASSOCIATION. (2013). DIAGNOSTIC AND STATISTICAL MANUAL OF MENTAL DISORDERS (5TH ED.). WASHINGTON



Understand trauma  
physically changes  
our brain

## "Thinking about Thinking"

Higher Reasoning  
Executive Function

## Prefrontal Cortex

9 Functions of the  
Prefrontal Cortex

1. Empathy
2. Insight
3. Response Flexibility
4. Emotion Regulation
5. Body Regulation
6. Morality
7. Intuition
8. Attuned Communication
9. Fear Modulation



## Limbic Brain

1. Fight, flight, freeze stress response
2. Thinks, "Am I safe? Do people want me?"
3. Emotions live here

# Prefrontal cortex's purpose

- Allows us to think things through and respond in a rational way
- Important in controlling attention and what we want to focus on
- Executive function that help us respond in a rational way-helps us think things through
- Crucial in integrating sensory information taken in into a logical narrative





# Limbic System Purpose

- ▶ **PRIMARY FUNCTION** – DEFENSE CIRCUITRY – FOR DEFENDING OURSELVES AGAINST ATTACK, WHICH INCLUDED THREATS IN THE ENVIRONMENT AND RESPONDING TO THEM
- ▶ **SECOND FUNCTION** – MEMORY ENCODING – ENCODING DATA POINTS IN THE FORM OF SIGHT, SOUNDS, SMELLS, OR TASTES
- ▶ **THIRD FUNCTION** – EMOTION – EMOTIONS GET TRACTION IN THE LIMBIC SYSTEM, NOT THE PREFRONTAL CORTEX ( OUR LOGIC CENTER) “EMOTIONS HAVE NO LOGIC”

# Amygdala

- ▶ Also found in the limbic system, not in the “logical” prefrontal cortex
- ▶ Our early warning system that detects potential threats in the environment
- ▶ Important in the defense circuitry because it triggers chemicals to be released into your brain and body, preparing you to react to the threat



# Hippocampus



- ▶ Helps us scan the environment and compare what is in the environment with what we know or indicator of either safety or danger
- ▶ If we find the threat legitimate, we respond accordingly and largely without thinking or planning
- ▶ Works to categorize sensory input and store memory
- ▶ In our reaction, our prefrontal cortex might not be involved because it would slow us down or maybe place us in more danger

# Fear Circuitry is in control

- *Loss of prefrontal Cortex regulation*
- *Bottom-up attention*
- *Survival reflexes*
- *Self-protection habits*
- *Altered memory encoding and consolidation*

# We evolved to survive predatory attack

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When fear kicks in it shifts everything in the brain and starts to have a major effect on memory

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Our brain is sculpted to burn in the information just right before the attack and help us predict future attack and avoid it.

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Stress hormones kick in and alter the encoding of memory



**Trauma:  
Impact on  
Cognitive Ability**



**High Stress + Fear =  
Impaired Prefrontal Cortex**

Call 911...

*What's the number?*



# Bottom up Attention

Where does your attention go?

- ▶ Not driven by the prefrontal cortex, but by fear circuitry
- ▶ Huge implications for how people respond



# Survival Reflexes

FIGHT OR FLIGHT

THE GOAL IS TO ESCAPE THE THREAT

# Freeze

WE ACTUALLY EVOLVED TO FREEZE FIRST THEN  
TO FLEE IF POSSIBLE

- Preparing for action
- Hormone's surge: racing heartbeat, increased blood pressure, hyper ventilation, glucose to muscles
- Digestive system shutdown



- ▶ Often the first thing the brain does when someone isn't taking no for an answer
- ▶ Can be a couple or seconds or longer
- ▶ When danger is detected by the fear circuitry, we freeze so all of our attention can
- ▶ Focus on the senses and how to escape



JAY KARL'S OFFICIAL  
PRANKS

# The Response of Last Resort

When escape – by fleeing or fighting – is or appears to be impossible, the body reacts drastically to survive:

**TONIC IMMOBILITY**

# Tonic Immobility

- ▶ Frightening and traumatizing
- ▶ Associated with
  - ▶ Increased prevalence of PTSD (2x higher)
  - ▶ Increased self-blame
  - ▶ Decreased access to support
  - ▶ Decreased reporting
- ▶ Educate and explain

M Sondergaard HP, Helstrom L. Tonic immobility during sexual assault – a common reaction predicting post-traumatic stress disorder and severe depression. *Acta Obstet Gynecol Scand* , 2017; 96:932–938.







# Collapsed Immobility

- ▶ Described as feeling like “rag doll”
- ▶ Rapid drop in blood pressure = feeling sleepy, fainting, passing out



# Dissociation and Depersonalization

- ▶ The “essence of trauma”
- ▶ Overwhelming sensory experience is fragmented – no longer connected to the trauma
- ▶ *Depersonalization* – feeling nothing, survival by making oneself “disappear”

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

Penguin Books (2015)



BREAK

**NOW PLAYING** CNN health

Rape trauma often mistaken for deception

CNN



00:02 / 01:56



# Mitigate the Harm

- ▶ Submit
- ▶ Negotiate

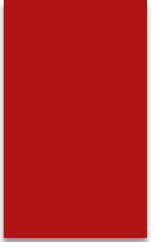
If the victim realizes that saying “no” is useless or they will be subject to greater violence or death if they resist, they may submit or negotiate in order to minimize the violence to themselves or others.

# Large Group Discussion (chat)

How have you seen victims present the following responses during and after a traumatic event?

- ▶ Flight
- ▶ Fight
- ▶ Immobility
- ▶ Submit
- ▶ Negotiate

# Self Protection Habits



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Polite responses to dominant  
or aggressive people

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Polite responses to  
unwanted sexual advances

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Hoping or pretending its no  
big deal- trying to save face



Responses to fear call  
on habits and responses  
that have been  
developed

MARINES TRAINED TO RAISE THEIR HANDS ON A  
FIRING RANGE – FALL BACK IN HABIT IN COMBAT

**BEYOND THE CALL OF**

**DUTY**

**CNN**

5:56 AM PT

RIGHT NOW

MIAMI



83°

ORLANDO



78°

TAMPA



80°

# How Memory Works – The High Road

## **Attention:**

What are we paying attention to?

What we attune to affects what we remember

## **Memory Encoding:**

How the hippocampus captures what we're attending to in order to start forming memory

SOURCE: Diamond et al., 2007; Wilson et al. 2016

*(The Neurobiology of Trauma: What You Need to Know About the Brain and Trauma, Part 2; Dr. Rebecca Campbell, Ph.D. Professor of Psychology, Michigan State University)*

# How Memory Works – The High Road

## **Central Details:**

Core aspects of an experience that captured our attention (more likely to be encoded)

## **Peripheral Details:**

What's happening around the core experience that didn't capture our attention (less likely to be encoded, not as strongly encoded)

SOURCE: Diamond et al., 2007; Wilson et al. 2016

*(The Neurobiology of Trauma: What You Need to Know About the Brain and Trauma, Part 2; Dr. Rebecca Campbell, Ph.D. Professor of Psychology, Michigan State University)*

# Memory and the Impact of Trauma – The Low Road



- ▶ **Pre-Frontal Cortex** – data driven processing, logical thought, control of attention, and the high road to memory – is impaired
- ▶ 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

# Memory and the Impact Of Trauma – The Low Road

- ▶ Fragmented
  - ▶ Not organized in a contextual, chronological narrative
- ▶ Incomplete
  - ▶ Peripheral details will be missing, or poorly encoded
- ▶ Disclosure is a process



Dr. Rebecca Campbell, PhD  
Professor of Psychology  
Michigan State University

# At the Time of the Event

## Victim



- Amygdala
- Survival brain
- Fragmented recall
- Memory lapses

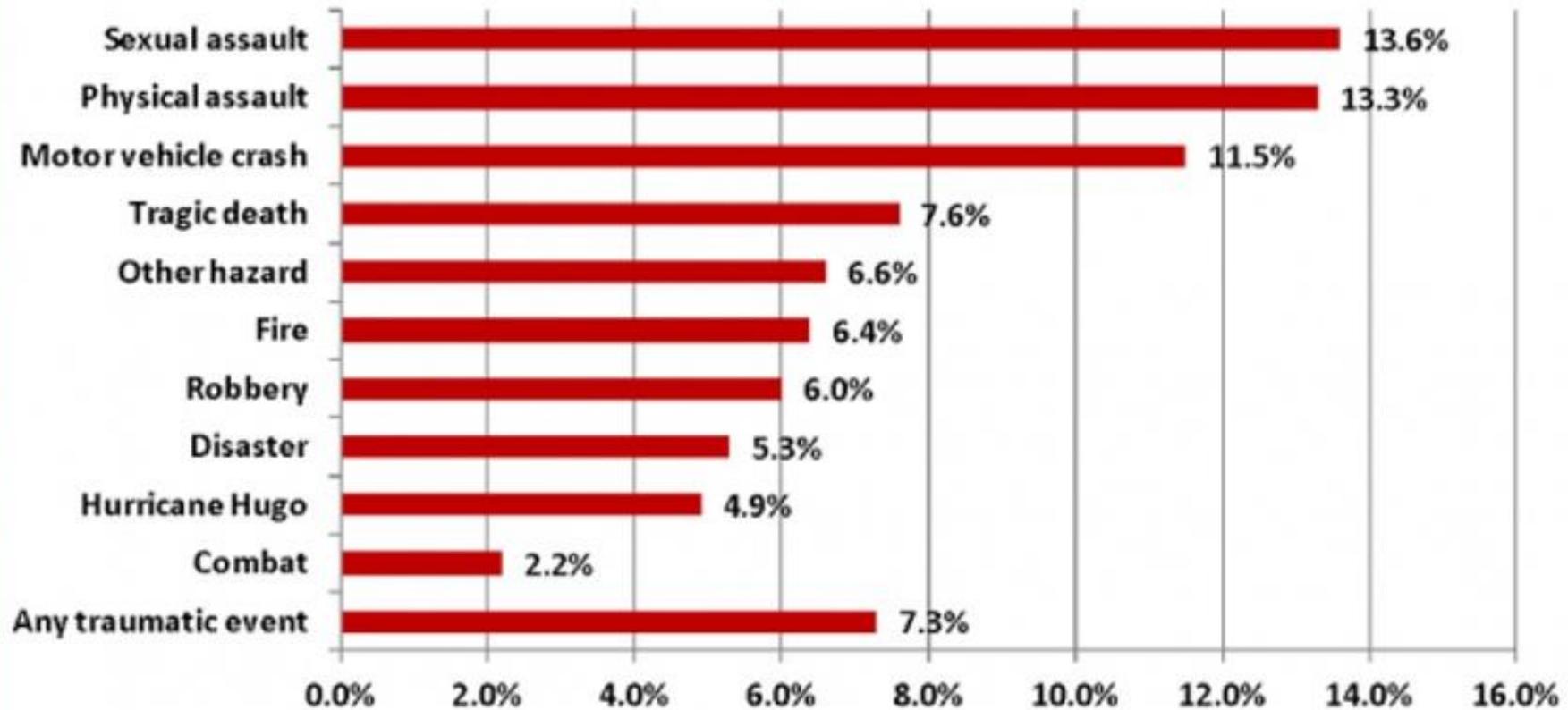
## Suspect



- Pre-frontal cortex
- Rational thought
- Linear articulation
- Complete story

# Trauma is Trauma

**Figure 1. Percentage of adults (18+) who develop PTSD after exposure to trauma by trauma type**



# After the Event

- ▶ It can take 96 hours for hormones to return to regular levels
  - ▶ Hormone imbalance can be re-triggered later
  - ▶ Hormones levels may not have the chance to decrease for victims in abusive relationships
- ▶ Physiological changes in the body can cause a variety of lasting reactions
  - *Lack of emotion, flat affect*
  - *Smiling, laughing*
  - *Upset, crying*
  - *Shock, numbness*
  - *Confusion*
  - *Anger*
  - *Isolation*
  - *Depression*
  - *Manic behavior*
- ▶ There's no one way people react to traumatic events

# Potential Long-Term Consequences

- ▶ Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
- ▶ Depression
- ▶ Dissociation and emotional numbing
- ▶ Anger, aggression, self-harming
- ▶ Other anxiety disorders (phobias, panic)
- ▶ Substance and behavioral addictions
- ▶ Relationship problems, disconnection, isolation
- ▶ Eating problems
- ▶ Sleep problems

# Large Group Activity: Victim Trauma

*I am a  
survivor  
of rape.*

# Officer Trauma and Victim Trauma

## Officer:

- ▶ “I never heard the gunshots...”
- ▶ “I needed to know that I put up a fight b/c I had no recollection”
- ▶ “I thought we are going to die”

## Victim/Survivor:

- ▶ “Not exactly sure what happened”
- ▶ “I don’t really know how long it lasted”
- ▶ “I kinda just blanked out / I just went somewhere else”

# Trauma informed approach recognizes:

- ▶ **Disclosure is a process**, not an event!
- ▶ Delayed reporting, inability to recall details and sequence of events is common as a result of **victim trauma**
- ▶ Victim may remember additional details over time, keep options open for continued disclosures
- ▶ Traumatic memory is stored in the brain differently

# Things to remember about trauma

- Trauma triggers chemicals in the brain
- Chemicals influence perception, reaction, and memory
- Memory becomes fragmented
- Memory is stored in the brain differently
- We **do not** control how the brain and body respond to trauma

# How we respond matters

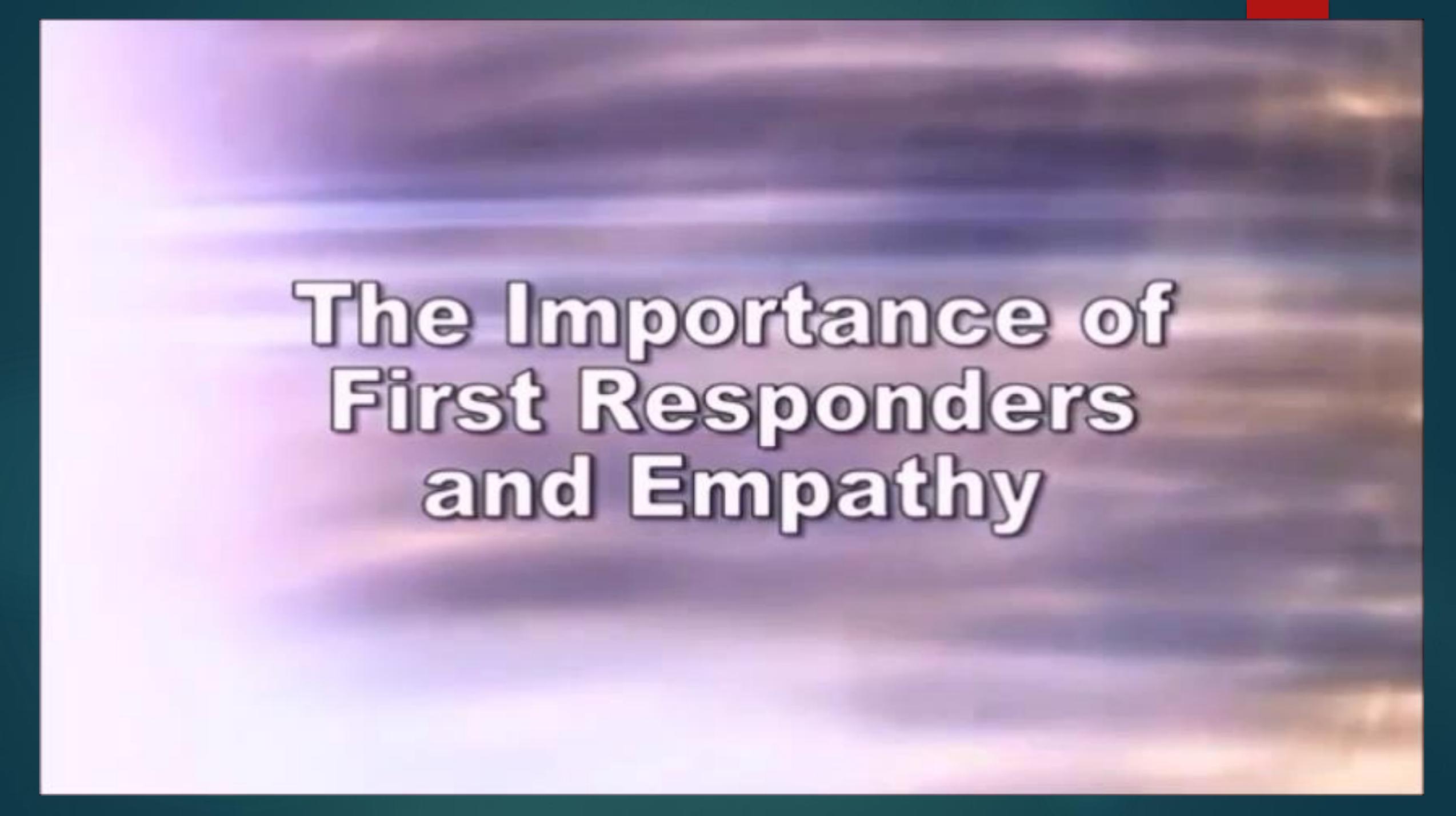
Trauma alters the brain, triggering chemicals that influence perception, reactions, behavior, demeanor, and memory

- ▶ Traumatic Memory is fragmented- can not provide a narrative and is sometimes misinterpreted as lying by law enforcement, family, friends, and society
- ▶ Delayed reporting and inability to recall details and sequence of events is common as a result of trauma
- ▶ We do not control how the brain and body respond
- ▶ Demeanor – lack of emotion or odd or inappropriate affect – misinterpreted as lying or “not being upset”
- ▶ Sensory memories may be more detailed

# First Impressions Matter

BY BEING EMPATHETIC, PATIENT, AND RESPECTFUL, (YOU) CAN CONTRIBUTE TO THE IMMEDIATE AND LONG-TERM RECOVERY OF THE VICTIM AND LAY THE FOUNDATION FOR COOPERATION AND RESPECT ON WHICH A SUCCESSFUL INTERVIEW, INVESTIGATION AND PROSECUTION IS BUILT.”

*IACP SEXUAL ASSAULT ISSUES AND CONCEPT PAPER*



# **The Importance of First Responders and Empathy**



BREAK



# Trauma-Informed Victim Interviewing



# Trauma-Informed Interview Best Practices

- ▶ Initial victim interview
- ▶ Detailed follow-up interview

# Trauma-Informed Interview Best Practices

- ▶ Use two full sleep cycles as a baseline after the incident to conduct the detailed follow-up interview.
- ▶ With the victim's permission, arrange for an advocate or support person to attend the interview.
- ▶ Work with the victim to identify an interview location that is convenient and comfortable for the victim.
- ▶ Wear attire that will not be perceived as intimidating or threatening by the victim.
- ▶ Provide contact information.
- ▶ Explain next steps and confidentiality.

# Trauma-Informed Interview Best Practices

- ▶ Express compassion.
- ▶ Use open-ended questions.
- ▶ Listen.
- ▶ Do not interrupt.

# Trauma-Informed Interview Best Practices

- ▶ “I’m sorry this happened to you.”
- ▶ “This is not your fault.”
- ▶ “You are not alone, how can we help you?”
- ▶ “Your health and safety are our priority.”

# Trauma-Informed Interview Best Practices

- ▶ “Where would you like to start?”
- ▶ “What are you able to tell me about your experience?”
- ▶ Allow for an uninterrupted narrative.
- ▶ Wait until after the narrative to ask clarifying questions.
- ▶ Use the victim’s words or descriptions.

# Trauma-Informed Interview Best Practices

**AVOID** the following:

- ▶ Questions that start with “why”
- ▶ Directives such as “explain to me...”
- ▶ Requests for a chronological account with prompts such as “and then what happened?”

# Reframing Interview Questions

Ask about sensations and thoughts using the victim's words or description of what happened:

- ▶ “When (specific event happened), are you able to tell me about your feelings?”
- ▶ “When (specific event happened), are you able to tell me about your thoughts?”
- ▶ “How did you feel after/before (specific event happened)?”
- ▶ “What are you able to remember smelling when (specific event happened)? Are you able to tell me more about that?”
  - ▶ Break each of the 5 senses—smell, sight, touch, taste, sound—into a separate question

# Reframing Interview Questions

Explain why you're asking the question:

- ▶ ~~“What were you wearing?”~~
- ▶ “Sometimes we can get valuable evidence from the clothes you were wearing, even if you've put them through the laundry. We'd like to get the clothes you were wearing at the time of the assault as evidence. Can we pick up those items at a time and place that is convenient for you?”

# Reframing Interview Questions

Explain why you're asking the question:

▶ ~~“Were you drinking?”~~

▶ ~~“Were you taking drugs?”~~

▶ “Can you tell us if you had been drinking at the time of the assault? We are not investigating your drinking. We are concerned for your safety and about what happened to you. This helps us to establish an element of the crime and get a better picture of what was happening during the assault and provide you with additional support.”

▶ Ask the same questions about taking drugs

# Trauma-Informed Interview Best Practices

- ▶ Ask about all five senses – **hearing, smelling, tasting, touching, seeing**
  - ▶ “If anything, what do you remember **hearing** during (a specific time)?”
  - ▶ “Do you remember **smelling** anything when (an event happened)? Would you tell me more about that?”
  - ▶ “When (specific event happened), are you able to tell me about what you were **seeing**?”

# Trauma-Informed Interview Best Practices

- ▶ Ask about additional “senses.” – **thinking, feeling**
- ▶ Emotional memory establishes an element – fear, force, or coercion:
  - ▶ “Would you help me understand what you were **thinking** when (specific event happened)...?”
  - ▶ “What were your **feelings** while you were in (the room, the car, the house, etc.)?”
  - ▶ “What was going on **in your mind** when you realized you were in danger?”
  - ▶ “How did you **feel** when/after/before (specific event happened)?”

# Discussion – Large Group



Share an example from a case where sensory details led to evidence that corroborated the victim's account.

# Discussion – Large Group

- ▶ What are ways investigators should handle discrepancies/inaccuracies in follow up interviews?
- ▶ What does it mean to “listen and verify”?



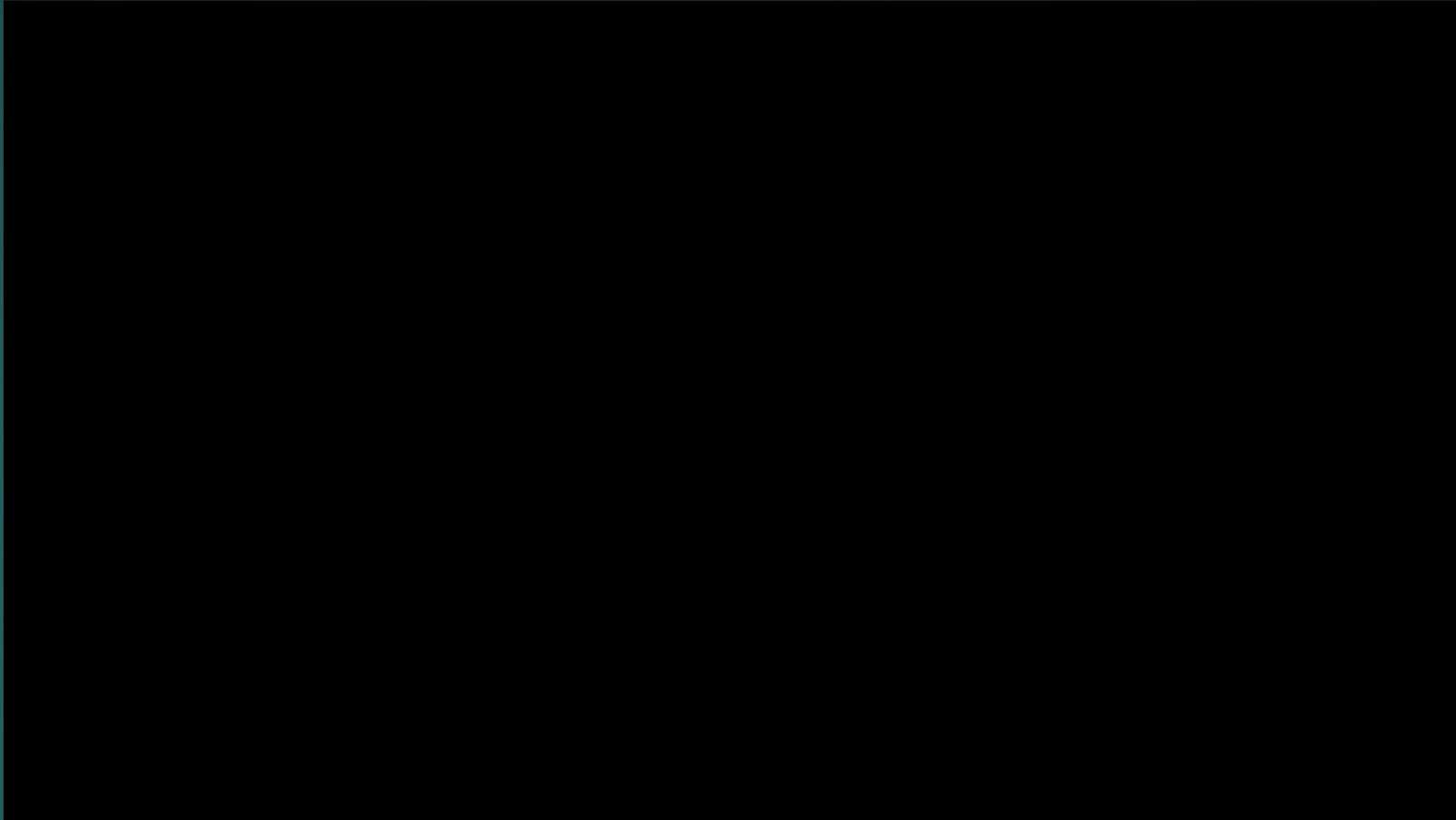
BREAK

# Practical Applications & Scenarios: Trauma Informed Interviewing

# Example Interview: What NOT to Do



# Example Interview: What TO Do





BREAK

# Practical Application: Trauma-Informed Interviews

- We will practice 3 different scenarios.
- For each, identify a person who will be the interviewing officer, and one person to be the "victim." Use the info on the file as your prompts.
- All other participants will be observers.
- Observers will offer feedback on what the responding officer did well, and what they could consider doing differently.
- Interviewer and victim will have 5 minutes for each scenario; whole groups will debrief each scenario for 3 minutes.

# Key Take-Aways: Trauma-Informed Interview Scenarios



What did we see?



What worked well?



What are we still  
struggling with?



BREAK



# Perpetrator Tactics and Behaviors

## Stereotypes & Myths Prevail

Sexual assault perpetrators are creepy, violent strangers jumping out of the bushes (or old van) at night.

Are driven and reinforced by social media and news reports.

Creates a false sense of security, because then we believe we can avoid the circumstances under which sexual assault happens (to other people).

# Understanding Sexual Assault Perpetrators

- ▶ Are manipulative, strategic, calculating, and opportunistic
- ▶ Prey on victims perceived as vulnerable, and use strategies to increase vulnerability
- ▶ Know their victims
- ▶ Are often repeat perpetrators with a series of and/or multiple victims
- ▶ Often use only the amount of violence necessary to subdue/coerce/intimidate/threaten the victim
- ▶ Frequently have a history of or engage in other violent crimes

# Understanding Sexual Assault Perpetrators

- ▶ Perpetrators who raped a known partner or acquaintance are also likely to have raped a stranger
  - ▶ 2016 study, 33.3% of perpetrators
- ▶ Domestic violence perpetrators use sexual assault as a tool of power and control
  - ▶ CDC - 18.3% of women and 8.2% of men experienced sexual assault by an intimate partner

# Understanding Sexual Assault Perpetrators

- ▶ Perpetrators tend to:
  - ▶ Feel entitled to sex
  - ▶ Seek and use power and control
  - ▶ Believe men and women are unequal
  - ▶ Believe that masculinity is defined by having sex with many women
  - ▶ Believe that aggression and dominance are tied to masculinity
  - ▶ Believe in rigid gender roles

# Understanding Sexual Assault Perpetrators

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## ***Vulnerable***

Perpetrators target individuals who are or who they can make:

Vulnerability factors can include age, disability, addiction, power dynamics, forms of "isolation" and "credibility"

## ***Accessible***

How available the victim is to the perpetrator and how difficult it is for the perpetrator to isolate them

## ***Perceived as less credible***

Marginalized populations, addiction disorders, mental disorders, lifestyle choices, use of drugs or alcohol

# Understanding Sexual Assault Perpetrators

- ▶ Target individuals they perceive as already vulnerable and less likely to be believed by society: family, friends, law enforcement, prosecutors, judges, juries
  - ▶ Physical or mental disabilities
  - ▶ Mental health issues
  - ▶ Engage in sex work
  - ▶ Under the influence of drugs or alcohol
  - ▶ Marginalized populations
- ▶ Use tactics to increase victim vulnerability and reduce victim credibility

# Perpetrator Tactics

Targeting

Grooming/Organizing

Testing

Manipulation

Isolating

Coercion

Daniel  
Holtzclaw  
Case Study

DEMOCRACY  
**NOW!**

Play (k)



*“He didn’t choose CEOs or soccer moms. He chose women he could count on not telling.”*

– Prosecutor Lori McConnell

# Oklahoma's Daniel Holtzclaw

## Holtzclaw chose victims for their perceived vulnerability and lack of credibility

- ▶ Found to have assaulted 13 Black women, most of whom were low income and some who were using alcohol/drugs, and who had prior convictions.
- ▶ December 20, 2013 – first known sexual assault
- ▶ May 8, 2014 – Oklahoma City Police began investigating Holtzclaw for sexual assault. However, he was allowed to remain on regular duty.
- ▶ Assaulted 5 more women while still on-duty
- ▶ June 18, 2014 - Jannie Ligons who did not meet the profile of his other victims was assaulted by Holtzclaw and reported the assault
- ▶ December 9, 2015 - Convicted of sexual assault for 8 of the 13 victims. Sentenced to 263 years in prison.

# Small Group Discussions: Daniel Holtzclaw

- What were the behaviors of the perpetrator?
- What were the tactics of the perpetrator?
- What were the special circumstances because the perpetrator was an officer?

# Offender-Focused Investigative Strategies

# Investigative Strategies

## Investigate

Investigate the perpetrator's course of conduct, not just the current crime.

## Investigate

Investigate the perpetrator, not the victim.

## Start

Start your investigation looking at the victim through the perpetrator's eyes – as a target.

## Do not decide

Each case is unique; do not decide this case based on your last case.

## Ask about

Ask about context and history.

## Expect

Expect perpetrator to try to manipulate law enforcement.

# Investigative Strategies

- ▶ Look for multiple victims.
  - ▶ Talk to friends, family, peers, former partners.
  - ▶ Other victims may come forward if arrest is publicized.

This changes the case from “he said/she said” to “he said/they said.”

# Controlled Phone Calls

- ▶ Pre-text phone calls
  - ▶ Before suspect is aware of investigation
  - ▶ Detailed plan that the victim is comfortable with and a story that will get suspect talking
  - ▶ Victim advocate or support person present
  - ▶ Support any decision the victim makes
  - ▶ Vital to debrief
  - ▶ May require multiple phone calls
  - ▶ Software to enhance evidence collection, e.g. Callyo (<https://callyo.com/>)



Prep Work: Play an example of a successful pre-text phone call. Important – redact any identifying information.

# Perpetrator Pre-Offense Actions

- ▶ In cases of alcohol-facilitated sexual assault:
  - ▶ Who was buying/providing the drinks/drugs?
  - ▶ How much alcohol/drugs were provided?
  - ▶ What were the intoxication levels of the victim and suspect?
- ▶ Surveillance videos
- ▶ Receipts for drug/alcohol purchases

# Perpetrator Post-Offense Actions

- ▶ Examine the suspect's actions post-assault:
  - ▶ What did he say to his friends? (get to them quickly)
  - ▶ What did he put on his social network site?
  - ▶ What did he say to the victim?

# Perpetrator Characteristics

- ▶ Expect perpetrator to be unwilling to see their actions as rape and/or sexual assault
- ▶ Understanding the non-stranger sex perpetrator:
  - ▶ May have had no prior contact with police
  - ▶ Don't believe they did anything wrong
  - ▶ Admit to sex – say it was consensual
  - ▶ Believe in rape myths
  - ▶ Have hypermasculine (macho) attitudes
  - ▶ Explained as “sex gone bad... a misunderstanding”



BREAK

Consent

# Consent

Perpetrators frequently use the “consent defense.”

How you define consent, as the investigator, frames how you approach the investigation and prosecution of a sexual violence case.

# What is Consent?

- ▶ What is your definition of “consent?”
- ▶ In what non-sexual situations/circumstances do we have to give or receive “consent”?

# What is Consent?

“YES!”?

Silence...?

Active enthusiastic  
participation?

Something in between?

## **F** FREELY GIVEN

Consenting is a choice you make without pressure, manipulation, or under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

## **R** REVERSIBLE

Anyone can change their mind about what they feel like doing, anytime. Even if you've done it before, and even if you're both naked in bed.

## **I** INFORMED

You can only consent to something if you have the full story. For example, if someone says they'll use a condom and then they don't, there isn't full consent.

## **E** ENTHUSIASTIC

When it comes to sex, you should only do stuff you WANT to do, not things that you feel you're expected to do.

## **S** SPECIFIC

Saying yes to one thing (like going to the bedroom to make out) doesn't mean you've said yes to others (like having sex).



## What is NOT consent?

### The following are NOT consent:

- Giving in because of fear
- Going along to avoid being hurt
- Giving in because of pressure
- Going along to gain approval or avoid reprisal
- Inability to provide continued consent
- Agreeing to one act is not blanket consent.
- Consent can be revoked at any point.
- Compliance is not consent.

# Consent in Intimate Relationships

Consent to sexual acts at one time is not consent for those acts at a future time.

Consent and lack of consent can be expressed verbally and through body language which partners are familiar with.

CDC - 18.3% of women and 8.2% of men have experienced sexual assault by an intimate partner.





BREAK

# Suspect Interviewing

# Suspect Interviewing

- ▶ Not a traditional suspect interrogation
- ▶ Aims to build rapport with the suspect
- ▶ More effective means of obtaining information from suspect
- ▶ Give suspect the opportunity to share “their side of the story” in order to ultimately hold them accountable
  - ▶ Feign sympathy and understanding

# Suspect Interviewing

Shares some characteristics with trauma-informed interviewing:

- ▶ Active listening
- ▶ Listening more than you speak
- ▶ Listening and hearing without judgement
- ▶ Not interrupting
- ▶ Using open-ended questions
- ▶ Using phrases such as, “Can you help me to understand...?”

# Suspect Interviewing

Suspect interviews are based on thorough investigative groundwork. The goals of the interview can be to:

- ▶ Lock the suspect into a story
- ▶ Identify the suspect's defense strategy
- ▶ Corroborate the victim's statement
- ▶ Identify additional investigative avenues/leads
- ▶ Identify additional crimes
- ▶ Obtain admissions/concessions and/or a confession



Suspect  
Investigation and  
Interviewing  
Activity



BREAK

# Report Writing

# Report Writing

- ▶ Summarize the evidence and context uncovered during the investigation.
- ▶ Describe the tools, objects, or weapons that were used and how they were used.
- ▶ Detail the experience in ways that do not minimize or trivialize it.
- ▶ Use direct quotes.
- ▶ Do not sanitize victim's language.

# Report Should Include:

- ▶ Perpetrator's behavior, including premeditation, grooming, coercion, threats, force, etc.
- ▶ Traumatic reaction of the victim before, during, and after the assault
- ▶ What the victim observed with 5 senses: see, smell, taste, hear, touch
- ▶ Additional senses: what the victim thought, felt, and feared
- ▶ Victim's condition
  - ▶ Physical: Injuries, clothes, etc.
  - ▶ Emotional: Fight, flight, or freeze response

# Document What the Victim Says

## Sensory details explain behavior and/or emotion

- *Do not use: Victim never made any attempt to scream or get away*
- Use victim's exact wording: "I felt like a couldn't move. I was on autopilot, like it was happening to someone else."

## Emotional memory establishes an element – fear, force, or coercion

- *Do not use: Victim stated she didn't do anything to stop him*
- Use the victim's exact wording: "When he climbed on top of me, I was afraid he was going to kill me."

# Reports Should NOT Include:

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Editorializing (the 14-year-old victim appeared older than her chronological age)

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Victim blaming statements (victim willingly drank alcohol with him)

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Vague quantitative words (for example, a lot, lots, many, some)

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Police jargon

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Subjective nondescriptive terms (acted strange, seemed upset, not normal)

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Sanitized or cleaned-up language if not used by the victim (writing penis vs. dick)

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Consensual language, terms of affection, or words depicting mutual participation (made love, engaged in oral sex, hugged, cuddled, caressed)

# Words/Phrases Carry Meaning

## CONNOTATION?

- Victim claims/alleges...
- Victim's story
- Victim consented
- Uncooperative victim
  
- The victim's delayed report...

## BETTER CHOICE

- Victim reports, says, states...
- Victim's account
- Victim submitted
- Reluctant or non-participatory victim
- 10 days after the victim states she was raped...

# Trauma Informed Victim Interview Best Practices - Recap

Trauma affects response, investigation, interview, and cold case follow-up.

- ▶ Disclosure is a process, not an event.
- ▶ Victims may remember additional details over time, keep options open for continued disclosures.
- ▶ The interview is a way to allow victims to express what their experience was rather than just what they remember or do not remember.
- ▶ Capturing the trauma and the sensory and peripheral details of the event is compelling evidence.

# Trauma Informed Victim Interview Best Practices - Recap

- ▶ Show compassion and respect.
- ▶ Active listening.
- ▶ Use open-ended questions.
- ▶ Ask about all five senses.
- ▶ Ask about thoughts, feelings, and emotions.
- ▶ Document accurately and thoroughly.
- ▶ Use appropriate case code.



# Partnerships and Collaborations

# Foundation of Collaboration



# Collaborations and Partnerships

What are the various communities your department serves?

- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual
- Transgender, Gender Non-Conforming
- People with:
  - Mental Illness
  - Addictions
  - Disabilities
- Economically Disadvantaged
- Visitors
- Immigrants
- Ethnic & Racial Minorities
- Military/ROTC
- Religious/Faith Communities
- Others?

# Collaborations and Partnerships



- Of this list, how many of these groups trust you enough to call on a regular basis?
- Of this list, who is not calling you?
  - What are the barriers keeping them from calling?
  - What are you doing to encourage these groups to call?

# Collaborations and Partnerships



Who are your local community partners?

- Prosecutors
- Law enforcement (local, federal)
- Community advocates
- Domestic Violence Response Team (DVRT)
- SANEs/Nurses/Health Care
- Coordinated Community Response (CCR) members
- Labs/forensic
- Domestic Violence Fatality Review group members
- Human Trafficking Task Force members
- Victim Compensation Program
- Others?

# Partners

- ▶ Do you know what your partners do?
- ▶ What is the LE role in the partnership?
- ▶ What does your partner need from you?

# Internal Partnerships

- ▶ Do officers and units within your agency partner?
- ▶ Who are your internal partners?

# Why should I collaborate?

- ▶ Improved inter-discipline communication and assistance
- ▶ Share expertise/resources
- ▶ Dispels myths/ discipline mis-conceptions
- ▶ Educate on the limitations of LE/investigative standards
- ▶ Identify area of opportunity and gaps
- ▶ Allows sharing of resources
- ▶ Improved assistance to victims and families
- ▶ Coordinated victim support = Strengthens victim cooperation = Increased victim reporting
- ▶ Creates stronger investigation

# Collaborations and Partnerships



What effective partnerships and collaborations have you created in order to strengthen the response to and investigation of violence against women crimes?

# Collaborations and Partnerships

- ▶ Clear goals and mission (unified commitment)
- ▶ Clear roles and responsibilities: (accountability)
- ▶ The right people (competency)
- ▶ Trust
- ▶ Clear structure/principled leadership
- ▶ External support and resources

1998; Larson and LaFasto:  
Eight Characteristics of Successful Teams.

# Collaborations and Partnerships

Work with partners to:

- ▶ Cross train staff/agency members
- ▶ Mutually assist with development and review of protocol and procedures
- ▶ Maintain constant communication; consistent meetings
- ▶ Create Memorandum of Understanding
- ▶ Create a campus-wide priority and legacy to effectively address violence against women crimes

# Collaborations and Partnerships



Why do you engage partners?

- ▶ Intelligence and other information.
- ▶ They may have more direct contact with community members.
- ▶ They may be able to help explain context in an incident.
- ▶ Important for community members to see you in a positive light.

# Collaborations and Partnerships

Ways law enforcement can develop and enhance relationships:

- ▶ Participate in 'Take Back the Night' events
- ▶ Take part in campus cultural heritage celebrations
- ▶ Create a liaison programs
- ▶ Increase presence via foot and bike patrol
- ▶ Tabling events
- ▶ "Coffee with the Cops"
- ▶ Others?