

Your Journey Together & Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Six Principles of Trauma-Informed Approach

Your Journey Together is designed to be delivered with sensitivity to the prevalence of trauma in the lives of vulnerable children and families. The YJT curriculum was developed to reflect the six key principles of a trauma-informed approach promulgated by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (2014): safety; trustworthiness; peer support; collaboration; empowerment, and cultural, historical and gender issues. This alignment tool provides more information on how these principles are incorporated into the YJT curriculum.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2014). *SAMHSA’s Concept of Trauma and Guidance for a Trauma-Informed Approach*. (HHS Publication No. 14-4884). Retrieved from <http://store.samhsa.gov/product/SAMHSA-s-Concept-of-Trauma-and-Guidance-for-a-Trauma-Informed-Approach/SMA14-4884>

SAMHSA Principle #1 – Safety

“...staff and the people they serve, whether children or adults, feel physically and psychologically safe; the physical setting is safe and interpersonal interactions promote a sense of safety. Understanding safety as defined by those served is a high priority.”

YJT and Children	YJT and Adult Caregivers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children feel safe when they know what to expect. YJT supports parents in providing consistency for their children. • Children feel safe when they are engaged in trusting relationships with caregivers. YJT supports parents in developing attuned relationships with their children. • YJT emphasizes creating a physically safe environment for children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coaches are encouraged to collaborate with each family to identify their unique strengths and needs and to sensitively adapt the curriculum accordingly. • Adults feel safe when they know what to expect. Expectations are made very clear for parents by recapping prior sessions and reviewing future sessions throughout the “journey.” • Coaches are encouraged to promote emotional and psychological safety by giving parents many opportunities to openly express their feelings and thoughts.

SAMHSA Principle #2 – Trustworthiness and Transparency

“...decision are conducted with transparency with the goal of building and maintaining trust with clients and family members, among staff...”

YJT and Children	YJT and Adult Caregivers
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Children can trust their parents when routines and rituals are established with them and are consistent. Parents are given strategies to develop consistent routines and expectations are made clear to their children.• Children develop trust when parents are reliable. Coaches encourage parents to follow through with what they say and do with their children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• YJT is designed to be delivered over time to help coaches develop a trusting, relationship with the parent.• Transparency is emphasized through clear expectations, open conversations, and collaborative decision-making with parents about the course of their unique “journey.”

SAMHSA Principle #3 – Peer Support

“Peer support and mutual self-help are key vehicles for establishing safety and hope, building trust, enhancing collaboration, and utilizing their stories and lived experience to promote recovery and healing. The term “Peers” refers to individuals with lived experiences of trauma, or in the case of children this may be family members of children who have experienced traumatic events and are key caregivers in their recovery. Peers have also been referred to as “Trauma Survivors.”

YJT and Children	YJT and Adult Caregivers
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• YJT focuses on helping children build the skills for positive relationships and attachments with peers, siblings and adults to help them recover, heal, and achieve future success.• Parents are taught how risk experiences impact their children’s healthy development and future life outcomes. They are encouraged to enhance their relationship with their children in ways that support resilience, healing, and recovery.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The adult resilience support parents in building a social network with trusted adults in their lives.• Parents are encouraged to connect and share stories of risk and resilience with peers who they can trust.• YJT can be delivered to parents in a group setting, allowing for parents to build relationships with other parents and create a support network.

SAMHSA Principle #4 – Collaboration and Mutuality

“Importance is placed on partnering and the leveling of power differences between staff and clients... healing happens in relationships and in meaningful sharing of power and decision making...”

YJT and Children	YJT and Adult Caregivers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents are guided to recognize their children’s strengths and individuality, and to support their children in developing the initiative to make positive decisions and choices. Parents are encouraged to make developmentally appropriate decisions while honoring their children’s ideas and preferences. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> YJT uses a relationship-based coaching model that encourages a respectful and equal partnership between parents and coach. Parents are empowered to take the lead and be equal participants and at times take the lead in activities within the curriculum. Coaches build the capacity of parents to make healthy decisions for themselves and their children.

SAMHSA Principle #5 – Empowerment, Voice and Choice

“...individuals’ strengths and experiences are recognized and built upon. The organization fosters a belief in the primacy of the people served, in resilience and in the ability of individuals to heal and promote recovery from trauma...Organizations understand the importance of power differentials and ways in which clients, historically, have been diminished in voice and choice and are often recipients of coercive treatment. Clients are supported in... goal setting to determine the plan of action they need to heal and move forward...”

YJT and Children	YJT and Adult Caregivers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> YJT uses a strength-based approach that emphasizes resilience, hope and the ability to adapt to adversity. Parents complete an assessment and identify their child’s strengths and goals, and make a plan of action to help their child heal and move forward. Parents have the opportunity to reflect upon their caregiving or parenting practices and identify those areas where they are strong and those where they would like to improve. Children are supported in developing hopefulness, optimism and belief in their abilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> YJT uses a strength-based approach that emphasizes resilience, hope and the ability to adapt to adversity. Coaches encourage parents to believe that they are valuable and capable throughout the curriculum. Parents complete a reflective checklist and identify their strengths, their goals, and make a plan of action for their own healing and moving forward.

SAMHSA Principle #6 – Cultural, Historical and Gender Issues

“The organization actively moves past cultural stereotypes and biases (e.g. based on race ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, religion, gender identity, geography, etc.); offers access to gender responsive services; leverages the healing value of traditional cultural connections; incorporates policies, protocols and processes that are responsive to the racial, ethnic and cultural needs of individuals served; and recognizes and addresses historical trauma.”

YJT and Children	YJT and Adult Caregivers
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Parents are encouraged to reflect upon, respect and respond to the unique needs and characteristics of each of their children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">YJT includes an activity to help caregivers reflect upon their family histories without judgment or guilt.Parents are guided to reflect upon and strengthen their internal beliefs.Coaches are also instructed to consider their own values and beliefs and put the families first.Coaches are encouraged to spend time getting to know and respecting the makeup, the priorities, beliefs and culture of each family.