Adverse Community Experiences and Resilience:

A Framework for Addressing and Preventing Community Trauma

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Objectives

Participants will:

1. Describe what community trauma is and where it comes from

2. Make a case for why addressing and preventing community trauma is important

3. Delineate how to address and prevent community trauma through community strategies

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What's Trauma Got to Do with it?

How the Environment Affects Wellbeing

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Use the chat function to identify risk & protective factors in the following pictures

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Florence, South Carolina

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Chicago, Illinois

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Photo Source: http://www.nydailynews.com/news/politics/brooklyn-jail-playground-rebuilt-white-house-mark-america-historic-moments-article-1.173202

MY NEIGHBORHOOD IS KILLING ME

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Exposures

Environment

Illness & Injury

Behavior

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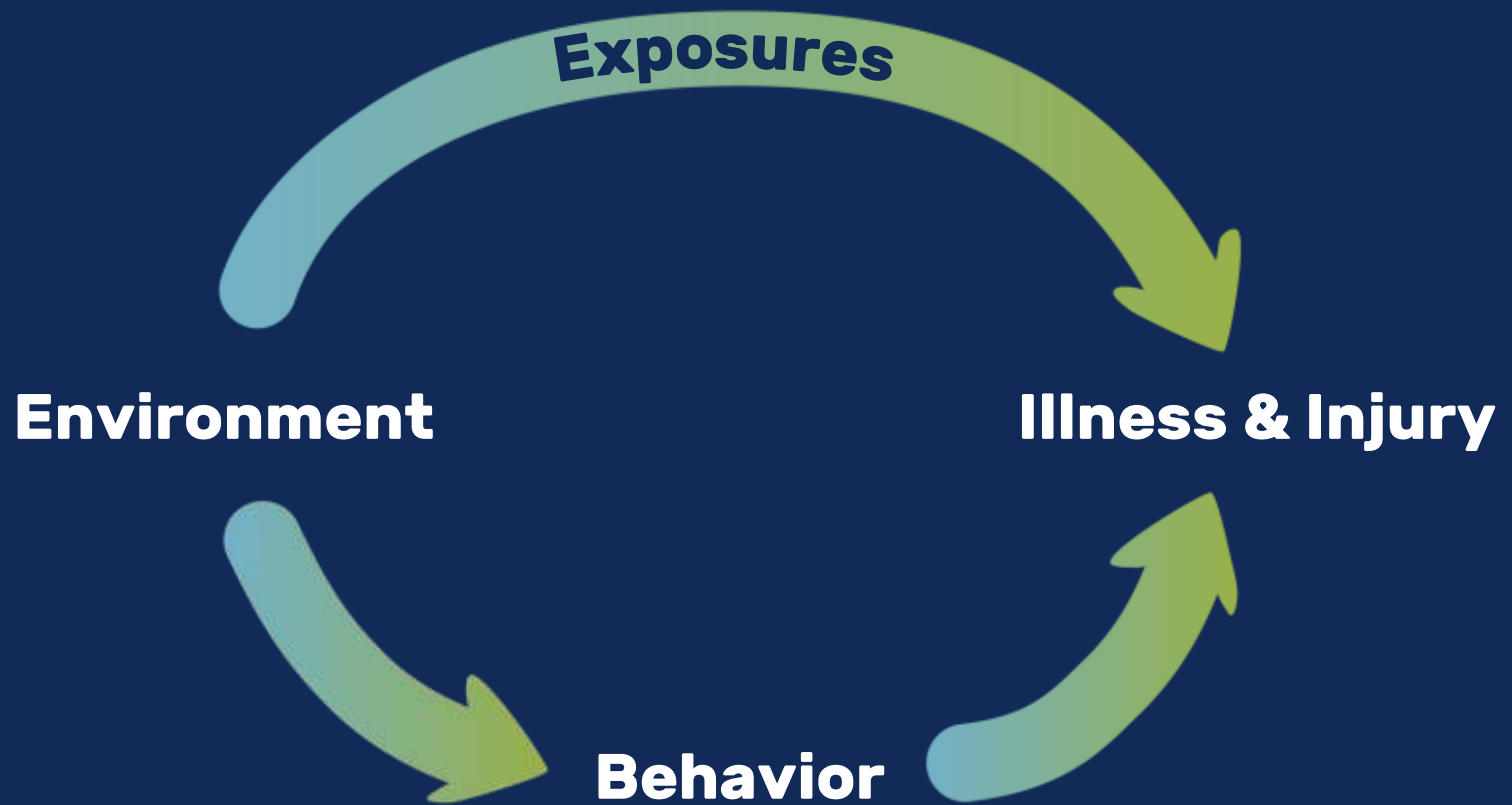
"It is unreasonable to expect that people will change their behavior easily when so many forces in the **social**, **cultural**, and **physical** environment conspire against such change.

- Institute of Medicine

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Moving Upstream

We are still standing on the bank of the river, rescuing people who are drowning. We have not gone to the head of the river to keep them from falling in.
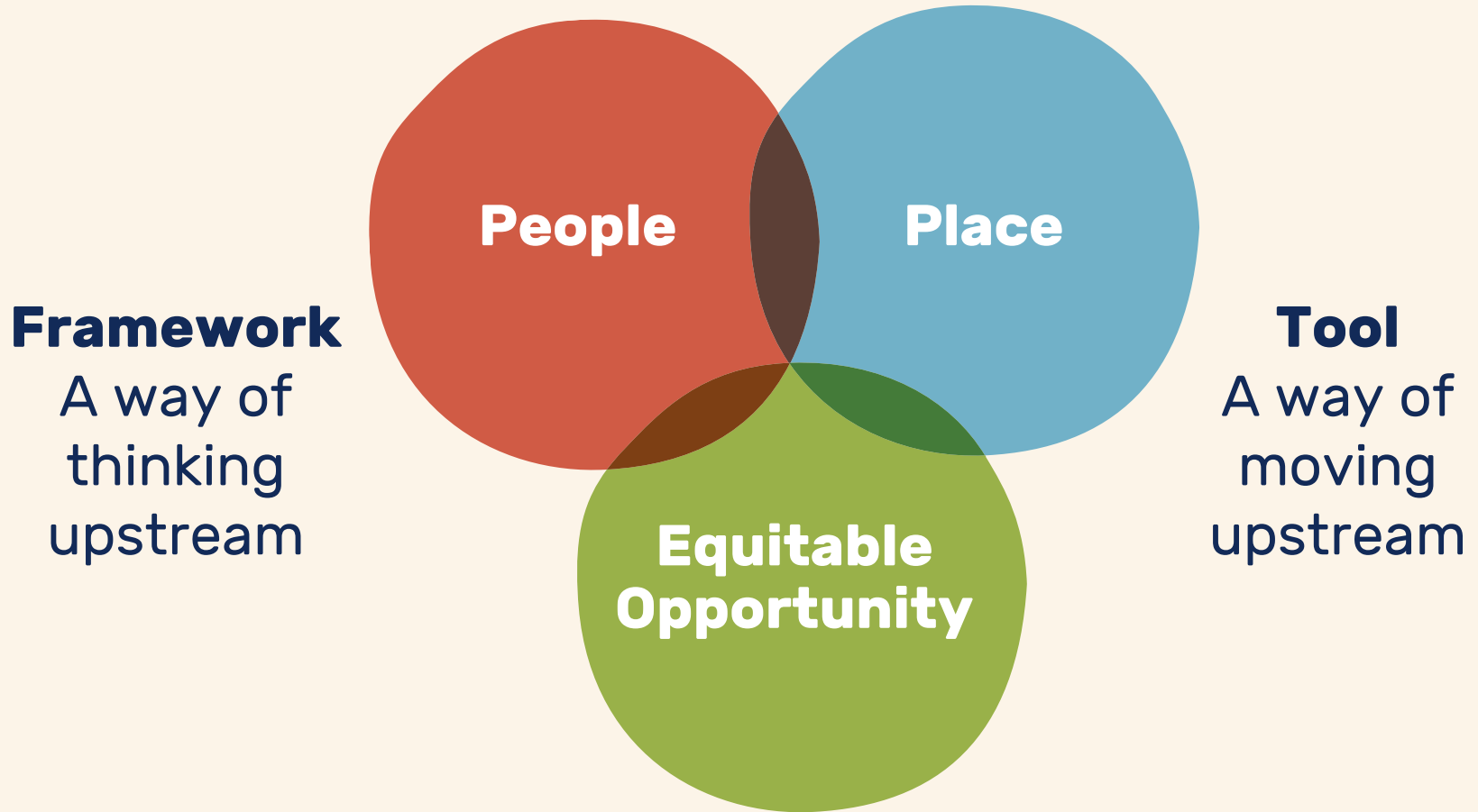
That is the 21st century task."
Gloria Steinem

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THRIVE
Tool for Health and Resilience In Vulnerable Environments

Federal Office of Minority Health

THRIVE

People

Place

Framework
A way of thinking upstream

Tool
A way of moving upstream

Equitable Opportunity

A way to engage communities in dialogue

THRIVE Factors

People

Social networks & trust

Participation & willingness to act for the common good

Norms & culture

Equitable Opportunity

Education

Living wages & local wealth

Place

What's sold & how it's promoted

Look, feel, & safety

Housing

Parks & open space

Air, water & soil

Getting around

Arts & cultural expression

What can be done to prevent the problem from *occurring in the first place?*

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Discussion/Reflection Questions:

1. How does this definition of prevention align with your work on prevention?

2. How does it expand your understanding of prevention?

3. How might this focus on prevention that considers community factors inform your work?

What is Community Trauma?

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Trauma: What We Know

- There is growing understanding about trauma, particularly its prevalence and impact.

- Trauma is the impact of experiences or situations that are painful.

- Trauma-informed care is becoming a standard in a growing number of places

- The predominant approach to dealing with trauma is screening and treatment, consistent with an individual medical model.

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Community Trauma: What We're Learning

- Trauma also manifests at the community level, and is not just the aggregate of individuals in a neighborhood who have experienced trauma.

- Community trauma is the impact of chronic adversity (e.g., violence and structural violence) across a community.

- There is an understanding that trauma serves as a barrier to effective solutions to promote health, safety and well-being.

- There are manifestations, or symptoms, of community trauma in the social-cultural, physical/built and economic environments.

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Structural Drivers Also Contribute to Trauma

- Structural drivers are the **inequitable distribution** of power, money, and resources

- Structural drivers create the conditions that harm communities and contribute to trauma

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Symptoms of Community Trauma

Community trauma symptoms are the manifestations of the impact of experiencing adversity (structural violence and/or violence) across a community.

Examples include:

- damaged social networks
- a low sense of social and political efficacy
- deteriorated built environments
- intergenerational poverty
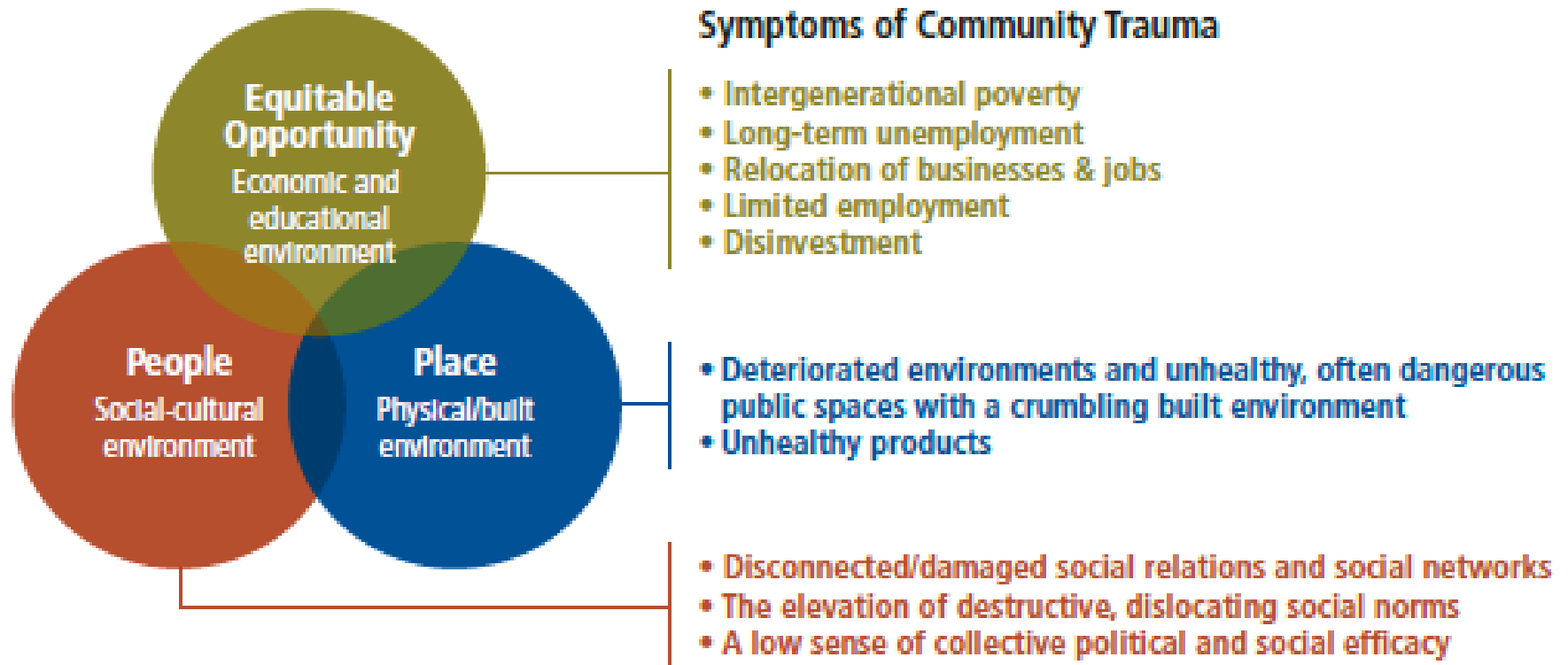
Symptoms of Community Trauma

Symptoms of Community Trauma

Equitable Opportunity — Economic and educational environment:
- Intergenerational poverty
- Long-term unemployment
- Relocation of businesses & jobs
- Limited employment
- Disinvestment

People — Social-cultural environment
Place — Physical/built environment:
- Deteriorated environments and unhealthy, often dangerous public spaces with a crumbling built environment
- Unhealthy products

- Disconnected/damaged social relations and social networks
- The elevation of destructive, dislocating social norms
- A low sense of collective political and social efficacy

Figure 1 The Community Environment

Structural Drivers – examples *What systems are driving the harm?*	Structural Violence – associated examples *What's inflicting the harm?*	
The housing market	• Displacement • Gentrification	• Homelessness • Unsafe housing
The market economy	• Unsustainable, poverty level wages and work arrangements • Underemployment • Flight of businesses • Loss of community economic engine	• Widespread job loss • Shift to automation/technology • Redlining • Segregation from opportunity
Educational system	• Failing schools and school systems	• Zero tolerance policies • School funding formulas
Community development and design	• Disproportionate toxic exposures	• Poor transportation systems
Justice system	• Over/oppressive policing, under policing, and unconstitutional policing • Criminalization of mental illness and substance abuse	• Differential sentencing and minimum sentencing, higher rates of incarceration
Immigration policy	• Travel bans • Refugee restrictions	• Courthouse raids • Family separation

Examples of Structural Drivers and Structural Violence

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What? Why? How? Answers to Frequently Asked Questions About the Adverse Community Experiences and Resilience Framework, http://preventioninstitute.org/publications/what-why-how-answers-faqs-about-acer-framework

Housing Market

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http://www.oakha.org/AffordableHousing/Pages/Wait-Lists.aspx

Discussion/Reflection Questions:

1. How and where are structural inequities coming up in your work? What's creating the harm in the child welfare system?

2. What does that tell us about where to begin intentional efforts to address inequities?

ACEs and Adverse Community Experiences

- Community trauma increases risk factors that make ACEs more likely to occur

  - Adverse community experiences contribute to trauma across the community, impacting people across the lifespan

  - Community trauma is a risk factor for community violence, which can increase exposure to ACEs

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ACEs and Adverse Community Experiences

- Community trauma reduces protective factors for ACEs, exacerbating their impact

  - Communities with high rates of trauma are compromised in their capacity to be part of effective community improvement strategies

  - Community trauma compromises social networks and support, a protective factor against toxic stress

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Trauma gets in the way of us doing what we need to do. When it is chronic and not episodic, it is really damaging.

-Susan Neufeld, Vice President, Resident Programs and Services, Bridge Housing

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How do we prevent and address trauma?

When adversity is both pervasive & persistent?

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Community Resilience

- Community resilience is the ability/capacity of a community to adapt, recover **and thrive**, even in the face of adversity

- It's rooted in community factors, such as social networks and trust; willingness to act for the community good; living wages/local assets and wealth; healthy, equitable community design and infrastructure; and healthy products and services

Adverse Community Experiences and Resilience: A Framework for Addressing and Preventing Community Trauma, http://preventioninstitute.org/publications/adverse-community-experiences-and-resilience-framework-addressing-and-preventing

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Elements of a Resilient Community

THRIVE Community Factors

1. Social networks & trust
2. Participation & willingness to act for the common good
3. Norms & culture

4. What's sold & how it's promoted
5. Look, feel & safety
6. Parks & open space
7. Getting around
8. Housing
9. Air, water, soil
10. Arts & cultural expression

11. Education
12. Living wages & local wealth

Examples of THRIVE

- strong social networks and trust
- community engaged in solutions
- norms supportive of healthy relationships

- access to healthy food/products
- perceived safety
- safe parks/accessible open space
- reliable ways to get around
- safe, affordable housing
- safe/clean air, water, soil
- thriving arts /cultural expression

- high quality education (pre-K-on)
- living wages, local ownership

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Pillars of Wellbeing
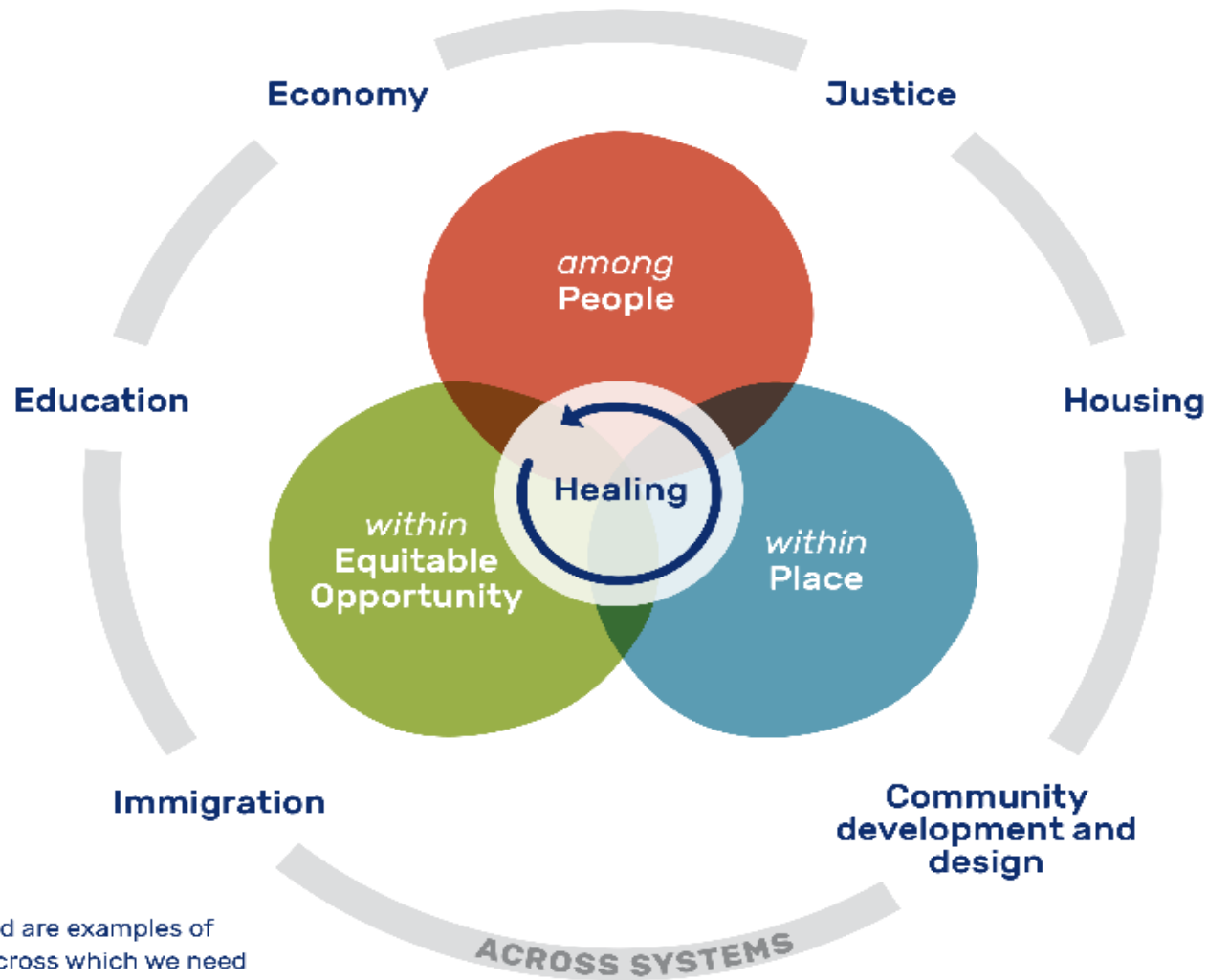
Belonging/Connection

Safety

Trust

Dignity

Hope/Aspiration

Control of Destiny/Self-Determination

Note: The systems listed are examples of the types of systems across which we need to work to address community trauma.

Healing:
A Starting Point for Community Agency

- **Healing circles**

- **Vigils**

- **Restorative justice** practices

- **Acknowledgement/ reconciliation**

- Arts and **engagement in the arts**

- **Community dialogues**

- Practices that are **culturally and community rooted** and acknowledge harm and promote resilience

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What? Why? How? Answers to Frequently Asked Questions About the
Adverse Community Experiences and Resilience Framework
http://preventioninstitute.org/publications/what-why-how-answers-faqs-about-acer-framework

Strategies Among People

- Uplifting **positive narratives of hope and resilience** from within the community

- Enhanced **community engagement and advocacy**

- Trauma informed **community building**

- Reconnecting with **cultural identity**

Equitable Opportunity

Place

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http://preventioninstitute.org/publications/what-why-how-answers-faqs-about-acer-framework

Strategies Among People

- Increase **civic engagement and participation**

- Supporting **multigenerational relationships**

- Coming together to **build community efficacy**

- Advancing **positive norms**

Equitable Opportunity

Place

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Creating Space for Being/Doing/Connecting

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United Women of East Africa
San Diego, CA

Strategies within the Community (Place)

- Reclaiming **land, spaces and public places**

- **Arts and cultural reflection/expression** in the community

- Focus on **ensuring stable housing with dignity**

- Creating **safe and supportive places** for regular gathering/coming together

People

Equitable Opportunity

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Strategies within the Community (Equitable Opportunity)

- **Workforce and economic development**

- **Restorative justice in** schools

- Resident **ownership of homes and businesses**

Place   People

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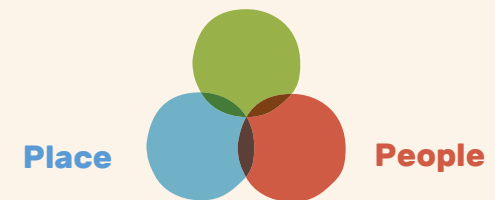
Strategies Across Systems

- Trauma informed **systems transformation**

- Creating **inclusive spaces** for those closest to the issues/problem

- **Power-sharing** (e.g., participatory budgeting, shared leadership and decision-making)

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Building a Trauma-Informed City: HEAL San Francisco

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Photo Credit: SFMTA

Discussion Questions:

1. In what ways are you working to support healing?

2. What new opportunities do you have to emphasize healing in your prevention efforts?

"

Working on community determinants is both scary and reassuring. If we don't do this level of prevention, we will always be chasing the problem.

-Ohio Community Collective Impact Model
for Change Learning Community Partner

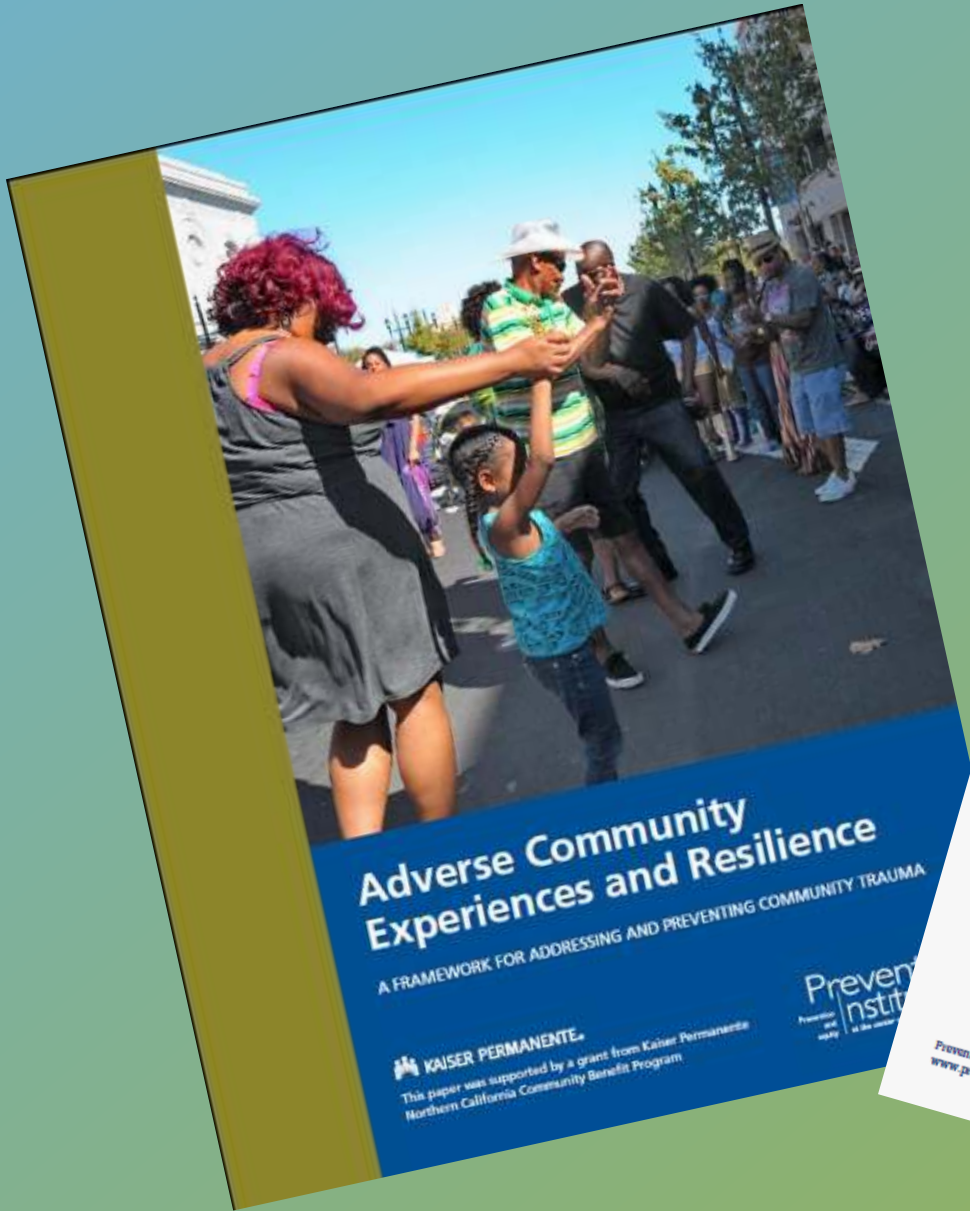"

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City paints over Brooklyn 'jail' playground with space-age replacement

BY JAKE PEARSON, ELIZABETH HAYS / DAILY NEWS WRITERS / Thursday, April 15, 2010, 4:14 PM

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JAIL

Adverse Community
Experiences and Resilience
A FRAMEWORK FOR ADDRESSING AND PREVENTING COMMUNITY TRAUMA

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What? Why? How?

Answers to Frequently Asked Questions about the
Adverse Community Experiences and Resilience Framework

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Additional Resources

- ***Minimizing the Impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences through a Focus on Adverse Community Experiences****:* This brief explains the relationship between adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and adverse community experiences, making the case and providing emerging strategies to address community trauma and build community resilience.

- ***Supporting forgotten fathers: Changing systems, norms, and outcomes for young fathers in support of healthy child development and community safety:*** This brief includes immediate opportunities within the early childhood system and the criminal justice system, as well as other sectors, to embed a more intentional focus on supporting fathers.

- ***Cradle to Community: A Focus on Community Safety and Healthy Child Development****:* This brief makes the case for the important relationship between early childhood development and safe communities; and presents opportunities and mechanisms for promoting early childhood development and community safety using a shared framework and building on local policies and practices in both fields.

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