Mobilizing Action for Resilient Communities

Columbia River Gorge

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Overview

• The beginning
• Engagement across the years
• Growth of the work
• Learning Collaboratives
• Shifting the community narrative
• Methods & outcomes
• Eagle Creek Fire response

• What could be better?
• Suggestions for Building Community Movement
• Questions
The Beginning

- Began in 2011
- Safe Kids Healthy Schools Grant
  - Multiple grant iterations
- Going around and around
- Outside perspective
- Trauma symptoms & behaviors
- Goal to make change
- Sanctuary Model
Engagement Across the Years

Original Group – Wasco County
- Superintendent
- Community MH Executive Director
- Chief of Police
- County Youth Justice Director
- DHS District 9 Manager

Expansion – Multi-County
- Original members organizations

- Public Health
- Physical medical
- Faith-based organizations
- Foster & child mentor organizations
- DV & Sexual Assault advocacy agencies
- Head Start & Early Head Start
- Early Learning Hub
- Justice System
Engagement Across the Years Continued...

- Decision makers are highest level staff
- Project Director position
  - School district
  - Community Mental Health agency
  - Multi-county Columbia Gorge Health Council

Current Engagement Goals
- Community supported network
- Permanent “home”
- Diversity, equity, and inclusion
  - Organizations
  - Government
  - General community members
Growth of the Work

Original
- Improve functioning of specific organizations
  - Staff focused
- Identify shared language
- Improve communications
- Utilize shared tools
- Create safety in relationships
- Create safety for clients

Expansion
- Multi-county, community-wide effort
- Organization & community focused

- Targeted engagement in physical medical & justice sectors
- Further development of shared language and identity
- Continued trainings & events
- Learning Collaboratives
- Building trauma response capacity & facilitation support
- Coaching, implementation, & practice support
- Broad communication through website, blog, newsletters, and articles
- Diversity, equity, and inclusion
TIPs Learning Collaborative

- Cross organization & community social learning
- Every 6 weeks for 1.75 hours
- Two locations
- Participant informed content
- Joint learning collaboratives
- Donated meeting space
- Content shared for continued use

Structure
- Review activity
- Worksheet activity
- Trauma informed practice focus topic
- 1:1, small, & large group discussions
- Implementation & strategy development
- Community events
Shifting the Community Narrative

• Everyone had the same goal but it wasn’t being achieved
• Plagued by blame, shame, and judgement
• It wasn’t safe to make mistakes
• Focused on shifting roles from toxic to empowered
• Challenges remain but can be handled in a healthy manner
Methods & Outcomes

Methods
• Free trainings
• Community-based learning collaboratives
• Coaching & support
• Communication & information saturation
• Networking & presence
• General presentations
• Community events
• Workshop planning sessions
• Facilitated listening sessions

Outcomes
• Training attendance
• Learning collaborative engagement
• Website traffic
• Qualitative evaluation
• Development of Organization Trauma Informed Practices (O-TIPs) assessment
• Newly engaged sectors and organizations
• Requests for community presentations and engagement
• Buy-in from community leaders
• Shared community language
Eagle Creek Fire Response

Why does it matter?

• Stress response
• Burnout
• Collective disturbances
• Direct trauma
• Vicarious trauma
• Impact on vulnerable populations

What did the response look like?

• Staff working from offices closest to home
• Replacement food vouchers
• No toll bridge fees
• Community resilience building event
• Community mental health support in hardest hit areas
• Follow up training for first responders
What Could Be Better?

What we’ve learned so far…

- Project director supporting community effort
- Make space for everyone to have their “aha” moment
- Find the champion(s) in each organization
- Decision-makers must be high level organization leaders
- Shared power
- Social learning environment is key
- Have space and grace for yourself & others

What we’re missing…

- Measuring civic engagement as indicator of success
- Practices and tools for emotional intelligence
- Resilience building events
- General community member presentations & trainings
- Community engagement events
Suggestions for Building Community Movement

• Build in space and time for everyone to have an "aha" moment
• ACEs is not a doomsday prophecy
• Identify and support a leader to direct the community effort
• Find champions at all levels
• Create environment of social learning
• Empathy is key
• Practice shared power
• Understand that symptoms & behaviors associated with trauma & toxic stress is the mind doing exactly what it is supposed to do

• It is a slow process of behavior change.
Questions?