

# Trauma Informed Counseling and Advocacy

Charmayne Adams, MA, NCC

[cadams49@vols.utk.edu](mailto:cadams49@vols.utk.edu)

[www.charmayneadams.com](http://www.charmayneadams.com)



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
TENNESSEE  
KNOXVILLE

**BIG ORANGE. BIG IDEAS.®**

# Goals

- Counselors will be introduced to the ACA endorsed advocacy competencies
- Counselors will learn about ways they can currently advocate for clients that have experiences traumatic events
- Counselors will learn about the different levels and types of care available to clients that have experienced traumatic events

# Session overview

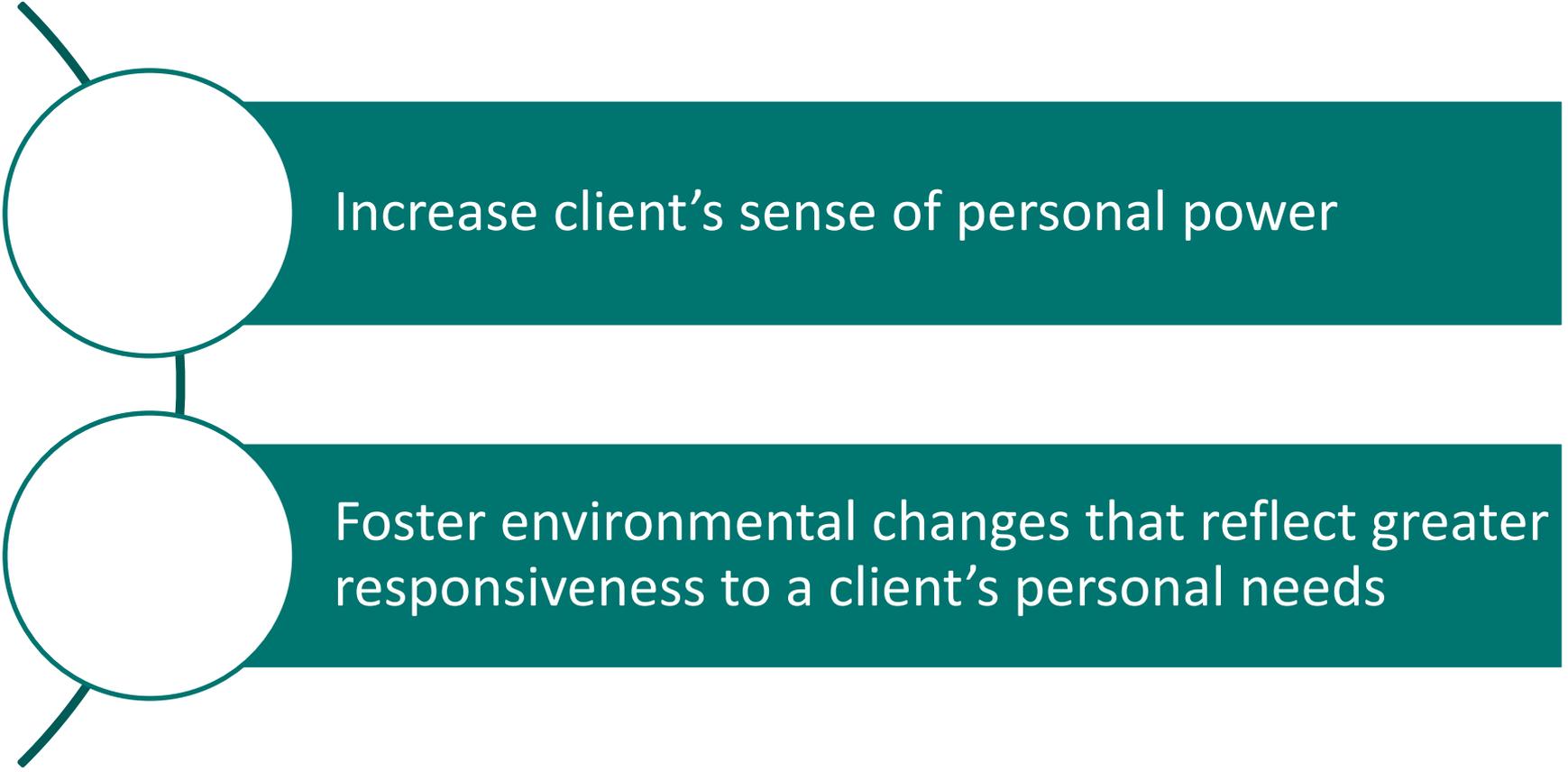
Advocacy Model

Advocating for clients  
that have experienced  
trauma

# Advocacy

- Lewis and Lewis (1983)
  - “case advocacy, advocacy on behalf of individuals, and class advocacy, advocacy that challenges policies and institutions that discriminate against populations”
- Toporek and Liu (2001)
  - “action taken by a counseling professional to facilitate the removal of external and institutional barriers to clients’ well-being”

# What are the goals of advocacy?

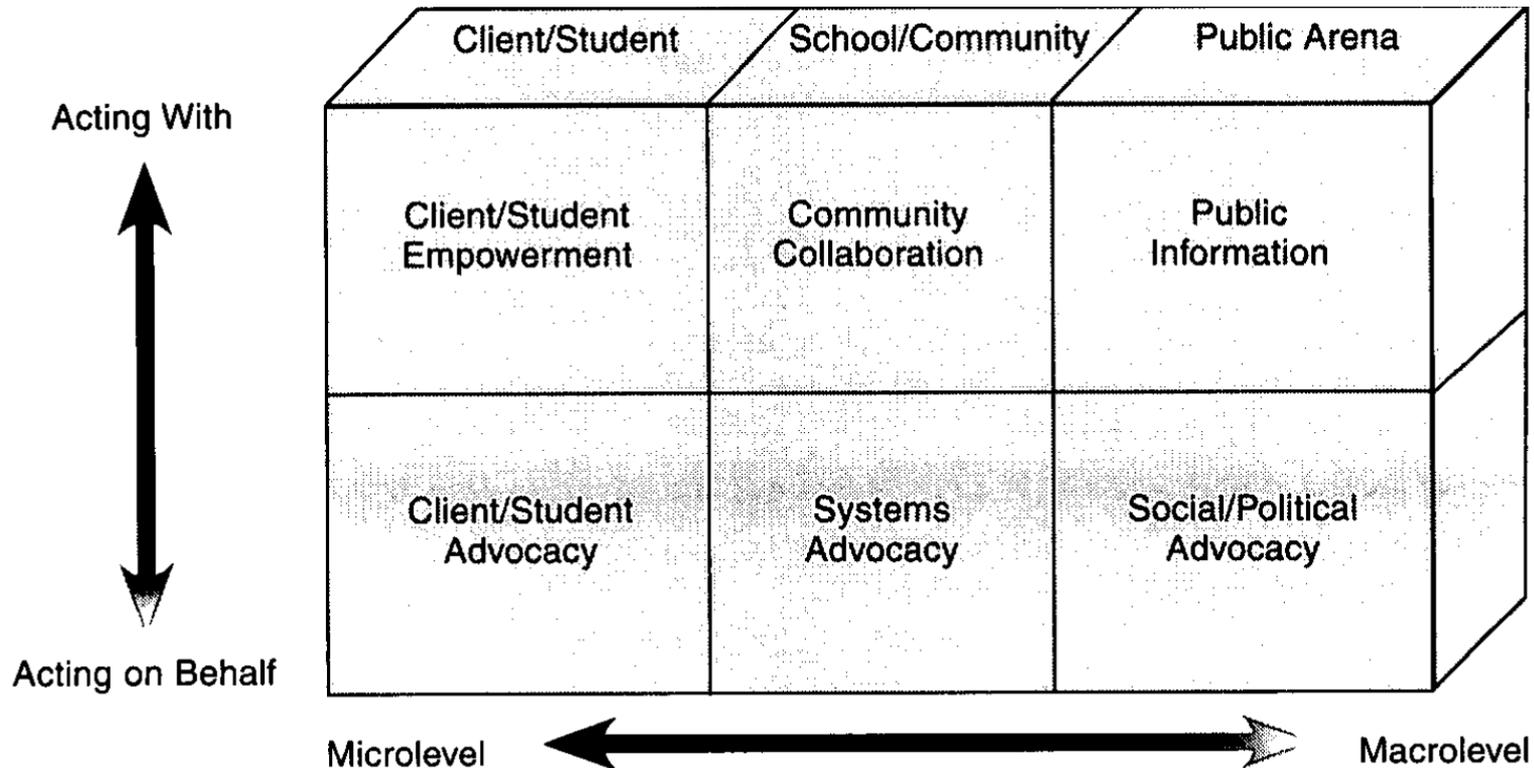


Increase client's sense of personal power

Foster environmental changes that reflect greater responsiveness to a client's personal needs

(Lewis, Lewis, Daniels, and D'Andrea, 1998)

# ACA Advocacy Competencies



**FIGURE A1**

## **ACA Advocacy Competency Domains**

Toporek, R. L., Lewis, J. A., & Crethar, H. C. (2009). Promoting Systemic Change Through the ACA Competencies. *Journal of Counseling & Development, 87*(3), 260–269.

# Client Level of Intervention

## Client Empowerment

- Implementation of empowerment strategies in direct counseling
- Counselors help clients understand their own lives in context

## Client Advocacy

- Counselors advocate to address external factors that act as barriers to *individual's* development
- The client-advocate role is especially significant when individuals or vulnerable groups lack access to needed services

# School/Community Level of Intervention

## Community Collaboration

- Counselors collaborate with clients/client-communities and become an *ally*
- Lend our skills, expertise, and access to clients to support an issue they identify

## Systems Advocacy

- Counselors focus on identifying systemic problems, gathering information and insight from those affected and implement advocacy at a systems level
- Leadership role

# Public Arena Level of Intervention

## Public Information

- Counselor and client-community collaborate in efforts to alert the public of macrolevel issues
- Often involves media

## Social/Political Advocacy

- Addresses client or client community issues at a policy or legislative level on behalf of the community or client



**WHAT CAN THIS LOOK LIKE WHEN WE ARE WORKING WITH CLIENTS THAT HAVE EXPERIENCED TRAUMATIC EVENTS?**

# Trauma

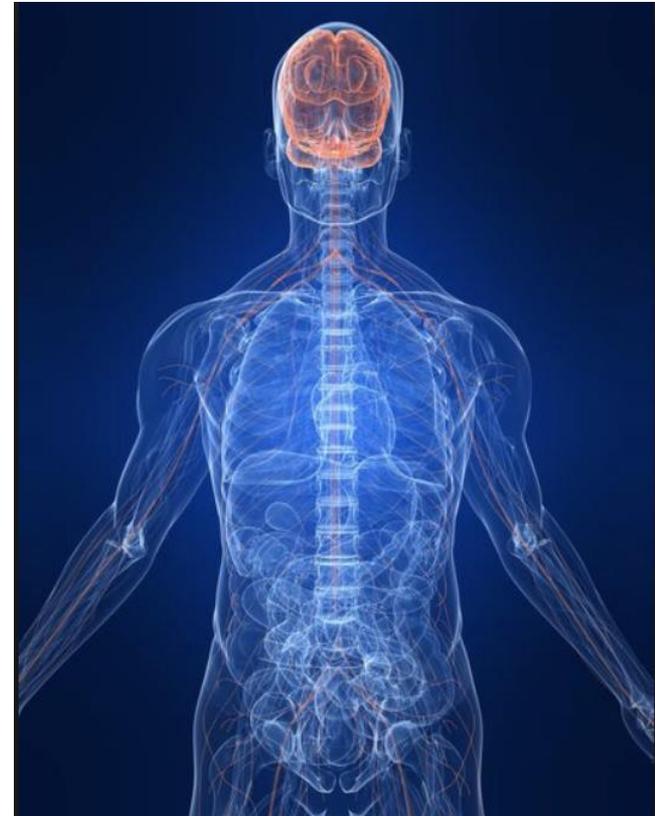
“...an event *perceived* as sudden and/or forceful that overwhelms a person’s ability to respond to it, recognizing that a trauma need not involve actual physical harm to oneself; an event can be traumatic if it contradicts one’s worldview and overpowers one’s ability to cope” (Horowitz, 1989)



# How does trauma impact clients/students?

Trauma is a cognitive, physiological, and psychological construct that impacts an individual's ability to regulate emotions, engage with others, and function in daily occupational and personal tasks (Kira et al., 2015; Layne et al., 2011).

The body experiences stress as a ***whole system event***, and trauma/crisis is an experience that pushes this system into a state of dysregulation (Horowitz, 1989; Siegel, 2012).



# ACA Advocacy Competencies

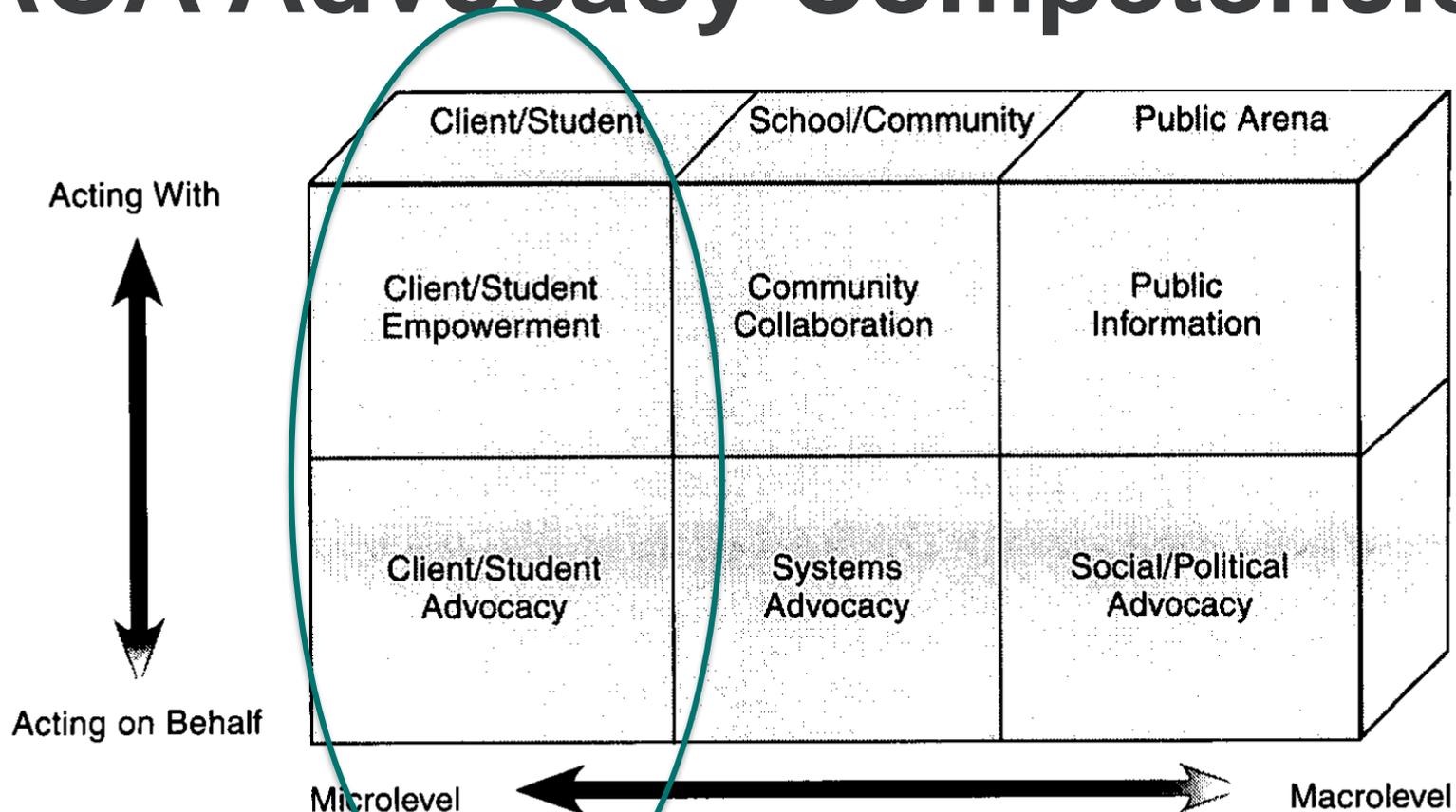


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# Client Level Intervention

## Client empowerment

Identify strengths and resources of clients/students

- Trauma response is adaptive!

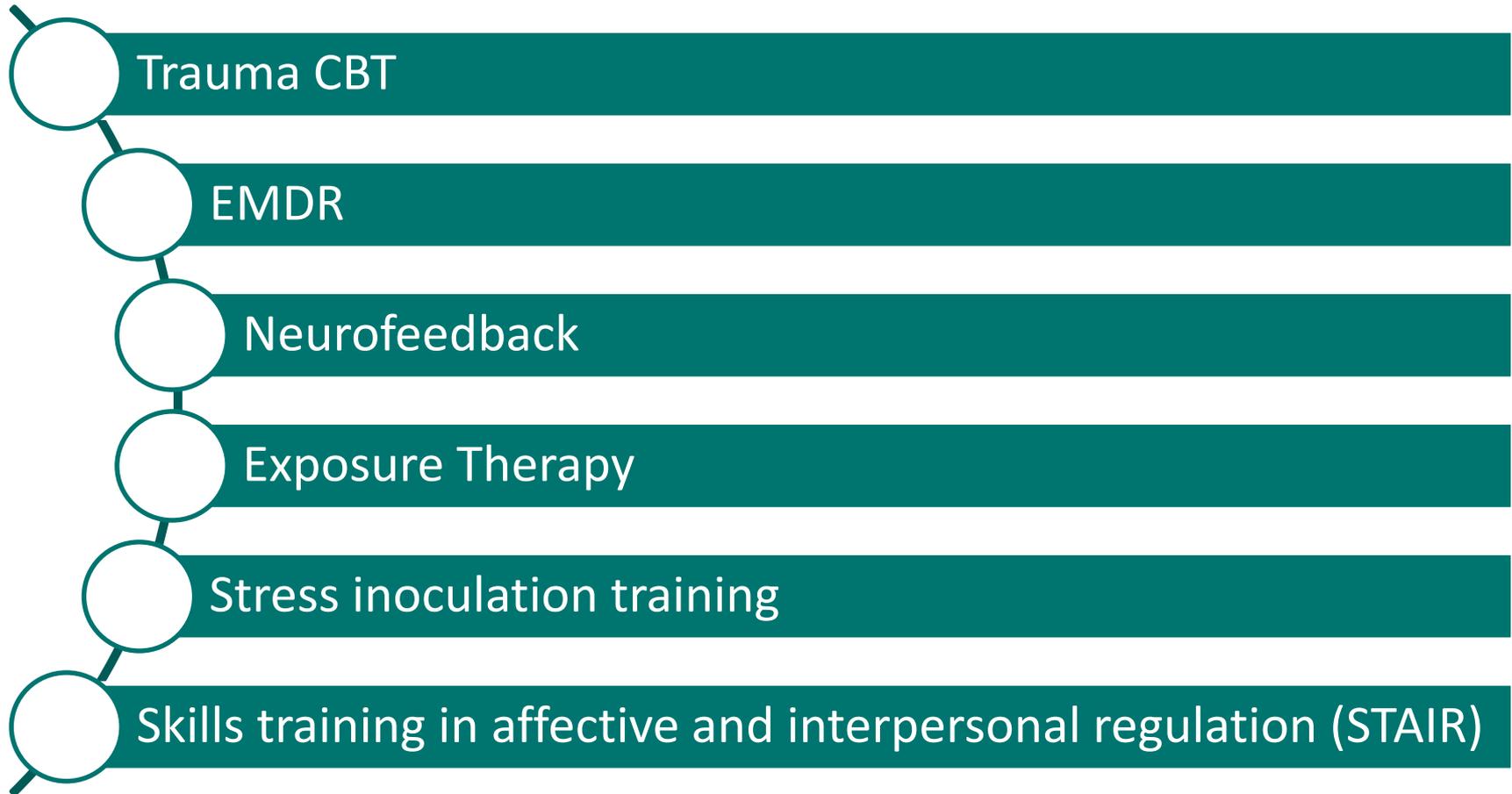
Identify the social, political, economic, and cultural factors that impact your client/student

- How is culture and social context impacting the way the client is responding/interpreting the traumatic event?

Recognize signs indicating that an individual's behavior reflects responses to systemic or internalized oppression/trauma exposure

Help the client identify external barriers

# Trauma-Specific Interventions



# Client Level Intervention

## Client Advocacy

Negotiate relevant services and education systems on behalf of clients and students

- Call a referral on behalf of a client, speak with a teacher on behalf of a student

Help clients and students gain access to needed services

- Provide a book, print off a materials, get phone numbers

# ACA Advocacy Competencies

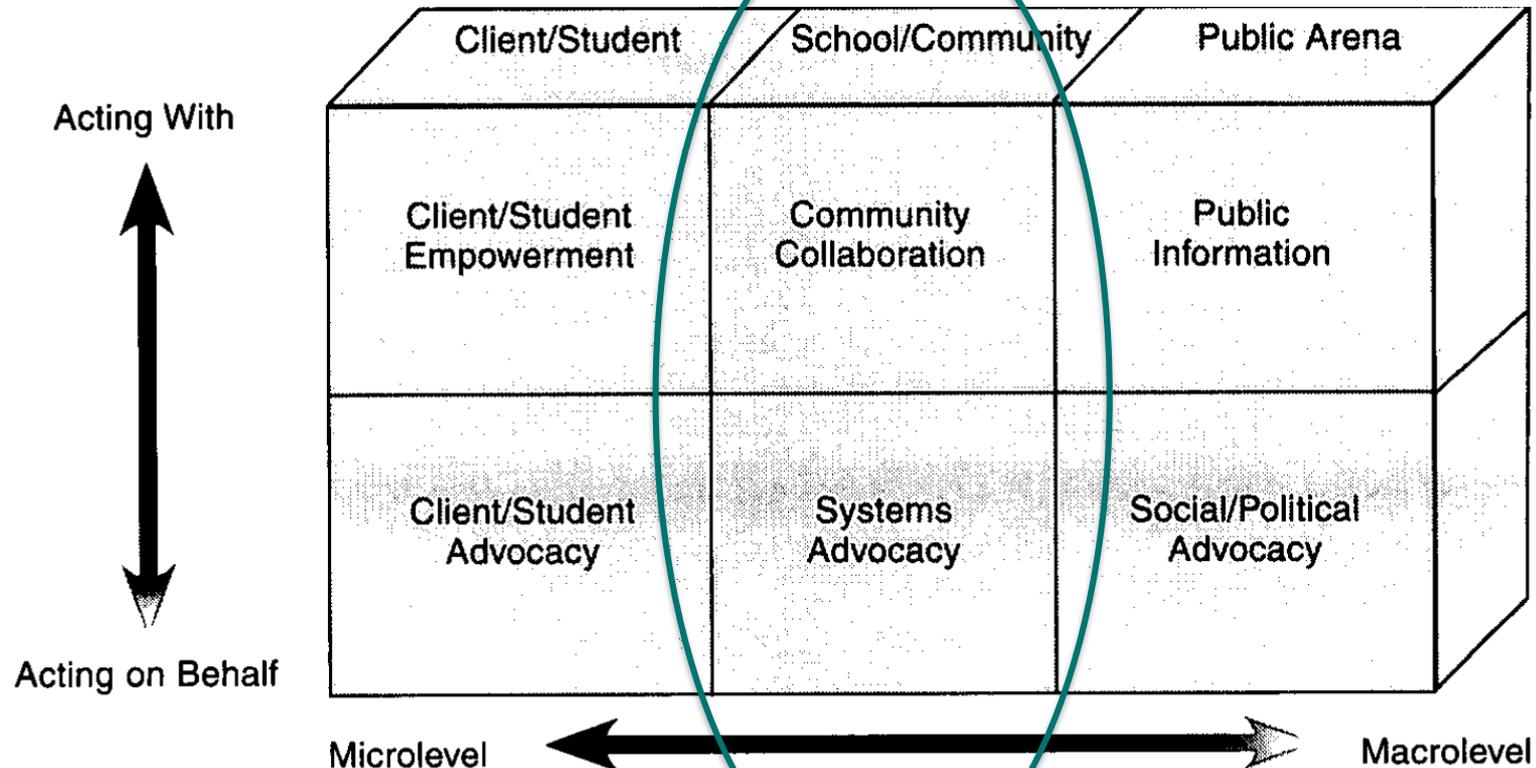


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# School/Community Level Intervention Community Collaboration

Identify and offer skills that the counselor can bring to the collaboration

- Communication skills, conflict resolution

Use effective listening skills to gain understanding of the group's goals

- Identify patterns between groups and collaborate with a larger community



# School/Community Level Intervention Systems Advocacy

Identify Environmental Factors impinging on students' or clients' development

- What systemic barriers are impacting students/clients?

Collaborate with stakeholders, develop a vision to guide change

- Who is involved in this system, who has similar or parallel investment in the issue? What does the end goal look like for everyone?



## West Side High School, Newark, New Jersey

[https://aplus.com/a/akbar-cook-principal-west-side-high-school-ellen-show?no\\_monetization=true](https://aplus.com/a/akbar-cook-principal-west-side-high-school-ellen-show?no_monetization=true)



## Park City School District

<https://www.parkrecord.com/news/mindfulness-training-expands-to-more-schools-in-park-city-school-district/>

# ACA Advocacy Competencies

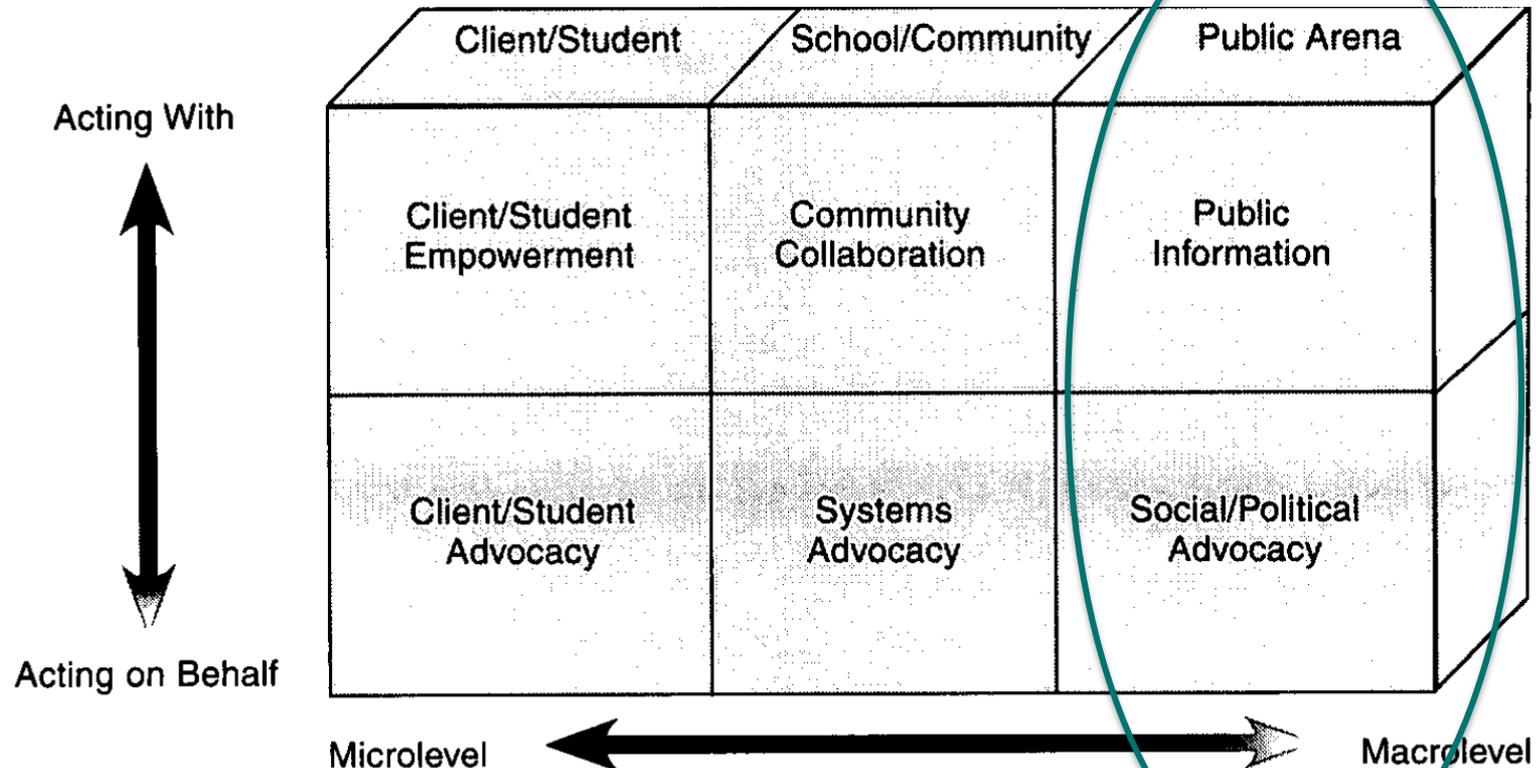


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# Public Arena Level of Intervention

## Public Information

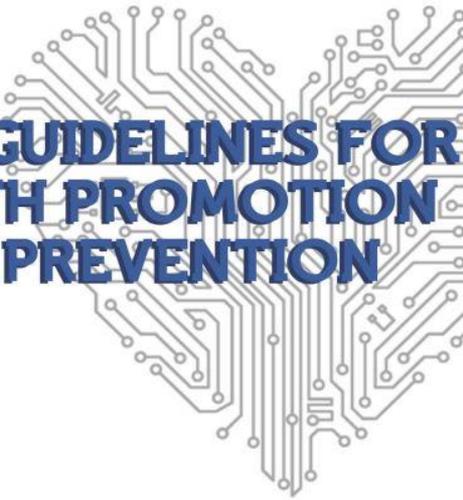
Communicate information in ways that are ethical and appropriate for the target population

- Help clients/students inform peers, family members, teachers, people on their healthcare team about trauma

Disseminate information through a variety of media

- Support clients/students as they participate in public awareness campaigns

# SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES FOR MENTAL HEALTH PROMOTION AND SUICIDE PREVENTION



- Help clients/students to understand that social media campaigns should be trauma-informed
- Ensure that all source media campaigns also have links to resources
- Use our knowledge of health, development, wellness, and communication to work alongside our clients in getting the information they want out

The Entertainment Industries Council's TEAM Up Social Media Guidelines for Mental Health Promotion and Suicide Prevention provide tips for organizations and individuals communicating about mental health and suicide on social media to reduce stigma, increase help seeking behavior and help prevent suicide.

<http://www.eiconline.org/teamup/wp-content/files/teamup-mental-health-social-media-guidelines.pdf>

# RECOMMENDATIONS FOR REPORTING ON SUICIDE

Developed in collaboration with: American Association of Suicidology, American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, Annenberg Public Policy Center, Associated Press Managing Editors, Canterbury Suicide Project - University of Otago, Christchurch, New Zealand, Columbia University Department of Psychiatry, ConnectSafely.org, Emotion Technology, International Association for Suicide Prevention Task Force on Media and Suicide, Medical University of Vienna, National Alliance on Mental Illness, National Institute of Mental Health, National Press Photographers Association, New York State Psychiatric Institute, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Suicide Awareness Voices of Education, Suicide Prevention Resource Center, The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and UCLA School of Public Health, Community Health Sciences.



Work with students/individuals in the organization along side clients to ensure that suicide is being reported in a way that does minimally impacts those that are already experiencing distress

In 2001 several U.S. government agencies and health organizations, including the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, the American Association of Suicidology and the Annenberg Public Policy Center, published consensus recommendations for the media reporting of suicide.

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3015096/#R8>

# Public Arena Level of Intervention

## Social/Political Advocacy

With allies, lobby legislators and other policy makers

Identifies problems and mechanisms and avenues for addressing these problems

- Who is already advocating for trauma-informed care? What have other organizations/districts/communities done?

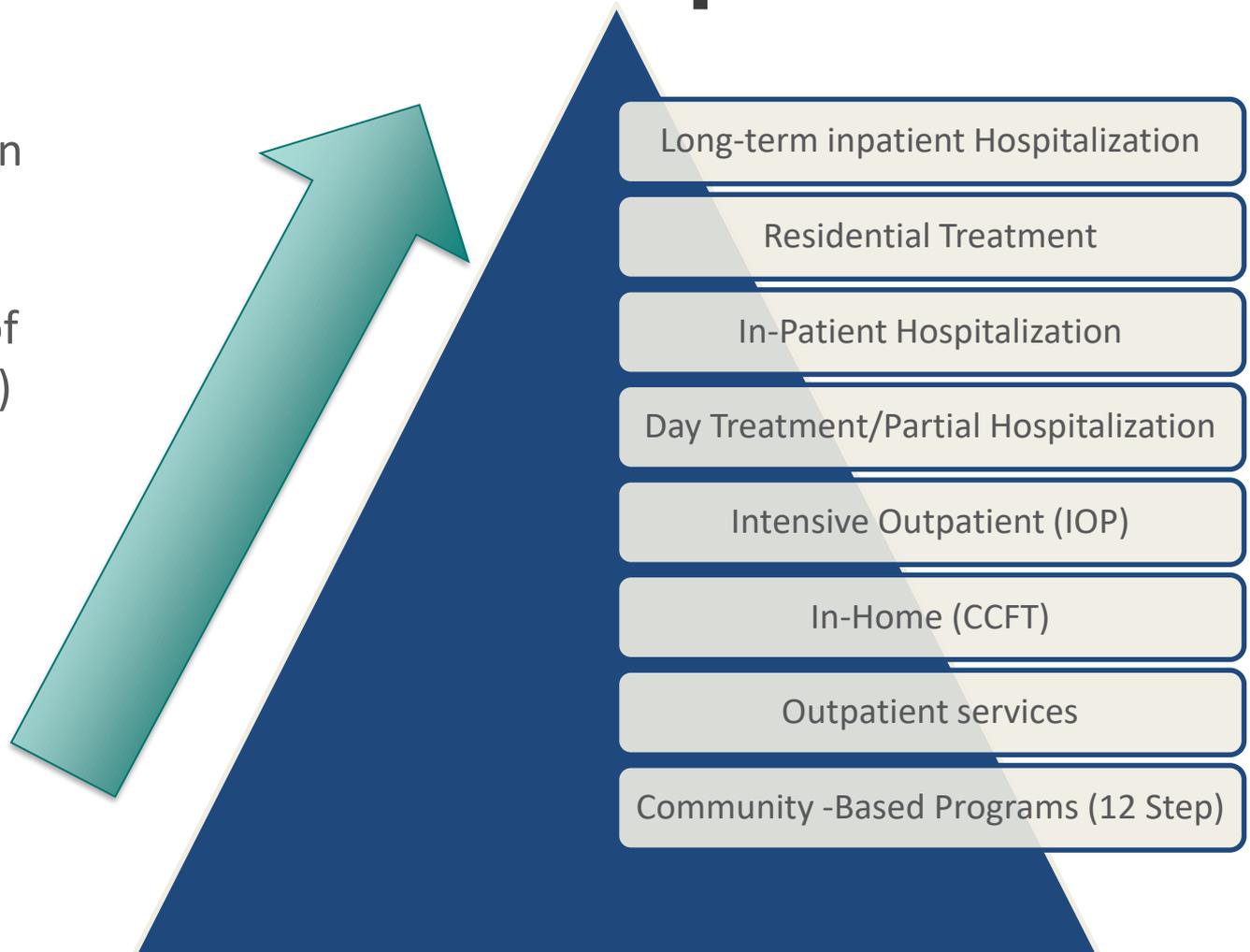


**HOW DO WE CONNECT CLIENTS TO THE APPROPRIATE SERVICES?**

# How do we know what type of services are most helpful?

Decrease in client autonomy, increase in monetary and time commitment for the client, increase risk of losing resources (job)

Our primary justification for increasing levels of care is imminent danger



# Considerations

How has the client been coping so far?

What are their external and internal resources?

Level of motivation and insight

What does the client want? What do the invested stake holders want?

How do I provide access to services in the least restrictive environment?

Trauma history

# References and Resources

- Center for Substance Abuse Treatment (US). Trauma-Informed Care in Behavioral Health Services. Rockville (MD): Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (US); 2014. (Treatment Improvement Protocol (TIP) Series, No. 57.) Chapter 6, Trauma-Specific Services. Available from: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK207184/>
- Kira, I., Ashby, J., Omidy, A., & Lewandowski, L. (2015). Current, continuous, and cumulative trauma-focused cognitive behavior therapy: A new model for trauma counseling. *Journal of Mental Health Counseling*, 37(4), 323-340.
- Layne, C. (2011). Developing interventions for trauma-exposed children: A comment on progress to date, and 3 recommendations for further advancing the field. *Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine*, 165(1), 89-90.
- Mental Health Social Media guidelines: <http://www.eiconline.org/teamup/wp-content/files/teamup-mental-health-social-media-guidelines.pdf>
- Park City School District: <https://www.parkrecord.com/news/mindfulness-training-expands-to-more-schools-in-park-city-school-district/>
- Tatum, P. T., Canetto, S. S., & Slater, M. D. (2010). Suicide Coverage in U.S. Newspapers Following the Publication of the Media Guidelines. *Suicide & Life-Threatening Behavior*, 40(5), 524–534. <http://doi.org/10.1521/suli.2010.40.5.524>
- West Side High School: [https://aplus.com/a/akbar-cook-principal-west-side-high-school-ellen-show?no\\_monetization=true](https://aplus.com/a/akbar-cook-principal-west-side-high-school-ellen-show?no_monetization=true)