

Press Release

May 30, 2022

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT:

Dr. Sharon Harris: 516- 676-2008

safeglencove@yahoo.com

### **SAFE Glen Cove Coalition: Trauma Informed Approach Needed as the Pandemic Wears On**

The American Psychological Association (APA) defines trauma as an emotional response to a terrible event like an accident, rape, or natural disaster. Immediately after the event, shock and denial are typical. Longer term reactions include unpredictable emotions, flashbacks, strained relationships, and even physical symptoms like headaches or nausea. While these feelings are normal, some people have difficulty moving on with their lives. Trauma usually presents months, sometimes years after an event and even as the pandemic eased, there is still a risk for trauma-related effects. Organizations and systems are increasingly recognizing the need to respond, using Trauma-Informed Care (TIC), a system-wide paradigm shift that requires agencies and systems to acknowledge the high prevalence of trauma and align individual interactions and all levels of organizational functioning with the paradigm shift of “what happened to you” versus “what is wrong with you?”

Last June the New York State Office of Addiction Services and Supports (OASAS) announced a partnership with the Institute on Trauma and Trauma-Informed Care (ITTIC) at the University at Buffalo School of Social Work. The goal of the partnership was to identify key leaders in the OASAS system of Trauma-Informed Care (TIC). Recognizing the pervasive impact of trauma on individuals, families and communities, OASAS sought out the learning collaborative as means of paving the way for a trauma-informed approach which mirrors the model of using universal precaution. Universal precaution positions organizations to avoid unintentional re-traumatization (activation of trauma-related survival responses in the here and now) and therefore create opportunity for interactions and environments that can promote healing and growth.

The trauma-informed approach is the overarching umbrella that provides the framework for all individuals, organizations and systems to engage in universal precaution: to assume that individual, systemic and historical trauma is likely to be present in any given individual’s story, and thus responding to everyone in ways that prevent the possibility for re-traumatization. It requires a person to commit to acknowledge how their self and world view influences their interpretation of present moments.

OASAS maintains the overall health care system needs to commit resources to plan and facilitate an organizational strategy to maintain a basic understanding of trauma and adversity as well as to consider

workforce health and engage in trauma-informed practices to treat individuals still experiencing pandemic related trauma.

The American Medical Association is the largest association of physicians—both MDs and DOs—and medical students in the United States. Its mission is "to promote the art and science of medicine and the betterment of public health." For more information please visit [www.ama-assn.org](http://www.ama-assn.org).

The New York State Office of Addiction Services and Supports (OASAS) is a State agency whose mission is to improve the lives of all New Yorkers by leading a comprehensive premier system of addiction services for prevention, treatment, and recovery. For more information about OASAS please visit <https://www.ny.gov/agencies/office-addiction-services-and-supports>.

To learn more about the SAFE Glen Cove Coalition please follow us [www.facebook.com/safeglencovecoalition](https://www.facebook.com/safeglencovecoalition) or visit SAFE's website to learn more about the COVID-19 Epidemic and its correlation to increased mental illness, alcohol and substance use in youth and adults and resources to cope please visit [www.safeglencove.org](http://www.safeglencove.org).