



Trauma Informed Mental Health Engagement & Resource Navigation- Part 1

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Welcome & Objectives

1 **Emerging Adulthood & Developmental Stage**



2 **Common Mental Health Challenges: College Students**



3 **Identifying & Responding to a Mental Health Crisis**



4 **Strategies to Engage & Support Students**

5 **Continued Mental Health Learning & Support**

Why This Matters: Emerging Adult Development

1

Identity Exploration

Academic, career, and relationship choices shape identity during this crucial period.

2

Increased Independence

New responsibilities in finances, housing, and healthcare decisions emerge.

3

Brain Development

Ongoing neurological changes affect impulsivity and emotional regulation.

4

Transition Stress

Adapting to college, workforce, and societal expectations creates unique pressures.

Mental Health Prevalence in College Students ([Healthy Minds, 2013-2021](#))

60%

Mental Health Conditions

Over 60% of college students met criteria for one or more mental health conditions in 2021. (Lipson et.al., 2022)

34%

Anxiety

Anxiety is the second most prevalent mental health condition in this population (Lipson et.al., 2022)

40%

Depression

Depression is the most common diagnosis among college students. . (Lipson et.al., 2022)

Impact of Financial & Basic Needs Stress

1

Increased Risk

Students facing food or housing insecurity are more likely to experience anxiety and depression.

2

Post-Pandemic Instability

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated financial and housing challenges for many students.

3

Recommendations

Integrated supports that provide student access to basic need resources.

Recognizing Mental Health Challenges



Anxiety Disorders

Recognize overwhelm, frequent worry, avoidance of stressors, and physical symptoms like rapid breathing.



Depressive Disorders

Observe low energy, lack of motivation, expressions of hopelessness, and withdrawal from peers.



Trauma & PTSD

Notice hypervigilance, difficulty trusting, emotional numbing, or discomfort discussing experiences.

Recognizing Warning Signs

- Seeming unusually confused or unable to concentrate
- Prolonged depression (sadness or irritability)
- Feelings of extreme highs and lows
- Excessive fears, worries and anxieties
- Avoiding friends or social activities
- Dramatic changes in eating or sleeping habits
- Strong feelings of anger
- Strange thoughts (delusions)
- Changes in school performance or attendance
- Seeing or hearing things that aren't there (hallucinations)
- Growing inability to cope with daily problems and activities
- Suicidal thoughts or statements
- Numerous unexplained physical ailments
- Increased substance use

[Mental Health America: Additional Resources](#)
[NAMI: Warning Signs and Symptoms](#)

Identifying & Responding to a Crisis

1

Recognize Warning Signs

Extreme distress, references to self-harm, or disconnection from reality.

2

De-escalate

Stay calm, use a nonjudgmental tone, and give space while maintaining engagement.

3

Refer & Follow-Up

Connect to campus resources or crisis services following your institution's protocols.

[Be There Certificate](#): 2-hour interactive, free course on recognizing mental health warning and crisis signs.

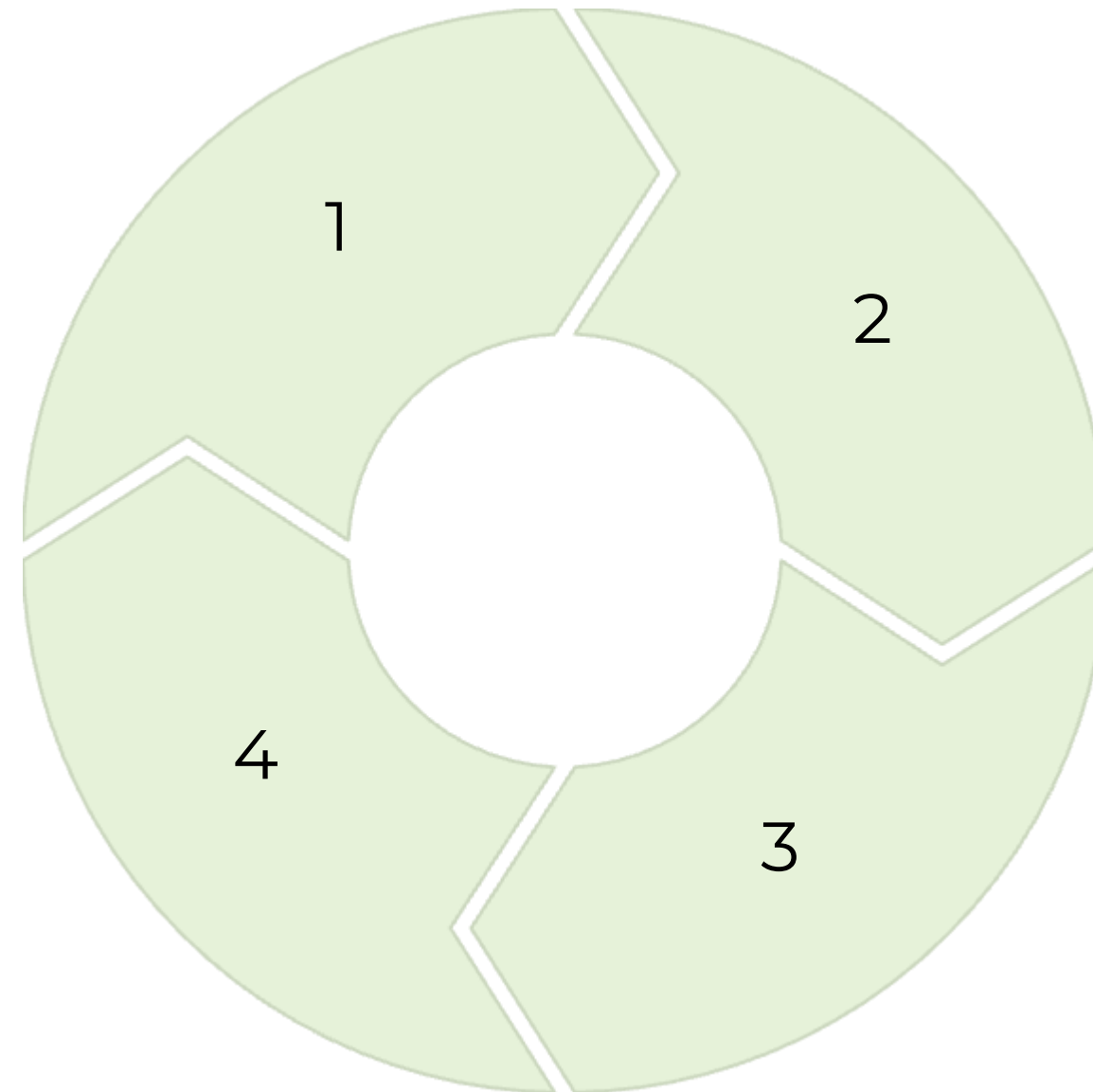
Trauma Informed Skills to Engage & Support Students

Empowerment & Choice

Prioritize safety, trust, and empowerment in all interactions.

Safety

Emotional and physical safety, cultural humility.



Collaboration

Motivational interviewing principles to support student engagement.

Trustworthiness

Clarify your role and limitations in providing support.

Empowerment

Empowerment: Involves the recognition of strengths and skills to build a realistic sense of hope and possibility

- Housing liason, benefit navigator roles as pathway to [improve retention, support student wellbeing](#), and promote interdependence.

In Practice

- Normalize continuum of skill building: "modeling, doing with, cheering on."
- Assessing student [strengths](#) and natural supports at referral or intake.
 - What do you value about yourself?
 - Tell me about any creative or different solutions you tried. How did this work out?
 - Who is important in your life?

Choice

Choice: Making individual choice and control a priority. Student has a right to self-determination and autonomy.

In Practice

- Inform students about options available with options that reflect race, gender, and culture.
- What would be one small step we can take today to improve X
 - Task chunking options
- Support flexibility within parameters
 - Example: Student with anxiety is meeting to complete a benefit application that requires phone interview and reports distress.
 - Validate concern- I know this is difficult and I'm here to support you in this process. ([Breathing visual](#), stress balls, drawing)
 - Offer choices for support: Can discuss what to expect on the call, role play/write a script, help identify quiet location for call.

Collaboration

[Motivational Interviewing](#) (Miller & Rollnick, 2013)

- Motivational Interviewing (MI) is a collaborative, goal-oriented communication style that helps individuals resolve ambivalence and strengthen their motivation for change. It is based on four key principles: expressing empathy, developing discrepancy, rolling with resistance, and supporting self-efficacy. [OARS Skill](#)

[Solution-Focused Brief Therapy](#) (De Shazer and Kim-Berg)

- SFBT is a hope friendly, positive emotion eliciting, future-oriented vehicle for formulating, motivating, achieving, and sustaining desired behavioral change

In Practice

- Seek Ideas & Feedback- ask students what they already know about benefits or resources to support independence.
 - How have you been able to meet your needs?
 - What kind of supports have you used that have been helpful to you?
 - Co-construction of solution between student and staff
- Explore with empathy- their perspective on challenges and barriers to develop effective solution.
 - i.e. stigma related 'resistance' to completing benefit application

Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness: Maximize trust ensuring clear expectations and having consistent boundaries. Refers to transparency.

In Practice

- Expectation setting: Establish upfront current availability, student priorities for the appointment, and follow up options.
- Clarify role: "I can connect you to available resources, but I may not have all the answers. However, I'm here to problem solve with you."
 - Proactively discuss: your role v. student's
- Boundaries: validate intense emotions or events and connect to appropriate resources as needed if beyond scope of your role.

Safety

Safety: Ensuring physical and emotional safety, including cultural humility. Generally involves protection of self and others.

In Practice

- Awareness of environment where appointments occur (privacy, noise, exits).
- Consequences provided in supportive, non-confrontational language.
- Avoid assumptions about mental health experiences based on cultural background.
- Acknowledge that seeking help may be stigmatized in some communities.
 - Value of peer support, campus cultural organizations, mutual aid, and other community resources.



ILLINOIS CAMPUS CARES
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CENTER

Solution-Focused Brief Therapy (SFBT) in Higher Education: Open Coaching Series

Virtual, Monthly,
Skills Based, Open
Enrollment Sessions

with Institute for
Solution-Focused
Therapy (ISFT)

Join us for this virtual coaching series designed for Illinois higher education professionals interested in learning practical, strength-based skills to support student mental health. This series will focus on specific topics or populations relevant to college mental health across campus. CEUs provided through ISFT each session, details [here](#).

No prior experience with SFBT is needed to participate. Target audiences are included for each session, though anyone interested is welcome. Learn more about the curriculum plan and future sessions [here](#).

Please join us for any of the upcoming monthly sessions. This series lasts from May-December 2025.

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MAY

SOLUTION-FOCUSED SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS MANAGING
SUBSTANCE USE AND ACADEMIC PRESSURES

ANNE BODMER-LUTZ, MD
1- 3 PM CST

AUDIENCE: MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

13
JUNE

FROM CRISIS TO CAPACITY: SOLUTION-FOCUSED CASE
MANAGEMENT FOR STUDENTS WITH COMPLEX NEEDS

ANNE BODMER-LUTZ, MD
10-12 PM CST

AUDIENCE: BENEFIT NAVIGATORS, HOUSING
LIASONS, & CASE MANAGERS

icctac.org
btolar2uic.edu



REGISTER



Scan to register:



Resources for Continued Learning

Mental Health Signs & Symptoms

[Mental Health America](#)

(signs, symptoms, most conditions).

Motivational Interviewing (MI)

-[Intro to MI](#) (Slides)

-[Navigator Model: MI Overview](#) (Video)

Other Resources

-[Early Intervention & Prevention](#) (B4Stage4)

-[Strengths Based Questions](#)

-[Trauma Informed Care Principles](#)

Mental Health Crisis/Gatekeeper Trainings

-[Question, Persuade, Refer](#)

-[Mental Health First Aid](#)

-[MHFA- Higher Education](#)

-[Be there Certificate](#) (interactive, under 2-hours)