Models from Mental Health and Substance Abuse Settings:

**Trauma-Informed Domestic Violence Services**

The resources listed below supplement the 3-part VAWnet Special Collection series, *Trauma-Informed Domestic Violence Services*. Included here are domestic violence specific trauma treatment approaches that exist in published form as well as trauma program models that take a broader approach, are relevant to women, and could potentially be adapted for survivors of domestic violence.

Several of the models listed here were first developed during the groundbreaking *Women, Co-Occurring Disorders and Violence Study* funded by SAMHSA in the 1990s. All of the women in this study had both mental health and substance abuse diagnoses, and the vast majority had also experienced interpersonal violence and/or childhood abuse. Many of the commonalities between domestic violence victim advocacy approaches stems from the influence these women had on the developing trauma field.

Providing trauma treatment in the context of recent or ongoing intimate partner violence should involve a combination of domestic violence specific interventions related to safety, confidentiality, and access to resources, and treatment for the range of symptoms that can arise in the context of ongoing abuse. In addition, some evidence-based trauma treatment approaches may not be applicable for survivors who are still under siege or who are experiencing the effects of severe, longstanding abuse. Yet, even the most well designed trauma-informed mental health and substance abuse services are not a replacement for domestic violence victim advocacy. For more information, please contact the [National Center on Domestic Violence, Trauma, and Mental Health](https://www.dartcenter.org).

**Trauma-Informed Approaches to Treatment & Service Provision**

The three models described below were originally developed for mental health settings, and can therefore offer useful information to domestic violence victim advocacy organizations that are working to build collaborative relationships with the mental health field. In addition, elements of these models can be adapted in a variety of ways for use by domestic violence programs.

**Using Trauma Theory to Design Service Systems**

This edited volume (*Harris & Fallot, 2001*) was one of the first publications to apply the principles of trauma theory directly to the design of human services. It includes an introductory chapter describing how all components of a service system need to be reconsidered in the light of our understanding about the role violence plays, as well as chapters addressing trauma-informed approaches to screening and assessment, housing, addiction services, and case management. The final two chapters address the role of consumer-survivors in trauma-informed services and how trauma affects those who deliver services.

**The Sanctuary Model**

The Sanctuary Model® represents a theory-based, trauma-informed, evidence-supported, whole culture approach that has a clear and structured methodology for creating or changing an organizational culture. The objective of such a change is to more effectively provide a cohesive context within which healing from psychological and social traumatic experience can be addressed. As an organizational culture intervention, it is designed to facilitate the development of structures, processes, and behaviors...
on the part of staff, clients and the community-as-a-whole. The intention is to counteract the biological, affective, cognitive, social, and existential wounds suffered by the victims of traumatic experience. The Sanctuary Model® teaches individuals and organizations the necessary skills for creating and sustaining nonviolent lives and systems and to keep believing in the possibilities of peace. The Sanctuary Model® has been successfully employed in several DV programs across the country.

*Risking Connection®: A Training Curriculum for Working with Survivors of Child Abuse*

Risking Connection® is a trauma treatment curriculum developed by specialists at the Trauma Research, Education and Training Institute, Inc. (TREATI). The project was guided by an advisory board made up of survivors and community mental health providers. Risking Connection® teaches a relational framework and skills for working with survivors of traumatic experiences, both of which are central to providing trauma-informed services. While originally developed for clinicians working with adult survivors of childhood abuse, the concepts and material can be adapted for work with survivors of domestic violence. The focus is on relationships as healing, and on self-care for service providers. Key features include the centrality of a trauma framework in understanding survivors in the context of their life experiences, guidance on trauma-informed crisis intervention, working with survivors for whom self-harm has become an important coping strategy, and attention to issues that arise for providers in doing trauma work. The manual itself is only available to participants in approved Risking Connection® trainings.

**Trauma-Specific Interventions**

None of the interventions included in this section have been designed for or tested with domestic violence survivors although some have included domestic violence survivors. However, they do contain elements that may be relevant for women in domestic violence programs. Several of these models, when combined with domestic violence specific interventions, may be particularly applicable to survivors of domestic violence who have experienced multiple forms of trauma beginning in childhood. Other treatments such as Cognitive Processing Therapy, Prolonged Exposure Therapy, Eye Movement Desensitization Reprocessing Therapy (EMDR), and a range of Mind Body Therapies are not included here but are discussed in the review articles cited in the Special Collection.

*Beyond Trauma*

*Beyond Trauma: A Healing Journey for Women* is an integrated curriculum for women's services based on theory, research, and clinical experience. While the materials are designed for trauma treatment, the connection between trauma and substance abuse in women's lives is a theme throughout. The program has been developed for use in residential and outpatient treatment settings, domestic violence programs, mental health clinics, and criminal justice settings. Beyond Trauma has a psychoeducational component that teaches women what trauma is, its process, and its impact on both the inner self (thoughts, feelings, beliefs, values) and the outer self (behavior and relationships, including parenting). The major emphasis is on coping skills with specific exercises for developing emotional wellness.

**TREM, M-TREM**

The Trauma Recovery and Empowerment Model (TREM) group intervention was developed at Community Connections in the 1990s. In the years since then, more than 1500 clinicians in over twenty states have been trained in this model. TREM and M-TREM are fully manualized group interventions for...
women (TREM) and men (M-TREM) who are trauma survivors. These groups, developed with and for people receiving services at Community Connections by Dr. Maxine Harris, address a broad range of trauma sequelae among people dealing with psychiatric conditions and/or substance abuse problems. Both use cognitive restructuring, psycho-education, and coping skills training, weaving each of these techniques throughout the intervention, which incorporates a specific recovery topic in each weekly 75-minute session. TREM is organized into three major parts: empowerment, trauma education, and skill-building. TREM was evaluated as part of the SAMHSA Women, Violence and Co-Occurring Disorders Study (see http://nrepp.samhsa.gov regarding its evidence base) involving integrated mental health, trauma and substance abuse treatment within a comprehensive array of trauma-informed services. For many of the women in this study, a history of domestic violence was one aspect of the continuum of trauma they had experienced over the course of their lives.

**Trauma Affect Regulation Guide for Education and Therapy (TARGET)**

TARGET is a strengths-based approach to education and therapy for trauma survivors who are looking for a safe and practical approach to recovery. TARGET's goal is to help trauma survivors understand how trauma changes the body and brain's normal stress response into an extreme survival-based alarm response. These reactive responses may develop into PTSD. TARGET teaches a practical 7-step set of skills that can be used by trauma survivors to regulate extreme emotional states, to manage intrusive trauma memories, to promote self-efficacy, and to achieve lasting recovery from trauma. TARGET can be used in education classes, group therapy, individual counseling or therapy, or outreach and case management. TARGET has been translated into Spanish, Hebrew, and Dutch, with adaptations to address people from a variety of national and cultural origins, as well as for deaf individuals.