

ECHO IDAHO

Behavioral Health in Primary Care

Sexual Trauma

August 6, 2025

Lisa Johnson, LCPC

Mental Health Therapist

St. Lukes Behavioral Health Care

None of the planners or presenters for this educational activity have relevant financial relationship(s) to disclose with ineligible companies whose primary business is producing, marketing, selling, re-selling, or distributing healthcare products used by or on patients.



Learning Objectives

Define sexual trauma and understand the types of sexual trauma as well as its prevalence among types of survivors.

Identify the psychological, physical and social impacts of sexual trauma.

Employ trauma informed care principles to create a safe and supportive environment for survivors

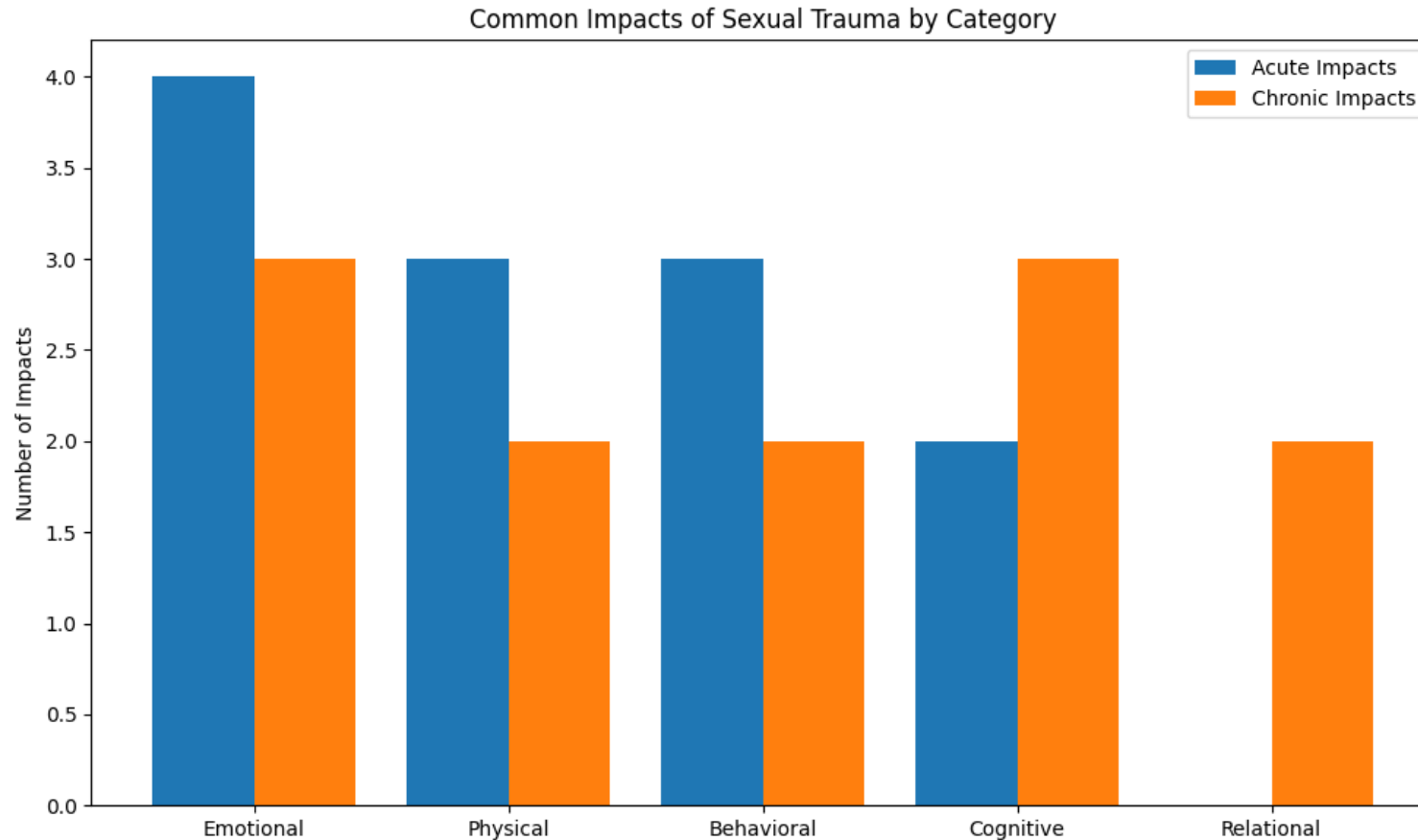
Utilize effective communication strategies to facilitate disclosure and build trust with patients.

Sexual Trauma

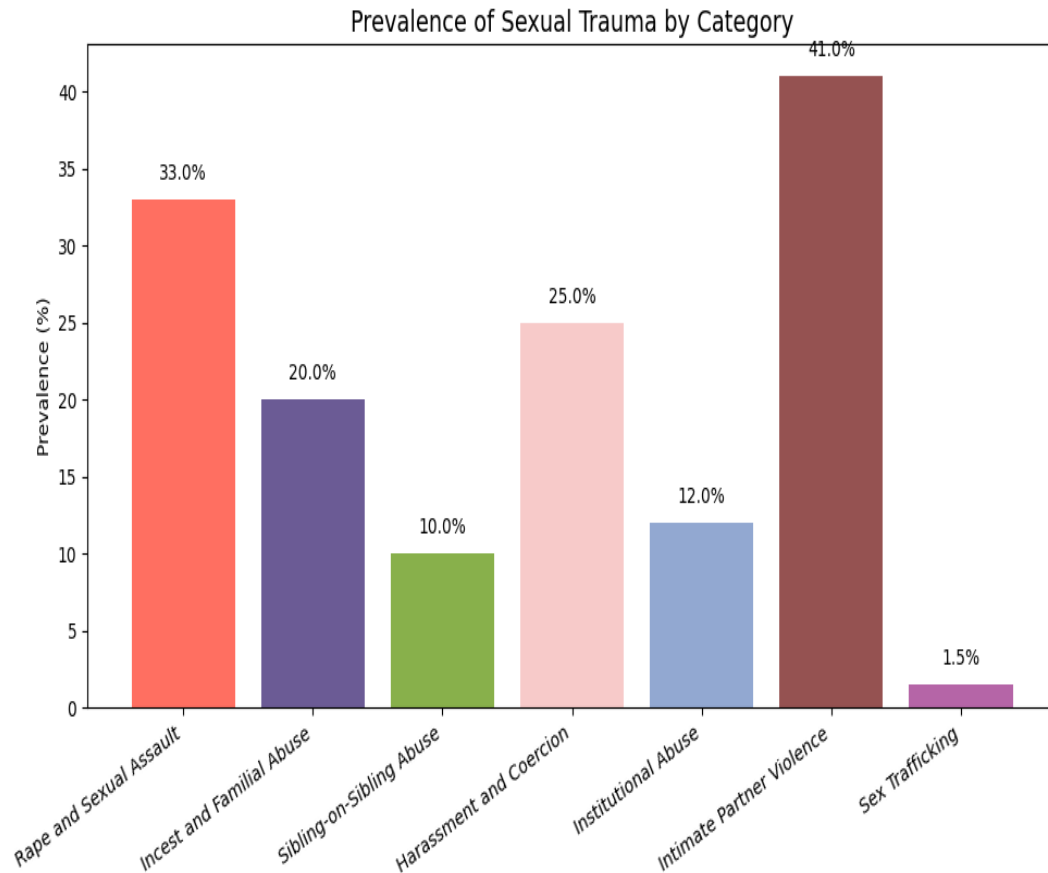
Sexual trauma is broadly defined as any disturbing experience associated with sexual activity, including but not limited to rape, incest, harassment, assault, abuse, and other sexual violations where consent is not freely given. It is recognized as a common cause of posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and dissociative disorders

Importance: Understanding and addressing sexual trauma is crucial for providing effective care and support to survivors.

Negative Impacts of Sexual Trauma both Acute and Chronic



Types of Sexual Trauma



Rape and sexual assault 33%

Incest and familial abuse 20%

Sibling-on-sibling 10%

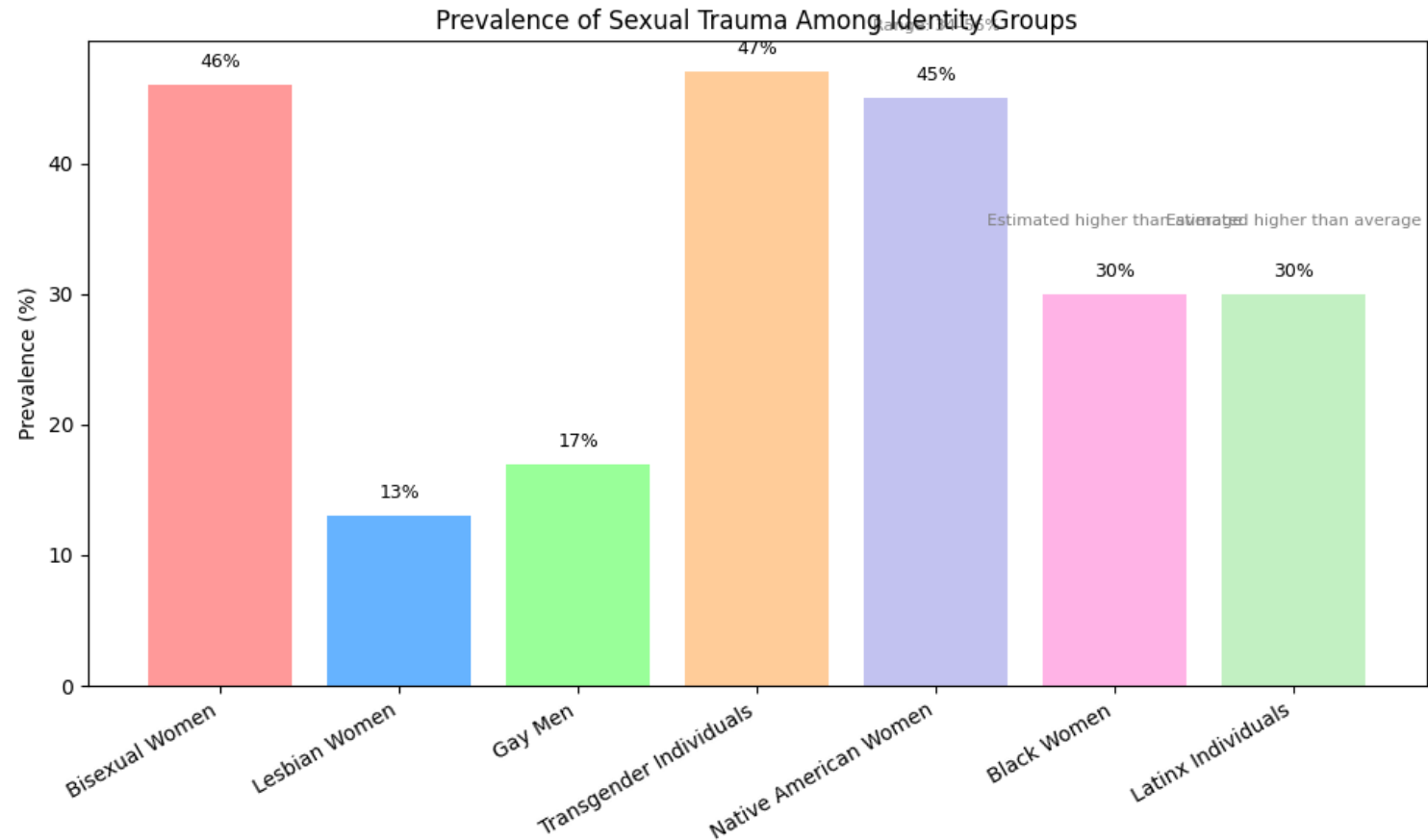
Harassment and coercion 25%

Intimate partner sexual violence 41%

Institutional abuse (e.g., in schools, prisons, military, religious institutions) 12%

Sex Trafficking 15%

Prevalence in BIPOC, LGBTQ+, and Transgender Populations



LGBTQ and Transgender Communities: Trauma Informed and Affirming Practices: The Importance of Recognizing Intersectionality

Use inclusive language and pronouns in all interactions.

Incorporate SOGIE (Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity & Expression) screeners to assess trauma and identity-specific needs.

Provide staff training on LGBTQ+ cultural competency and trauma-informed care.

Create safe, visible affirming spaces (e.g., signage, inclusive forms, gender-neutral bathrooms).



BIPOC Trauma Informed and Affirming Practices



Culturally Responsive Services:

- Culturally matched providers and interpreters
- Integration of spiritual and traditional healing
- Adapted trauma therapies (e.g., narrative therapy, EMDR)

Community Engagement & Empowerment:

- Partner with trusted community organizations
- Peer-led support groups and healing circles
- Address systemic barriers (e.g., immigration, language)

Intersectional & Survivor-Centered Approach:

- Recognize overlapping identities and vulnerabilities
- Prioritize autonomy, choice, and empowerment
- Advocate for inclusive policies and access to care

Principles of Trauma Informed Care

Cultural, Historical & Gender Issues

Empowerment, Voice & Choice

Collaboration & Mutuality

Peer Support

Trustworthiness & Transparency

Safety

Effective and Respectful Communication Strategies to use

TRAUMA-INFORMED COMMUNICATION IN HEALTHCARE



SAFETY



TRUSTWORTHINESS



PEER SUPPORT



COLLABORATION



EMPOWERMENT



CULTURAL SENSITIVITY

COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES



PERSPECTIVE-TAKING

Acknowledge the patient's



EMOTIONAL ATTUNEMENT

Be aware of patients, emotions



PATIENT ACTIVATION

Encourage their involvement in



SHARED DECISION-MAKING

Partner with patients in 'toosing'



TEACH-BACK METHOD

Confirm patients' understanding

Recommended Reading List

Articles:

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). *Trauma-Informed Care in Behavioral Health Services*. Treatment Improvement Protocol (TIP) Series; 2014.

Long-Term Psychological and Physiological Effects of Male Sexual Trauma. Journal of the American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law.2024,JAAPL.230076-23.

Elliott DE et al. *Trauma-informed care in behavioral health services*. Psychiatric Clinics; 2005.

Pulverman,Carey, Creech,Susannah. *The Impact of Sexual Trauma on the Sexual Health of Women's Veterans: A Comprehensive Review*.NIH.2021.Oct;22(4):656-671

Finkelhor, et al 2009, Hackett 2013, Grant et al 2009, Snyder 2000, Gerwitz-Meydan & Finkelhor, 2019, Mathews et al 2024; Juveniles Who Commit Sex Offenses Against Minors.

Websites:

www.nsvrc.org National Sexual Violence Resource Center

<https://rainn.org> Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network

www.aacap.org American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry

www.5waves.org

References

- National Sexual Violence Resource Center. Statistics about sexual violence.
- RAINN. Scope of the Problem: Statistics.
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). *Trauma-Informed Care in Behavioral Health Services*.
- Elliott DE et al. *Trauma-informed care in behavioral health services*.
- Survivors.org
- CDC: National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS)

Citation: Raj A, Rao N, Patel P, Kearl H, Skolnick C. #MeToo 2024: A National Study of Sexual Harassment and Assault in the United States. Newcomb Institute. Tulane University. September 2024. <https://newcomb.tulane.edu/content/metoo-research>.