

**ILOTA**  
**PEDIATRIC SIS TOWN HALL:**  
**TRAUMA INFORMED CARE**  
 Jessica Weiler, OTD, OTR/L, CTRP

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**JESSICA WEILER, OTD,  
 OTR/L, CTRP**



- I am a pediatric occupational therapist currently working in early intervention and private practice
- My career has focused on mental health promotion, trauma informed care, strengths-based approaches, and neurodiversity affirming practices
- Occupational therapy's history is founded in mental health practice, and I enthusiastically believe that we have the unique and specialized skills to integrate trauma informed practices in our therapeutic interventions in any practice setting

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**POLL QUESTION 1:**  
**WHAT SETTING DO YOU WORK IN?**

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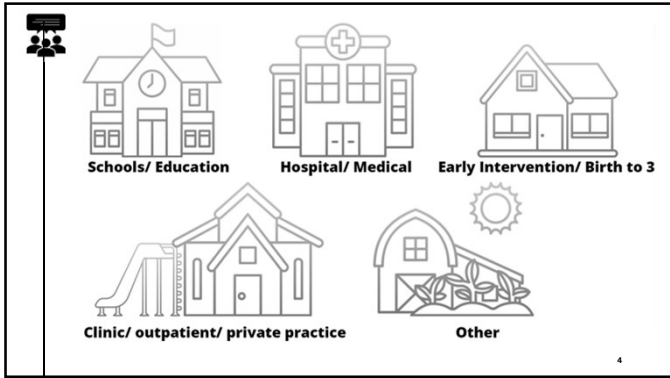
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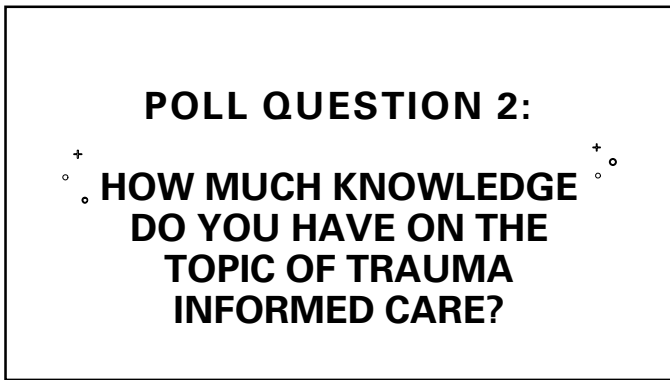
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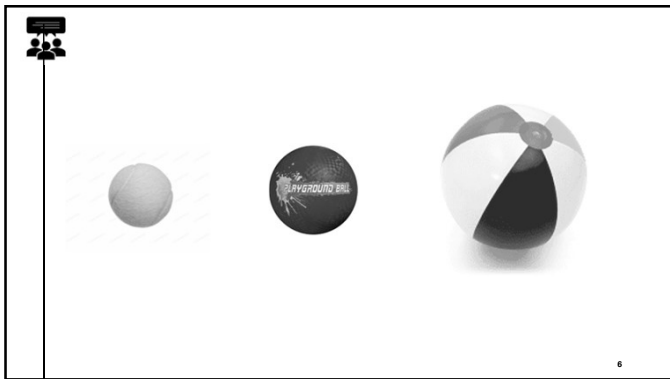
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**Participation**

- Poll Questions
- + • Chat Questions
- • Questions in the Chat

**SYMBOL KEY**

Website link

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Document ◦

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Question or discussion

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**Guiding Structure**

- + 1. TRAUMA DEFINED
- 2. TRAUMA AND THE BRAIN
- 3. PHYSICAL IMPACT OF TRAUMA
4. OTS AND TRAUMA
5. SUPPORTING TRAUMA
6. APPLICATIONS IN VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

**SYMBOL KEY**

Website link

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Question or discussion

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**TRAUMA DEFINED**

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### CHAT QUESTION 1:

HOW WOULD YOU DEFINE TRAUMA OR WHAT WORDS COME TO MIND WHEN YOU THINK OF TRAUMA?

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### WHAT IS TRAUMA?



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### TRAUMA IS PERVASIVE



The national average of child abuse and neglect victims in 2013 was 679,000, or 9.1 victims per 1,000 children.\*



SAMHSA

About **1 in 7** children experienced child abuse and neglect in the last year.



CDC

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**Understanding Child Trauma**

Child trauma occurs more than you think.

More than **TWO THIRDS OF CHILDREN** reported at least 1 traumatic event by age 16. Potentially traumatic events include:

- PSYCHOLOGICAL, PHYSICAL, OR SEXUAL ABUSE
- COMMUNITY OR SCHOOL VIOLENCE
- WITNESSING OR EXPERIENCING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
- NATURAL DISASTERS OR TERRORISM
- COMMERCIAL, SEXUAL, OR LABOR EXPLOITATION
- SUDDEN OR VIOLENT LOSS OF A LOVED-ONE
- REFUGEE OR WAR EXPERIENCES
- MILITARY FAMILY-RELATED STRESSORS (E.G., DEPLOYMENT, PARENTAL LOSS OR INJURY)
- PHYSICAL OR SEXUAL ASSAULT
- NEGLECT
- SERIOUS ACCIDENTS OR LIFE-THREATENING ILLNESS

The national average of child abuse and neglect victims in 2013 was 679,000, or 9.1 victims per 1,000 children.\*

Each year, the number of youth requiring hospital treatment for physical and mental trauma would fill **EVERY SEAT IN 9 STADIUMS!**\*

**1 IN 4** HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS will or has **1 PHYSICAL FIGHT!**\*\*

**1 IN 3** high school students who bullied at school: **1 IN 6** EXPERIENCED **CYBERBULLYING!**\*\*

**NCTSI LINK TO INFOGRAPHIC**

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**TRAUMA IS A PERSONAL EXPERIENCE** + °

- “When a child feels intensely threatened by an event they are involved in or witnesses, we call that event a *trauma*. There is a range of traumatic events or trauma types to which children and adolescents can be exposed” (NCTSN, 2022)
- **There are different types of trauma**
- **Adverse Childhood Experiences**
- **How childhood trauma affects health across a lifetime**

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**POLL QUESTION 3:** + °

**TRUE OR FALSE**

**TRAUMA IS A SENSORY EXPERIENCE**

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**TRAUMA IS A SENSORY EXPERIENCE**

**BUT WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?**

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**QUESTION CHECK IN**

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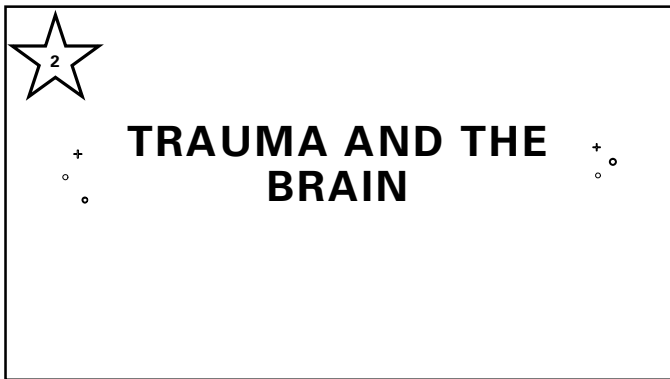
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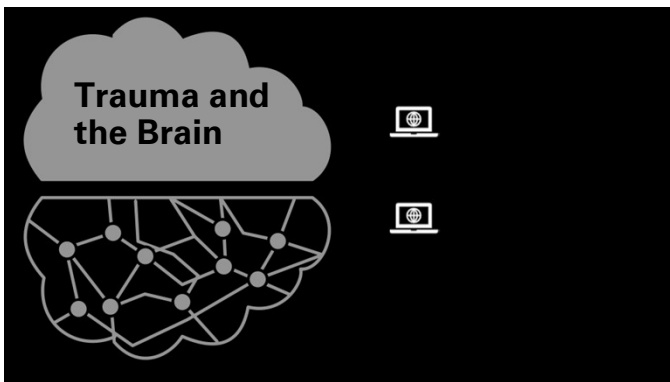
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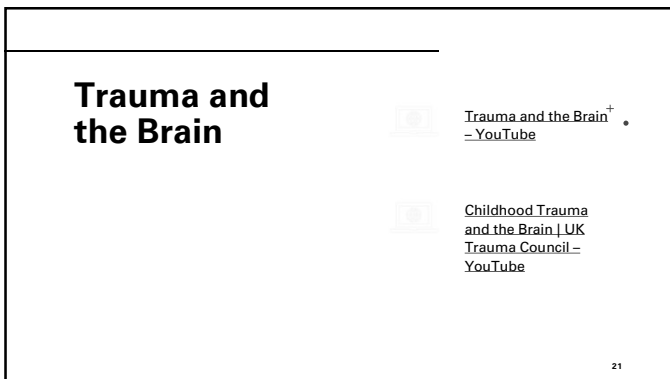
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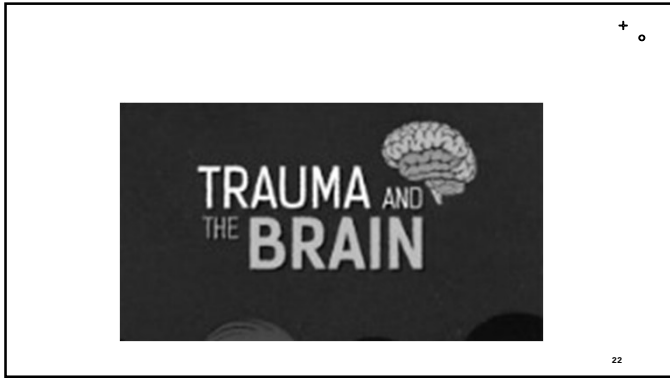
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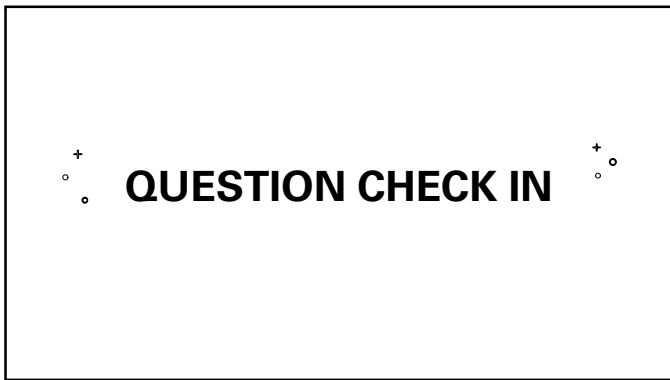
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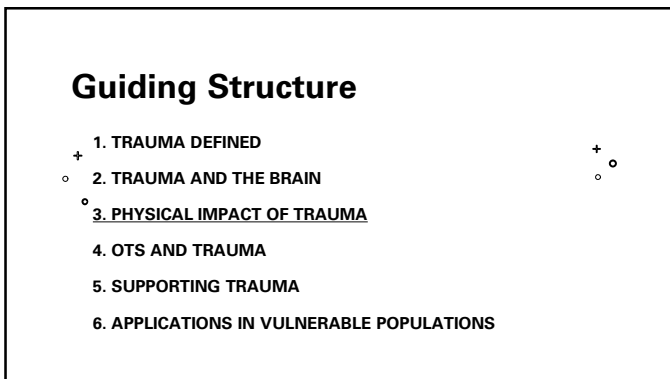
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**PHYSICAL IMPACT OF TRAUMA**

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**Physical Impact of Trauma**

-  [The in Utero Experience: Trauma Before Birth](#)
-  [Physical Impacts of Trauma](#)
-  [How childhood trauma affects health across a lifetime | Nadine Burke Harris - YouTube](#)

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**CHAT QUESTION 2:**

**ANYTHING THAT SURPRISES YOU ABOUT THE PHYSICAL IMPACT OF TRAUMA?**

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**CHAT QUESTION 3:**  
**WHAT DOES TRAUMA INFORMED CARE MEAN TO YOU?**

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**TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE SHIFTS THE FOCUS FROM**

***“WHAT’S WRONG WITH YOU?”***  
**TO**  
***“WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU?”***

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**TRAUMA INFORMED CARE SEEKS TO** <sup>+</sup> <sub>o</sub>

- Understand the widespread impact of trauma and potential supports
- Recognize the signs and symptoms of trauma
- Integrate knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, and practices
- Actively avoid re-traumatization

 • [Trauma-Informed Care Implementation Resource Center](#)

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**PRINCIPLES OF TRAUMA INFORMED CARE** <sup>+</sup> <sub>o</sub>

- Safety
- Trustworthiness and transparency
- Peer support
- Collaboration and mutuality
- Empowerment, voice, and choice
- Cultural, historical, and gender issues

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 **WHAT ARE OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS SAYING ABOUT TRAUMA INFORMED CARE?** <sup>+</sup> <sub>o</sub>

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## OTS ARE TALKING ABOUT AND RESEARCHING TRAUMA

**A Sensory Integration-Based Intervention Perspective to Trauma-Informed Care for Children**  
 Sarah A. MacRae, MSW, OTR/L, FAOTA

**Background**  
 The importance of early parent-child interactions in the child's emotional and developmental development

**The Issue Is ...**  
 Childhood Toxic Stress: A Community Role in Health Promotion for Occupational Therapists  
 Jennifer P. Green, Katherine E. Bogan, James Washburn

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## CHAT QUESTION 4: IN WHAT WAYS CAN OTS BE TRAUMA INFORMED?

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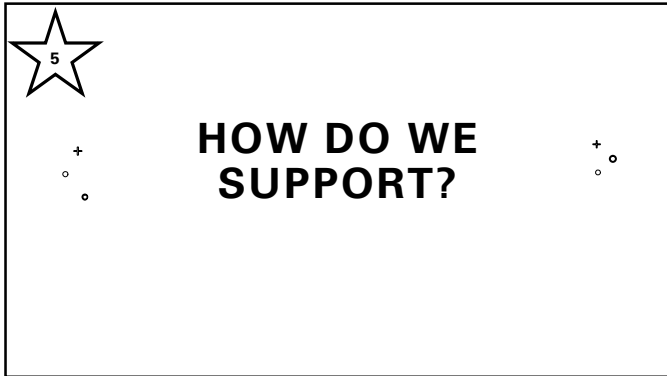
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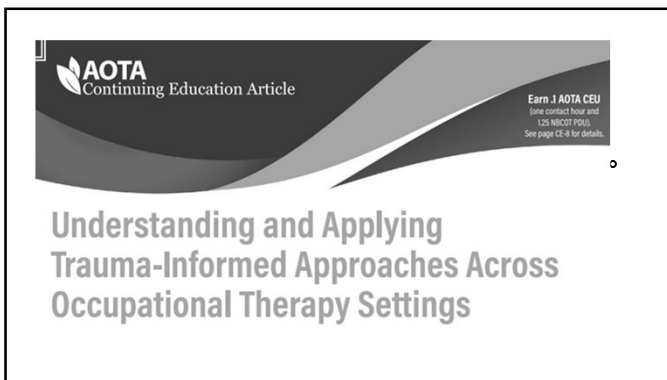
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**Figure 1. Trauma-Informed Care (TIC) in Action: Do's, Don'ts, and Associated Principles**

Do	Don't	Associated TIC Principle(s)
Ask, "What happened to you?"	Ask, "What's wrong with you?"	Safety
Always ask preferred pronouns.	Assume pronoun based on name or appearance.	Cultural, historical, and gender issues
Ask permission for everything.	Assume that individuals will be willing to say or do anything you ask them to do.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safety</li> <li>• Collaboration and mutuality</li> <li>• Empowerment, voice, and choice</li> </ul>
Provide TIC training for all providers and support staff.	Provide training only for certain staff, based on title or role.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safety</li> <li>• Trustworthiness and transparency</li> <li>• Peer support</li> <li>• Collaboration and mutuality</li> <li>• Empowerment, voice, and choice</li> <li>• Cultural, historical, and gender issues</li> </ul>
Administer an Adverse Childhood Experiences screening to all clients.	Ignore the pervasiveness of trauma in all areas of practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaboration and mutuality</li> <li>• Safety</li> <li>• Trustworthiness and transparency</li> <li>• Cultural, historical, and gender issues</li> </ul>
Assess and follow up with trauma-related needs.	Ignore trauma-related needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaboration and mutuality</li> <li>• Safety</li> <li>• Trustworthiness and transparency</li> </ul>
Acknowledge that there may be aspects of the environment that you cannot change to support well-being, such as loud noises from machines.	Ignore those things over which you have no control.	Trustworthiness and transparency

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**“What do I do?”**  
**Trauma-informed Support for Children**

- 1 Create safety**  
 The first and most essential practice adults learn is to avoid causing or adding to the trauma by making their classroom. If you are in a classroom, make your own classroom a safe place for your students and yourself by creating a space that is safe for a safe place.
- 2 Regulate the nervous system**  
 Children who have experienced trauma have a nervous system that is hyperactive and often in a state of fight or flight. This is why they may have difficulty focusing, listening, and following directions. They may also have difficulty regulating their emotions and behavior. It is important to help them regulate their nervous system.
- 3 Build a connected relationship**  
 One of the most important ways to support the nervous system when an eye around trauma is to build a connected relationship with the child. This connection provides a sense of safety and security after chaos. It can also provide the support for getting our nervous system after chaos. It can also provide the support for getting our nervous system after chaos.
- 4 Support development of coherent narrative**  
 Children who have experienced trauma often have a fragmented sense of self. They may not be able to tell a story about their life. It is important to help them develop a coherent narrative of their life. This can be done through storytelling, drawing, and other activities.
- 5 Practice power-with strategies**  
 Children who have experienced trauma often feel a loss of power and control. It is important to help them practice power-with strategies. This can be done through role-playing, decision-making, and other activities.
- 6 Build social emotional and resiliency skills**  
 Children who have experienced trauma often have difficulty with social and emotional skills. It is important to help them build social emotional and resiliency skills. This can be done through social stories, role-playing, and other activities.
- 7 Foster post-traumatic growth**  
 Children who have experienced trauma often have a sense of hopelessness and despair. It is important to help them foster post-traumatic growth. This can be done through goal-setting, problem-solving, and other activities.

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**OTS ARE ADDRESSING TRAUMA**

- Understand the widespread impact of trauma and potential supports
- Recognize the signs and symptoms of trauma in assessment and intervention
- Integrate knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, and practices
- Actively avoid re-traumatization

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**QUESTION CHECK IN**

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## VULNERABLE POPULATIONS




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## POPULATIONS AT RISK

- Some groups of children and families are disproportionately represented among those experiencing trauma. This means that they may be exposed to trauma at particularly high rates or be at increased risk for repeated victimization.
- For some populations, co-occurring issues and unique adversities can complicate recovery from trauma. Others may face significant challenges related to access to services or require services that are specially adapted for their needs.



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**CHAT QUESTION #5:**

**DO YOU WORK WITH A POPULATION VULNERABLE TO TRAUMA?**

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**POPULATIONS AT RISK**

Substance use	Economic stress	Military and veteran families	Unhoused youth
LGBTQ youth	Post-institutionalized children	Foster care	Medically fragile
Neurodivergent	Autistic	Inner city/ Lower income	Anxiety

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**CHAT QUESTION #6:**

**WHAT IS A STEP YOU CAN TAKE TO IMPLEMENT TRAUMA INFORMED PRACTICES IN YOUR WORK?**

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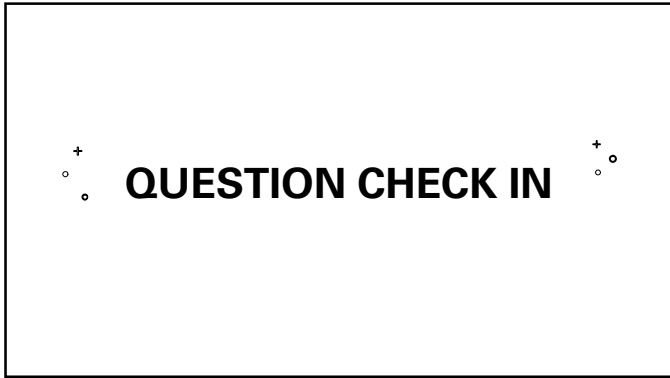
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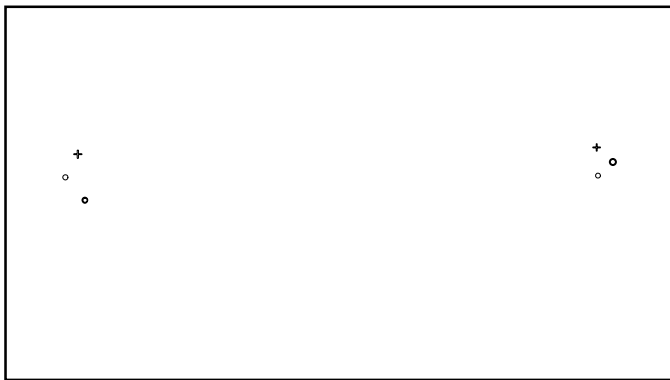
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# CONTACT INFORMATION

- Jessica Weiler, OTD, OTR/L, CTRP
  - [jessicaweiler@thrivetherapyot.com](mailto:jessicaweiler@thrivetherapyot.com)
  - Visit me through ThriveTherapyOT.com
  - Come chat with other OTs on Facebook at OTs for Pediatric Mental Health: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/395557154330473>
  - Listen to me being interviewed by Sarah Zera, The Moxie OT: <https://www.moxieot.com/podcast/e9-jessica-weiler>
- Elizabeth Kohler-Rausch, ILOTA Pediatric SIS co-chair
  - [beth.kr.ot@gmail.com](mailto:beth.kr.ot@gmail.com)
- Ashley Hettlinger, ILOTA Pediatric SIS co-chair
  - [ashleybuksa1@gmail.com](mailto:ashleybuksa1@gmail.com)

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# REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

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- Understanding Child Trauma
  - SAMHSA <https://www.samhsa.gov/child-trauma/understanding-child-trauma#:~:text=Fact%20acts,for%20physical%20assault%20related%20injuries>
  - CDC <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/childabuseandneglect/trafact.html>
  - Children's Bureau Child Maltreatment Report 2020 [Child Maltreatment Report 2020](https://www.childmaltreatment.gov/2020) | The Administration for Children and Families ([hhs.gov](http://hhs.gov))
- Trauma is a personal experience
  - The National Child Traumatic Stress Network <https://www.nctsn.org/what-is-child-trauma/trauma-types>
  - CDC Kaiser ACE Study <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/ace/about.html>
  - Nadine Burke Harris YouTube on Adverse Childhood Effects <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=95ovU3d9tk8>
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  - (8:44) YouTube "Trauma and the Brain" <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4-4k7n24a8Ic>
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  - The In Utero Experience- Trauma Before Birth [https://www.communityservices.act.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0006/1549761/The-in-utero-experience.pdf](https://www.communityservices.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0006/1549761/The-in-utero-experience.pdf)
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  - SAMHSA's Concept of Trauma and Guidance for a Trauma-Informed Approach <https://youth.gov/youth-article/samhas-concept-trauma-and-guidance-trauma-informed-approach>
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  - Trauma Informed Occupational Therapy - Felice Gobbel
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  - [http://www.researchgate.net/publication/358334804\\_Childhood\\_Toxic\\_Stress\\_A\\_Community\\_Role\\_in\\_Health\\_Promotion\\_for\\_Occupational\\_Therapists](http://www.researchgate.net/publication/358334804_Childhood_Toxic_Stress_A_Community_Role_in_Health_Promotion_for_Occupational_Therapists)
- How do we support
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  - <https://www.ichtraining.org/trauma-informed-support-for-children/>
- Vulnerable Populations
  - <https://www.nctsn.org/what-is-child-trauma/populations-at-risk>

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