

**Linking  
Systems of Care**  
for Children and Youth Project



**NCJFCJ**  
est. 1957  
NATIONAL COUNCIL OF  
JUVENILE AND FAMILY COURT JUDGES  
WWW.NCJFCJ.ORG



# *Linking Systems of Care Montana*

Trauma-Informed Approaches

# Participant Workbook

## Module 6



# Module 6

## Empowerment, Voice, and Choice

### Learning Objectives



- Explain the particular importance of practices that enhance empowerment, voice, and choice, for clients and staff who have experienced trauma.
- Identify resilience and protective factors in children and families and apply an understanding of children’s and families’ resilience and protective factors that may be applied while working with them.
- Articulate practices that allow children and families to express empowerment, voice, and choice at the organizational level.
- Devise strategies/policies to empower staff and provide increased opportunities for voice and choice within the agency, organization, or program.

**What do the words “empowerment,” “voice,” and “choice” mean to you?**

---

---

---

---

---

## Key Definitions

**Empowerment** – The capacity of individuals, families, groups or communities, to take control of their circumstances and achieve their own goals, thereby being able to work towards helping themselves and others to maximize the quality of their lives and their ability to thrive (Adams, R. 2008. Empowerment, participation and social work. Macmillan International Higher Education)

**Partnering** – An arrangement where two or more parties agree to cooperate to advance their mutual interests

**Power-sharing** – A deliberate approach to engagement with families, youth, and children, that seeks to combine the knowledge, training and resources of the provider and organization with the lived experience and resources of the families receiving services. (NCTSN, What's SHARING POWER Got to Do with Trauma-Informed Practice?)

**Resilience** – refers to the ability of an individual, family, or community to cope with adversity and trauma, and adapt to challenges or change. (SAMHSA)

**Protective factors** – are practices, characteristics, or other elements that help to enhance a child, youth, family, or provider's ability to recover and effectively adapt following a potentially traumatic event. These factors may be internal, such as problem-solving or relationship-building skills, or external, such as having one's basic needs met or having a positive relationship with a sibling. (National Child Traumatic Stress Network)

**Voice** – The ability to express one's thoughts, emotions, or opinions, and have them heard by the intended audience or recipient.

**Choice** – Being able to select or make a decision when faced with two or more possibilities.

# Case Study – Identifying Protective Factors

## Case 1



**Rosa** is a three-year-old girl of mixed ethnicity (Caucasian and Latinx) who came to **Your Agency** following an allegation of sexual abuse by her paternal uncle. She came to **Your Agency** with her mother, Carmen, father, Ari, 10-year-old sister, Alicia, and maternal grandmother, Grace. The family expressed concern about how the

abuse might affect Rosa, and wanted to know how to help her. Rosa appeared to be especially close to her grandmother and sat in her lap or held her hand. Carmen said that Grandma Grace watches Rosa while she and her husband are working at a restaurant that they own and run together. Grandma Grace said that she is very close with Rosa who likes to help her cook and listen to music. She said that Rosa really likes to sing and dance, and that she knows all of the hymns that they sing in church. About a month ago, Rosa seemed to lose interest in singing. Although Grandma Grace asked, she wouldn't tell her why she wouldn't sing. Carmen and Ari said that around that time, Rosa was waking up from bad dreams at night and seemed scared to go back to sleep. One day, Carmen was picking Rosa up from her grandmother's house and mentioned that her uncle was coming over for dinner. Rosa began to cry and refused to leave Grandma Grace's house. After some time and much comfort from her mother and grandmother, Rosa disclosed that her uncle was hurting her. Carmen told her husband Ari who talked to Rosa and then immediately called the police.

What are some protective factors you can identify in **Rosa's story** that might be used to help her and her family during this time?

---

---

---

---

What questions might you ask Rosa and/or her family to learn about other protective factors?

---

---

---

---

How might culture, race, or ethnicity be a protective factor in **Rosa's story**?

---

---

---

---

## Case 2



Shawn is a 10-year-old male from a Native American tribe who came to **Your Agency** with his maternal grandmother Janine following some behavioral issues at school. In the most incident, Shawn was sent home from school after running out of the classroom and through the halls of the school, punching the walls, yelling and swearing, and tearing some of the posters in the hallway. Shawn's teacher

reported that this happened after he witnessed a classmate push another child who fell to the ground, and his teacher held him back as he was trying to step between the fight. The vice principal was able to help him calm down and said that she sent him home because she did not feel it was in his best interest to return to the classroom and did not have an alternative for him. She said that Shawn really loves, and is knowledgeable about, insects and reptiles, and she was able to help him calm down by bringing him into an office where there is a pet lizard in an aquarium. He was able to recite some facts about the lizard and eventually hold the lizard. She also reported that they are working with Shawn's grandmother, teacher, and a school counselor to find other ways to keep Shawn at school in a safe way, without having to send him home. He has been sent home 27 times this year.

Janine (Shawn's grandmother) reported that about one year ago, Shawn witnessed his mother in a physical fight with her sister (Shawn's aunt), which resulted in his mother's death. Janine is now Shawn's guardian. She reports that the situation is very difficult because her only remaining daughter is in prison for the murder. She said that she visits her every weekend and Shawn accompanies her because she cannot leave him alone. She said that the school has recommended counseling but the reservation is not close to any comprehensive mental health services.

She also admitted that she does not know how to help him because she doesn't know how to deal with her own grief and loss related to her daughter's death and the circumstances around it.

What are some protective factors you can identify in **Shawn's story** that might be used to help him and his family during this time?

---

---

---

---

What questions might you ask **Shawn or his family** to learn about other protective factors?

---

---

---

---

How might culture, race, or ethnicity be a protective factor in **Shawn's story**?

---

---

---

---

### Case 3



Isabella is a 15-year-old Caucasian female who came to **Your Agency** following her disclosure that she was sexually assaulted at a party by an acquaintance. Isabella was accompanied by her mother, Amy, who immediately called law enforcement and reported the assault. Amy reported that for the past six weeks, Isabella has been spending

more time in her room and less time with friends. She said that she has seemed “moody,” and that at first Amy believed it was just “teenage girl behavior.” Isabella also recently came out to her family as lesbian. Amy said that Isabella hasn’t been wanting to go to track practice or meets, even though she used to look forward to them. Amy found out about the assault when the mother of Isabella’s friend Katie called her. Isabella had disclosed to Katie, who was worried about her friend and told her own mother, who told Amy.

Isabella and Katie had been at a party and most of the kids attending were drinking. Katie left the party early because she wasn’t feeling comfortable there, but Isabella wanted to stay. The next day, Katie called her to ask her how things went, and Isabella told her that she had too much to drink and remembers Asher, a 17-year-old boy in their school, bringing her into a room. She said that she remembers telling him she wanted to go home, but he started to take her clothes off. She said that she began to cry and kept telling him “no” and “I want to go home”, but he kept saying “No it’s okay. You want to do this” and he raped her. Katie said that Isabella didn’t tell anyone else because she knew she shouldn’t have been at the party and shouldn’t have been drinking. At first Katie kept her secret, but she began to get worried about Isabella when she stopped coming to track and didn’t seem herself at school. At one point Isabella told Katie that, “it would be easier if I died and could just stop thinking about it.”



When Amy confronted Isabella about what she heard, Katie told her that she felt like it was all her fault and didn't want her mother to hate her or think badly of her. She said that she was scared to call the police because she had been drinking and was afraid she would get into trouble, and she didn't want others at school to find out what happened. Although she finally agreed to talk to the police, Isabella said that she didn't think she could do it again, or go to court. She said that talking to them overwhelmed her, and she has not wanted to get out of bed, or go to school ever since. Amy is very concerned and doesn't know how to help her daughter.

What are some protective factors you can identify in **Isabella's story** that might be used to help her and her family during this time?

---

---

---

---

What questions might you ask **Isabella or her family** to learn about other protective factors?

---

---

---

---

How might culture, race, or ethnicity be a protective factor in **Isabella's story**?

---

---

---

---

## Protective Factors Action Planning

### Community resources include:

- Cultural or religious organizations
- School environment
- Community organizations
- Economic opportunities

---

---

### Relationship resources include:

- Parenting abilities
- Sibling/other family relationships
- Positive peers
- Caring adults

---

---

## Individual resources include:

- Self-regulation skills
  - Problem-Solving skills
  - Relationship skills
  - Involvement in positive activities
- 
- 

## Case Study – Identifying Strengths

How can the strengths you just identified be used to help the child/youth and family?

---

---

---

How can you help to strengthen protective factors related to the community, for your child/youth? (Remember to consider communities of varied cultures.)

---

---

---

What might you do help strengthen or build upon relationships factors? (Consider parenting, sibling relationships, relationships with other caring adults, and peer-friendships.)

---

---

---

What skills might the child build upon – or be taught – to help them cope with their current situation?

---

---

---

## Empowerment, Voice, and Choice for Staff

---

---

---

---

---

## Helpful Resources

- Empowerment definition comes from: Adams, R. (2008). Empowerment, participation and social work. Macmillan International Higher Education.
- Power-Sharing comes from the NCTSN, What's SHARING POWER Got to Do with Trauma-Informed Practice? [https://www.nctsn.org/sites/default/files/resources/fact-sheet/whats\\_sharing\\_power\\_got\\_to\\_do\\_with\\_trauma-informed\\_practice\\_2.pdf](https://www.nctsn.org/sites/default/files/resources/fact-sheet/whats_sharing_power_got_to_do_with_trauma-informed_practice_2.pdf).
- NCTSN What's Sharing Power Got to Do with Trauma-Informed Practice? [https://www.nctsn.org/sites/default/files/resources/fact-sheet/whats\\_sharing\\_power\\_got\\_to\\_do\\_with\\_trauma-informed\\_practice\\_2.pdf](https://www.nctsn.org/sites/default/files/resources/fact-sheet/whats_sharing_power_got_to_do_with_trauma-informed_practice_2.pdf).  
<https://www.nctsn.org/resources/sharing-power-tool-reflection>

- SAMHSA's Concept of Trauma and Guidance for a Trauma-Informed Approach: <https://store.samhsa.gov/product/SAMHSA-s-Concept-of-Trauma-and-Guidance-for-a-Trauma-Informed-Approach/SMA14-4884>.
- American Psychological Association, information on resilience – <https://www.apa.org/topics/resilience>.
- Children’s Bureau Protective Factors to Promote Well Being – <https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/preventing/promoting/protectfactors/>.
- The Strengthening Families Approach and Protective Factors Framework: Branching Out and Reaching Deeper – <https://www.researchconnections.org/childcare/resources/28802/pdf>.
- Children’s Bureau has a resource relevant for all age groups that explores the use of community, family and individual protective factors to help children and families – <https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/preventing/promoting/protectfactors/>.
- The Center for the Study of Social Policy offers a fact sheet on how to use protective factors to strengthen parenting and thereby strengthen families. It’s especially useful for families with younger children and when you have access to/time with the parent – <https://cssp.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/ProtectiveFactorsActionSheets.pdf>.
- The National Child Traumatic Stress Network’s Pathways to Partnership Toolkit offers a structure for examining and expanding the role of youth and families in their organizations on both the clinical and organizational levels. This toolkit includes self-assessment tools, along with sample goals, objectives, activities, and strategies to help users evaluate current participation and target areas for further integrating youth and families – <https://www.nctsn.org/resources/pathways-partnerships-youth-and-families-national-child-traumatic-stress-network>.

## LSOC Montana Organizational Trauma-Readiness Self-Assessment

If your organization does a good job in this category, please provide an example of the mechanism used to accomplish this principle.

---

---

---

---

---

What could be different in your organization for a ranking one number higher?

---

---

---

---

---

What is the next step to increase rankings in this category?

---

---

---

---

---

Document the next steps your organization will take.

---

---

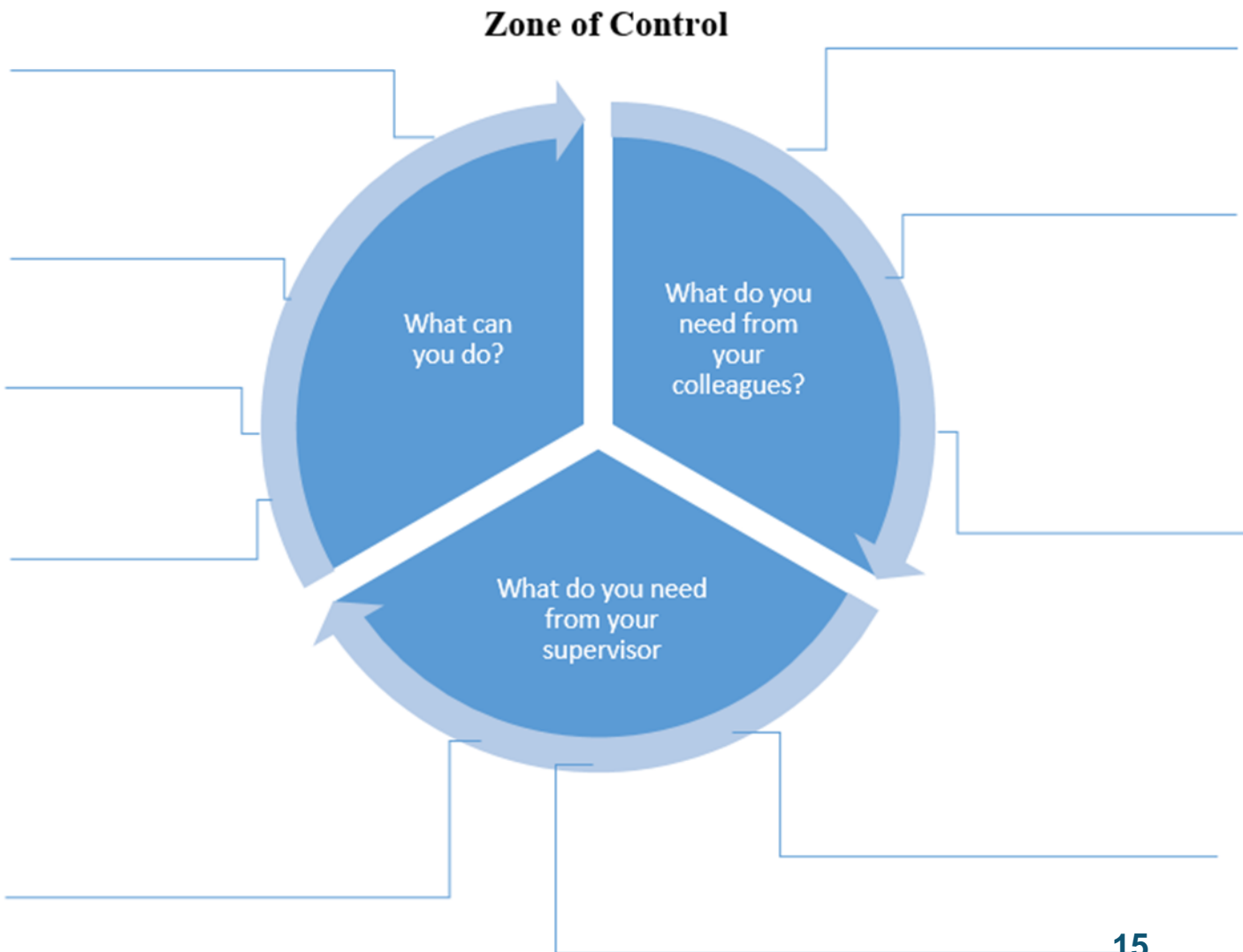
---

---

---

---

## Individual Action Planning



## Test your knowledge



### Question 1

*Voice is the ability to express one's thoughts, emotions, or opinions, and to have them heard by the intended audience or recipient.*

True  
False

### Question 2

*Some internal protective factors include:*

- A. High self-esteem
- B. Self-efficacy
- C. Strong social support network
- D. All of the above
- E. a and b

### Question 3

*Employees who feel empowered at work are associated with:*

- A. Stronger job performance
- B. Higher job satisfaction and satisfaction with leadership
- C. Stronger commitment to the organization
- D. All of the above