



PERU

Program Evaluation and Research Unit

The impact of trauma-informed suicide prevention approaches

A systematic review of evidence across the lifespan



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Learning Objectives

By the end of this module, you will be able to do the following:

- Describe relationship between suicide and trauma exposure
- Define trauma-informed therapeutic practices
- Summarize research approach and findings
- Discuss next steps and support options



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Trauma's impact on suicide

- Trauma impacts **physical, cognitive, behavioral** and **emotional aspects** of individual
- Changes to their **stress responses** can be impacted (changes how they process fear)
- The body's **overstressed arousal regulation** impacts behavior
- **Trust and physical safety** become paramount and a hyper focus



Trauma-informed practices

- Making conscious effort to understand deep, personal impact trauma has on individuals
- Seek to **avoid re-traumatization** by empowering individual in:
 - Decision making
 - Creating safety and trust
 - Choice and collaboration
 - Building skills in personal problem solving



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Methods for data collecting

Eight databases utilized:

Medline 1946-2022

Embase- 1947-2022

PsycINFO- 1806-2022

Emcare- 1995-2022

Ovid Nursing-1946-2022

JBI-1997-2022

ProQuest Psychology-1920-2022

Breakdown of results

Record identified-430

Records screened-347

Records assessed-22

Studies reviewed-4



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Selection criteria

- Studies selected had an emphasis on **trauma-informed therapy**
- **Assessment for suicide and self harm** was a component of each one, with a focus on long term results
- Articles had to be in English
- Tracked results one full year or longer



What was the result

- Out of the four studies, **only two reported improvements** in suicidal ideation, intent, and behavior
- **Limited evidence** makes it difficult to draw conclusions as to the effectiveness of trauma-informed therapies
- The overall assessment is that this **work is in its infancy** and the literature focuses on implementation and feasibility
- **More research is needed**, combination of qualitative and quantitative



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Strengths and Limitations

Strengths

- Comprehensive search strategy
- Independent researchers
- Review team had vast amounts of experience working in suicide prevention space

Limitations

- Small number of studies, 4
- Only quantitative research included
- Research articles in English only



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Discussion question

- How do we go about identifying ways to best treat persons who have experienced trauma and have suicidal ideations?
- What non-traditional therapies may be able to assist this population?
- How could phenomenological research effect this area of study?



References

- Procter, N., Othman, S., Jayasekara, R., Procter, A., McIntyre, H., & Ferguson, M. (2022). The impact of trauma-informed suicide prevention approaches: A systematic review of evidence across the lifespan. *International Journal of Mental Health Nursing*, 32(1), 3–13. <https://doi.org/10.1111/inm.13048>



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