COMMUNITY HEALTH CARE ASSOCIATION of New York State

Community Care Corner

Health Center Staff Wellness Resources

Trauma-Informed Toolbox Strategy Session:
Health Equity and Trauma-Informed Care

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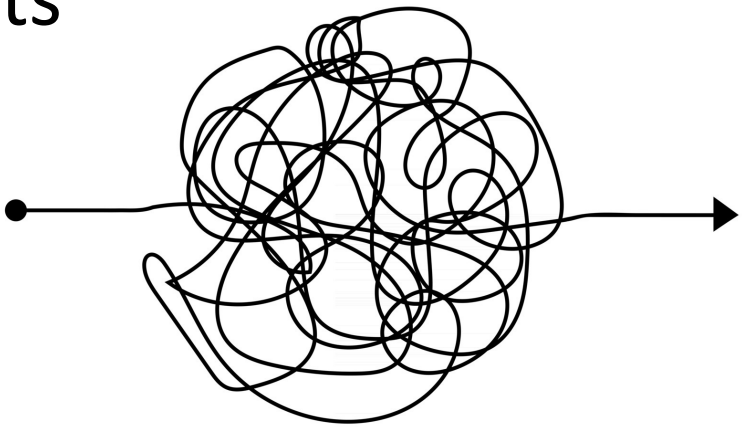
The Institute on Trauma and Trauma-Informed Care

Realities of the here and now…

- Ongoing and rapid changes in protocols, directives, etc.
- Continuous news and social media reports
- Violence, brutality, racial injustice
- Extreme weather events
- Economic instability



- The future remains uncertain and unpredictable
- COVID-19's continued impact is a health equity issue — particularly impacting marginalized communities

The Here and Now, Re-Traumatization, and Impact on the Workforce

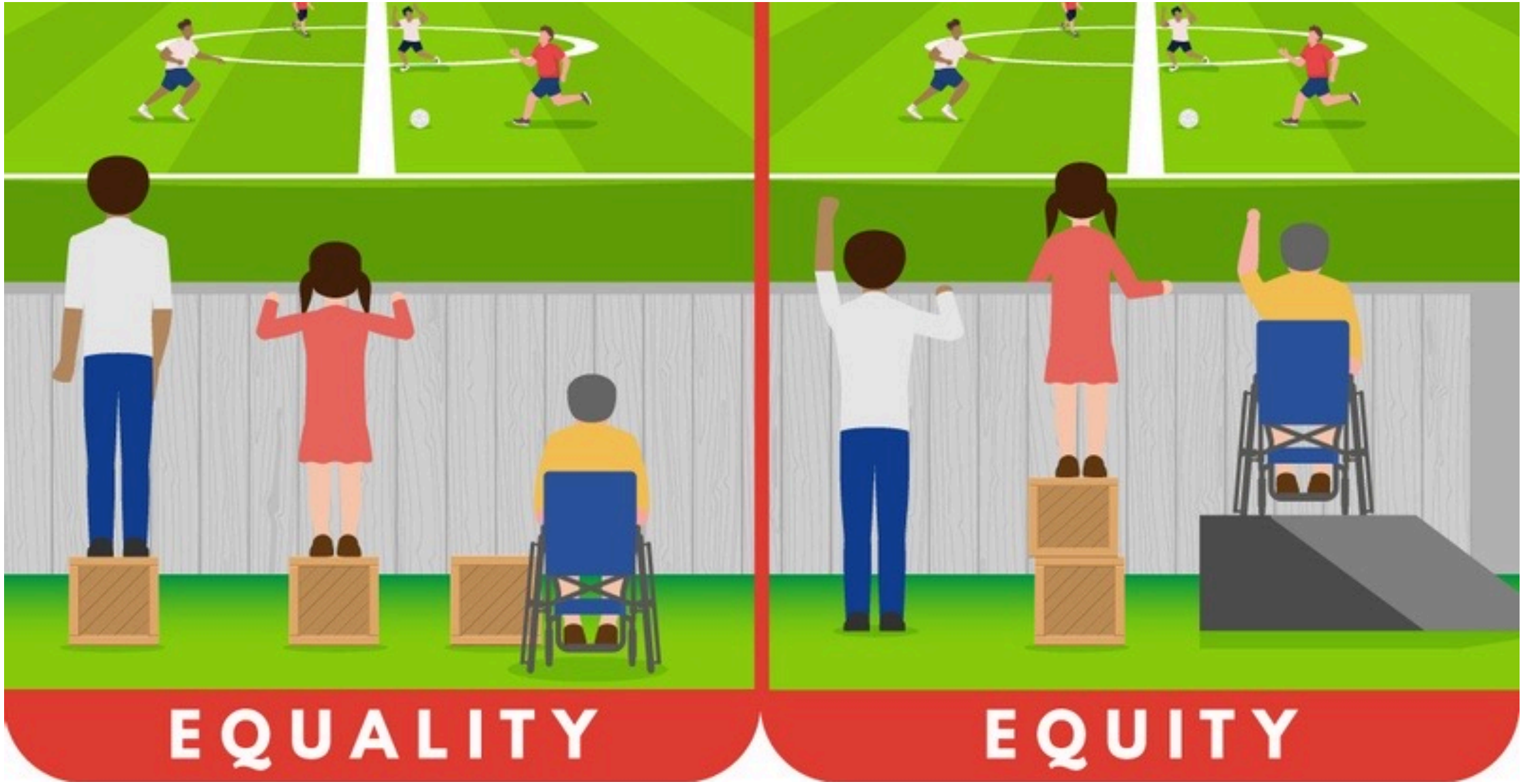
All that is continuing to happen in the world is **bringing to the forefront** the number of health inequities that exist… not having the ability to work from home, not having access to healthcare, to food and water, to social support, to financial stability, to safe housing, etc.

…for those who belong to groups that have been made particularly vulnerable, experiencing these inequities directly can be ***re-traumatizing***…

** being unseen/unheard, no choice/collaboration, being unsafe, disempowerment, mistrust

…for those striving toward health equity in their work, ***witnessing*** these inequities may cause a sense of sadness, anger, and/or helplessness…

** burnout, compassion fatigue, vicarious trauma, languishing, moral distress,



(United Way,)

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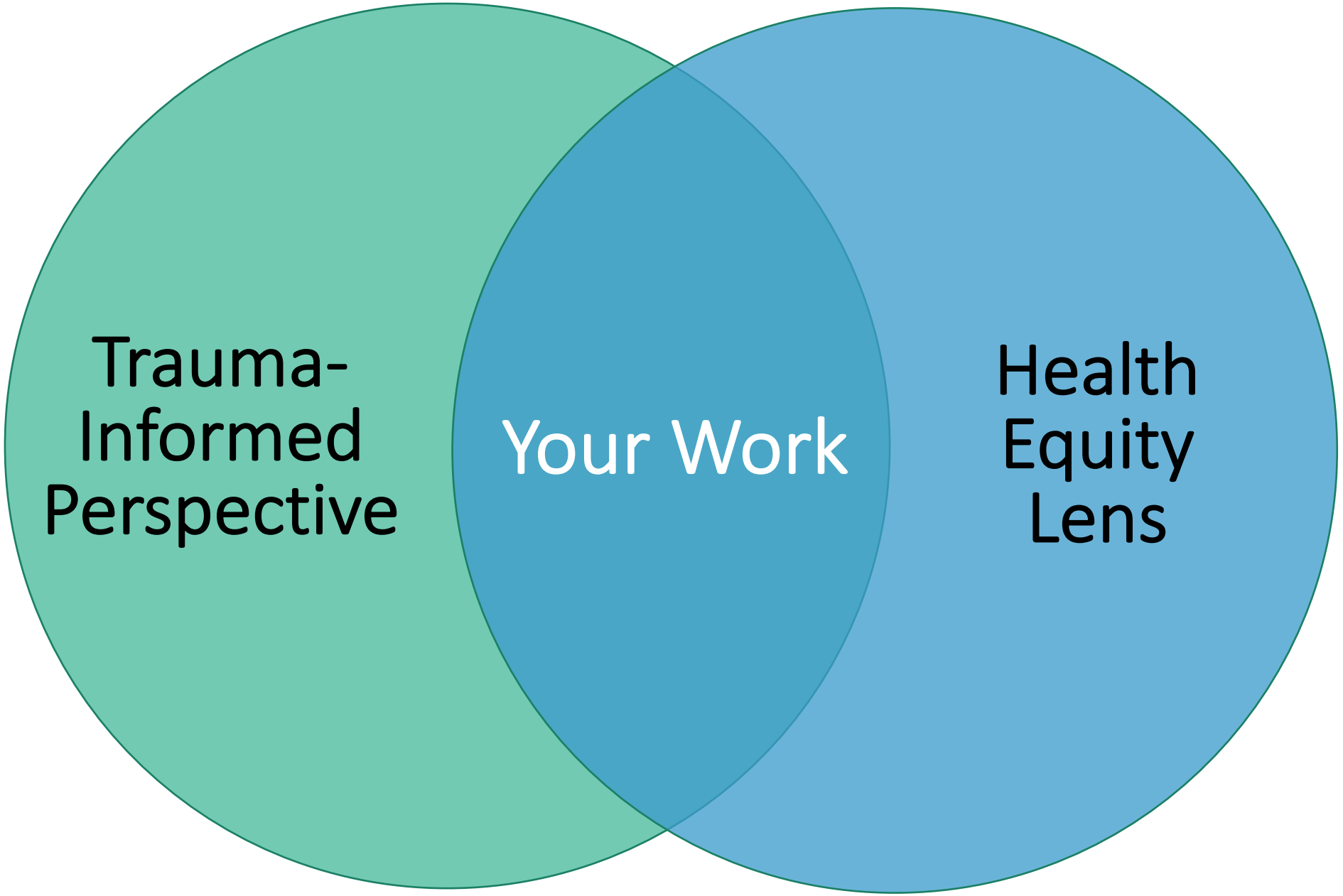
What is Health Equity?

All people having a fair and just opportunity to be as healthy as possible.

*This requires **removing economic and social obstacles** to health to **reduce and ultimately eliminate disparities** in health and its determinants that adversely impact excluded or marginalized groups.*


Trauma-Informed Perspective
Your Work
Health Equity Lens

Trauma-Informed & Health Equity Perspective

We stop asking:
"What is wrong?"

- Non-compliant
- Resistant
- Irresponsible
- Lack concern for others
- Poor life choices

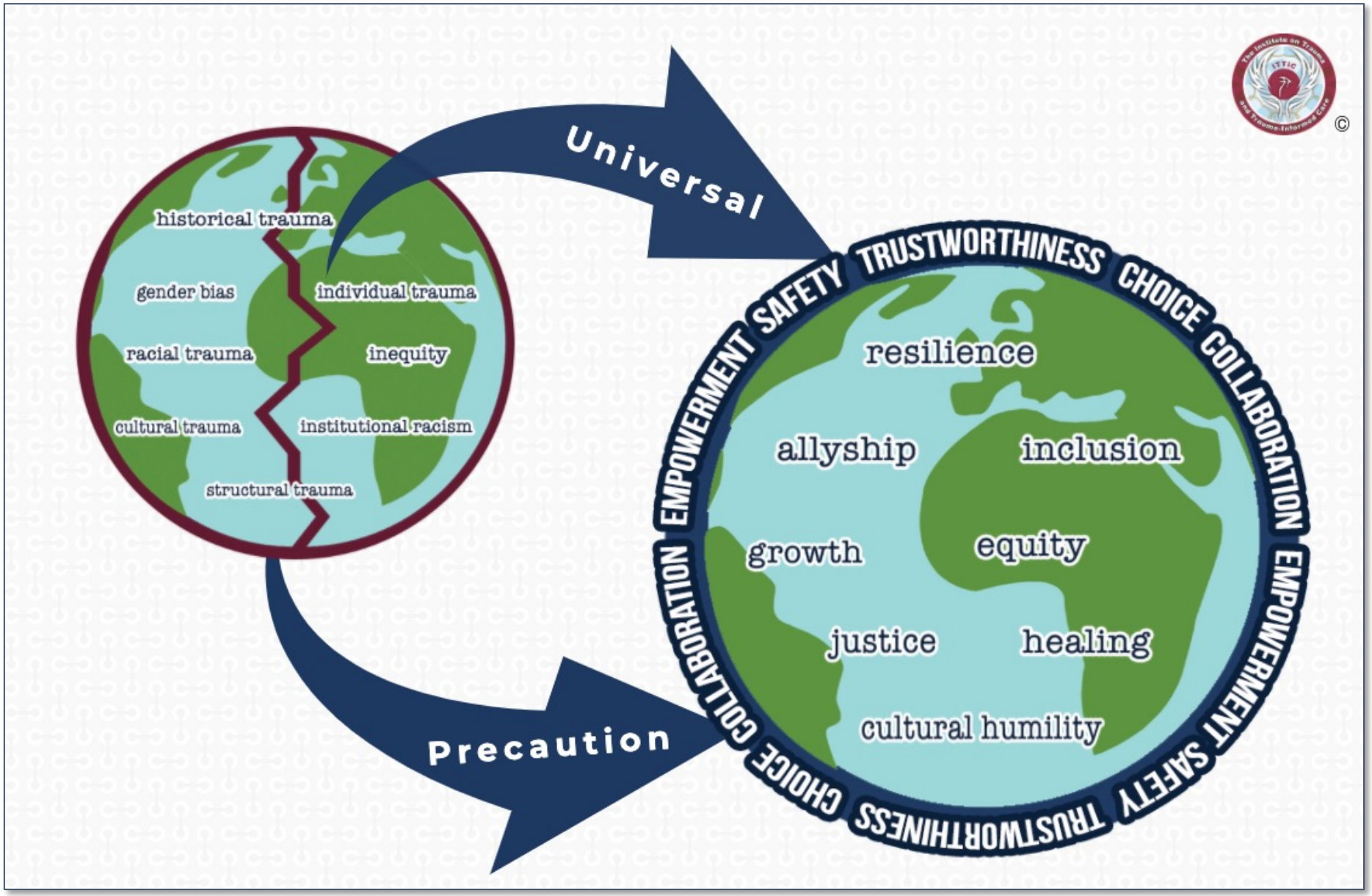
UNIVERSAL PRECAUTION

We begin asking…
"What happened?"

- Lack of resources
- History of adversity & trauma
- Mistrust of systems
  - Systemic oppression & discrimination
  - Historical trauma & inequities
  - Lack opportunity to collaborate in solution-building

(Bloom & Farragher, 2013; Harris & Fallot, 2001)

(Browne et al., 2012; Jennings, n.d.; Schiavo, 2020)



(The Institute on Trauma and Trauma-Informed Care, 2021)

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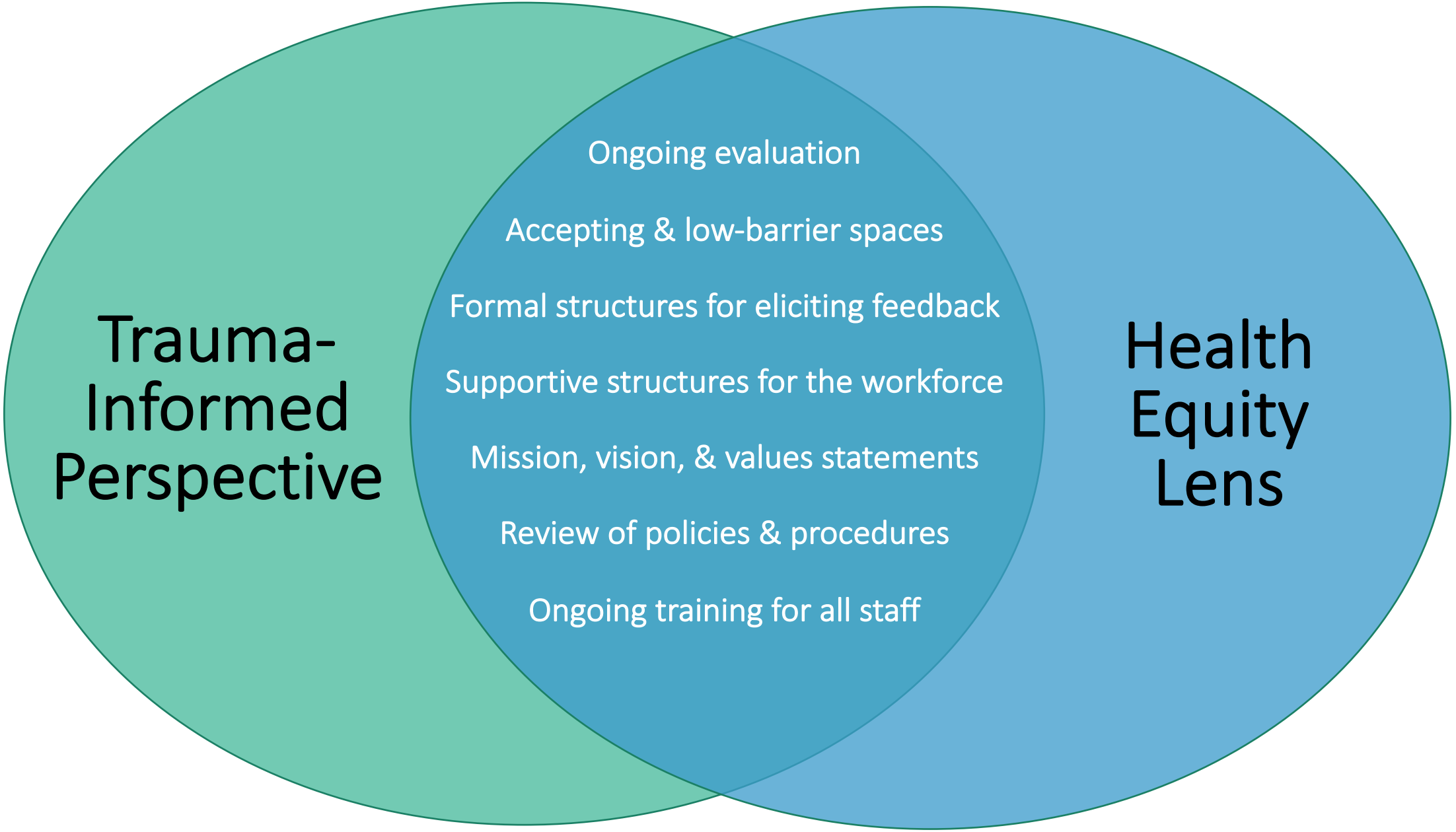
Health Center Staff
Wellness Resources 2022


Trauma-Informed Perspective
Ongoing evaluation
Accepting & low-barrier spaces
Formal structures for eliciting feedback
Supportive structures for the workforce
Mission, vision, & values statements
Review of policies & procedures
Ongoing training for all staff
Health Equity Lens

Individual Considerations and Strategies

Safety

Trustworthiness

Choice

Collaboration

Empowerment

- Work together with patients and their families to facilitate access to supports and services that address the social determinants of health
- Treat individuals as the experts of their own lives, and tailor service delivery to their context
- Seek out education and information to support you in recognizing the signs, symptoms, and culturally-specific expressions of trauma
- Take intentional notice of cultural strengths and resilience and collaborate with patients to create treatment plans that mobilize mobilize them to promote physical, mental, social, and spiritual health
- Prioritize rapport and relationship-building
- Strive to acknowledge the validity of and hold space for multiple truths and ways of doing things to support you in working with difference
- Use culturally-sensitive, person-first, and solution-focused language

(Health Care Toolbox, n.d.; Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, 2017; Brookings Institute, 2022)

Safety

Trustworthiness

Choice

Collaboration

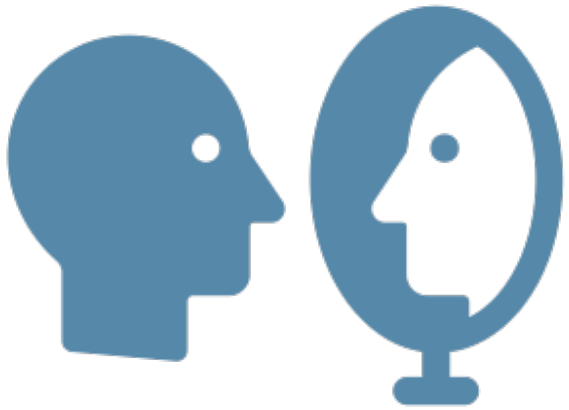
Empowerment

Health Center/Leadership Considerations and Strategies

- Create intentional spaces for debriefing, sharing resources, celebrating individual and collective resilience, and providing support for one another (e.g., affinity groups)
- Establish and uplift equity as a priority in mission/vision/values statements
- Create formal structures to support the workforce to deliver equitable, culturally-responsive care (e.g., training, resource repositories, etc.)
- Review policies, procedures & protocols and revise as needed
- Make efforts to hire a workforce that reflects the diversity of the community
- Notice and seize opportunities for partnership and collaboration with other community members and organizations to bolster patient and workforce access to supports to address the social determinants of health
- Create physical space that is accepting and low-barrier
- Establish a process for accountability and repair when harm occurs

(Health Care Toolbox, n.d.; Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, 2017; Brookings Institute, 2022)

Reflection Point



What have you been doing that works to manage/ cope with witnessing health inequity?

What is your health center/community already doing well to address health equity through a trauma-informed lens? What role have you played/ could you play in advancing that action?

Additional Resources on Health Equity

- Primary Care Associations – Race and Equity Resource Library
- Kaiser Family Foundation – Health Disparities are a Symptom of Broader Social and Economic Inequalities
- Robert Wood Johnson Foundation – What is Health Equity and What Difference Does it Make?
- National Resource Center for Refugees, Immigrants, and Migrants – Health Education Translated Materials Library
- Community Health Association of Mountain/Plains States – Health Equity Resources
- Race Matters Institute – Racial Equity Organizational Assessment
- Healthy Equity Initiative – COVID-19 is a Health Equity Issue
- Visualize Health Equity: A Community Art Project
- Health Care Toolbox: Addressing Health Disparities
- Brookings – 5 Building Blocks to Achieving Greater Health Equity
- New York Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities Prevention
- O'Connor - Advancing Health Equity and Social Justice: Using a Trauma-Informed Lens