



THE BADASS QUARTERLY

A periodic publication of the BADASS Active Bystander Campaign & the Wellness Resource Center

Blocks 3 & 4 2018

Take action to make sure CC is a safe, accepting, and fun place to spend your college years

The BADASS campaign focuses mainly on preventing violence, responding to people in distress, and fostering inclusivity. This edition focuses on mental health and building a trauma-informed community.

Be Aware: What is trauma?

Trauma is an experience or situation that is experienced as physically or emotionally harmful and that overwhelms an individual's ability to cope (The Center for Nonviolence and Social Justice). This definition is quite broad and applies to a vast range of experiences. Unsurprisingly then, almost everyone (89% of the U.S. population) experiences some form of trauma in their lifetime (Kilpatrick et al. 2013). Because long-term discrimination is a form of chronic trauma, identity and positionality are also deeply connected to the likelihood of experiencing trauma. Exposure to trauma also increases the risk of anxiety, depression, and suicidality.

Neurologically, traumatic experiences code into our memories differently than regular memories—we often lose narrative details and chronology, but have intense emotional connection to certain fragments. Thus, a triggering or re-traumatizing event is an experience or situation that suddenly and intensely recalls the original trauma through a sensory or emotional connection. These events can be extremely paralyzing and distressing, and chronic subjection to re-traumatization significantly impacts mental wellbeing, as well as a person's ability to engage fully in many aspects of daily life.

A trauma-informed community incorporates an understanding of trauma into all practices in order to promote healing and emotional/psychological safety, and seeks to actively resist re-traumatization. This includes providing opportunities for choice, empowerment, and control. Because trauma-informed practices are mindful of the varied identities and experiences of all people, they also help to create more inclusive communities. You can Be Aware of the role your own traumatic experiences play in your life and use that perspective as a basis for empathy. You can also educate yourself about trauma processes and signs of mental health challenge in order to contribute to the creation of a trauma-informed community.

Healing is Facilitated By



Decide to Act

There are many ways to participate in creating a trauma-informed community, whether that's seeking support in recovering from your own trauma, helping to find resources for someone else, or daily actions to facilitate inclusivity in your spaces. Ask yourself these questions when deciding how to act:

- Do you or someone else need immediate crisis support?
- Are you or someone else experiencing mental health distress (anxiety, depression, suicidality, etc.) in connection to a traumatic experience?
- Are there certain people/places/events that you or someone you know avoid because they feel uncomfortable or triggered?
- How does your positionality affect your own experience with trauma? How does it affect your ability to recognize potential triggers and/or offer support?

Confidential Campus Resources:

The Sexual Assault Response Coordinator:

On-Call Advocate: 719-602-0960

The Counseling Center: 719-389-6093

Dial 2 after hours to be connected to counselor on call

The Chaplains: 719-389-6638 and 719-389-7986

The Butler Center Gender and Identity Development Specialist:
719-389-6198

Student Title IX Assistance and Resource Team:

start@coloradocollege.edu

Say Something

Connect with mental health and support resources

- In a mental health crisis, which can follow a traumatic event or trigger, call the counselor on-call or 911
- Access trained, confidential resources who can help navigate trauma-recovery: SARC, Gender and Identity Development Specialist, the Chaplains, START, etc.
- Connect with student groups supportive of or aligned with the survivor's experience: GROW, SOSS, QCC, etc.

Communicate your support to survivors and follow through

- Remind someone experiencing trauma or mental health challenges that you care about them
- Ask them what you can do to best support them
- Work from a place of trying to understand their experience and avoid judgement

Call out exclusive language and behavior

- Exclusive language is a form of violence and can be extremely triggering for those whom it targets. It is directly contradictory to a trauma-informed community.
- Call out jokes or casual comments that minimize the experience of mental health challenges or trauma recovery, as this type of behavior perpetuates re-traumatization
- Object to aggressive, predatory, or non-consensual physical contact by telling the perpetrator to stop and checking in with the target of the behavior
- Maintain the integrity of your commitment to support whether or not you know a survivor is present

BE AWARE. DECIDE TO ACT. SAY SOMETHING.

