

Promoting Trauma Informed Federal Policies for Children and Families

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Presentation Overview

- Overview of the National Child Traumatic Stress Network and relevant federal policies
- Recent and emerging federal policy initiatives of relevance to children/families affected by trauma
- How experts (you) can effectively inform and influence policies affecting children/families who have experienced trauma

National Child Traumatic Stress Network

- Established by Congress in 2000 as part of the Children's Health Act to raise the standard of care and increase access to services for traumatized children, families, and communities
- Funded through SAMHSA and coordinated by the UCLA-Duke University National Center for Child Traumatic Stress
- Grantees include hospitals, universities, and community-based programs that are involved in training, service delivery, product development, data collection and evaluation, and public policy and awareness efforts

Select Events Shaping the NCTSN

- <1998 Growing awareness of CTS, Cape Cod meeting, GAO study
- 1999 Columbine
- 2001 9/11 Terrorist Attacks
- 2001-Present Wars in Afghanistan and Iraq (2003-2011)
- 2005-Present Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, Sandy, and others
- 2013 Sandy Hook Elementary School

National Child Traumatic Stress Network Centers



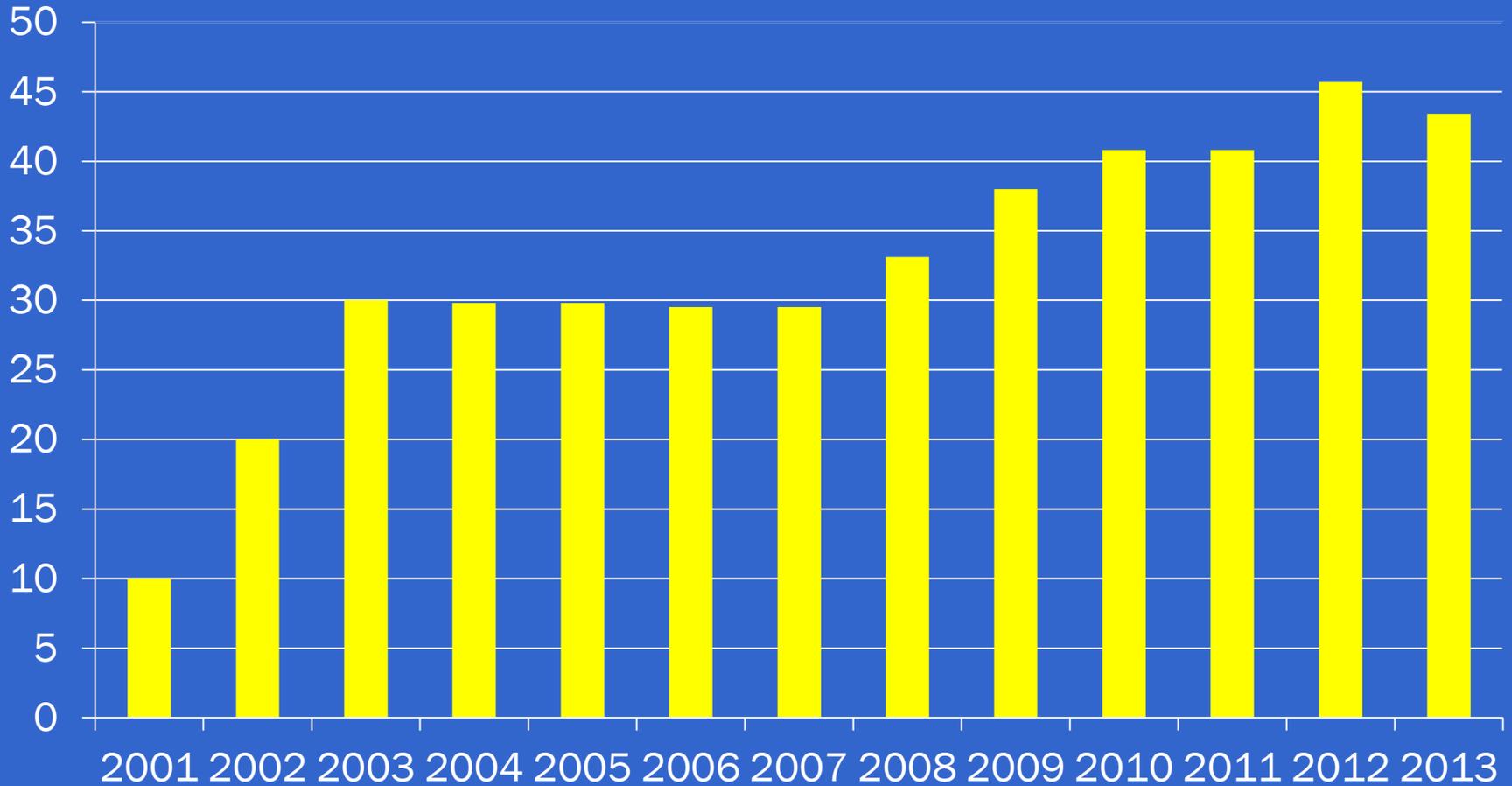
- ★ UCLA & Duke National Center for Child Traumatic Stress
- Treatment and Services Adaptation Centers
- Community Treatment and Services Centers
- ▲ Affiliate Member Organizations and Individuals

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NCTSN

The National Child Traumatic Stress Network

NCTSN Funding History



NCTSN Reauthorization

- The NCTSN has not been reauthorized since 2006.
- In February 2013, Sen. Patty Murray (D-WA) introduced the Children's Recovery from Trauma Act (S. 380) to reauthorize the NCTSN.
- In April 2013, provisions from this bill were included in the bipartisan Mental Health Awareness and Improvement Act (S. 689), led by Sens. Tom Harkin and Lamar Alexander, which was later passed with broad support by the Senate HELP Committee and the full Senate as an amendment to gun legislation that was ultimately defeated.
- Senate champions and supporters of this proposed legislation continue to work in support of its passage.

MH Awareness and Improvement Act

Senators Harkin (D-IA) and Alexander (R-TN)

- Reauthorizes and strengthens the NCTSN
- Expands use of PBIS and early intervening services in schools
- Reauthorizes and strengthens youth suicide prevention efforts
- Reauthorizes grants for mental health awareness training
- Encourages improvements to the CDC National Violent Death Reporting System
- Authorizes the following GAO reports:
 - Examining Mental Health Care for Children
 - Assessing Barriers to Behavioral Health Integration
 - Status of Virginia Tech Recommendations

Supporters of the Children's Recovery From Trauma Act

- American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry
- American Psychological Association
- Futures Without Violence
- National Children's Alliance
- National Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health
- Prevent Child Abuse America
- Mental Health America
- uFOSTERsuccess
- American Art Therapy Association
- American Association on Health and Disability
- American Dance Therapy Association
- American Group Psychotherapy Association
- American Orthopsychiatric Association
- American Psychiatric Association
- Anxiety and Depression Association of America
- Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance
- National Alliance to Advance Adolescent Health
- National Association of Social Workers
- National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors
- National Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare
- School Social Work Association of America
- The Trevor Project

Emerging Federal Policy Issues of Relevance to Child Trauma

- Affordable Care Act Implementation
- Mental Health Parity Implementation
- HHS Guidance on Child Trauma Services
- ESEA Reauthorization
- Other Initiatives Focused on Mental Health and School Climate
- White House Initiatives
- Ongoing Political Challenges

Affordable Care Act and Children

- Children on Parents' Insurance until Age 26
- Elimination of Pre-Existing Coverage Exclusions
- CHIP Reauthorization until 2015
- Coverage for Children Aging Out of Foster Care
- Access to Preventive Care
- Expanding Medicaid Coverage
- Establish and Expand School-Based Health Centers
- Support for Home Visiting Program

SAMHSA ACA Training Resource Toolkit

- Describes Affordable Care Act, how it works, and why it is important for the uninsured with behavioral health conditions
- Explains how the Health Insurance Marketplace works, how to apply for health coverage, and where to get help
- Contains communication ideas/materials that can be used to create awareness and motivate the uninsured to enroll

<http://www.healthcare.gov>

Mental Health Parity Implementation

- The Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act of 2008 requires that if a group health plan offers coverage for mental health or substance use disorder benefits, the coverage can be no more restrictive than the coverage for medical/surgical benefits
- Several year delay in final implementation regulations has led to lawsuits, denial of services, and confusion
- Final regulations are expected in October 2013

HHS Guidance on Child Trauma Services

- In July, ACF, CMS, and SAMHSA issued a letter to state directors of child welfare, Medicaid, and mental health authorities encouraging them to strengthen their efforts to address complex trauma among children and youth known to child welfare.
- The letter provides information about federal authority and funding streams, strategies for coordinating cross-system efforts, and good practices for integrating evidence-based screening, assessment, and interventions related to complex trauma.

Elementary & Secondary Education Act

- First authorized in 1965, ESEA is the federal law that directs investments in elementary and secondary education
- Its primary focus is equity in educational access and support
- ESEA was last authorized in 2002 for a period of five years
- ESEA reauthorization has garnered bipartisan attention from lawmakers, the education community, and other stakeholders

How Does ESEA Impact Your Role As a Professional?

A Blueprint for ESEA Reform

- In March 2010, the administration released its ESEA blueprint
- The blueprint builds on the prior reforms in four areas:
 1. Improving teacher and principal effectiveness to ensure that every classroom has a great teacher and every school has a great leader;
 2. Providing information to families to help them evaluate and improve their children's schools, and to educators to help them improve their students' learning;
 3. Implementing college- and career-ready standards and developing improved assessments aligned with those standards; and
 4. Improving student learning and achievement in the lowest-performing schools by providing intensive support and effective interventions.

ESEA Reauthorization Proposals

- Many policymakers and stakeholders are working in support of an ESEA reauthorization that includes research-based, schoolwide interventions that support:
 - student mental health
 - social and emotional learning
 - positive behavior supports and interventions
 - student threat assessment
 - positive school climate/bullying prevention and intervention

Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning Act

Reps. Ryan (D-OH) and Petri (R-WI)

- Amends ESEA to include teacher and principal training related to the social and emotional development needs of students (among the activities funded under the Teacher and Principal Training and Recruiting Fund program)
- Allows funded training to include training in classroom instruction and schoolwide initiatives that enable students to acquire the knowledge, attitudes, and skills most conducive to social and emotional competency

Safe Schools Improvement Act

Sens. Casey (D-PA) and Kirk (R-IL) and Rep. Sanchez (D-CA)

- Amends ESEA to require states to direct their local educational agencies to establish policies that prevent and prohibit conduct (including bullying and harassment) that creates a hostile or abusive educational environment that adversely affects education
- Requires the Secretary of Education to conduct an independent biennial evaluation of programs and policies to combat bullying and harassment in elementary and secondary schools

Achievement Through Prevention Act

Sens. Bennett (D-CO), Alexander (R-TN), Franken (D-MN), and Burr (R-NC)

- Amends ESEA to allow states, local educational agencies, and schools to use school improvement funds to implement schoolwide PBIS and early intervening services
- Amends ESEA to require states that receive funds for the education of neglected or delinquent children to use PBIS and early intervening services to improve such students' academic performance and reduce their need for discipline

**Included in S. 689*

Other Initiatives Focused on Mental Health & School Climate

Student Non-Discrimination Act

Sen. Franken (D-MN) and Rep. Polis (D-CO)

Addresses the problem of harassment and discrimination against LGBT students

Specifically, this bill would:

- prohibit discrimination and harassment based on actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity against students in federally funded schools
- provide aggrieved students with legal recourse in the event of such discrimination and harassment

Mental Health in Schools Act

Sen. Franken (D-MN) and Rep. Napolitano (D-CA)

- Authorizes increased funding for the Safe Schools/Healthy Students program to expand access to school-based mental health services, training for school and community service providers working in schools, and educational programming for youth/families with mental disorders
- Local districts would be eligible to apply for competitive grants for the development of a comprehensive, trauma-informed and culturally appropriate school mental health program and for specific initiatives (e.g., schoolwide PBIS and community trainings about the signs of mental health problems)

**Included in S. 689*

Garrett Lee Smith Memorial Act Reauthorization

Sens. Reed (D-RI) and Murkowski (R-AK) and
Reps. Cassidy (R-LA) and Davis (D-IL)

- Youth suicide prevention grants in 49 states, 48 tribes/tribal organizations, and 138 institutions of higher education
- Reauthorization would continue/expand grants to states for suicide prevention programs in schools, higher education, and juvenile justice, behavioral health, and foster care programs
- Funds could be used for public education/outreach activities, trainings for professionals, and early interventions/treatment

**Included in S. 689*

Mental Health First Aid Act

Sens. Begich (D-AK), Blumenthal (D-CT), Ayotte (R-NH) and
Reps. Barber (D-AZ)

- Authorizes training grants to help recognize the signs of mental disorders, ways to safely de-escalate crisis situations, and how to connect with appropriate local mental health agencies
- Target populations include:
 - emergency services staff and first responders
 - law enforcement
 - school staff and students/parents in elementary, secondary, and higher education
 - community leaders
 - primary care providers
 - veterans

**Included in S. 689*

White House Initiatives

White House Gun Violence Reduction Plan

(January 2013)

1. Closing background check loopholes to keep guns out of dangerous hands
2. Banning military-style assault weapons and high-capacity magazines, and taking other common-sense steps to reduce gun violence
3. Making schools safer
4. Increasing access to mental health services

Federally Funded Gun Violence Research

- In 1996, Congress banned research on the public health effects of gun violence
- In January 2013, President Obama directed CDC to conduct research into the causes and prevention of gun violence



Photo source: whitehouse.gov

White House Conference on Mental Health (June 2013)



Toolkit for Community Conversations About Mental Health
www.mentalhealth.gov

Photo source: left, C-SPAN.org; right, Win McNamee/Getty Images North America

Ongoing Political Challenges

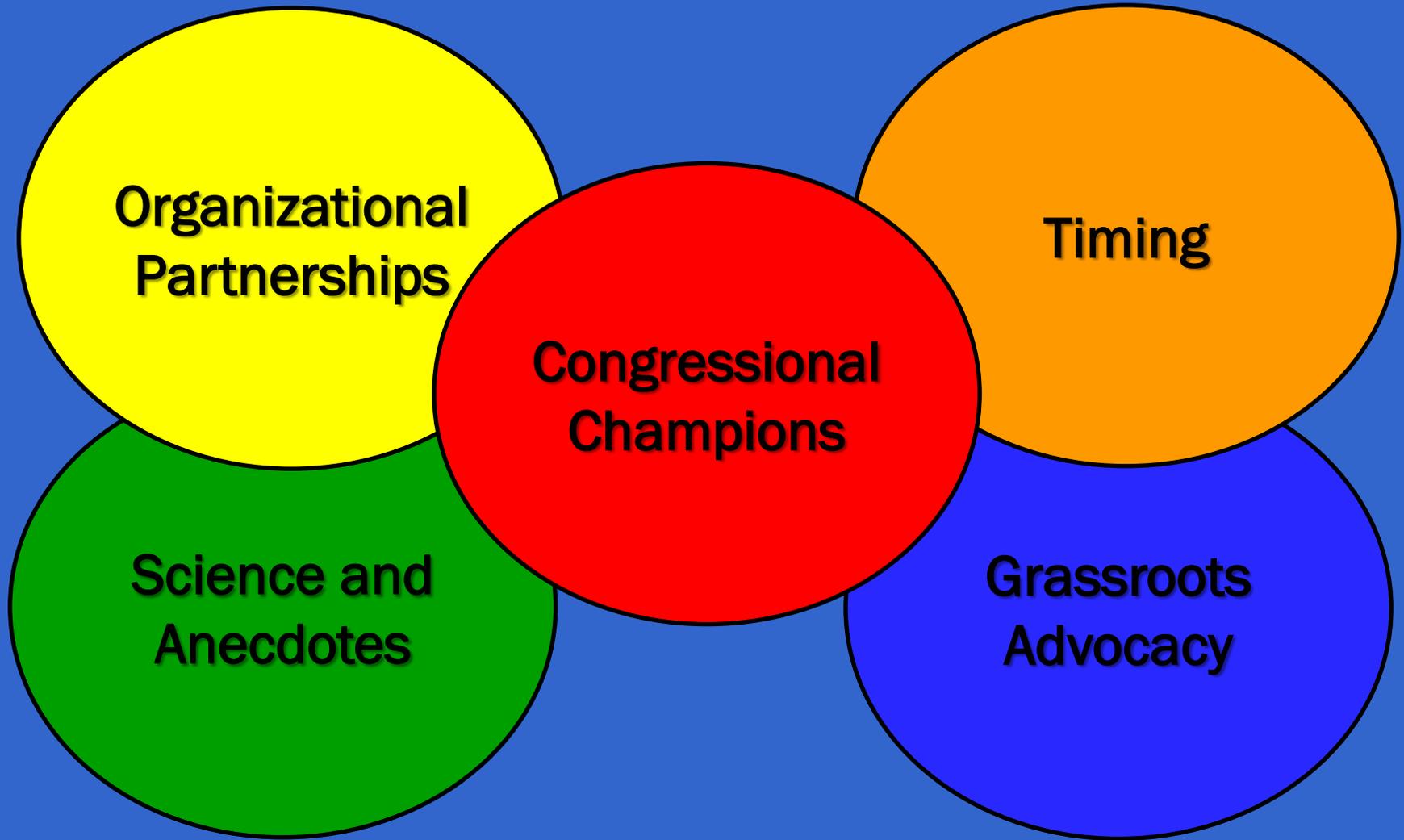
- Sequestration/Budgetary Restrictions
- Partisan Politics
- New Members/Members in New Roles
- Upcoming Mid-term Elections

Effectively Informing and Influencing the Policymaking Process

Mental Health and Trauma Experts: An Essential Resource for Policy Change

- Scientific and clinical expertise
- Local data, examples, and anecdotes
- Constituent/voter

Components of Successful Policy Change



Getting Started

- Determine what the issue is and what is wanted or needed
- Determine who has the authority to grant the request
- Identify appropriate approach to be taken
 - Individual or group
 - Informal or formal

Communicating with Policymakers

- Letters to the Editor
- Op-Ed Letters
- Press Releases
- E-mails
- Letters
- Phone Calls
- In-Person Visits
- Hearings
- Briefings
- Media/Press Events
- Site Visits
- Receptions
- Town Hall Meetings
- Demonstrations
- Social Media

Getting More Involved

- Work with your legislative affairs office and/or communications offices
- Attend a Capitol Hill or district event
- Arrange for a policymaker site visit
- Consider a legislative or executive branch fellowship