

“Historical trauma is the cumulative emotional and psychological wounding over the lifespan and across generations. It’s a powerful consciousness of carrying grief and trauma that is larger than one’s self, the family and the community.”

The traumatic experiences of past generations directly affect children, families and communities today. However, it’s important to recognize that communities that have suffered such enduring trauma are also remarkably resilient and demonstrate great strength in the face of adversity.

- Japanese-Americans
- African-Americans
- Native Americans
- Survivors of the Holocaust

Families and communities that experience historical trauma through generations are at a higher risk for poor physical and mental health outcomes. Children from these families may struggle to thrive in schools, and teens and young adults may find it difficult to connect with peers and build healthy relationships.

Family Support Professionals can help by:

- Learning about and from history, letting the families and communities you serve guide you.
- Listening to people with an open mind and heart.
- Providing strength-based tools and resources that help the healing process for families and communities.
- Identifying and celebrating the strengths of those healing from trauma.
- Offering materials and programs that are centered on cultural practices, including traditional and historical wisdom, and that are written in native or home languages.
- Being mindful of your own story with the understanding that your experiences have shaped your thoughts and feelings about the world and people around you.

Positive Ways to Respond to Historical Trauma

- Acknowledge the experiences of the past.
- Honor history through stories, traditions and collective wisdom.
- Look to the future through children.



Resources

- Videos:
 - Experiences of Black Families in the U.S., Roger Booker Jr. - [Video](#)
 - Immigration Refugee, Vi Tran – [Video](#)
 - Overcoming, Vi Tran - [Video](#)
 - We Shall Remain, Created by the Style Horse Collective, stylehorsecollective.com – [Video](#)
- The National Child Traumatic Stress Network (2013). *Conversations about Historical Trauma*
 - [Part One](#)
 - [Part Two](#)
 - [Part Three](#)
- Historical Trauma, SAMHSA’s GAINS Center for Behavioral Health and Justice Transformation – [Fact Sheet](#)
- Historical Trauma and Cultural Healing, University of Minnesota Extension – [Resources](#)
- Historical Trauma and Microaggressions, Engel, C. 2013, ACEs Connection - [Blog](#)