

Strengthening Trauma Awareness & Resilience

EVES: Reference Guide

When someone discloses a trauma history, your response can include EVES: **Empathy Validation Education & Support**. EVES is an acronym to guide you in providing a brief response that communicates your understanding and contributes to a healing relationship.

The information below describes each of the four components and provides examples you can use.

EMPATHY.



Demonstrating that you have heard the content, feeling and meaning of the adverse experience to the person.

How can you express empathy?

"You've been through so much and I'm so sorry you had to go through that. I can't imagine what it's like to be {fill-in with the adversity shared by the individual}."

VALIDATION.



Validate the experience as an understandable response to adversity and the vulnerability of childhood.

How can you validate experiences?

"I realize how hard it must be to talk about your experiences with {fill-in with the adversity shared by the individual} and I appreciate the courage it takes to share this with me. You've helped me understand how humiliating and dehumanizing it was for you."

EDUCATION.



Provide information about the impact of adversity on a person's risks for numerous problems including current difficulties such as incarceration risk.

What can you say to inform the individual about the impact of trauma or adversity?

"We have learned through years of research that many people who've experienced trauma and adversity in childhood can also end up in the criminal justice system. The good news is that people can begin to heal with counseling and the support of others."

SUPPORT.



Explore the role that adversity plays in their lives and identify strategies to address them OR offer support to identify resources best suited to assist the person via internal and external referrals.

How can you explore supports?

"Have you had the interest or opportunity to talk to someone about what you've been through and to better understand how these experiences have affected your life?"

"How can I best support you given everything that's happened to you?"

"In my role and training I'm able to discuss this with you further if you like."

"In my role and training, I'm not in the best position to help you explore or discuss these issues in more detail. However, we have helpers in this program who do [or I can help you find someone outside of this program.] Please let me know what works for you. Perhaps you need some time to think about it or you may have some questions that I might be able to answer."