

Brain Development, Trauma, and Resilience Training

July 15, 2021

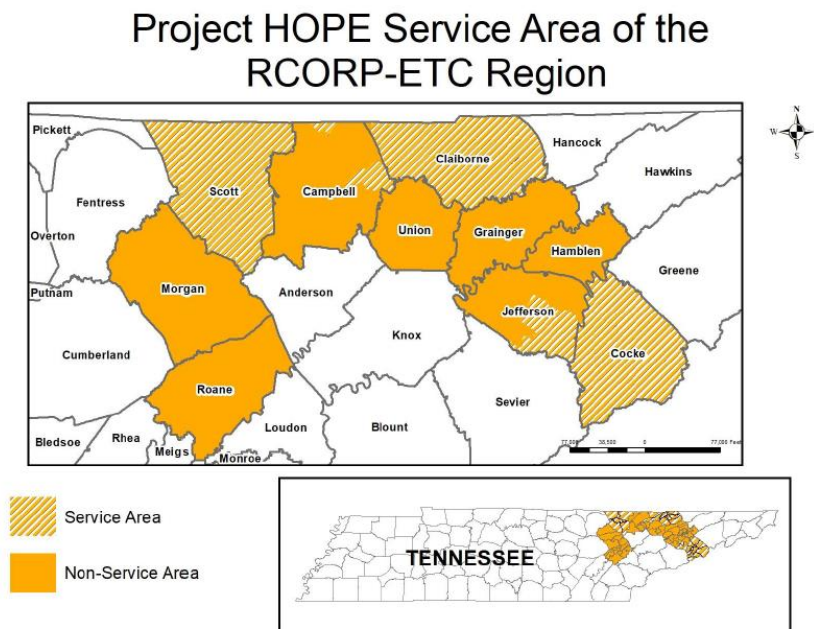
Youth Development Collaborative Training

On July 15, 2021, Project HOPE (Healing Opioid Use Disorder Through Prevention and Expertise) Youth Development Collaborative hosted an online event for professionals working with youth across the Project HOPE 10-county area. The 1-hour event included a training session on brain development, trauma, and resilience presented by Ashlyn Schwartz, M.S., and Kyler Groner.

Attendees

The Project HOPE service area includes 5 counties in East Tennessee: Scott, Claiborne, Cocke, Jefferson, and Campbell (see Figure 1). The consortium is co-led by the University of Tennessee, Knoxville and has almost 100 members. The training flyer was posted on the project website. Invitations for this training were emailed to all consortium members. While 68 individuals registered for the training, 31 professionals attended.

Figure1. Project HOPE region and service area



Evaluation

Of the 31 attendees, 15 completed the evaluation survey. Community professionals who attended the training included behavioral health therapists, social workers, non-profit professionals, community-based nurses, prevention specialists, case managers, public health professionals, and counselors. The

attendees work in or serve one or more of these 15 counties: Campbell, Claiborne, Cocke, Grainger, Hamblen, Jefferson, Morgan, Roane, Scott, Union, Knox, Anderson, Blount, Monroe, and Loudon.

Evaluation of Training

The overall experience of the training was well regarded among attendees, as all participants would recommend the training session to a colleague.

Attendees indicated how satisfied they were with the training, possible answers ranged from *very dissatisfied* (1) to *very satisfied* (5). On average, participants' answers ranged between *satisfied* (4) and *very satisfied* (5) on every question. Attendees were very satisfied with the training content (4.53), engagement of the training (4.40), knowledge of the facilitators (4.40), relevance of the training to their needs (4.27), and mix of presentation and activities (4.07).

Attendees shared how much they knew before and after the training session, retrospectively for a series of learning objectives. Possible answers ranged from *nothing at all* (1) to *a whole lot* (4). On average, attendees reported knowing between *a little bit* to *a whole lot* before the training (grand mean= 2.88) and between *a lot* to *a whole lot* after the training (grand mean=3.41, $p<.001$). There were significant increases in knowledge reported in most learning objectives within the training session (Table 1). The largest increase was in clarifying trauma-informed resilience-building strategies for working with youth ($p<.001$) and describing critical periods of brain development ($p<.001$), followed by identifying basic processes of brain development ($p<.05$).

Table 1.

Learning Objectives	Pre-Score	Post-Score	Mean Difference	p-value
Basic processes of brain development	2.80	3.27	0.47	0.029
Critical periods of brain development	2.67	3.33	0.66	0.007
How adverse childhood experiences impact behavior and brain development	3.07	3.47	0.40	0.082
Define resilience	3.27	3.53	0.26	0.262
Trauma-informed resilience-building strategies for working with youth	2.60	3.47	0.87	0.004

When asked if attendees learned anything new, most attendees (80%) indicated yes, they had learned new information. Examples included learning new strategies, knowledge, and perspectives on the relationship of adverse childhood experiences and behaviors, as well as exercises and activities with children to explain stress and coping.

Suggestions from Attendees

Attendees were asked to provide insight on how future trainings may be improved. Most attendees had no recommendations, saying the training was excellent. One recommendation was clarifying more on definitions for people who are not familiar with the topic.