

## **SECONDARY TRAUMA: Supporting Professionals Who Work with Traumatized Children**

### **Action Steps**

- **Recognize** that exposure to trauma is a risk to the well-being of staff and a potential source for Secondary Trauma in your workplace.
- **Develop** a multidimensional approach to preventing Secondary Trauma including: self-report assessments, participation in self-care groups, caseload balancing, flextime scheduling and providing a forum where staff feel safe and comfortable discussing their emotional reactions to trauma.
- **Implement** best practices in intervening in Secondary Trauma including: cognitive-behavioral strategies, caseload management, reflective supervision, peer support and supervision and external group processing.
- **Provide** formal training on Secondary Trauma during orientation and on an on-going basis. Encourage buy-in and participation in Secondary Trauma strategies and interventions from all levels of staff including administrative staff, foster parents, youth advocates, case workers, supervisors and managers.
- **Support** professionals by offering ongoing training on the effects of childhood trauma and effective treatment approaches.
- **Provide** individual and group support including positive peer support groups and supervision.
- **Decrease** stress on staff by enhancing resilience skills, increasing social support, providing outlets and offering stress reduction activities.
- **Design**, implement, evaluate and disseminate culturally appropriate policies to prevent and decrease Secondary Trauma among staff. During the exit interview, include specific questions to determine whether Secondary Trauma played a role in leaving the agency.
- **Provide adequate funding** for Secondary Trauma training and services. Investing in these important trainings and services will reduce staff turnover, enhance quality of casework practice, improve outcomes for children and save money.

*From the conference "Secondary Trauma: Supporting Professionals Who Work with Traumatized Children," June 20, 2012, at The Children's Center, New York City, sponsored by The New York Center for Children in association with Prevent Child Abuse America and NYC Children's Services.*