



Proposing trauma-informed practice and response in policing: A social innovation narrative for reforming responses to child sexual abuse and exploitation

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This article is directly related to the first global Trauma Informed Policing and Law Enforcement Conference held in Melbourne, Australia in February 2024.

ABSTRACT

Shifting towards trauma-informed practice and response (TIPAR) in law enforcement is crucial for reforming policing practices to reduce re-victimization among survivors of child sexual abuse and exploitation (CSA&E). Studies show that one in four Australians experience childhood sexual abuse (Haslam et al., 2023) highlighting the urgent need for effective law enforcement interventions. Police, as primary responders for children in the criminal justice system, experience significantly higher rates of stress and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) compared to the general population. Current policing cultures often use ad hoc procedures that struggle to meet the unique needs of CSA&E victims. TIPAR advocates for comprehensive police training and trauma-informed policies to address these gaps. By integrating TIPAR consistently across law enforcement agencies (LEAs), this approach aims to enhance case progression, build police legitimacy, foster trust, and increase victims' engagement with justice processes. Implementing TIPAR is expected to enhance compassion satisfaction among officers, improve staff retention, reduce organizational costs, and create a justice system that better supports CSA&E survivors and their families. This holistic approach is crucial for addressing the significant under-reporting of sexual offences, where over 85% fail to progress to prosecution (Attorney Generals Department, 2023). Piloting TIPAR is essential to gather empirical data supporting government adoption of minimum standards for trauma-informed practices in legislation, ensuring that TIPAR principles are embedded in all LEA activities. This Social Innovative Narrative aims to explain the benefits of implementing TIPAR within LEAs, advocating for a more compassionate and effective response to trauma within law enforcement.

Key Words Trauma-informed policing; child sexual abuse and exploitation; investigative processes; compassion satisfaction; attrition; police; law enforcement; trauma.

INTRODUCTION

I tried to report the abuse I experienced on numerous occasions, each time feeling like I was not heard and wondered if I was believed. Whilst some police were kind and tried to make it ok for me to speak, the process still felt out of my control, with limited communication and feared for my safety disclosing information not knowing

who had access to it. (Survivor of Child Sexual Abuse & Exploitation, personal communication, 2024)

Child sexual abuse and exploitation (CSA&E) is a significant global public health issue and the primary preventable cause of death, disability, and illness within Australian households (World Health Organization, 2018). There is an anomalous amount of maltreatment facing our communities,

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which can hardly be addressed in this article. In 2021, the Australian Centre to Counter Child Exploitation received more than 33,000 reports of online child sexual exploitation (Cale et al., 2021). The Australian Child Maltreatment Study (Higgins et al., 2023) tells us 28.5% of Australians will experience CSA before the age of 18, which is one in three girls and one in five boys (Haslam et al., 2023). This implies finding ways to respond in a way that addresses the future implications of a community who will be living with the repercussions of complex trauma. A growing body of research indicates adverse childhood experiences are associated with increased risks of a range of poor psychosocial outcomes in adult life (Rokach & Clayton, 2023). Largely, resources currently cannot service the demand and support the needs of these vulnerable communities.

As awareness of CSA&E increases, it is crucial for Australian law enforcement agencies (LEAs) to review policies and procedures thoroughly to avoid practices that could harm trauma survivors (Rich, 2024). One suggestion is a trauma-informed practice and response (TIPAR), which aims to mitigate the health consequences of trauma by integrating responses that include an understanding of how trauma's effects, various paths to recovery, and the risks of re-traumatization (Tebes et al., 2019). The TIPAR framework aligns with the Victims' Charter Act 2006, mandating investigatory agencies understand impacts of crime on victims, families, and communities. This alignment aims to reduce the likelihood of secondary victimization within the criminal justice system.

Police affected by their experiences within the justice system also struggle with responses to traumatic situations encountering approximately 900 traumatic events throughout their careers (Papazoglou, 2013; Tuttle et al., 2019) and up to 19.6% of police report some form of childhood trauma themselves, subsequently being at greater risk of suicidal ideation than the general population (Talavera-Velasco et al., 2024). Given exposure to abused children is one of the highest stressors; there is a pressing need for enhanced support as only 9% of officers report their tertiary education adequately prepared them with the necessary skills and knowledge surrounding CSA&E, harmful sexual behaviour, or the impacts of trauma across the lifespan (The National Centre for Action on Child Sexual Abuse, 2023).

My panic attacks, insomnia and anxiety all increased significantly during the reporting process. It was long, with silence between updates. This made my anxiety increase until I eventually decided not to pursue my case. At the time, the cost was greater than any potential outcome. (Survivor of Child Sexual Abuse & Exploitation, personal communication, 2024)

Responses by LEAs to survivors of CSA&E internationally have been criticized for their dismissive approach to trauma-informed practices due to job-related stress and trauma (Eikenberry et al., 2023). Many survivors who do report often regret this decision due to re-victimizing responses, which can significantly hinder recovery, especially when survivors already experience self-blame and post-traumatic stress (Lorenz et al., 2019). Survivors have reported these negative responses can be as traumatizing, if not more so, than the initial assault (Shaw et al., 2016). Victims who

report their experiences often encounter scepticism, denial of assistance, judgment, and unwarranted victim-blaming (Shaw et al., 2016).

This undoubtedly accounts for the significant under-reporting with only 5–13% of sexual abuse survivors reporting to police (Fischer, 2013). The Attorney Generals Department (2023) The NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (2024) indicates that over 85% of reported sexual offences do not proceed to prosecution. Many survivors choose not to disclose due to feelings of shame, guilt, and self-blame (Alaggia, 2004; Dorahy & Clearwater, 2012), as well as anxiety about the consequences of disclosure (Dorahy & Clearwater, 2012). When trauma intervention strategies are not properly implemented, police may also inadvertently re-victimize survivors through boundary violations, enforced secrecy, silencing, feelings of powerlessness, manipulated realities, and event distortion to protect perpetrators, exacerbating trauma symptoms and perpetuating victim-blaming (Butler et al., 2011; Greeson et al., 2016; Harris & Fallot, 2001).

LEA processes often emphasize emotional detachment, quick decision-making in uncertain situations, prioritization of factual evidence over subjective impressions, and swift resolution (Davies et al., 2022). This can create organizational pressures for rapid case closure, sometimes pressuring victims to withdraw complaints prematurely when they struggle to provide comprehensive disclosures (Bikos, 2021; Ricciardelli et al., 2020). Initial police response significantly influences a survivor's willingness to engage, highlighting the critical role of trauma-informed support during the early stages of police investigation (Dewald & Lorenz, 2022). When survivors do attempt to report a second time, they often encounter judgment based on their previous withdrawal, which can diminish credibility or discourage further legal action. Statistics show survivors are more likely to report cases involving physical injuries or unknown perpetrators (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2021–2022). Moreover, Police behaviour significantly influences community perceptions of police legitimacy and their relationships within the community (Greeson et al., 2016).

To truly serve and protect, LEAs must integrate TIPAR, ensuring consistent, compassionate, and effective support for all survivors of abuse. This shift is crucial for rebuilding trust and fostering a justice system that upholds survivors' rights and well-being while proactively reducing and repairing harm and re-victimization. This requires a proactive response, such as TIPAR.

ADDRESSING COMPLEXITY IN CSA&E THROUGH TIPAR

Addressing complexity in CSA&E through TIPAR involves grappling with the most prevalent form of sexual trauma, familial abuse (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2021–2022), which often leaves lifelong effects (Koçtürk & Yüksel, 2019). Cognitive dissonance, arising from inconsistencies in one's beliefs or knowledge, drives discomfort and motivates individuals to resolve this state (Festinger, 1957; Vaidis & Bran, 2014), sometimes leading to withdrawal of complaints and high attrition rates. Victims of familial CSA&E frequently delay disclosure due to fears of family upheaval, loyalty conflicts, and attachment issues (Dorahy & Clearwater,

2012). Victims may exhibit behaviours such as forgetting the abuse, with memory impairment more pronounced in cases of familial abuse compared to non-incestuous abuse (DePrince & Freyd, 1999). Grooming, a critical aspect of CSA&E, involves a systematic process aimed at gaining trust, access, rapport, compliance, and secrecy from the victim (Bennett & O'Donohue, 2014; Whittle et al., 2015; Zinzow et al., 2010). This process extends to the broader community as perpetrators seek opportunities to exploit vulnerabilities and gain access to children (Di Gioia & Beslay, 2023). It is important for LEAs to understand these complex nuances to respond with appropriate actions, language, and demeanour, influenced by their training and awareness of their impact, which has been shown to lead to varying satisfaction ratings from community members (Gagnon & Fox, 2021).

TIPAR MODEL

TIPAR is a proposed trauma-informed theoretical framework designed to provide developmental trauma-informed training, as well as support policy changes to shift organizational culture and reduce re-traumatization of survivors of CSA&E. Research has found that implementing models such as TIPAR as an advocacy effort has shown to decrease the experience of institutional betrayal by survivors (Smith & Freyd, 2014).

Developmental trauma theory (DTT) underpins TIPAR; emphasizes recognition of interpersonal trauma, including emotion regulation, impulse control, attention and cognition, dissociation, interpersonal relationships, and self and relational schemas (van der Kolk, 2014); and underscores the profound impact of DTT shown to be associated with adult neurocognitive function, indicating the importance of understanding how early developmental risk factors impact working memory (Vargas, 2009). The TIPAR model integrates

LEA strategies, survivor insights, and trauma-informed clinical practices aimed at supporting victims of CSA&E, empowering clients with compassionate interactions, minimizing triggers, understanding trauma responses, and utilizing trauma-informed interview techniques, collaboration, and gender balancing. The TIPAR model will provide LEAs with more psychological support through training that prevents compassion fatigue and improves compassion satisfaction, both of which have been shown to prevent burnout (Wagaman et al., 2015). Implementing trauma-informed approaches in vulnerable Australian communities has led to significant cost savings and better outcomes, including reducing hospitalizations, crisis interventions, improving service delivery, enhancing collaboration, boosting staff morale and retention, and reducing turnover costs (Benjamin et al., 2019).

The TIPAR model (see Figure 1) proposes six pillars of trauma-informed police response, including containment, choice, connection, compassion, accountability, and continuity. Within the model, the focus lies on the colleagues, survivors and their families, offenders and their families, and “you.” All these components will be discussed in the following sections. We propose that all elements of the TIPAR model are interconnected and support the functions of the others.

KEY PILLARS UNDERPINNING TRAUMA RESPONSIVENESS

Containment

Containment, as defined in psychoanalytic practice, encompasses psychological, emotional, physical, and operational aspects (Bion & Mawson, 2014). This concept describes how a “container” absorbs and processes emotional distress, returning it in a more manageable form, facilitating emotional coping and understanding (Bion & Mawson, 2014). The concept aligns with Siegel’s (1999) notion of the Window of Tolerance, which suggests trauma survivors may experience heightened hypervigilance, pushing them beyond their optimal zone for emotional regulation within the autonomic nervous system, often leading to fight, flight, freeze, or fawn responses. TIPAR acknowledges childhood trauma can narrow this Window of Tolerance, making it challenging to manage stress and access cognitive functions necessary for effective disclosure. For police, exposure to traumatic events, including their own adverse childhood experiences, can lead to maladaptive behaviours that hinder their ability to remain within their own Window of Tolerance. Negative interactions between officers and survivors can deter future reporting of assaults (Anders & Christopher, 2011). The demeanour and response of the LEAs significantly influence a survivor’s comfort, trust in the justice system, and willingness to pursue a case (Maddox et al., 2011). Thus, integrating containment within the TIPAR model not only supports officers in managing their own trauma responses but also fosters an environment where survivors feel emotionally contained and supported throughout their interactions with LEAs.

Choice

Choice is a critical component in the healing process of trauma survivors empowering and restoring autonomy and control, often lost during traumatic experiences (Ford & Courtois, 2021). By integrating the concept of choice into police

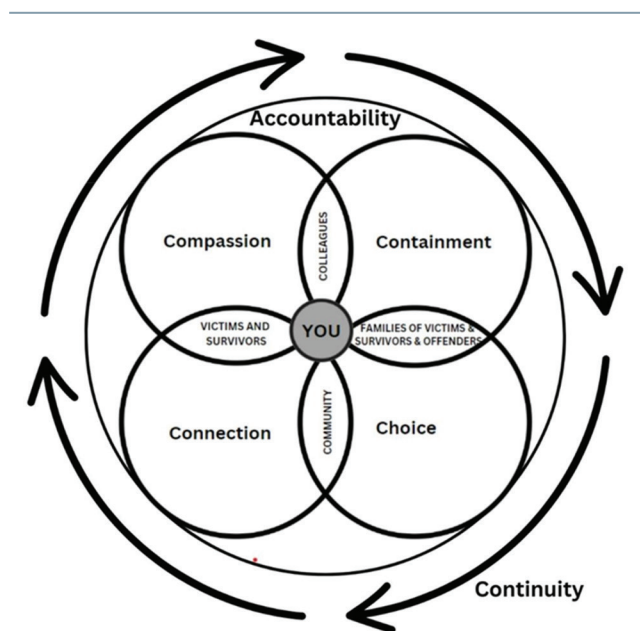


FIGURE 1 Trauma-informed practice and response model created by the two primary authors

procedures, as demonstrated in the TIPAR model, police can offer more personalized and trauma-informed responses that acknowledge the survivor's needs and actively work to prevent re-traumatization. Providing choices affirms survivors' experiences and conveys belief and acceptance. LEAs should prioritize autonomy and choice, ensuring that survivors feel safe in all interactions throughout the justice process. Without adequate infrastructure to support survivors and the staff assisting them, the power of choice and validation is limited, undermining opportunities for empowerment and autonomy, risking the perpetuation of harmful practices and systemic abuse. Choice, within the TIPAR model, promotes open and secure communication, mitigates fears, and fosters a supportive environment for disclosures.

Connection

Connection promotes compassion and empowers survivors in their decision-making processes, thereby enhancing the effectiveness of trauma-informed practices. By emphasizing the concept of "safe telling and disclosing," LEAs can establish a framework that prioritizes the physical, emotional, and psychological safety necessary to alleviate survivors' profound fears surrounding reporting and engaging with the justice system. To create safety and support emotional containment, there must be a level of connection, and an environment to facilitate the process of disclosure, which is cognizant of the distress experienced by victim survivors in disclosing. Disclosure is made possible through building a trusting relationship, which allows for vulnerable and painful areas of the disclosure to be shared without hindrance (Brennan & McElvaney, 2020; Podolan & Gelo, 2023).

Extended legal processes associated with CSA&E often amplify survivors' feelings of danger when disclosing their experiences. Children particularly will suffer varying degrees while awaiting trial, leading to an exacerbation of trauma symptoms (Cossins, 2020). Indeed, factfinders (such as LEA and legal professionals) are likely to interpret the type of evidence and emotions associated with re-traumatization negatively, particularly where inconsistencies and confusion arise out of trauma and poor recall (Cossins, 2020). According to Porges' Polyvagal Theory (Porges, 2007), the autonomic nervous system's survival responses may fail to resolve perceived threats, prompting survivors to withdraw from social connections and prioritize self-protection (Ugwu et al., 2024). Understanding these perceived dangers enables police to comprehend survivors' post-disclosure experiences and adaptive survival strategies (Bailey & Brown, 2020; Foley, 2023).

The TIPAR approach underscores the importance of keeping survivors informed and involved throughout the investigation process. Effective communication plays a pivotal role; without it, survivors may feel overlooked, fostering fear and anxiety instead of fostering trust and reassurance. By establishing closer connections with survivors, police gain insights into their unique needs and can offer tailored support accordingly.

Compassion

Compassion, as defined by Neff (2003), entails achieving a balance of more positive than negative responses during challenging times. It acknowledges the possibility of

experiencing both positive and negative psychological well-being simultaneously (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Within LEAs, however, current processes, cultural norms, operational demands, and a lack of TIPAR training often relegate compassion to a secondary consideration. Infrastructure and systems are not adequately designed to support compassion as a primary approach. The psychological toll inherent in police work, often referred to as compassion fatigue (Figley, 1995), stresses the indirect consequences of repeated exposure to trauma. This exposure can lead to conditions such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), work dissatisfaction, depression, burnout, self-criticism, and maladaptive coping mechanisms (Zani & Cicognani, 2009). Enhancing compassion satisfaction among police officers, while simultaneously minimizing compassion fatigue, should therefore be central objectives for LEAs and their administration (Tuttle et al., 2019).

Accountability

Accountability should serve as foundational principles in the implementation of TIPAR within LEAs. The current inconsistency and lack of accountability in TIPAR practices highlight the need for uniformity and a focus on positive outcomes when interacting with those affected by CSA&E. It is imperative individuals within the system are held accountable for their actions and behaviours while maintaining a trauma-responsive approach that enhances, rather than replaces, accountability. Emphasizing accountability and transparency can establish a default position of safety, fostering trust and confidence among survivors. This approach ensures that LEAs create a supportive environment that upholds the principles of TIPAR, ultimately improving outcomes.

Notably, no change can occur without training being embedded within an organization, and while training is an integral first step in trauma-informed care (TIC) (Harris & Fallot, 2001; SAMHSA's Trauma and Justice Strategic Initiative, 2014), follow-up supports such as refresher training, coaching, supervision, and feedback are also integral to successful implementation (Gustafson et al., 2013; Mahon, 2022a,b; Miller et al., 2004). We also note that successful implementation requires accountability measures for all within the TIPAR to ensure effective and consistent approaches to practice and the needs of victim survivors and those represented within the framework are met. This includes being accountable to staff, as Bloom and Farragher (2011) describe the impact of organizational stress as permeating across the entire system of an organization, impacting all stakeholders and levels of service delivery, care, and outcomes.

Continuity

Continuity is a trauma-informed approach that provides consistency, engagement, and support and continues throughout the period of time the victim survivor has cause to engage with the justice system. Continuous support from trained professionals is essential for reducing symptoms of PTSD, depression, and anxiety among trauma survivors (Han et al., 2021).

Consistency in approach not only facilitates cultural shifts within the organization but minimizes re-traumatization, bolsters the well-being of officers, reduces moral injury and boosts job satisfaction. Predictable and supportive

encounters are crucial for effective trauma response and community engagement (Stevenson, 2022). Establishing a steadfast standard of practice in LEAs is essential, guiding decision-making at all levels within law enforcement agencies. This standard should be accountable and shape police culture, influencing how officers interact with and serve their community. Maintaining these standards over time is critical for successfully embedding cultural shifts that permeate the entire organization. Active engagement with community stakeholders and flexibility to adapt to the evolving nature of trauma are vital components of this approach (Serrata et al., 2020).

Given the diverse experiences and needs of CSA&E survivors, which vary across social, cultural, and economic backgrounds, continuity of practice ensures that every individual interacting with LEAs receives consistent, holistic support. This not only reduces service calls and the risk of re-victimization but also supports the well-being of police officers by mitigating the challenges of their demanding work and addressing post-service vulnerabilities. Adequate systems must be in place to promote officers' well-being throughout their careers and beyond, recognizing the inherent stresses and responsibilities of their roles.

THE PEOPLE WITHIN THE TIPAR MODEL

Staff and Colleagues (LEAs)

LEAs play a critical role in the TIPAR model, supporting both survivors of CSA&E and the staff who work with them. A TIPAR lens is essential for addressing the 28.5% of Australians affected by CSA&E (Higgins et al., 2023) and recognizing the fluidity of trauma responses in police, particularly those with adverse childhood experiences. Consistent leadership within LEAs that prioritizes safety and staff well-being fosters a productive workforce and enables employees to confidently express their needs. This supportive environment is crucial for effective trauma-informed practices and enhances trust in law enforcement. It promotes empathy, reduces burnout, and improves job satisfaction among police. Incorporating LEAs into the TIPAR model is vital for a holistic support system, benefiting both survivors and officers, and improving outcomes for individuals and the community.

Police culture has traditionally been resistant to accepting emotional support, even viewing it as risky and interfering with the officer's reputation and job duties (Evans et al., 2013). Organizational stressors that include the organizational setting or design (e.g., management-autonomy, flexibility, participation in decision-making, etc.) may be a greater source of stress for police. Police showed that two specific organizational stressors – “fellow officers not doing their job” and having “inadequate or poor-quality equipment” – were among the top 5 of 60 most frequently occurring stressors (Violanti et al., 2016). Furthermore, repeated exposure to the psychologically adverse events unfortunately makes police more susceptible to an increased risk of depression and suicide (Violanti, 2022).

Families of Survivors

We recognize families of victim survivors experience a profound and pervasive ripple effect of abuse, especially when the perpetrator is a family member, or someone known to

them. This often leads to betrayal trauma, families feeling neglected, excluded, and further harmed and can also endanger the survivors.

Cultural understanding is paramount, as the concept of family varies widely across communities. Trauma-informed resources and training must centre on the intersectionality of experiences and reflect how trauma impacts individuals differently, ensuring approaches are culturally safe and sensitive (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2021). For example, First Nations families often have extensive kinship networks, and disclosure within these communities requires specific care, strategy, and implementation. Barriers to disclosure among ethnic minorities, such as the need to preserve family honour, present significant challenges. Training for first responders can facilitate culturally appropriate encouragement of disclosure within these communities, supported by a well-developed national research agenda (Sawrikar & Katz, 2018). This ensures that all responses are informed, sensitive, and effective in addressing the unique needs of diverse cultural backgrounds.

Offenders and Their Families

Partners and families of offenders can be considered secondary victims, experiencing vicarious trauma and other negative outcomes due to the distressing knowledge of their loved one's offending (Fuller & Goldsmid, 2016). This group remains largely unsupported and vulnerable (Shannon et al., 2013). Families are often unaware of the abuse until a search warrant is executed or police become involved, at which point there is minimal support available to them. Recognizing the potential for unaddressed trauma to lead to future offending, and the victim-offender overlap of people being both victims and offenders of crime, is also essential for a trauma-informed approach. This understanding can lead to the development of more effective strategies for addressing intergenerational trauma and enhancing child abuse prevention efforts (Berg & Rogers, 2017). By acknowledging and supporting the unique needs of offenders' families, LEAs can help mitigate the broader impacts of trauma and contribute to a more holistic and compassionate system of care.

Community

We view the community as a diverse group encompassing those directly affected by CSA&E, such as witnesses, bystanders, practitioners, and the wider general public. CSA&E extends through every aspect of our communities, influencing media and social media, interactions with support networks, the health system, and leaving lasting consequences of trauma. Recognizing the far-reaching ripple effects of CSA&E is essential, especially within LEAs as this has shown to initiate and build resilient, trauma-informed communities, which include the establishment of stronger inter-agency and collaborative service systems (Matlin et al., 2019). By addressing these widespread impacts, LEAs can foster a more supportive and informed community response, ensuring that all interactions with survivors and affected individuals are handled with sensitivity and care because of collaborative efforts (Faller & Henry, 2000).

We must acknowledge preventing and protecting children from CSA&E is a whole of community responsibility. Truly successful intervention in the reduction of trauma

TABLE 1 Through a trauma-informed practice and response (TIPAR) lens: an integration with the PEACE.model

P	E	A	C	E
Planning and Preparation	Engage and Explain	Account Clarification and Challenge	Closure	Evaluation
<p>Effective planning is crucial throughout the entire investigation, especially in the context of investigative interviews. Timely interviews are vital as memories can fade or become unreliable over time for victims and witnesses.</p>	<p>Building rapport and explaining the interview process and why the interview needs to occur. People typically fear the unexpected, and by describing the interview process this fear can be reduced.</p>	<p>In the process, accounts must be developed, probing the topic thoroughly, introducing investigative topics, and rigorously clarifying and challenging them. This ensures that information obtained from the interviewee aligns with existing knowledge or can be substantiated.</p>	<p>The aim is for witnesses to leave the interview on a positive note. Beyond the formal aspects, revisiting neutral topics from earlier can aid in achieving this goal. A well-conducted interview can also enhance community relations, as witnesses often share their impressions of both the interviewer and the overall interview experience with others.</p>	<p>Evaluation in investigative interviewing ensures accuracy and relevance. It involves assessing witness statements and victim accounts for consistency and cross-referencing with evidence. Interviewers maintain empathy while objectively assessing information to uncover essential details crucial to resolving cases.</p>
TIPAR Applied (Continuity)	TIPAR Applied (Choice)	TIPAR Applied (Containment)	TIPAR Applied (Compassion & Connection)	TIPAR Applied (Continuity)
<p>Continuity is crucial, with the same officers handling the case from start to finish to minimize the need for the victim to repeat their story. This approach should also consider the interviewee's demographic, gender, and cultural and linguistic diversity. Planning should include selecting a suitable location that takes into account potential triggers, aiming to prevent emotional shutdown by addressing these concerns in advance.</p>	<p>While the interview is formal, rapport-building begins beforehand, allowing for connection-building. Clearly explain the process and give the victim survivor time to process and respond. Ensure they understand their rights and provide choices on how to proceed. Reassure them about confidentiality and the interview's purpose. Mention that challenging questions may arise to ensure thoroughness. Understanding triggers helps suggest breaks during disclosure to maintain their comfort level.</p>	<p>Officers use trauma-informed techniques during interviews to ensure emotional support and containment. This includes offering breaks, using non-judgmental language, and being patient with emotional responses. They create a safe space where victims' emotions are respected and validated throughout.</p>	<p>At the interview's end, officers summarize with compassion, ensuring the victim feels their account was accurately captured. They outline next steps, allowing questions or concerns, fostering connection. Recognizing trauma's impact on understanding, officers offer follow-up choices to support the victim's healing journey.</p>	<p>Interviewers ensure accuracy by assessing witness and victim accounts for consistency and cross-referencing with evidence. They allow interviewees to provide feedback for ongoing support and gauge their comfort levels. Officers reflect on interviews, noting successes and areas for improvement, discussing strategies with supervisors to maintain trauma-informed practices and support their well-being.</p>

associated with disclosure, investigation, and attitudes about CSA&E is dependent on a community, their beliefs, attitudes, and engagement. Child abuse cases between law enforcement and child protective services and professionals that demonstrate a collective responsibility have shown to reduce intervention-induced trauma and increase criminal convictions (Faller & Henry, 2000). Individuals often feel vulnerable alone, but in community have the power of numbers and shared meaning to provide strength (Mohr Carney et al., 2022).

Among the many ripple effects of CSA&E on the community is the financial impact consisting of health care costs and lost productivity costs, which varies across the lifespan of every victim survivor. In 2016–2017, the estimated annual burden of violence against children and young people in Australia was \$34.2 billion; the lifetime cost was \$78.4 billion (Deloitte Access Economics, 2019). This further attests to the need for a TIPAR approach to ensure cost reduction efforts are prioritized in focussing on early intervention and safe pathways for reporting as the number of victims and survivors increases.

The Victim Survivor

I spent 12 hours in total talking to the police about explicit details of my abuse. Each time I had to stop, get on with life, and continue with my story the next time they were able to meet with me. It was exhausting ... (Survivor of Child Sexual Abuse & Exploitation, personal communication, 2024)

Within the criminal justice system, the term “victim” describes a person who has been subjected to a crime, while “survivor” is used to refer to someone who is actively going through the recovery process (Alexenko et al., 2015). It is important to recognize that many individuals affected by CSA&E may switch between these terms based on their current stage in the recovery journey. Acknowledging and respecting these preferences is crucial for providing appropriate support and fostering a trauma-informed approach within LEAs. Understanding and using the preferred terminology of those affected not only validates their experiences but also supports their empowerment and healing process.

You

The final person within the TIPAR model is you. You are at the heart of your decision-making, but for decisions to be meaningful, they must align with organizational goals. The TIPAR model provides a necessary framework for this alignment and facilitates empowered responses. Consistent performance relies heavily on the availability of resources and tools. It is the organization’s responsibility to provide these, fostering decision-making that enhances well-being, job satisfaction, and achievement, benefiting the community served. This alignment ensures that individual actions support broader objectives, creating a cohesive and supportive environment within LEAs, leading to better outcomes for both officers and the community.

TRAUMA-INFORMED APPROACHES GLOBALLY

TIC is increasingly recognized globally as a crucial framework for police organizations aiming to better understand

and respond to trauma. Based on the premise that trauma affects everyone, from staff to clients, TIC integrates this understanding into organizational policies, procedures, and practices to meet the specific needs of individuals affected by trauma (Fallot & Harris, 2008; SAMHSA’s Trauma and Justice Strategic Initiative, 2014). Internationally, LEAs are adopting trauma-informed approaches to enhance support for vulnerable community members. The Scottish Government, for instance, has implemented trauma-informed awareness training across its police force, aimed at improving interactions with vulnerable individuals (Barton et al., 2019; Bellis et al., 2015; Boulton et al., 2021). In Alabama, a comprehensive trauma-informed approach to sexual assault police training involved 331 officers (Lathan et al., 2019). This initiative assessed officers’ exposure to trauma-informed training, their acceptance of rape myths, and awareness of local and national sexual assault movements. The findings indicated officers trained in trauma awareness showed greater personal engagement in learning about sexual assault and demonstrated a deeper understanding of trauma dynamics, contrasting with untrained counterparts (Lathan et al., 2019). Moreover, training was associated with a reduced acceptance of rape myths among officers, despite those handling more sexual assault cases being initially more likely to hold such beliefs. Overall, integrating trauma-informed principles into police training has been shown to enhance responses to sexual assault cases, improving empathy and effectiveness in handling sensitive situations (SAMHSA’s Trauma and Justice Strategic Initiative, 2014). These efforts underscore a global trend towards more empathetic and informed policing practices that prioritize understanding and supporting individuals affected by trauma. Such can be seen through a TIPAR lens, when reviewing already valuable policing models such as the PEACE model for investigative interviewing.

PEACE MODEL INTEGRATION WITH TIPAR

The non-accusatory, information gathering approach to investigative interviewing known as the PEACE model is widely regarded as a policing best practice, suitable for any type of interviewee, whether victim, witness, or suspect (Forensic Interview Solutions, n.d.). By embedding the TIPAR model within the PEACE framework, the investigative interviewing process can be better tailored to the needs of trauma survivors. This integration aims to create a safer and more supportive environment that encourages survivors to disclose their experiences with confidence and trust in the process demonstrating the potential for TIPAR approaches to be integrated seamlessly (see Table 1).

CONCLUSION

This social innovation narrative introduces TIPAR, a trauma-informed framework rooted in DTT, clinical practice, and neurobiological science. TIPAR aims to enhance police responses to survivors of CSA&E and their supporters, fostering police legitimacy and improved outcomes. TIPAR is designed to mitigate the traumatic effects of CSA&E by creating a supportive environment for disclosure (Ahrens & Aldana, 2012; Ullman & Peter-Hagene, 2014). Trauma-informed practices, including eliminating triggers, empowering clients

with choice and agency, clarifying procedures, tailoring approaches, educating staff, ensuring privacy, dignity, and managing vicarious trauma, have shown efficacy (Butler et al., 2011). Implementing TIC faces challenges such as institutional resistance, entrenched practices, cost barriers, and concerns about staff and client emotional well-being (Butler et al., 2011). Further research on TIPAR is recommended, beginning with trauma-awareness training for all officers and staff to pilot and evaluate its impact on LEA operations, including attrition rates, officer well-being, staff retention, re-traumatization risks, and disclosure outcomes. Adopting a trauma-informed approach equips police to recognize and respond to vulnerability early, facilitating timely interventions and referrals (Rogers & Smith, 2018). TIPAR's potential extends beyond CSA&E to support other vulnerable groups and reform outdated systems hindering survivor disclosures. TIPAR suggests a transformative shift towards a trauma-informed culture within law enforcement, promising significant societal benefits.

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The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare.

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