

National Alliance to End Homelessness Conference 2024



2.06 Real Talk: Balancing Criminalization, Racial Trauma, and Law Enforcement Partnerships Workshop

LOS ANGELES HOMELESS SERVICES AUTHORITY

Moderator: Dr. Va Lecia Adams Kellum, LAHSA, CEO

LAHSA

March 4, 2024

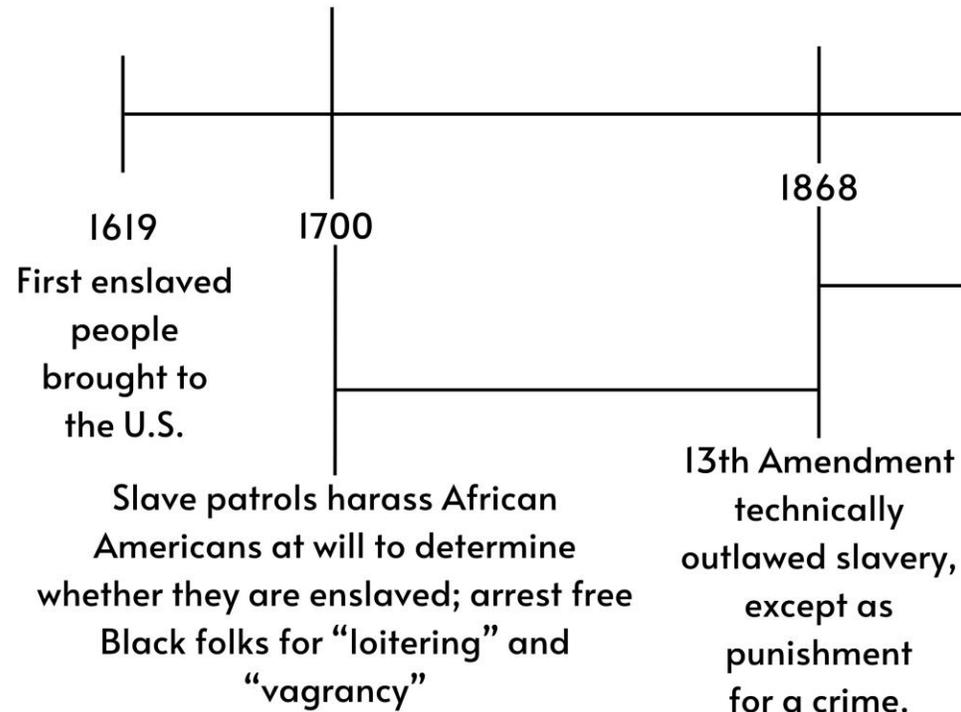
HPRI Mission

The Homelessness Policy Research Institute (HPRI) is a collaborative of over one hundred researchers, policymakers, service providers and experts with lived experience of homelessness that accelerate equitable and culturally informed solutions to homelessness in Los Angeles County by advancing knowledge and fostering transformational partnerships between research, policy and practice.



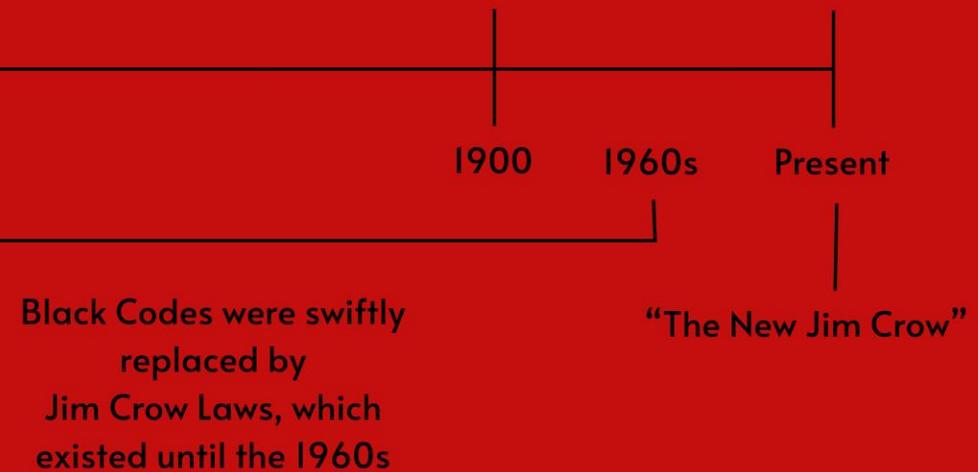
Slave Patrol

Earliest slave patrols
“establish a system of terror
and squash slave uprisings
with the capacity to pursue, apprehend,
and return runaway slaves” - NAACP



Modern-Day Police

By 1900, local municipalities had begun establishing police departments to enforce local laws, especially Jim Crow Laws



Trauma is conventionally defined as:

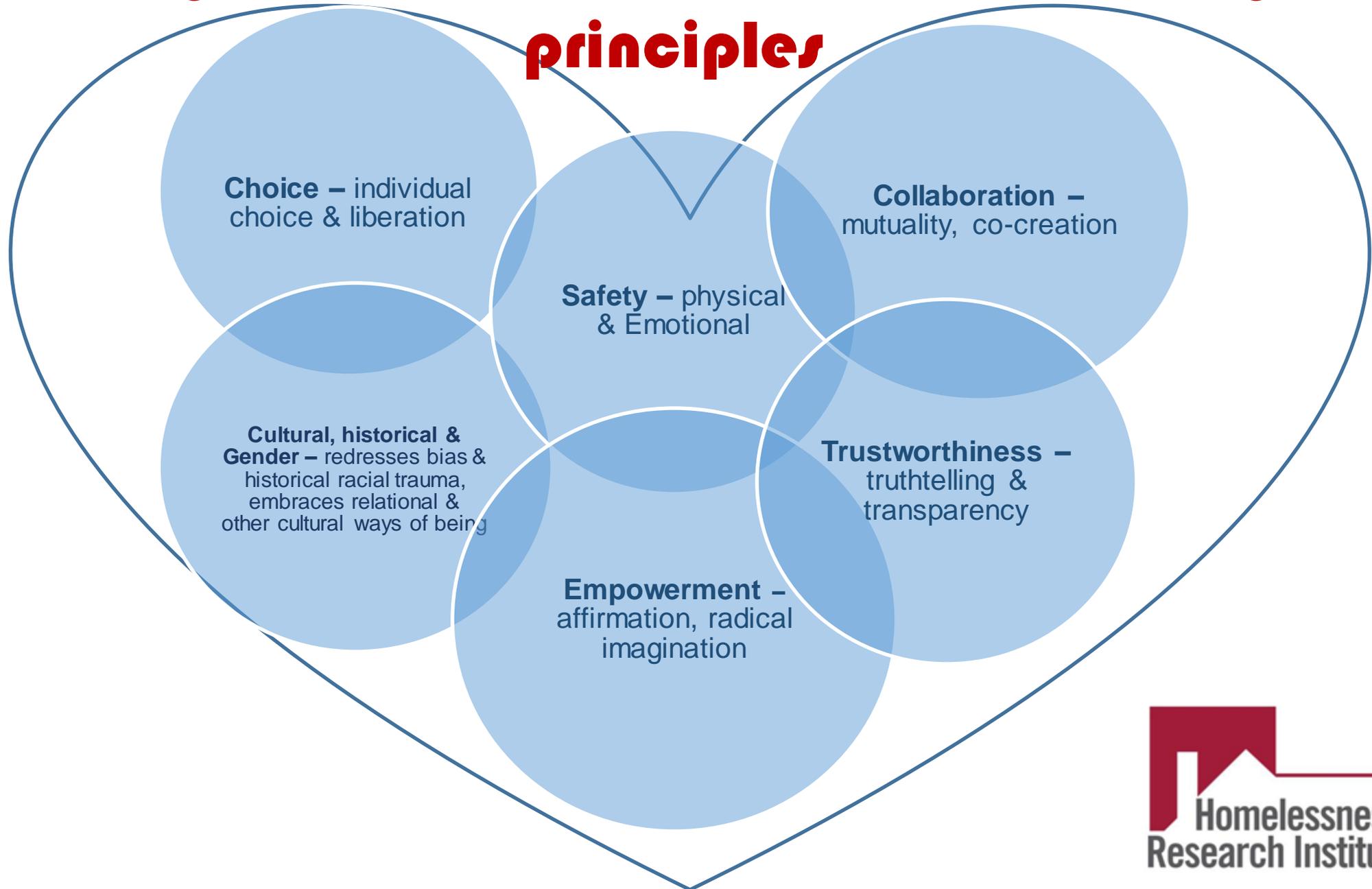
- A deeply disturbing or distressing experience (physical, psychological) that exceeds coping capacity
- An acute event, or chronic events

Racialized trauma is defined as:

Complex trauma resulting from the ongoing experience of oppression and subordination. Mental and emotional injury caused by encounters with racial bias and ethnic discrimination, racism, and hate crimes.

Many marginalized identities are charged with navigating through trauma PLUS ongoing experiences of traumatic oppression

Shared agreements: trauma-informed healing care principles



Providers guide to racially conscious, trauma informed care

Safety	Choice	Collaboration	Trustworthiness	Empowerment
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Racialized and intersectional safety is considered and explored• Individual, therapeutic, familial, community and organizational safety addressed• Trauma is anticipated to have an impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Decision making, with both micro and macro consequences historically and in the present are considered• Clients provided culturally relevant tools and information to analyze options	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Providers and client broach dialogue regarding differences in intersectional identities and lived experiences to develop a genuine rapport• Clients invited to share honest racial feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All interactions respectful, with the understanding that racism plays a role• Systemic interaction with other organizations clarified• Boundary violations are explored with curiosity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Client lived experiences are believed, validated and affirmed• Clients are encouraged to share narratives• Therapeutic intervention and advocacy is not provided without real consent (not pseudo equity)

Liberatory BIPOC driven work aims to center hope, healing, resilience, solutions, and well-being.

- White worldview of trauma and TIC is inherently limited; based on “fixing clients”.
- TIC must center cultural ways of knowing, including cultural and ancestral healing and practices that are within/for/by communities of color.
- We cannot do Trauma Informed Care without centering racial justice, social justice, equity, & liberation.
- *“If it is not anti-racist..if it is not about justice and liberation, it is not trauma-informed”:
Exploring the Intersections of Racial Justice and Trauma Informed Care - Erin R. Fairchild, Gita R. Mehrotra*



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Panelist: Dawan Moses, LAHSA, Director of Special Projects

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LAHSA

Personal Experience Involving Unsheltered Homelessness & Law Enforcement

Encampment to Home

Moving People Indoors with Dignity

- Innovative outreach effort to move people from large encampment straight into interim housing
- Moved people indoors with dignity and compassion
- Prevented any arrests or confrontation with police departments

Ocean Front Walk

- Six-week project from June – July 2021
- Partnership with the City Council District 11, LA City Mayor’s office, Hilton Foundation, LAHSA, LAPD, LASAN and other service providers

Moved 213 people off OFW into interim housing



Path to Permanent Housing

Upon moving into interim housing, each person was connected to a permanent housing resource and assigned a Case Manager

Current Housing Status

104

People Permanently Housed

77%

Housing Retention Rate

ENCAMPMENT TO HOME: Moving People Indoors with Dignity

Penmark Park



- Three-week Project Oct 2020
- Housed 77 individuals with ZERO arrests

Centennial Park (Venice Library)



- Two-week Project June 2022
- Housed 45 individuals with ZERO arrests







Inside Safe Project Design

- Targets large encampments to quickly bring people inside
- Provides a hotel room to every participant
- Improve wellbeing of all participants
- Transition to permanent housing



Inside Safe Results

36

Encampment Resolutions

2,139

People Moved into Interim Housing

78%

Housing Retention

25%

Permanently Housed

Inside Safe

VENICE



CULVER MEDIAN



A woman in a brown coat and grey hat is hugging a man in a white shirt from behind. They are standing on a street next to a blue car. In the background, there are residential buildings and a lawn.

NEW DEVELOPMENTS

LOS ANGELES TRIES TO MOVE HOMELESS FROM STREETS TO MOTELS

CNN

AC360°



Balancing the Role & Involvement of Law Enforcement

Questions to consider when approaching an encampment resolution effort or unsheltered homelessness:

1. What do I know about the area?
2. What relationships do I have with law enforcement in that specific location?
3. Is there a history of Crime/violence associated with this encampment/individual(s)?
4. What has been their approach?
5. Who's the mayor/muscle*?
6. What are the demographics?
7. Do I have staff that look like or speak the language of the community?
8. Are there any laws being violated?



Law Enforcement as Partners

The safety and well-being of both the engager and engaged are of utmost importance! We want to house, not harm.

- The engagement and effort should be service-led.
- Law enforcement is on standby as a partner to support workers and individuals experiencing homelessness.
- They are not immediately on-site, unless there is a concern for harm/risk to those in the area.
- Ask yourself/staff “Do I/you feel threatened?”
- The goal and purpose of this approach is to avoid triggers of trauma and to bring more individuals safely indoors.



Thank you!



Shawn Pleasants

Co-Chair

LAHSA Lived Experience
Advisory Board (LEAB)

Questions?
