

## The Neurobiology of Trauma

What You Need to Know About the Brain and Trauma (PART 3)

Rebecca Campbell, Ph.D. Professor of Psychology Michigan State University This project was supported by Grant No. 2015-AK-BX-K021 awarded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance. The Bureau of Justice Assistance is a component of the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Justice Programs, which also includes the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the National Institute of Justice, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, the Office for Victims of Crime, and the SMART Office. Points of view or opinions in this document are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.



In this three-part webinar series,

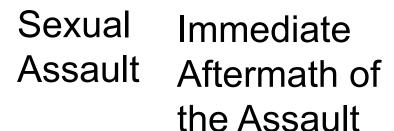
I want to share with you how research on the brain can help us connect the dots . . .



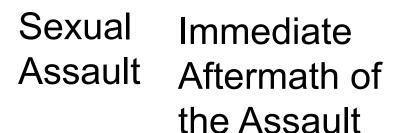
Sexual Assault



Sexual Immediate
Assault Aftermath of the Assault



#### 1 Year? 2 Years? 3 Years? ... 10 Years?



## Webinar: Part 1

 How the brain & body react to major traumas, including sexual assault

 Emphasis on understanding victim behavior during assault & in immediate aftermath

## Webinar: Part 2

 How the brain & body react to major traumas, including sexual assault

Emphasis on understanding memory formation
 & recall during assault & in immediate aftermath

## Webinar: Part 3

 How the brain & body react to major traumas, including sexual assault

 Emphasis on understanding implications for cold case investigations and victim notifications

# Neurobiology & Cold Cases

# **NOW HERE**



Sexual Assault

Immediate
Aftermath of
the Assault

## Where do you start?

We started by pulling the police reports from the untested rape kits.

Sex Crimes Unit Detective In Jurisdiction With Untested SAKs

#### INTER-OFFICE MEMORANDUM

OLD POLICE REPORT

To: OIC

Subject:

THIS COMPLT IS DEEP. SHE TELLS THIS STORY

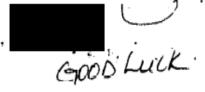
NO-TEARS NONE! THE TIMES ARE OFF.

I TAKED WITH THE DR. ALL HE FOUND WAS

A LITTLE WHITE DISCHARGE NO TRAVMA!

WHO CAN FIGURE IT!

OVERI



#### INTER-OFFICE MEMORANDUM

OLD POLICE REPORT

To: OIC

Subject:

THIS COMPLT IS DEEP. SHE TELLS THIS STORY

NO-TEARS NONE!! THE TIMES ARE OFF.

I TALKED WITH THE DR. ALL HE FOUND WAS

A LITTLE WHITE DISCHARGE NO TRAVMA!

WHO CAN FIGURE IT!

OVERI

GOOD Luck

**POLICE** OIC REPORT on CASE /S FROM.

#### **Back Then**

- Science on neurobiology of trauma still developing
- Training on neurobiology of trauma non-existent

- Any training on trauma nearly non-existent
- Sexual assault not an organizational priority

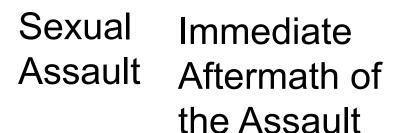
You have to look at them with fresh eyes . . . see them different

That was then, this is now

It's a do-over.

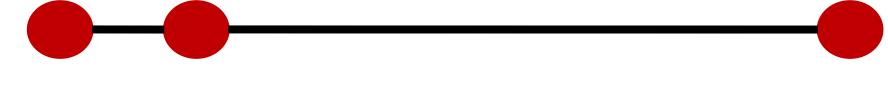
Sex Crimes Unit Detective In Jurisdiction With Untested SAKs

#### 1 Year? 2 Years? 3 Years? ... 10 Years?



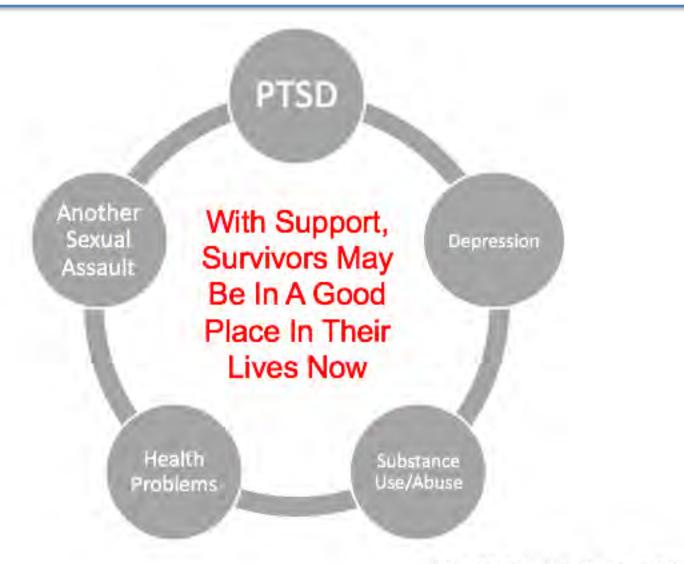
#### WHAT HAPPENED HERE?

1 Year? 2 Years? 3 Years? ... 10 Years?



Sexual Immediate
Assault Aftermath of
the Assault







SOURCE: Campbell, Dworkin, & Cabral, 2009

# ???



Sexual Immediate
Assault Aftermath of the Assault

# Because we don't know, we need to take a TRAUMA-INFORMED APPROACH

## Trauma-Informed

- Attending to victims' emotional AND physical safety
- Strengthening victims' capacity to recover with information, resources, services, and support

 Educating victims, service providers, and the general community about the impact of trauma on survivors' health and well-being

#### Victim Notification Is . . .

- A reactivation of the assault memories
  - HPA Axis re-activation will cause neurobiological distress
  - Could trigger flashbacks and other symptoms
  - Could exacerbate PTSD and/or other MH issues
  - Could increase substance use/abuse
  - Could trigger substance abuse relapse

#### **Empirically-Supported Guidelines for Cold Cases**

- Multidisciplinary team to form protocols
- Training for all practitioners involved in cold cases
- Protocols attend to physical & emotional safety
- Protocols need to provide choice & control

## **Empirically-Supported Guidelines for Cold Cases**

- Multidisciplinary team to form protocols
- Training for all practitioners involved in cold cases
- Protocols attend to physical & emotional safety
- Protocols need to provide choice & control

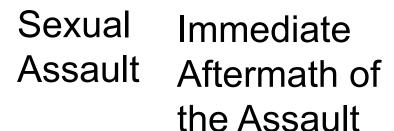
AND... Increases victim engagement

Increase successful prosecutions

# Conclusions

In this three-part webinar series,

I want to share with you how research on the brain can help us connect the dots . . .



## UNDERSTANDING NEUROBIOLOGY OF TRAUMA



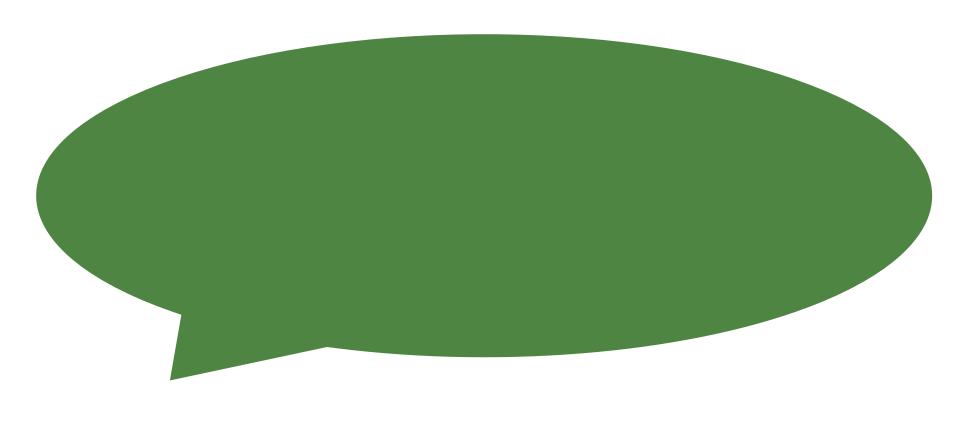
Sexual Assault

Immediate
Aftermath of
the Assault

#### TRAUMA-INFORMED PROTOCOLS



Sexual Immediate
Assault Aftermath of
the Assault



Everything you say, everything you do is a chance to help me or hurt me.

Make the choice to help. Please help me.

You Can Help.

You Are Helping.

**Becoming Trauma Informed Means You Are Helping.** 



Thank you!

**Questions and Discussion** 

<u>rmc@msu.edu</u>