



**Oregon Juvenile Department Directors'
Association**
Representing Oregon's County Juvenile Departments
www.ojdda.org

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The Oregon Juvenile Department Director's Association (OJDDA) supports HB 2575 which creates a grant program for law enforcement agencies to fund trauma informed care (TIC) training and protocol development.

Law Enforcement personnel respond to assist individuals during many different types of traumatizing events. Brain science shows that individuals experiencing trauma and distress have impacts on their brain functioning, including their decision-making capabilities, their ability to take in information and their ability to emotionally modulate. In addition, both victims of and suspects of crime may have personal histories of trauma that are triggered when under duress, making them more vulnerable during these traumatic events.

Youth referred to the Juvenile Justice system often have significant histories of abuse, neglect and may come from distressing home dynamics. Adolescent brain development is not complete until around age 25, and they need more time and assistance to process events and not be reactive in the moment. The impacts of trauma can delay this development in children, youth, and adults, leading to maladaptive behaviors in the midst of trauma.

There are skills and approaches to working with traumatized individuals that can minimize re-traumatization and help the traumatized individual feel safe and ultimately facilitate communication, understanding and decision-making. A police officer who is unaware of an individual's past trauma might read their behavior as hostile or adversarial and might assume a defensive stance. A trauma-informed officer, however, might recognize this behavior as typical of someone who has experienced past trauma and utilize skills to help the individual feel safe and de-escalate, reducing the need for physical force.

Trauma informed and de-escalation approaches that consider the impact of structural racism and other forms of historical trauma can also decrease the need for physical force intervention and traumatization. A public safety system that understands the impacts of trauma will be more likely to develop diversion, treatment, and culturally responsive programming and justice based responses that have the capacity to provide healing responses, reduce recidivism and impact the racial and ethnic disparities in our justice system.

Trauma informed care protocols and supports for law enforcement officers is also important as they are exposed to and experience significant trauma in their line of duty. Increasing their

competency around how they assess and respond to people in crisis/trauma will increase their ability to partner with other providers, to more often and more appropriately use other community resources for themselves and for the public, will increase their capacity to stay emotionally regulated and calm during encounters and will increase their capacity to process and better recover from traumatic exposure.

SB 2575 is a good investment in our communities and public safety. OJDDA urges a YES vote on this bill.