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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 17-19, 2023: First Annual #WeHealUS Trauma-Informed & Mental Health Justice Summit

CHICAGO, Ill. – Today, [Pathways to Resilience](#), [Campaign for Trauma-Informed Policy and Practice](#) (CTIPP), and [Compassion Prison Project](#) announced a new partnership to launch the first annual [#WeHealUS Mental Health and Trauma-Informed Justice Summit](#).

- DATE/TIME: May 17-19, 2023 from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. CT
- LOCATION: 6404 Joliet Road, Countryside, IL 60525
- TICKETS: [Free registration](#) (virtual or in-person)
- NOTE: Continued education units (CEUs) to be offered
- CONTACT: Heather Proctor, heather.proctor@wehealus.org

Attendees can expect to learn educational concepts and practical strategies from subject matter experts to help support individuals on their healing journey. Focus will be on reduction of re-traumatization, achieving better outcomes for trauma survivors, justice-impacted communities and professionals in the legal field

“We are excited to highlight innovative, cross-sector initiatives happening in states and communities to create change and to promote resilience, prevent recidivism, and work toward a trauma-responsive justice system.” Jennifer Ryan – Founder, Pathways to Resilience

“Healing begins with the work we do on ourselves which ripples out to our families, our friends, our co-workers, our community, our society. I am reminded of David R. Hawkins' quote: "When we heal something in ourselves, we heal it for the world," said Fritzi Horstman, Founder and Executive Director of Compassion Prison Project.

The summit will help foster a more equitable system that supports justice, restoration, and well-being. Consider that

- Approximately 1 in 5 adults in the United States [experiences](#) mental illness in a given year. Among incarcerated individuals, that rate is even higher, with estimates [ranging](#) from 25-40%.
- Nearly 70% of youth in the juvenile justice system [have](#) at least one mental health condition, and 93% reported exposure to adverse childhood experiences including child abuse, family and community violence, and serious illness.
- People with mental health conditions are [overrepresented](#) in the criminal justice system, often due to a lack of access to mental health care and other community resources.
- Professionals that work in courtrooms and the legal system commonly [experience](#) vicarious trauma that can compound over many years and lead to depression, compassion fatigue, PTSD symptoms, and impaired performance.

“Integrating trauma-informed policies and practices into all systems across the U.S. helps to create more collaborative and supportive environments for everyone to live,” said Jesse Kohler, Executive Director of CTIPP. “When we address the root causes of trauma and promote restorative justice and healing, we can prevent future harm and foster equitable and just systems that serve and support everyone involved.”

[#WeHealUS](#) started as a grassroots campaign that honors May as Mental Health Awareness Month by amplifying the hard work of individuals, organizations, and local/state governments building resilience and healing. Nationwide, more states and municipalities are embracing trauma-informed and healing-centered policies and practices because resilience grows through healthy and informed relationships.

“Change doesn’t happen overnight,” said Heather Proctor, CEO of WeHealUS. “Through education and mindfulness, we can expand mental health awareness, become more trauma-informed, and create positive environments for change and healing.”

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