



# **Secondary Traumatic Stress & Vicarious Trauma Among Professionals Who Work with Victims of Child Maltreatment**

*A Bibliography*

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### **Championing and Strengthening the Global Response to Child Abuse**

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## Scope

This bibliography provides research literature that covers the multiple aspects of vicarious trauma, secondary traumatic stress, compassion fatigue, and burnout experienced by professionals working in fields associated with child maltreatment.

## Organization

Publications include articles, book chapters, reports, and research briefs and are listed in date descending order. Links are provided to full text publications when possible. However, this collection may not be complete. More information can be obtained in the Child Abuse Library Online.

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# Secondary Traumatic Stress & Vicarious Trauma Among Professionals Who Work with Victims of Child Maltreatment

## A Bibliography

Clark, S. L., Miller, B., Akin, B. A., Barney, R., Theile, K., Carr, K., & McArthur, V. (2025). Investigating the effects of resilience and meditation interventions on secondary traumatic stress among child welfare professionals: A randomized clinical trial. *Traumatology*. Advance online publication. DOI:10.1037/trm0000609

Secondary traumatic stress (STS) threatens the well-being of child welfare workers and remains a prevalent problem among this population. Higher resilience may be a protective factor against STS. Despite ongoing recommendations to reduce STS and increase resilience among child welfare professionals, few studies have investigated interventions that may improve these aspects of workforce well-being. This study implemented a 12-week, psychoeducation intervention, resilience alliance (RA), using a randomized clinical trial. The sample comprised 175 child welfare workers in a Midwestern state. All participants provided services directly to children and families. Participants were randomized into two groups: (a) a comparison group that participated in RA ( $n = 87$ ) and (b) an intervention group that participated in RA plus loving-kindness meditation ( $n = 88$ ). Data were collected via pre-, post-, and retrospective pretest surveys. Mixed linear models tested for pre- and posttest differences and for retrospective pre- and posttest differences for both groups. The results indicated a statistically significant decrease in STS for both groups. Additionally, resilience improved in both groups. Results did not demonstrate that participants assigned to the treatment group had statistically significant improvements compared to those in the comparison group. Results from this study demonstrate that RA and loving-kindness meditation are promising interventions to reduce STS and strengthen resilience among child welfare workers. More research is needed to investigate these interventions in other child welfare jurisdictions and contexts. Additionally, more research is needed to investigate these interventions with other child welfare populations such as with supervisors and administrators.

Clark, S. L., Miller, B., Akin, B. A., Byers, K., Wright, K., Carr, K., & Hunt, M. K. (2025). [Exploring the relationships between self-care and well-being outcomes among child welfare professionals](#). *Journal of Public Child Welfare*, 19(1), 110–140.  
DOI:10.1080/15548732.2024.2306151

Child welfare workers experience increased risk of secondary traumatic stress (STS) and burnout. Despite encouragement to bolster self-care, little remains known about self-care and well-being outcomes. This study explored frequency of self-care and its relationship with STS, burnout, and compassion satisfaction by surveying 305 child welfare direct service and supervisor professionals. Participants completed the ProQol and reported frequency and types of self-care. Findings indicated frequency of self-care was associated with decreased STS and burnout, and increased compassion satisfaction. Given the prevalence of STS in child welfare, further exploration of self-care and its potential for strengthening well-being is necessary.

Murray, K. J., Miller, B. C., Lim, R., Sullivan, K. M., & Blythe, M. O. (2025). Effectiveness of a workforce stress intervention among providers of evidence-based treatment for child traumatic stress. *Traumatology*. Advance online publication.  
DOI:10.1037/trm0000549

Despite the well-established risk of secondary traumatic stress and other forms of workforce stress for mental health clinicians providing trauma treatment, there is little research to support interventions to mitigate this stress. The current study is a preliminary evaluation of the intervention Components for Enhancing Clinician Engagement and Reducing Trauma (Miller, 2022). Participants in the intervention ( $n = 60$ ) were recruited from a training project in one state for agencies providing evidence-based treatment for child traumatic stress. Participants showed significant reductions between preintervention and 6-month follow-up in secondary traumatic stress, burnout, and four of the five intervention targets. There were no changes in compassion satisfaction and one target of the intervention. Qualitative evaluation data were also reviewed, which

highlighted an overall positive response to the training, the usefulness of the components, and areas for future growth. Overall, the results of the current study, while limited, support the effectiveness of the Components for Enhancing Clinician Engagement and Reducing Trauma intervention in mitigating workforce stress for mental health providers.

North, M. N., Thompson, Y. T., Jorgensen, A., Taylor, E. K., Miller, M., Ralston, E., & Silovsky, J. F. (2025). Lean on me: The role of organizational and supervisory support in understanding work outcomes in victim advocates. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 171, 108170. DOI:10.1016/j.childyouth.2025.108170

Burnout, or the exhaustion caused from a buildup of stressors, is a prevalent issue amongst helping professionals such as victim advocates due to problems of high workload, understaffing, and secondary traumatic stress. Turnover is a common result of burnout when employees do not have the resources needed to counterbalance workplace demands. Voluntary turnover can be harmful to organizations and the populations they serve. Resources potentially beneficial to employees are support from their supervisor and their organization more broadly. Thus, we used a longitudinal mixed methods approach to test the effect of support on burnout and turnover intention in victim advocates working within the contexts of Children's Advocacy Centers (CACs) in the United States, a population with limited study. This sample was representative of victim advocates working within U.S. CACs. This longitudinal study disseminated three surveys over the course of one year with the purpose of examining the relationships among organizational and supervisor support, burnout, and turnover intention. Qualitative responses were also gathered to examine factors that contribute to burnout and retention of victim advocates. Findings revealed that organizational and supervisory support's effect on turnover was mediated by burnout and that a driving force for retention was commitment to the population they serve. Potential strategies that may be used to ameliorate stress and strain, enhance well-being and work performance, and reduce turnover intention are discussed, including building a collaborative and

psychologically safe interpersonal environment in the agency and with community partners and illuminating positive impact on families served.

King, E. A. (2024). Work-related trauma exposure: Influence on child welfare workers' mental health and commitment to the field. *Traumatology*, 30(2), 187–197.  
DOI:10.1037/trm0000419

The field of child welfare continues to be plagued by high rates of worker turnover that further complicate the challenging work of protecting and enhancing child welfare in the United States. The child welfare workforce plays a crucial role in promoting child well-being and preventing abuse and neglect, but safety, permanence, and well-being outcomes of children are negatively impacted by high rates of workers leaving their jobs. Numerous organizational and individual factors have been studied in relation to worker turnover, and while there is a foundation of research related to direct and indirect trauma separately, different typologies of trauma have rarely been studied together. This study examined child welfare workers' exposure to work-related trauma from a stress-response framework. A statewide sample of child welfare workers ( $n = 657$ ) responded to items relating to their experiences of client perpetrated violence, deaths or injuries on their caseloads, and secondary trauma. They completed scales measuring their current levels of depression, anxiety, posttraumatic stress disorder, and overall commitment to the field of child welfare. Three typologies of trauma emerged: primary trauma, caseload trauma, and secondary trauma. Structural equation modeling analysis indicated that primary trauma had a small, but positive relationship with commitment to the field ( $B = .17, p < .05$ ). Caseload trauma predicted workers' levels of secondary trauma ( $B = .14, p < .05$ ), and secondary trauma had a strong, predictive relationship with worker mental health ( $B = .77, p < .001$ ). Creating typologies to distinguish different kinds of trauma allowed for a nuanced look at workers' experiences and how they influence outcomes related to the mental health of workers and commitment to the field.

Lwin, K., Shi, X., Jewell, R., Lock, S., Stack-Cutler, H., & Drouillard, D. (2024). Exploring child welfare worker wellbeing, organizational social context, and staff recommendations for change: A mixed method case study. *Journal of Public Child Welfare, 19*(3), 551–576. DOI:10.1080/15548732.2024.2343679

Child welfare workers are the link between families and the system and are tasked with assessing and mitigating child maltreatment. While US-based research suggests that organizations are prime for child welfare workers to experience poor overall wellbeing, there is a dearth of research in Canada. This mixed method case study explored workers' levels of burnout, secondary trauma, and compassion satisfaction, and the organizational social context. Qualitative recommendations to promote wellbeing include, Help us help families, Listen to me and appreciate me, Give us time to breathe, Give me my independence, We want to connect, and We are fighting the system.

Park, T. K., Kim, J., Pierce, B., & Lee, H. (2024). Transformational leadership, secondary traumatic stress, and burnout of child welfare workers: Multilevel moderation effects. *Social Work, 69*(3), 231–239. DOI:10.1093/sw/swae017

This study examines the moderating effects of distant leader's practice of transformational leadership on the relationship between secondary traumatic stress (STS) and burnout among child welfare workers. Caseworkers and supervisors in a Midwest U.S. state ( $N = 210$ ) rated their regional director's use of transformational leadership skills using a survey. Given the nature of the clustered data, multilevel modeling was employed to examine the main effects of transformational leadership on worker burnout and its cross-level interaction effect on the association between worker STS and burnout. Multilevel modeling demonstrated that worker burnout was positively associated with STS and negatively associated with organizational-level transformational leadership. The cross-level interaction between transformational leadership and STS was significant. Specifically, the positive association between workers' STS and burnout decreased as transformational leadership increased. These findings



suggest that organizational approaches such as transformational leadership can influence workforce results. Further research will guide child welfare policymakers to develop more sophisticated training programs in leadership skills and strategies.

Strolin-Goltzman, J., Breslend, N., Hemenway Deaver, A., Wood, V., Woodside-Jiron, H., & Krompf, A. (2024). Moving beyond self-care: Exploring the protective influence of interprofessional collaboration, leadership, and competency on secondary traumatic stress. *Traumatology*, 30(1), 69–76. DOI:10.1037/trm0000244

Despite a growing field of knowledge related to the causes and correlates of secondary traumatic stress (STS), there is a dearth of research directly comparing STS across child welfare and mental health; rather, when the two are examined within the same study, it is often as part of a larger sample of “social workers,” which is not further differentiated during analysis (Bride, 2007). Furthermore, few studies consider the role of the macro- or mezzo-level environments, such as the influence of interprofessional collaboration or leadership on STS across child welfare (CW) and mental health (MH) populations. Thus, this study will use structural equation modeling to examine micro-, mezzo-, and macrolevel factors across public CW workers and mental health care providers serving children and families involved with the CW system in one small, rural, northeastern state. Results demonstrate significant and differential relationships between interprofessional collaboration and transformative leadership across CW and MH systems. The findings will provide guidance for differential prevention and intervention strategies across these helping professions

Wells, M., Jonsson, L. S., Keefe, M., & Oates, F. (2024). [Supervision and organizational resilience: Considerations for staff retention in child welfare agencies.](#) *International Journal of Child and Adolescent Resilience*, 11(1). DOI:10.54488/ijcar.2024.357

This paper presents results from a mixed methods online survey on factors related to child welfare professionals' experiences with supervision, considered within the framework of organizational resilience. This analysis presents results from 543 child protective service (CPS) professionals in the United States. About a quarter of these child welfare professionals currently held supervisory roles. Comparisons of those without supervisory roles indicate higher mean ratings on perceptions of support and care from those not currently in supervisory roles, while those currently in supervisory roles reported higher mean ratings on perceptions of potential growth and promotion. Outcomes including intention to stay in child welfare, satisfaction with position, and salary were significantly associated with positive supervision components. These professionals' qualitative responses highlight a need for consideration of supervision approaches that reflect trauma-informed components and that foster organizational resilience. Implementation of these critical supports for child welfare professionals may have lasting impacts on the well-being of children, youth, and families.

Geoffrion, S., Lamothe, J., Giguère, C. É., & Collin-Vézina, D. (2023). The effects of adherence to professional identity, workplace aggression, and felt accountability on child protection workers' professional quality of life. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 135, 105950. DOI:10.1016/j.chiabu.2022.105950

Child protection workers (CPWs) are exposed to physical and psychological violence initiated by clients. The consequences associated with exposure to this type of trauma and others are compounded by the anxiety generated by the feelings of being accountable and the constant scrutiny and monitoring CPWs are under. Previous research suggests that acting according to one's professional values can help protect

against the effects of trauma exposure and the anxiety associated with being held accountable when situations devolve into crises. Using path analysis, this study sought to investigate how this complex intersection between client aggression, felt accountability, and professional identity among 310 CPWs is related to their professional quality of life (ProQoL). Results show that adherence to professional identity was strongly and positively associated with ProQoL scores ( $\beta = -0.42, p < .001$ ). Felt accountability and exposure to psychological violence (but no other forms of violence) were consistently and negatively related to ProQoL scores ( $\beta = -0.42, p < .001/\beta = -0.20, p < .001$ ). The impact of felt accountability on ProQoL scores can be partially explained by lowered adherence to professional identity. This suggests that the current way CPWs are held accountable and evaluated comes at odds with their professional values. The article ends with a discussion on how organizational changes surrounding accountability can be anxiety-inducing for some CPWs who increasingly feel overwhelmed by the complexity of their cases. Organizations must therefore reflect on how they can better embody the values of their clinicians.

Groggel, A. (2023). "Horrible Slime Stories" when serving victims: The labor of role taking and secondary trauma exposure. *Qualitative Sociology*, 46, 47-76.  
DOI:10.1007/s11133-022-09528-0

The emotional and psychological consequences associated with providing services to traumatized others have been well established with extant scholarship highlighting these workers' susceptibility to vicarious trauma and secondary traumatic stress. But less is known about the underlying interactional processes by which symptoms of secondary trauma emerge. This research investigates the consequences of taking the role of a person who is victimized and experiencing emotional turmoil by analyzing interviews with workers who serve victims seeking legal services. Role-taking is the process of mentally and affectively placing the self in the position of another, understanding another's

perspective. Workers described listening to victims' experiences or coworkers' accounts of difficult cases as being "slimed." Those engaging in both cognitive and empathic role-taking often struggled to "shake" this content and became susceptible to mirroring the distress of the traumatized clients and coworkers. In response to this exposure, workers often shared troubling intakes or cases with coworkers as a type of interpersonal emotion management. Workers who provided emotional support to colleagues often experienced indirect exposure to trauma on two fronts: in the service of clients who had experienced intimate partner violence and from coworkers. Thus, those best able to role-take with victims or coworkers are most likely to experience greater secondary trauma exposure and its potential toll.

Guay, S., Lemyre, A., Guédé, R., Juster, R. P., & Geoffrion, S. (2023). Prospective effects of peer support and gender roles on the mental health and work functioning of child protection workers exposed to potentially traumatic events. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 137, 106033. DOI:10.1016/j.chiabu.2023.106033

Child protection workers (CPWs) are regularly exposed to potentially traumatic events (PTEs), especially, aggressive behaviors from the service users. This study aimed to evaluate the effects of a peer support program on the mental health and work functioning of CPWs exposed to a PTE, while considering the moderating effect of gender roles. Participants were recruited in two youth social services centers (YSS) in Canada and assessed one month ( $n = 176$ ), two months ( $n = 168$ ), six months ( $n = 162$ ), and 12 months ( $n = 161$ ) following exposure to a PTE. Three groups were formed: workers from the first YSS who received peer support (intervention group), workers from the first YSS who did not receive peer support (first control group), and workers from the second YSS where no peer support program was available (second control group). Linear mixed models were used to compare the three groups across time. The intervention group did not differ from the control groups on any outcome variables at any time points. Gender roles did not moderate any effect. However, compared with the first control group, the intervention

group scored lower on masculine gender roles, suggesting that lower masculinity may facilitate help seeking behaviors. The results point toward the need to improve the peer support intervention, to complement this intervention with other forms of support, and to promote organizational changes that would favor the workers' well-being and facilitate their recovery following a PTE.

Skar, A. M. S., Shevlin, M., & Vang, M. L. (2023). [A cross-sectional study among Danish child protection workers](#). *Traumatology*, 29(2), 93–101. DOI:10.1037/trm0000372

Little is known about moderating factors associated with indirect exposure to child abuse cases and the development of symptoms of secondary traumatization. This study tested the relationship between personal therapy and supervision on secondary traumatization and burnout and whether these factors moderate the effect of personal trauma history and exposure to child abuse cases, respectively, on secondary traumatization and burnout. Participants (N = 667) were recruited as part of a cross-sectional study among professionals working with child abuse cases in Denmark. Data were collected through online surveys. Analysis included bivariate and multivariate regressions and group-specific regression coefficients to test for moderation effects. Having attended personal therapy was associated with lower levels of secondary traumatization and emotional exhaustion. Case supervision was associated with lower levels of emotional exhaustion, whereas receiving supervision on the personal impact of working with child abuse cases was associated with higher levels of all outcomes. There was a significant moderating effect of case supervision on the relationship between exposure to child abuse cases and secondary traumatization and emotional exhaustion. There was no difference in this relationship depending on whether the participants had received supervision on the personal impact of the job, and the differential relationship between personal trauma history and the outcomes depending on whether the participants had attended personal therapy was not statistically significant. Case supervision may protect employees

working closely with child abuse cases against developing burnout and secondary traumatization by moderating the effect of indirect exposure.

Whitt-Woosley, A., & Sprang, G. (2023). Analysis of implementation drivers of secondary traumatic stress (STS)-informed organizational change and experiences of STS and burnout in child welfare. *Child Abuse & Neglect, 141*, 106194. DOI:10.1016/j.chiabu.2023.106194

STS and burnout (BO) are significant problems for child welfare professionals (Bride, 2007; Craig & Sprang, 2010). A challenge for at-risk professions is to understand how both individuals and organizations can address the potential impact of these conditions. This study explores the influence of organizational factors on individual experiences of STS and BO in child welfare settings. Study participants were 382 child welfare professionals in the United States who were participating in an organizational assessment of STS and related activities. The Secondary Traumatic Stress Informed Organizational Assessment (STSI-OA) tool (Sprang et al., 2014) was administered to evaluate the use of policies, practices and training activities that address STS and BO (Sprang et al., 2014). The National Implementation Research Network's (NIRN) implementation framework was applied to the STSI-OA and domain activities loaded onto the three implementation drivers of competency, organization and leadership (Sprang, Ross, & Miller, 2018). Regression analyses were conducted to determine the strength of associations between the implementation drivers of STS informed organizational activity and individual ratings of STS and BO. Increased use of STS-informed activities affiliated with all three implementation drivers was significantly associated with lower individual STS and BO scores. STS-informed activities associated with the organization driver seemed particularly effective for addressing STS. This study supports the utility of the integrated framework for enacting STS-informed change in child welfare contexts. Recommendations for organizations and future research are provided.

Beer, O. W., Beaujolais, B., Wolf, K. G., Ibrahim, A., & Letson, M. M. (2022). [How Children's Advocacy Centers law enforcement officers cope with work-related stress: Impacts and approaches to self-care](#). *Policing and Society*, 33(4), 385–397.  
DOI:10.1080/10439463.2022.2127712

Work-related stress has been identified as being harmful for law enforcement officers' (LEOs) health. The absence of effective coping strategies exacerbates the negative psychophysiological impacts on health. The literature suggests that law enforcement employers and communities also feel the impact of stress among LEOs. This study addresses the gap in the current literature in terms of qualitative-based exploration of the personal and professional impacts of LEOs working within Children's Advocacy Centers (CACs) and self-care and stress alleviation practices in response to environmental stressors. CAC LEOs' responses to three open-ended responses were analyzed from a national survey in the United States. Thematic analysis was utilized to identify emerging themes in relation to the: (1) personal, (2) professional impacts of work-related stress, and (3) the self-care or stress alleviation strategies adopted by LEOs. LEOs face multiple personal and professional stressors that impact their coping behaviours and health outcomes. Variation exists among LEOs in terms of coping behaviours and requires further investigation. This study highlights several gaps in the literature, including the personal and professional impacts of work-related stress among LEOs and the subsequent coping strategies adopted by LEOs in response to stressful working environments. Future research should further explore the impacts of work-related stress, coping strategies, and the development of effective stress prevention reduction approaches for this population.

Benuto, L. T., Yang, Y., Bennett, N., & Lancaster, C. (2022). Distress tolerance and emotion regulation as potential mediators between secondary traumatic stress and maladaptive coping. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 37(13-14), NP11557-NP11581. DOI:10.1177/0886260520967136

The extant literature has illustrated that protective service workers experience negative repercussions associated with their job (including the development of secondary traumatic stress; STS) and may utilize maladaptive coping mechanisms. Developing an improved understanding of factors that might explain the relationship between STS and the utilization of maladaptive coping mechanisms is warranted. This study sought to examine emotion regulation and distress tolerance as potential mediators between STS and the utilization of maladaptive coping mechanisms. Participants were 152 elder protective service workers and 105 child protective service workers who completed an online survey of self-report measures of emotion regulation, distress tolerance, STS, and coping behaviors. A parallel multiple mediator model was analyzed using structural equation modeling (SEM) to examine the hypothesis that distress tolerance and emotion regulation would mediate the relationship between STS and the utilization of maladaptive coping. Our hypothesis was partially supported as the effect of STS on maladaptive coping was mediated by emotion regulation but not by distress tolerance. The results from this study have both prevention and intervention implications. From a prevention perspective, efforts could be directed at teaching emotion regulation skills to those at risk for developing STS as a mechanism for decreasing the probability of denial, substance use, behavioral disengagement, and self-blame that may occur as a consequence of STS. From an intervention perspective, some of the negative sequelae of exposure to STS may be averted by teaching EPS and CPS workers who present with STS symptoms, emotion regulation skills.



Corbett-Hone, M., & Johnson, N. L. (2022). Psychosocial correlates of mental health work with human trafficking survivors: Risk and resilience. *Psychological Services, 19*(Suppl 1), 84–94. DOI:10.1037/ser0000615

Mental health professionals' responses to work with trauma survivors vary among a range of aversive and positive psychosocial experiences. This study examines the prevalence and predictors of these responses, including secondary traumatic stress (STS), vicarious resilience (VR), burnout, and compassion satisfaction (CS), among mental health professionals who work specifically with human trafficking survivors within the United States ( $n = 89$ ). Specific attention is devoted to examining the role of professionals' own trauma histories and their self-care practices in building their resiliency and potentially reducing their risk of aversive work-related psychosocial experiences. Findings reveal that responses range in intensity among this group of providers. Promisingly, none of the professionals demonstrated high levels of burnout and none demonstrated low CS. Furthermore, the majority of professionals in the study had low-to-moderate levels of STS and moderate-to-high levels of VR. Results from a series of multiple regressions exploring predictors of these correlates suggest that although professionals who work with trafficking survivors may risk burnout and STS, they also may receive significant personal satisfaction, growth, and resilience from their work. Results also indicate that professionals' personal experiences with trauma may act as a protective factor against aversive correlates. Altogether, findings suggest a need for professionals' active engagement in a wide variety of self-care behaviors, including seeking personal therapy as needed and engaging in advocacy, as a strategy for ensuring their well-being as they deliver mental health support for human trafficking survivors.

Daniel, A. M., & Treece, K. S. (2022). [Law enforcement pathways to mental health: secondary traumatic stress, social support, and social pressure](#). *Journal of Police and Criminal Psychology*, 37(1), 132-140. DOI:10.1007/s11896-021-09476-5

The mental health of law enforcement officers (LEO) is critical to the safety and well-being of the officers and the public they serve. However, LEO face significant on-the-job stressors that undermine mental health, and there is a lot to be learned about when and how LEO seek and enter mental health services. The present study sought to explore variables related to mental health seeking behavior, the role of social engagement and social pressure in the decision to seek mental health services, and the most common pathways into mental health utilized by LEO. A small sample of 86 LEO were recruited from the social media page of a law enforcement nonprofit support organization to take several self-report measures on past mental health service usage and intentions to seek future services, the Inventory of Attitudes Toward Seeking Mental Health Services, the Professional Quality of Life Survey, and a measure of social engagement on mental health topics. Results indicate that while a number of factors are associated with intentions to seek future services, the primary factor in past mental health seeking behavior was secondary traumatic stress. Those who sought mental health services reported higher social engagement and social pressure to seek help. LEO entered mental health services for a variety of reasons and through a variety of provider options, such that no one provider source was preferred. Though the present study was limited by a small sample size, reliance on self-report measures, and occurred during a time of civil unrest that sparked the “defund the police” movement, the results serve as a starting point for understanding the pathways into mental health services for LEO and the roles of secondary trauma and prior mental health service experience.

Deaton, J. D., Ohrt, J. H., Linich, K., McCartney, E., & Glascoe, G. (2022). Vicarious posttraumatic growth: A systematic review and thematic synthesis across helping professions. *Traumatology*, 29(1), 17–26. DOI:10.1037/trm0000375

Vicarious posttraumatic growth (VPTG) is a growth experience resulting from indirect trauma exposure. Helping professionals are often exposed to indirect trauma by hearing and addressing the trauma narrative through various capacities. However, there is limited information regarding the experiences of VPTG across helping professions. The purpose of this systematic review and thematic synthesis was to (a) identify current literature of the lived experiences of VPTG across professions, (b) review and integrate findings of multiple qualitative studies, and (c) inform policy and practice to facilitate VPTG across helping professions. The authors identified 6 themes in the thematic synthesis: negative affective responses, changes in world view, creating meaning to change self, changes in interpersonal relationships, engaging in efforts of support and self-care, and client progress impacting growth. The authors discuss implications of findings to inform policy, practice, and training programs across helping professions.

Gaboury, K., & Kimber, M. (2022). Consequences of vicarious traumatization among mental health service providers with a history of child maltreatment: A narrative review. *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy*, 15(Suppl 2), S203–S212. DOI:10.1037/tra0001298

This narrative review synthesizes existing literature evaluating the psychological and physiological impacts of vicarious trauma (VT), secondary traumatic stress (STS), and compassion fatigue (CF) in mental health providers (MHPs) with a personal history of childhood maltreatment. It also evaluates the impact of MHP childhood maltreatment history on the risk for developing VT, STS, and CF. Method: We conducted electronic database searches and forward and backward citation chaining to identify relevant articles. We extracted and synthesized data via iterative readings of each article, and then grouped articles into key thematic areas. Results: We synthesized 10 studies. The

studies identified a variety of psychological consequences of STS, CF, and VT, including increased risk of burnout, disruptions in cognitions, and altered worldviews. No studies examined the physiological consequences of STS, CF, or VT, highlighting a significant research gap. Nine of the 10 studies evaluated child maltreatment as a risk factor for STS, CF, or VT, with only five of these nine finding an association. Conclusion: Prevalence of maltreatment, especially emotional abuse and neglect, is high in the MHP population and may contribute to ongoing vulnerability to STS, CF, and VT. Childhood exposure to sexual abuse could have implications for MHPs' own intimate relationships. Studies with sample sizes capable of explicating the role of each type of child maltreatment for STS, CF, or VT among MHPs are needed. In addition, it would be prudent to regularly collect data on STS, CF, and VT experiences alongside physiological and psychological outcomes among the MHP workforce.

Janczewski, C., & Mersky, J. P. (2022). Secondary traumatic stress among home visiting professionals. *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy*, 15(Suppl 2), S222–S230. DOI:10.1037/tra0001296

This study examined the reliability and factor structure of the Secondary Traumatic Stress Scale (STSS) and the prevalence and correlates of secondary traumatic stress (STS) among home visitors. Method: Survey data were collected between 2015 and 2020 from 301 home visitors with caseloads. Participants completed the 17-item STSS, which assesses intrusion, avoidance, and arousal symptoms using the DSM–IV–TR diagnostic criteria. Internal reliabilities of the scale and subscales were measured and confirmatory factor analyses were performed to validate hypothesized model solutions. Symptom prevalence among the sample was calculated and linear regressions were conducted to examine whether personal and workplace factors were associated with STS. Results: Analyses confirmed that the STSS had sound internal consistency and that both 3- and single-factor measurement models fit the data. Approximately 10% of home visitors met

the clinical criteria for PTSD, though prevalence decreased to 8% after omitting an intrusion item that was endorsed by most respondents. Increased exposure to adverse childhood experiences and poorer work environment ratings were associated with increased STS. Non-Hispanic White race was associated with elevated arousal symptoms. No other personal or workplace factors were associated with scores on the STSS full scale or subscales. Conclusion: This study reaffirms that the STSS has sound psychometric properties, but it also raises questions about the prevalence and etiology of STS. Given the likely costs of PTSD to personal well-being and professional efficacy, further research is needed to advance the measurement and prediction of secondary traumatic stress.

Knight, K. E., Ellis, C., & Salois, E. M. (2022). Developing a response to secondary trauma for American Indian and rural service providers. *International Journal of Rural Criminology*, 6(2), 252–272. DOI:10.18061/ijrc.v6i2.8652

How can victim service providers, the organizations they work for, and the communities they serve help respond to the issue of occupation-based secondary trauma? Over the last few years, federal agencies in the United States have spent millions in research and programming to answer this important scientific and policy question. The current study builds on this work by describing and evaluating a community-based participatory research project focused on finding manageable, effective, sustainable, and ethical ways to respond to occupation-based secondary trauma in two separate communities: a rural American Indian community, Blackfeet Tribal Nation, and a predominantly white county in Montana, Gallatin County, United States. Findings from evaluation questionnaires (n=178; 80.10% women; 64.60% American Indian; 29.14% White) representing a wide range of occupations document that: (1) the implementation of the project was successful; (2) toolkits created for the project were useful to both individual participants and organizations; (3) training outcomes improved significantly; and (4) findings were

consistent across the two different community contexts. Contributions, lessons learned, and future directions are discussed.

Leung, T., Schmidt, F., & Mushquash, C. (2022). A personal history of trauma and experience of secondary traumatic stress, vicarious trauma, and burnout in mental health workers: A systematic literature review. *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy*, 15(Suppl 2), S213–S221.  
DOI:10.1037/tra0001277

Secondary traumatic stress (STS), vicarious trauma (VT), and burnout (BO) are work-related outcomes commonly ascribed to mental health workers, given their exposure to clients' traumatic experiences. It is theorized that a worker's own history of trauma increases the occurrence of these outcomes, through retraumatization/activation of threat cues during client interactions and overinvolvement with a client's progress. Given the inconsistencies in the literature and the ubiquity of trauma among workers, a systematic review was conducted to examine the association of personal trauma and the 3 related, but separate, work outcomes. Method: A systematic search strategy was used across relevant research databases (Cochrane, JSTOR, PsycINFO, PubMed) for empirical studies conducted from 2000–2021. In accordance with PRISMA guidelines, a four-phase selection process was used, resulting in 39 studies identified meeting the inclusion criteria. Results: A clear (positive) association between personal trauma history and STS and VT were identified, whereas mostly null findings were observed in regard to BO. The majority of studies were conducted in Western countries, adopted questionnaires as the primary means of data collection, and all but one were cross-sectional in design. Conclusion: In addition to a lack of diversity in study design, there were conceptual limitations to the research conducted (e.g., treating victims as a unitary group, neglecting the inclusion of mechanisms). To assist in moving the field forward, five research recommendations are outlined with the goal of creating greater clarity in the work-outcomes literature and increased nuance in how personal trauma is understood.

Kim, J., Chesworth, B., Franchino-Olsen, H., & Macy, R. J. (2022). [A scoping review of vicarious trauma interventions for service providers working with people who have experienced traumatic events](#). *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse*, 23(5), 1437-1460.

Health and human service providers who aid traumatized individuals frequently experience vicarious trauma (VT). Although VT plays a critical role in service providers' mental health and well-being, as well as in the quality of their service provision, little information is available concerning the development and implementation of VT interventions for service providers. To advance the development of evidence in this area, we undertook a scoping review in which we reviewed existing interventions intended to address VT among service providers working with traumatized clients. Searches of electronic databases were conducted to identify studies published in peer-reviewed journals, with no date restrictions. Over 1,315 citations were reviewed, and a total of 27 studies were included in the final review. The findings show that VT interventions in the literature can be divided broadly into four categories: psychoeducation, mindfulness intervention, art and recreational programs, and alternative medicine therapy. The VT interventions reviewed generally showed promise in their key outcomes, including reductions in secondary trauma stress, compassion fatigue, burnout, and other mental health outcomes. However, the current body of research is lacking both in rigor and in specificity regarding the definition of VT. Furthermore, existing VT interventions are generally self-care based and tend to focus on general stress management rather than addressing the specific effects of VT. Therefore, we call for an increase in efforts to tailor VT interventions to different service settings and participant characteristics, as well as greater attention to developing primary VT interventions at the organizational level.

Middleton, J., Harris, L. M., Matera Bassett, D., & Nicotera, N. (2022). "Your soul feels a little bruised": Forensic interviewers' experiences of vicarious trauma. *Traumatology*, 28(1), 74-83. DOI:10.1037/trm0000297

Vicarious trauma among social workers is well documented in the literature, yet there is a paucity of research in this area pertaining to forensic interviewers. Forensic interviewers who conduct structured interviews with children who have made allegations of abuse might be particularly vulnerable to vicarious trauma as a result of their work. Using a phenomenological approach, qualitative interviews were conducted with nine forensic interviewers throughout one western state in the United States. Findings indicate that forensic interviews are significantly impacted by their work and report experiencing vicarious trauma across three realms: within the interview, outside of the interview but within their professional role, and in their personal lives. Implications for practice include assisting organizations develop and target interventions that promote healthy coping responses to the inevitable traumatic nature of the work.

Miller, M. L., Gerhart, J. I., Maffett, A. J., Lorbeck, A., England, A. E., & O'Mahony, S. (2022). Experiential avoidance and post-traumatic stress symptoms among child abuse counselors and service workers: A brief report. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 37(11-12), NP10382-NP10392. DOI:10.1177/0886260520976225

Professionals who counsel and serve survivors of childhood abuse may be at risk of experiencing symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), which can be exacerbated by cognitive and emotional processes. It is hypothesized that (1) a significant proportion of professionals who primarily serve child abuse survivors experience elevated levels of PTSD symptoms and (2) elevated PTSD symptoms are associated with psychological inflexibility processes, specifically increased experiential avoidance, cognitive fusion, and emotion regulation difficulties. Child abuse counselors and service workers (N = 31) in a major metropolitan area were recruited for a small pilot study. Participants completed self-report measures of PTSD symptoms and levels of



psychological flexibility processes. A significant proportion of counselors endorsed clinically significant PTSD symptoms ( $n = 13$ , 41.9%). PTSD symptoms were significantly associated with experiential avoidance ( $r = .54$ ,  $p < .01$ ) and emotion regulation difficulties ( $r = .51$ ,  $p < .01$ ). These associations remained significant after controlling for the personality trait of emotional stability/ neuroticism. These findings suggest that PTSD symptoms may be common among child abuse counselors and service workers, and these symptoms tend to be of greater intensity when responded to in avoidant and inflexible ways.

Whitt-Woosley, A., Sprang, G., & Eslinger, J. (2022). The impact of COVID-19 and experiences of secondary traumatic stress and burnout. *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy*, 14(3), 507–515. DOI:10.1037/tra0001183

This study examines the relationships between multiple COVID-19 related stressors and experiences of secondary traumatic stress (STS) and burnout (BO). Method: This sample ( $N = 550$ ) of professionals and caregivers from a foster care system in the United States completed an online survey regarding their experiences of COVID-19 related stress in multiple domains (disruptions in routines, income/employment, food access, medical/mental health care access, access to social support, worries about COVID, family conflict/violence, and COVID diagnoses). The survey also included established measures of STS and BO. Results: A subset of COVID-19 stressors was found to account for 27.4% of the variance in STS and 24.7% of the variance in BO scores in regression analyses. Significant correlates for STS included worries about COVID, family conflict/violence and food access, while only worries about COVID and family conflict/violence were significant in the model testing BO. Part of the sample ( $N = 64$ ) had participated in a related 2019 study of STS and BO and were included in comparison analyses of these conditions before and during the COVID-19 pandemic. Results for T1 and T2 comparisons yielded significant increases in STS related symptoms of intrusion and alterations in cognitions and mood,

with differences in total STS scores trending toward significance. No significant differences were found in BO scores. Conclusions: These findings and associated implications are discussed for groups of caregivers and helping professionals with preexisting high levels of indirect trauma exposure in a pandemic context. This study provides some guidance on how to identify those at risk for increased distress in their helping roles and considerations for implementing support strategies during a pandemic.

Beer, O. W., Phillips, R., Letson, M. M., & Wolf, K. G. (2021). Personal and professional impacts of work-related stress alleviation strategies among child welfare workers in child advocacy center settings. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 122, 105904. DOI:10.1016/j.childyouth.2020.105904

High levels of occupational stress, burnout, and compassion fatigue have been challenges affecting social workers, organizations, and service users for decades. Studies have historically focused on quantifying these outcomes, missing the opportunity to qualitatively explore the role of cognitive, emotional, and behavioral responses in practitioners' stress experiences. Research is particularly lacking regarding the impact of occupational stress on child welfare workers (CWWs) within Children's Advocacy Centers (CACs), a population who routinely works with child abuse victims. This study analyzed three open-ended responses from a national online survey examining compassion fatigue in CACs to understand the impact of work-related stress on CWWs. Thematic analysis identified several themes regarding the professional and personal impact of work-related stress, as well as strategies used to alleviate stress. CWWs in CAC settings are uniquely impacted by occupational stress at both the personal and professional level. CWWs adopt engaging and avoidant coping behaviors to alleviate work-related stress. This qualitative study addresses a critical gap in understanding the differences and commonalities among work-related stress and coping responses to environments deemed stressful by CWWs in CACs. Further research is essential for developing effective stress-management approaches for front line providers addressing family violence.

Chen, M. (2021). [\*Evaluating secondary traumatic stress on victim advocates using the Helpfulness rating on service intake forms as a scale\*](#) (Publication No. 1)  
[Research brief, University of Kansas]. KU ScholarWorks.

This report examines how advocates have utilized a “helpfulness” rating on service intake forms to evaluate the degree of secondary traumatic stress that the on-call advocate has experienced. Using in-depth, semi-structured interviews, this report finds that the “helpfulness” rating is often employed by advocate and program coordinators to evaluate secondary traumatic stress, and those who report “unhelpful” and do not receive follow-up by their supervisor are more likely to leave the advocacy field shortly after a difficult case. The report offers recommendations for coordinators to decrease secondary traumatic stress among their advocates by developing organizational supports.

Cummings, C., Singer, J., Hisaka, R., & Benuto, L. T. (2021). Compassion satisfaction to combat work-related burnout, vicarious trauma, and secondary traumatic stress. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 36(9-10), NP5304-NP5319.  
DOI:10.1177/0886260518799502

Helping professionals play an essential role in the recovery of victims of trauma. However, research has demonstrated that, as a result of their work, helping professionals’ indirect exposure to clients’ trauma increases the likelihood of experiencing negative psychological responses, including vicarious trauma (VT), secondary traumatic stress (STS), and burnout. The present study examined the concurrent validity between the STS subscale on the Professional Quality of Life (ProQoL) scale and the Secondary Traumatic Stress Scale (STSS). Furthermore, the relationships between compassion satisfaction (CS) and burnout were investigated. Participants were recruited using a comprehensive web search of agencies across the United States that employed victim advocates, a subtype of helping professionals that are understudied. A list of possible agencies (N = 75) was generated, and each agency was sent an email about the study. In total, 132 victim advocates provided data for these analyses. Findings revealed positive correlations

between the STS subscale on the ProQoL and the STSS. In addition, a negative correlation was found between burnout and CS. Two-level hierarchical multiple regression analyses demonstrated that burnout accounted for 47.3% of the variance in STS, and CS contributed an additional 3.9%. Furthermore, burnout accounted 45.8% of the variance in VT, whereas CS contributed an additional 0.6%, indicating that burnout is a strong predictor of VT and STS, but CS may serve as a protective factor against experiencing both. Prevention and intervention efforts should target reducing burnout to combat these psychological sequelae and increasing CS.

Ellis, C., & Knight, K. E. (2021). [Advancing a model of secondary trauma: Consequences for victim service providers](#). *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 36(7-8), 3557-3583. DOI:10.1177/0886260518775161

A burgeoning body of scholarship is attempting to understand, normalize, and ameliorate the emotional strain of victim service provision. The literature, however, has yet to fully theorize the hazardous process of empathetic engagement with victims. As a result, concepts, mechanisms, and outcomes are often conflated, making it difficult to understand the etiological path of this occupational risk. The goal of this article is to attend to this gap by accomplishing three objectives. The first is to engage with the perspective of symbolic interaction to theoretically ground a conceptual model of secondary trauma. The second objective is to propose a model of secondary trauma that acknowledges its inherently interactional, interpretive, and, thus, vicariously transmissible nature. The third objective is to begin the work of empirically supporting this model with data from a sample of victim service providers ( $n = 94$ ) collected using in-depth interviews, focus groups, ethnographic participant observation, and community-based participatory research. Our findings suggest that victim service provision, in the form of empathetic engagement, can blur the boundary between self and other, and lead to a sense of damage in the self that manifests in unreliable self-agency, untrustworthy

coherence of other, desensitized self-affectivity, and fractured self-history. This work has significant implications. We illustrate an important paradox by showing how victim service provision can be helpful to victims but harmful to providers. We also offer a pathway for reducing this harm. By specifying mechanisms of damage, the model can be used to inform policies and practices supportive of victim service providers' health and well-being.

Hallinan, S., Shiyko, M., Volpe, R., & Molnar, B. E. (2021). On the back burner: Challenges experienced by change agents addressing vicarious trauma in first response and victim service agencies. *Traumatology*, 27(3), 316–325.  
DOI:10.1037/trm0000291

Vicarious trauma (VT) is the witnessing of, or learning about, another individual's traumatic experience, evoking an empathic response. VT, and associated conditions such as vicarious traumatization and secondary traumatic stress, is widespread among first responders (i.e., firefighters, police, and Emergency medical technicians [EMTs]) and victim assistance providers. VT can have damaging impacts on the physical and mental health of those exposed and leads to individual, organizational, and societal burdens. Strategies exist to address help organizations and individuals prevent negative impacts of VT; however, change agents—or individuals working to make a change in an organization—may face challenges in enacting these changes due to organizational barriers and cultural issues. This qualitative study examines data from first responders and victim service providers undergoing a process of changing their organization's response to VT. Interview and focus group data were gathered from 47 change agents within 15 diverse agencies. Results of thematic analysis showed that the nature of VT, namely, its intermittency, as well as administrative hurdles, made it challenging to maintain momentum for change. Recommendations for researchers and change agents within these agencies include following evidence-based organizational improvement processes and motivating administrators and workers to commit to making the change.

Helpingstine, C., Kenny, M. C., & Malik, F. (2021). Vicarious traumatization and burnout among service providers for victims of commercial sexual exploitation. *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse, 30*(6), 722–745. DOI:10.1080/10538712.2021.1938771

Victims of commercial sexual exploitation (CSE) are in need of multiple community services to aid in their recovery. Service providers are critical to ensuring these victims receive needed treatment. Given the complex trauma of these victims and the necessity of long-term treatment, these service professionals may experience vicarious trauma (VT) and burnout. This qualitative study interviewed 12 professionals who have provided direct services to victims of CSE about their experiences. They had on average about 8 years of experience and three were survivors of CSE. Almost all reported instances of burnout and VT but also had strategies for the prevention of such experiences. Most participants reported experiences of VT and burnout are inevitable when working with this population, but self-care strategies and peer support are essential to combatting these negative experiences. These results can inform agencies that provide services to victims of CSE so as to ensure their staff stay healthy and avoid burnout.

Levin, A. P., Putney, H., Crimmins, D., & McGrath, J. G. (2021). [Secondary traumatic stress, burnout, compassion satisfaction, and perceived organizational trauma readiness in forensic science professionals](#). *Journal of Forensic Sciences, 66*(5), 1758–1769. DOI:10.1111/1556-4029.14747

Secondary traumatic stress, burnout, and compassion satisfaction have been described since the 1980s and extensively studied in first responders, law enforcement, legal professionals, and human service providers. There are few studies in forensic science professionals. To determine levels of secondary traumatic stress, burnout, and compassion satisfaction and relate these to demographics and job characteristics, we administered online a modified version of the Professional Quality of Life (ProQOL) questionnaire to professionals in crime laboratories and medical examiner offices. Participants also completed a modified version of the Vicarious Trauma-Organizational

Readiness Guide (VT-ORG) to measure perceptions of their organizations' efforts to address vicarious trauma and promote health and wellness. Results from 419 subjects indicated that field-based forensic science professionals registered higher levels of secondary traumatic stress compared to laboratory-based professionals, but burnout and compassion satisfaction were not significantly different between these groups. Demographic variables did not predict any of these outcome measures, but work with victims' families and testifying significantly, albeit weakly, predicted higher secondary traumatic stress. Greater employee belief that their organizations were addressing issues of stress and trauma predicted lower levels of secondary traumatic stress and burnout and higher levels of compassion satisfaction. Write-in responses by participants paralleled the quantitative findings. These results indicate a need to strengthen organizational efforts to address stress and trauma and promote health and wellness, particularly in professionals with direct field-based exposure to crime scenes, contact with victims' families, and responsibility for testifying.

Losung, R. K., De Paoli, T., Kebbell, M., & Bond, A. (2021). [The role of empathy in professional quality of life: A study on Australian police officers working in sexual assault and child abuse investigation](#). *Journal of Police and Criminal Psychology*, 36, 616–626. DOI:10.1007/s11896-021-09468-5

Police working in sexual assault and child abuse investigation may be at risk of secondary trauma effects and burnout, particularly if they do not have protective mechanisms in place. Empathy has shown to be vital in protecting against secondary trauma and burnout, as well as enhancing compassion satisfaction. The current cross-sectional study surveyed 216 Australian police participants working in sexual assault and child abuse investigation exploring the relationship between different facets of empathy and professional quality of life factors. All facets of empathy predicted compassion satisfaction and negatively predicted burnout. Aspects of cognitive empathy negatively predicted burnout and secondary traumatic stress, while aspects of

emotional/physiological and cognitive empathy positively predicted compassion satisfaction. Novel gender differences were found, with males at higher risk of burnout; tenure significantly predicted burnout and secondary traumatic stress; and results supported that empathy is a vital mechanism for sustaining wellbeing, satisfaction, and efficacy in this work.

Ogińska-Bulik, N., Gurowiec, P. J., Michalska, P., & Kędra, E. (2021). [Prevalence and predictors of secondary traumatic stress symptoms in health care professionals working with trauma victims: A cross-sectional study](https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0247596). *PloS One*, 16(2), e0247596. DOI:10.1371/journal.pone.0247596

Medical personnel is an occupational group that is especially prone to secondary traumatic stress. The factors conditioning its occurrence include organizational and work-related factors, as well as personal features and traits. The aim of this study was to determine Secondary Traumatic Stress (STS) indicators in a group of medical personnel, considering occupational load, job satisfaction, social support, and cognitive processing of trauma.

Shell, E. M., Teodorescu, D., & Williams, L. D. (2021). Investigating race-related stress, burnout, and secondary traumatic stress for Black mental health therapists. *Journal of Black Psychology*, 47(8), 669–694. DOI:10.1177/00957984211033963

The present study examined the relationships among burnout, secondary traumatic stress (STS), and race-related stress among a national sample of 250 Black mental health therapists (counselors, social workers, psychologists, and marriage and family therapists). We investigated the predictive nature of the three subscales (Individual Racism, Cultural Racism, and Institutional Racism) of the Index of Race-Related Stress–Brief Version (IRRS-B) and selected demographic variables on therapists' reports of burnout and STS assessed on the Professional Quality of Life Scale–Version 5 (ProQOL-5).



All three forms of race-related stress significantly predicted both burnout and STS for Black mental health therapists. Of the demographic variables, hours worked per week significantly predicted burnout and STS. Additionally, highest degree obtained significantly predicted STS for Black mental health therapists. The utility of these findings in understanding the connections among race-related stress, burnout, and STS are discussed as well as directions for future research.

Smith, J., Cho, R., Martin, C., Cory, E., Smith, T., & Shouldice, M. (2021). Building skills and resilience in child abuse pediatricians: A novel program to address secondary traumatic stress. *Child Abuse & Neglect, 117*, 105082.  
DOI:10.1016/j.chiabu.2021.105082

Secondary traumatic Stress (STS) is an increasingly recognized phenomenon experienced by clinicians working with patients who have experienced trauma firsthand. STS is experienced in a range of clinical settings; medical trainees and those working in Child Abuse Pediatrics (CAP) are at particular risk of experiencing STS. To date, there are no interventions described to address STS experienced by medical trainees in the context of CAP training. The aim of this project was to design and pilot an innovative program to increase resilience and address STS symptoms among fellows in a CAP training program. The Therapeutic Group Sessions (TGS) program was developed for CAP fellows at the Hospital for Sick Children, Toronto, Canada. The intervention involved mandatory, monthly small group sessions facilitated by a consistent mental health professional throughout fellowship. Sessions included low intensity focusing activities, sharing impactful work-related experiences, mental health professional-led discussion of strategies and reflection on the session. Written evaluations were completed to understand the perceived impact on fellows and were analyzed for themes. Fellows reported improvements in perceived STS symptoms and increased feelings of resilience. Unanticipated positive outcomes were described including, a highly bonded fellowship group and transferrable skills gained in supportive communication. Programs developed

to support clinicians in other settings are reviewed and compared to the TGS program. This is the first program aimed at improving resilience and addressing STS among child abuse fellows. Outcomes demonstrated numerous positive impacts that are widely applicable to the broader clinical setting.

Sprang, G., Cole, J., & Leistner, C. (2021). In their own words: The impact of indirect trauma exposure on judges presiding over cases involving minors involved in sex trafficking. *Juvenile and Family Court Journal*, 72(3), 5-20. DOI:10.1111/jfcj.12204

Although secondary traumatic stress has been researched extensively among professionals working with youth in diverse professions, there is limited information about judicial experiences working with trafficked youth. Over 80% of respondents describe symptoms of secondary traumatic stress and countertransference responses. Notably, 20% with these symptoms also reported increased professional pride in their role performance with these cases. Implications for how judges can address the effects of indirect exposure are offered based on the literature and the recommendations of the respondents.

Sprang, G., Lei, F., & Bush, H. (2021). Can organizational efforts lead to less secondary traumatic stress? A longitudinal investigation of change. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*. 91(4), 443-453. DOI:10.1037/ort0000546

Current best practice approaches suggest that to address secondary traumatic stress (STS) a two-pronged perspective that considers individual and organizational factors over time is warranted. However, research documenting the impact of organizational efforts on individual experience with STS is lacking. In this study, it was hypothesized that as an organization becomes more STS informed, there would be decreases in reported levels of STS and burnout (BO) in individuals over time; and these changes would be associated with higher levels of implementation activity and increased use of

interventions to improve physical and psychological safety. Methods: This study uses data from 2,345 responses, representing 7 groups involved in an organizational change process aimed at creating STS informed organizations in a department of health and human services. The Secondary Traumatic Stress Informed Organizational Assessment (STSI-OA), the Secondary Traumatic Stress Scale (STSS), and the Professional Quality of Life-5 BO subscales measured variables of interest. Using a longitudinal design, baseline, post, and follow-up data were collected. Results: One-way ANOVAs revealed significant improvements in STSI-OA, STSS, and BO scores across time ( $p$ -value  $< .05$ ). Linear mixed models reveal that significant declines in STSS scores were associated with improved STSI-OA scores ( $p = <.001$ ), after adjusting for age, gender, time, and level of implementation activity. Implications: These results support the hypothesis that organizational efforts can improve an individual's perceived level of distress, and that focused attention to the issue of secondary trauma in an organization can improve organizational and individual outcomes using a data-driven change approach.

Armes, S. E., Lee, J. J., Bride, B. E., & Seponski, D. M. (2020). [Secondary trauma and impairment in clinical social workers](#). *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 110(Pt 3), 104540. DOI:10.1016/j.chiabu.2020.104540

Secondary traumatic stress (STS), symptomatology resulting from indirect exposure to trauma, is one potential negative effect from engaging in clinical social work. Yet, little is work. The purpose of this paper was to explore STS in a national sample of clinical social workers ( $N = 539$ ). A structural equation model demonstrating good model fit indicated that STS mediated the association between trauma exposure at work and reports of significant distress and impairment ( $\beta = .08$ ,  $p < .01$ ; 95 % CI = .03, .12). Likewise, STS mediated the association between working with children aged 13 and under and reports of significant distress and impairment ( $\beta = .05$ ,  $p < .05$ ; 95 % CI = .02, .09). Results indicated that the model accounted for 25 % of the variance in significant distress and impairment

( $R^2 = .25$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and 5% of the variance in STS ( $R^2 = .05$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Implications for agencies working with child welfare are provided, including a discussion of addressing STS and significant distress and impairment at the individual and larger agency levels.

Behnke, A., Rojas, R., Karabatsiakakis, A., & Kolassa, I. T. (2020). Childhood maltreatment compromises resilience against occupational trauma exposure: A retrospective study among emergency medical service personnel. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 99, 104248. DOI:10.1016/j.chiabu.2019.104248

Childhood maltreatment (CM) compromises resilience against stress and trauma throughout life. Therefore, it could present a major risk factor for the health of frequently trauma-exposed professionals such as emergency medical service (EMS) personnel. We investigated, whether EMS personnel's history of CM increased their risk for mental and physical stress symptoms after occupational trauma exposure. Data from 103 German EMS personnel (age:  $Mdn \pm QD = 26.00 \pm 8.50$  years) were collected as part of a cross-sectional survey distributed among employees of the regional German Red Cross EMS division (response rate 46.6%). The sample corresponded well to the division's entire staff in terms of socio-anagraphic characteristics. CM and occupational trauma exposure as well as posttraumatic, depressive, and somatic symptoms were assessed with self-report questionnaires. Moderation analyses indicated stronger positive associations between occupational trauma exposure and the severity of posttraumatic ( $\beta = .30$ ,  $p < .001$ ), depressive ( $\beta = .20$ ,  $p = .026$ ), and somatic symptoms ( $\beta = .18$ ,  $p = .059$ ) among EMS personnel who reported a higher exposure to CM. Our study provides initial evidence that CM could increase the EMS personnel's vulnerability to the detrimental consequences of critical incidents on duty. Future research is needed (i) to replicate and generalize our observation on various trauma-exposed professions as well as (ii) to develop preventive measures for targeting the mediating and protective factors which influence the relationship between CM and the negative consequences of occupational trauma exposure.

Brend, D. M., Krane, J., & Saunders, S. (2020). Exposure to trauma in intimate partner violence human service work: A scoping review. *Traumatology*, 26(1), 127-136. DOI:10.1037/trm0000199

Human service professionals offering psychosocial services to people who have experienced intimate partner violence (IPV) report multiple impacts to their physical and psychological well-being. These impacts have been described and investigated through multiple concepts including vicarious trauma, secondary traumatic stress disorder, compassion fatigue, and posttraumatic stress disorder. This scoping been found in the empirical, peer-reviewed, scholarly literature examining exposure to the aversive details of IPV among human service professionals? A total of 13 relevant empirical studies investigating the impacts of exposure to the aversive details of IPV and human service professionals were found. The results were charted, collated, and summarized. The results support previous research finding IPV human service professionals to be at elevated risk of harm as a result of their work. The impacts of IPV practice were predominantly described as challenging. Some research participants also reported having experienced positive growth and appreciation for their work despite exposure to traumatic events. Protective factors including workplace social support emerged. Implications for practice, training, and research are offered.

Deblinger, E., Pollio, E., Cooper, B., & Steer, R. A. (2020). [Disseminating Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy with a systematic self-care approach to addressing secondary traumatic stress: PRACTICE what you preach](#). *Community Mental Health Journal*, 56(8), 1531-1543. DOI:10.1007/s10597-020-00602-x

This pilot study evaluated the effectiveness of Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT) training programs augmented with a systematic “PRACTICE What You Preach” (PWYP) self-care focus, which has trainees personally utilize the coping skills they teach their clients. Participants were 115 clinicians/supervisors who completed a PWYP TF-CBT training program. Pre- to post-training analyses documented significant increases

in participants' competency and fidelity in implementing TF-CBT ( $p < .001$ ), significantly more frequent use of coping skills including instrumental social support ( $p < .01$ ), active coping ( $p < .001$ ), humor ( $p < .01$ ), and restraint ( $p < .01$ ), and significant decreases in secondary traumatic stress (STS;  $p < .001$ ). Children's symptoms of PTSD ( $p < .001$ ) and behavior problems ( $p < .05$ ) also decreased significantly. This preliminary evidence suggests that training augmented with PWYP may enhance clinicians'/supervisors' personal coping and reduce their levels of STS without compromising treatment implementation efforts and client outcomes.

Denk-Florea, C. B., Gancz, B., Gomoiu, A., Ingram, M., Moreton, R., & Pollick, F. (2020). [Understanding and supporting law enforcement professionals working with distressing material: Findings from a qualitative study](https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0242808). *PloS One*, 15(11), e0242808. DOI:10.1371/journal.pone.0242808

This study aimed to extend previous research on the experiences and factors that impact law enforcement personnel when working with distressing materials such as child sexual abuse content. A sample of 22 law enforcement personnel working within one law enforcement organisation in England, United Kingdom participated in anonymous semi-structured interviews. Results were explored thematically and organised in the following headings: "Responses to the material", "Impact of working with distressing evidence", "Personal coping strategies" and "Risks and mitigating factors". Law enforcement professionals experienced heightened affective responses to personally relevant material, depictions of violence, victims' displays of emotions, norm violations and to various mediums. These responses dampened over time due to desensitisation. The stress experienced from exposure to the material sometimes led to psychological symptoms associated with Secondary Traumatic Stress. Job satisfaction, self-care activities, the coping strategies used when viewing evidence, detachment from work outside working hours, social support and reducing exposure to the material were found to mediate law enforcement professionals' resilience. Exposure to distressing material

and the risks associated with this exposure were also influenced by specific organisational procedures implemented as a function of the funding available and workload. Recommendations for individual and organisational practices to foster resilience emerged from this research. These recommendations are relevant to all organisations where employees are required to view distressing content.

Fansher, A. K., Zedaker, S. B., & Brady, P. Q. (2020). Burnout among forensic interviewers, how they cope, and what agencies can do to help. *Child Maltreatment*, 25(1), 117–128. DOI:10.1177/1077559519843596

The current study used quantitative and qualitative responses from 250 forensic interviewers (FIs) in the United States to examine predictors of burnout and personal coping mechanisms. Findings indicated that burnout was primarily driven by work-related factors including frequently feeling overwhelmed with job-related duties, inadequate organizational support, and direct exposure to graphic materials involving children. Moreover, having a higher degree of compassion satisfaction and being non-White significantly mitigated symptoms of burnout. Qualitative findings indicated that FIs regularly experienced varied and personalized feelings of burnout and utilized a variety of coping methods to combat their stressors. FIs in this study also made individual suggestions regarding how their respective agencies can assist in the coping process. Policy implications are discussed.

Kalergis, K. I., & Anderson, D. (2020). Lessons from the field: An evidence-informed resiliency model for child abuse organizations. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 110(Pt. 3), 104266. DOI:10.1016/j.chiabu.2019.104266

Child abuse organizations are keenly aware of the impact helping abused and neglected children has on the people who do that work. In their efforts to address this issue, they look to their colleagues for recommendations on what works. Of particular value is

testimony from those who have used evidence-informed programs to mitigate the impact on staff, so services to children do not suffer. The Resiliency Project provided that evidence-informed program, one that was developed for and by the child abuse field in 2009. With funding from the Office for Victims of Crime, The University of Texas at Austin team of researchers, educators and practitioners developed the Organizational Resiliency Model (ORM) specifically for the child abuse field. The model draws from research on strengths individuals who are resilient have, and offers strategies for organizations to use to build resiliency in their staff. The ORM was piloted with 24 leaders from the field, including children's advocacy centers (CACs); court-appointed special advocate (CASA) programs; and government-based child welfare agencies. This article reviews the research basis for the ORM and new research supporting the model, and offers lessons learned through structured interviews with 10 child abuse leaders who piloted the ORM and continue to use it ten years later. Using the ORM, based on evidence available at the time, supported by new research and attested to by child abuse leaders who have sustained the model in their organizations, can promote a healthy and resilient workforce.

Molnar, B. E., Meeker, S. A., Manners, K., Tieszen, L., Kalergis, K., Fine, J. E., Hallinan, S., Wolfe, J. D., & Wells, M. K. (2020). Vicarious traumatization among child welfare and child protection professionals: A systematic review. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 110 (Pt. 3), 104679. DOI:10.1016/j.chiabu.2020.104679

Many individuals and organizations experience vicarious trauma, defined as exposure to traumatic experiences of others. Those who work with children traumatized by abuse and/or neglect, including, but not limited to, child welfare, child protection, counselors, healthcare providers, advocates, law enforcement, and prosecutors investigating crimes against children, are exposed to traumatic stories daily in their work. Negative reactions to this witnessing of other people's trauma results in vicarious traumatization (also referred to as secondary traumatic stress) which can manifest as mental, physical,



emotional, spiritual, work-related and/or social consequences. A review of research literature on the epidemiology of vicarious traumatization among child welfare professionals was conducted. A systematic search strategy was employed using relevant research databases (PubMed, PsychInfo, PILOTS, and EBSCO) for publications from 1995 to 2018. A four phase PRISMA selection process was employed. Search terms included vicarious trauma/related terms and child welfare/child protection professions. Trained reviewers considered articles meeting inclusion criteria including: (1) child welfare professions; (2) vicarious traumatization/related terms; and (3) analysis of epidemiological data on prevalence, risk/protective factors, or manifestation of vicarious traumatization. Initially 7,895 unique manuscripts were identified. After multi-stage screening, a total of 39 articles were included. Findings regarding the epidemiology of vicarious traumatization are summarized. While exposure to traumatic narratives of those they serve is inevitable for those working in child welfare and child protection professions, the growing research base shows potential for preventing negative impacts and promoting positive outcomes of this empathic work. Identification of additional risk/protective factors and future development and evaluation of evidence-based interventions are important next steps.

O'Hara, M. A., McCann, T. A., Fan, W., Lane, M. M., Kernie, S. G., & Rosenthal, S. L. (2020). Child abuse taking its toll on the emotional well-being of pediatricians. *Clinical Pediatrics*, 59(4-5), 450-457. DOI:10.1177/0009922820905865

Pediatricians caring for patients with child abuse or neglect (CABN) may experience secondary traumatic stress (STS) from traumatized patients, or burnout (BO) from workplace stress. This may be buffered by compassion satisfaction (CS), positive meaning from one's work. For this study, STS, BO, and CS specific to a pediatrician's care of CABN were assessed for residents, hospitalists, intensivists, and outpatient physicians. Using the Professional Quality of Life Scale modified for CABN experiences, participants (n

= 62) had a mean STS score at the 84th percentile, a mean BO score at the 66th percentile, and a mean CS score at the 17th percentile. Reporting one CABN patient as most emotionally impactful predicted STS, caring for all types of CABN predicted BO, and perceived knowledge no longer predicted CS when adjusting for the experience of mandated reporting or CABN fatality. These results highlight the need to support pediatricians involved with CABN.

Ramirez, J., Gordon, M., Reissinger, M., Shah, A., Coverdale, J., & Nguyen, P. T. (2020). The importance of maintaining medical professionalism while experiencing vicarious trauma when working with human trafficking victims. *Traumatology*, 30(1), 97–102. DOI:10.1037/trm0000248

Providing health care services to human trafficking victims may negatively impact the psychological wellness and decision-making process of health care providers, especially mental health providers. This article highlights John Gregory's concept of medical professionalism and discusses how the fundamental virtues, integrity, compassion, self-sacrifice, and self-effacement can guide health care providers in managing their work with trafficked patients. Recommendations are provided to health care providers, and the leadership of their institutions, to develop and support a professional culture of prevention and intervention for health care providers who experience psychological adversities related to their work with victims of human trafficking.

Rienks, S. L. (2020). An exploration of child welfare caseworkers' experience of secondary trauma and strategies for coping. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 110(Pt. 3), 104355. DOI:10.1016/j.chiabu.2020.104355

The use of coping strategies can protect against the detrimental effects of many work-related stressors. Given the stressful nature of casework with traumatized children and families, there is a need to better understand how to prevent the experience of secondary

trauma. The goal of this study is to examine child welfare caseworkers' experience of secondary traumatic stress (STS) and the extent to which coping strategies act as a buffer. Participants and Setting: This study utilizes both cross-sectional (N = 1968 at baseline) and longitudinal (N = 653 at 3-year follow-up) data from child welfare caseworkers in three states. Participants were recruited as part of a larger workforce study and invited to complete an online survey. Results indicated relatively high levels of secondary trauma, with 29.6 % of caseworkers scoring in the "severe" range. Caseworkers' experience of STS was positively associated with burnout and negatively associated with organizational support and coping. Those who utilized coping strategies reported fewer symptoms of secondary traumatic stress both concurrently and three years later. Of the 15 coping strategies explored, the more proficient copers were most likely to have a clear self-care plan, participate in activities or hobbies, and have a work-to-home transition plan. Study results point to the importance of developing a self-care plan and having secondary trauma exposure, both concurrently and over time.

Starcher, D., & Stolzenberg, S. N. (2020). Burnout and secondary trauma among forensic interviewers. *Child & Family Social Work, 25*(4), 924-934. DOI:10.1111/cfs.12777

Child Advocacy Centers provide a child-friendly environment for the forensic interview and subsequent investigation of child victimization cases. However, very little research has examined the effects of burnout, secondary trauma and organizational stressors on forensic interviewers. The present study examined the following research questions. To what extent do forensic interviewers experience burnout and secondary trauma associated with their profession? How do organizational stressors increase these outcomes among interviewers? Data were collected by conducting an online survey of interviewers working at Child Advocacy Centers across the United States. Results indicate burnout and secondary trauma among interviewers in this sample. Decreased job support, increased funding constraints and heavy agency caseloads all result in burnout

and secondary trauma. Policy recommendations include continued training and mental health services for interviewers. Future researchers should conduct qualitative interviews and examine how other factors, such as forensic interviewing protocols, influence interviewers' job experience and mental health.

Stewart, J., & Witte, T. H. (2020). [Secondary trauma and parenting practices in Internet Crimes against Children Task Force investigators](#). *American Journal of Criminal Justice*, 45, 1080–1099. DOI:10.1007/s12103-020-09530-8

Investigating cases of child pornography requires daily exposure to sexually explicit material involving children and may have negative implications on the mental well-being of those in this line of work. This study aimed to identify whether secondary traumatic stress symptoms were associated with participants' parenting behaviors and concerns about their own children's use of the internet. Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force workers (n = 212) completed online questionnaires measuring work exposure to sexually explicit material, secondary traumatic stress symptoms, and parenting behaviors. Professionals in this field reported a wide range of secondary trauma symptoms, and their parenting behaviors were both directly and indirectly (via secondary trauma) affected by prolonged exposure to sexually explicit material involving children. Internet monitoring behaviors were more prevalent for parents of younger children, and mothers' parenting behaviors were more strongly associated with secondary trauma symptoms than were fathers. Results have implications for mental health and parenting services for professionals in this field.

Strolin-Goltzman, J., Breslend, N., Hemenway Deaver, A., Wood, V., Woodside-Jiron, H., & Krompf, A. (2020). Moving beyond self-care: Exploring the protective influence of interprofessional collaboration, leadership, and competency on secondary traumatic stress. *Traumatology*, 30(1), 69–76. DOI:10.1037/trm0000244

Despite a growing field of knowledge related to the causes and correlates of secondary traumatic stress (STS), there is a dearth of research directly comparing STS across child welfare and mental health; rather, when the two are examined within the same study, it is often as part of a larger sample of “social workers,” which is not further differentiated during analysis (Bride, 2007). Furthermore, few studies consider the role of the macro- or mezzo-level environments, such as the influence of interprofessional collaboration or leadership on STS across child welfare (CW) and mental health (MH) populations. Thus, this study will use structural equation modeling to examine micro-, mezzo-, and macrolevel factors across public CW workers and mental health care providers serving children and families involved with the CW system in one small, rural, northeastern state. Results demonstrate significant and differential relationships between interprofessional collaboration and transformative leadership across CW and MH systems. The findings will provide guidance for differential prevention and intervention strategies across these helping professions.

Vîrgă, D., Baci, E. L., Lazăr, T. A., & Lupșă, D. (2020). [Psychological capital protects social workers from burnout and secondary traumatic stress](#). *Sustainability*, 12(6), 2246. DOI:10.3390/su12062246

Summary: To counteract the negative consequences inherent to the emotionally demanding professions like social work, we need to advance the understanding of the resources that preserve the employees' well-being. This study investigated the role of Psychological Capital (PsyCap) in protecting social workers from developing burnout and Secondary Traumatic Stress (STS). The design of the study builds on the job demands-resources model and the conservation of resources theory. A national sample of 193

Romanian social workers participated in the study. We used the structural equation modeling framework for data analysis. We tested two structural models that had burnout as a mediator for the relationship between PsyCap and STS: A partial mediation model and a total mediation model. Findings: The total mediation model was supported by our data suggesting that PsyCap has a protective role against burnout, and subsequently, STS. Moreover, the results indicate that burnout is the critical link between personal resources and STS. Applications: The results of the study contribute to enhancing the protection of the social workers' well-being in their professional settings, by advancing the knowledge about the resources that need to be developed in order to prevent or reduce the negative job consequences associated with helping professions. As such, increasing PsyCap levels of employees enhance the sustainability of their working conditions.

Benuto, L. T., Singer, J., Gonzalez, F., Newlands, R., & Hooft, S. (2019). [Supporting those who provide support: work-related resources and secondary traumatic stress among victim advocates](#). *Safety and Health at Work*, 10(3), 336–340.  
DOI:10.1016/j.shaw.2019.04.001

Victim advocates are at risk of developing secondary traumatic stress (STS), which can result from witnessing or listening to accounts of traumatic events. This study investigated the relationship between victim status, years of experience, hours of direct contact with victims, and availability of workplace supports in the development of STS. Of the 142 victim advocates, 134 were women. Regression analyses revealed that the only significant predictor of STS was the number of direct hours of victim services provided. The findings from this study found that women have high rates of STS and that more workplace support needs to be implemented.

Brady, P. Q., Fansher, A. K., & Zedaker, S. B. (2019). Are parents at a higher risk for secondary traumatic stress?: How interviewing child victims impacts relationships with forensic interviewer's friends and family. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 88, 275–287. DOI:10.1016/j.chiabu.2018.11.017

Forensic interviewers are at a heightened risk for secondary traumatic stress (STS) due to their frequent interactions with victims of child maltreatment (Bonach & Heckert, 2012). To date, however, few studies have examined the negative effects of this work on interviewers' social and emotional well-being. The present study seeks to explore the effect of STS on the relationships of forensic interviewers, including those with friends, family, and their respective children. Participants and setting: Data are derived from a sample of 367 forensic interviewers (FIs) recruited from across the United States. The current study used a cross-sectional research design to obtain qualitative and quantitative data from an online survey of certified forensic interviewers. Personal-level predictors of STS included interviewers' sex ( $\beta=0.11$ ,  $p = 0.02$ ), trauma history ( $\beta=0.13$ ,  $p = 0.004$ ), and frequency of socializing with family members outside of work ( $\beta = -0.12$ ,  $p = 0.01$ ). Work-related predictors included the frequency of direct ( $\beta=0.10$ ,  $p = 0.04$ ) and indirect exposures to graphic details of child maltreatment ( $\beta=0.09$ ,  $p = 0.05$ ), burnout ( $\beta=0.58$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), and years of experience investigating crimes against children ( $\beta=0.10$ ,  $p = 0.03$ ). Factors such as parental status and external social support were not significantly associated with STS in the qualitative analysis. Forensic interviewers experience both positive and negative effects of exposure to crimes against children, with work-related factors being particularly impactful on the potential for STS.

Branson, D. C. (2019). Vicarious trauma, themes in research, and terminology: A review of literature. *Traumatology*, 25(1), 2–10. DOI:10.1037/trm0000161

Growth in the arena of trauma-informed care has correspondingly created interest in the potential hazards for clinicians who regularly provide trauma-based services. However, what to call the phenomena of clinicians being affected by bearing witness to other's

trauma is a source of perplexity. A review of research indicated numerous terms are being used to describe this phenomenon. The literature review looked specifically at the term *vicarious trauma*, first developed by McCann and Pearlman (1990), and other closely related terms used in current literature (secondary traumatic stress, compassion fatigue, burnout, countertransference, traumatic countertransference, posttraumatic stress disorder, emotional contagion, and shared trauma). Vicarious trauma is a narrowly defined term, yet similar terms have been developed with overlapping characteristics and symptoms. Commonalities encountered in the review of literature were the lack of operationalized terms, vocabulary mismanagement, and the use of incorrect terminology when designing and conducting research, creating potential vulnerabilities to reliability and validity of findings. The implications are important to various issues, specifically an increase in the collective knowledge base and trustworthy information concerning vicarious trauma and similar terms, avenues to decrease research inconsistencies, better prevention measures, enhancement of clinical practice behaviors, and precautions for future research endeavors.

Hallinan, S., Shiyko, M. P., Volpe, R., & Molnar, B. E. (2019). Reliability and validity of the Vicarious Trauma Organizational Readiness Guide (VT-ORG). *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 64(3-4), 481-493. DOI:10.1002/ajcp.12395

The Vicarious Trauma Organizational Readiness Guide (VT-ORG) is an assessment of an organization's readiness to address vicarious trauma (VT), which is exposure to the traumatic experiences of people served. This study reports on the psychometric properties of the VT-ORG. Employees of first responder agencies (e.g., law enforcement, fire, emergency services) and victim assistance agencies are at a high risk for vicarious traumatization, which can lead to PTSD, substance use, and suicidal ideation, among other negative impacts. Organizations that do not address VT may see such effects as employee turnover, reduced efficiency, and complete 3,018 employees across 13 first



responder and victim assistance agencies who completed the 67-item VT-ORG and additional measures for evaluation of its validity and reliability. The VT-ORG was found to have excellent internal consistency (Cronbach's  $\alpha = .98$ ). A structural equation model demonstrated that the subscales of the VT-ORG predicted criterion measures of turnover intention, compassion satisfaction, and organizational resilience, with an overall model fit of CFI = .99, RMSEA = .053. This study found the VT-ORG to be a reliable and valid assessment of organizational responses.

Kerig, P. K. (2019). Enhancing resilience among providers of trauma-informed care: A curriculum for protection against secondary traumatic stress among non-mental health professionals. *Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment & Trauma*, 28(5), 613–630. DOI:10.1080/10926771.2018.1468373

Although the call to create trauma-informed services for youth has been clearly sounded, a relatively neglected part of this effort is the need to prepare non-mental health professionals to carry out trauma-informed programming in ways that protect them from secondary traumatic stress (STS). To this end, this article introduces Resilience for Trauma-Informed Professionals (R-TIP), a curriculum that introduces participants to techniques designed to promote resilience in the face of exposure to trauma-related material. Based on the existing evidence base regarding risk and protective factors for STS, six core elements targeted by the curriculum are described—appraisals, self-efficacy, emotional awareness, affect regulation, resilience, and prevention—as they are implemented across three stages: pre-exposure preparation, coping in the presence of trauma, and recovery in the aftermath of exposure.

Letson, M. M., Davis, C., Sherfield, J., Beer, O. W., Phillips, R., & Wolf, K. G. (2019). Identifying compassion satisfaction, burnout, & traumatic stress in Children's Advocacy Centers. *Child Abuse & Neglect*. 110(Pt. 3), 104240. DOI:10.1016/j.chiabu.2019.104240

Little research exists examining burnout related to the multidisciplinary team (MDT) working in a Children's Advocacy Center (CAC) setting. To measure compassion satisfaction, burnout, and secondary traumatic stress (STS) among CAC MDT professionals; identify work and worker characteristics that may impact compassion satisfaction, burnout, and STS; understand professional and personal impacts of occupational stress; and explore coping responses. A cross sectional survey was sent electronically to child abuse professionals working in CAC settings across the United States. Demographics and work characteristics were collected. Participants completed the Professional Quality of Life (ProQOL) to evaluate compassion satisfaction, burnout, and STS and answered open-ended questions regarding professional and personal impacts of occupational stress. Upon completion, participants received their ProQOL scores and additional stress management resources. A total of 885 participants completed the ProQOL (mean age = 42.07; 85% female). Overall mean scores were average for compassion satisfaction, high average for burnout, and in the top quartile for STS. All three scales differed significantly by MDT professional role ( $p < 0.001$  to  $0.01$ ) and employment length ( $p < 0.001$  to  $0.003$ ). Child welfare workers had significantly higher burnout scores than all other professions except law enforcement and prosecutors and significantly lower compassion satisfaction scores than most others. Professionals providing on-call services had significantly higher burnout ( $p < 0.001$ ). These results contribute to our understanding of MDT professions who might be at higher risk for burnout and STS and help inform future interventions to support the MDT.

La Mott, J., & Martin, L. A. (2019). Adverse childhood experiences, self-care, and compassion outcomes in mental health providers working with trauma. *Journal of Clinical Psychology, 75*(6), 1066–1083. DOI:10.1002/jclp.22752

This study examined the moderating effects of self-care on various compassion outcomes among mental health providers. Mental health providers (n = 371; 94.1% female; mean age = 47.12) were surveyed regarding their level of self-care, history of adverse childhood experiences, and the degree of burnout, secondary traumatic stress, and compassion satisfaction experienced. Results indicated that providers who endorsed a history of adverse childhood experiences (82.5%) also endorsed greater negative compassion outcomes than those who did not have such a history. Endorsement of self-care activities was a significant predictor of compassion satisfaction and burnout in the expected directions. Self-care served as a moderator between adverse childhood experiences and burnout. Self-care is an effective method for decreasing negative compassion outcomes among mental health providers who work with trauma. It is important to develop effective training programs that promote self-care in personal and professional settings.

Michalchuk, S., & Martin, S. L. (2019). Vicarious resilience and growth in psychologists who work with trauma survivors: An interpretive phenomenological analysis. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice, 50*(3), 145–154. DOI:10.1037/pro0000212

How do psychologists experience resiliency, satisfaction, and personal growth despite the challenges of working with trauma survivors? Although many psychologists experience negative effects related to working with traumatized clients, it is important to acknowledge the potential for some to experience resiliency and growth in the face of such work. Interpretive phenomenological analysis was used to explore the lived experiences of vicarious resiliency and growth in psychologists who work with trauma survivors. In-depth semistructured interviews were conducted with 6 psychologists

experienced in providing services to trauma survivors. Results revealed that participants maintained resiliency by privileging a shared journey, developing purpose and personal growth, deriving positive meaning, and serving humanity. Findings contribute to the limited literature on psychologists' ability to foster positive outcomes for themselves, and ultimately for their clients, through focusing on resiliency, satisfaction, and growth despite the risks associated with trauma work. Implications for future research and applications to practice and are discussed.

National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. (2019). [\*Taking action against clinician burnout: A systems approach to professional well-being.\*](#) The National Academies Press. DOI:10.17226/25521

Patient-centered, high-quality health care relies on the well-being, health, and safety of health care clinicians. However, alarmingly high rates of clinician burnout in the United States are detrimental to the quality of care being provided, harmful to individuals in the workforce, and costly. It is important to take a systemic approach to address burnout that focuses on the structure, organization, and culture of health care. Taking Action Against Clinician Burnout: A Systems Approach to Professional Well-Being builds upon two groundbreaking reports from the past twenty years, *To Err Is Human: Building a Safer Health System* and *Crossing the Quality Chasm: A New Health System for the 21st Century*, which both called attention to the issues around patient safety and quality of care. This report explores the extent, consequences, and contributing factors of clinician burnout and provides a framework for a systems approach to clinician burnout and professional well-being, a research agenda to advance clinician well-being, and recommendations for the field.

Polak, S., Bailey, R., & Bailey, E. (2019). Secondary traumatic stress in the courtroom: Suggestions for preventing vicarious trauma resulting from child sexual abuse imagery. *Juvenile and Family Court Journal*, 70(2), 69–75. DOI: 10.1111/jfcj.12137

The internet and social media have added to an increase in sexual imagery. As a result, law enforcement, judicial officers and court ordered counselors will be exposed to an increase of images. While not every individual will experience post-traumatic stress symptoms, it is anticipated there is risk for impact. The impact of viewing impartiality. This paper offers suggestions for self-care in the services of preventing collateral damage.

Sprang, G., Ford, J., Kerig, P., & Bride, B. (2019). Defining secondary traumatic stress and developing targeted assessments and interventions: Lessons learned from research and leading experts. *Traumatology*, 25(2), 72–81. DOI:10.1037/trm0000180

Secondary traumatic stress (STS) impacts many helping professionals and staff who are indirectly exposed to the graphic details of others' traumatic experiences and to the posttraumatic stress symptoms of those persons. A nascent but growing database documents the nature and effects of STS, but no consensus definition exists for STS. As a result, there has not been a systematic program of research and development for STS preventive, and ameliorative interventions. Current STS interventions tend to focus on generic wellness, health promotion, workplace safety, worker morale, and self-care rather than addressing the specific effects of indirect exposure to others' traumatic events or traumatic stress reactions. To address this gap, a scientific meeting of STS experts convened to consider the science regarding STS interventions and to create an agenda for advancing the field toward the development of evidence-based treatments for posttraumatic stress disorder following indirect exposure. This article reports on meeting findings, reviews the evidence supporting treatment of STS, and identifies symptom targets, best practice treatment approaches, and strategies for moving the field forward.

Staudt, M., & Williams-Hayes, M. (2019). [Secondary traumatic stress, burnout, and compassion satisfaction among child advocacy interdisciplinary team members](#). *Advances in Social Work, 19*(2), 416–429. DOI:10.18060/22957

Recent research has examined the stress and indirect trauma experienced by helping professionals who work with survivors of direct trauma, including interpersonal violence. Little of this research has focused on Child Advocacy Center team members. This practice-based survey research addresses that gap. The study examined secondary traumatic stress (STS), burnout, and compassion satisfaction (CS) in interdisciplinary team members (n=36) of one Child Advocacy Center in the southern United States, and explored relationships between CS, STS, and burnout. As assessed by the Secondary Traumatic Stress Scale, 50% of participants experience Post Traumatic Stress Disorder symptoms due to STS. Based on the Professional Quality of Life Scale, burnout was low and CS was high. Those with higher CS had lower burnout and STS. Positive associations were also found between life stresses in the past year as measured by the Social Readjustment Rating Scale and STS and burnout, but not CS. Practitioners, agency supervisors, and administrators need to be aware of the effects of trauma work, regularly assess for these effects, and provide opportunities for support and debriefing. Schools of social work should consider developing and implementing specialized units on STS and self-care.

Benuto, L. T., Newlands, R., Ruork, A., Hooft, S., & Ahrendt, A. (2018). Secondary traumatic stress among victim advocates: Prevalence and correlates. *Journal of Evidence-Informed Social Work, 15*(5), 494–509. DOI:10.1080/23761407.2018.1474825

The purpose of this study was to establish the prevalence of Secondary Traumatic Stress (STS) among victim advocates and to determine if risk factors (for the development of STS) that have been cited in the literature (with other populations) are applicable to victim advocates. Data was collected from 135 victim advocates using an online survey. The prevalence rate of STS among victim advocates is approximately 50% and risk factors

include number of hours worked per week, direct service hours, and working with adult survivors of child sexual abuse. Our results suggest that cumulative trauma exposure acts as risk factors to the development of STS among victim advocates. Intervention efforts for this population are sorely needed and the information gained from this study can be used to guide these intervention efforts.

Foreman, T. (2018). Wellness, exposure to trauma, and vicarious traumatization: A pilot study. *Journal of Mental Health Counseling, 40*(2), 142-155.  
DOI:10.17744/mehc.40.2.04

Due to the increasing number of clients seeking counseling who have experienced trauma, counselors are at a greater risk for developing vicarious traumatization and becoming impaired. Wellness has been described as helpful in managing the effects of working with clients who have experienced trauma and in mitigating impairment. The current pilot study examined how exposure to client trauma experiences impacted counselors' (N = 68) wellness and how exposure to client trauma along with wellness influenced vicarious traumatization. Participants had an average of 12.9 years of experience and a caseload on which most clients reported a trauma history. The expectation that greater exposure to client trauma would influence wellness was not met. However, results indicated that counselors with higher levels of wellness along with exposure to client trauma exhibited significantly lower levels of vicarious traumatization. The pilot study builds awareness of vicarious traumatization and highlights the importance of wellness.

Halevi, E., & Idisis, Y. (2018). Who helps the helper? Differentiation of self as an indicator for resisting vicarious traumatization. *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy*, 10(6), 698–705. DOI:10.1037/tra0000318

This study comprises a first attempt to explain and predict vicarious traumatization among therapists by means of Bowen's Family Systems Theory (Bowen, 1978), especially with reference to the phenomenon "differentiation of self," a central feature of his theory. A sample of 134 individual and group therapists who work in public and private clinics completed a series of questionnaires that provided data regarding demographic information, differentiation of self, and a belief scale that measures the existence of vicarious trauma. The findings indicate a strong negative correlation between vicarious traumatization and differentiation of self. In addition, participant age and "being in therapy" were both found to correlate with differentiation of self and vicarious traumatization. These findings point to the importance of differentiation of self as a resilience factor protecting against vicarious trauma, and have the potential to contribute to the development of tools for efficiently and accurately assessing predisposition toward vicarious traumatization among therapists.

Ireland, C. A., & Huxley, S. (2018). Psychological trauma in professionals working with traumatised children. *Journal of Forensic Practice*, 20(3), 141–151. DOI:10.1108/JFP-10-2017-0045

Clinical professionals working with psychologically traumatised children in the care system can experience potential challenges maintaining their own positive psychological health, and when repeatedly being exposed to the traumatic histories of those in their care. The purpose of this paper is to increase the understanding of vicarious trauma and provide a guide for focusing on future research. This is a systematic literature review, considering 13 articles that met the criteria and identified five main themes linked to secondary traumatic stress/vicarious trauma in staff. Five main themes were noted. These are: lack of organisational support; lack of health work-life balance; lack of



appropriate training; failure to use self-care techniques; and staff failure to share when they are experiencing symptoms. Various implications are noted from this review. These include: the importance of education and support for staff, to be mindful that newer staff may be considered an “at risk” group for the negative impact of such trauma, and to encourage staff in achieving an effective work-life balance.

Knodel, R. K. (2018). [Coping with vicarious trauma in mental health interpreting](#). *Journal of Interpretation*, 26(1), 2-23.

This research explores coping strategies used by American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters who work in mental health settings. Due to the highly emotional nature of such assignments, interpreters are at an increased risk for experiencing vicarious trauma. This study also investigates the available training regarding vicarious trauma in current interpreter education. Previous research has typically recognized the need for self-care and focused on general suggestions for coping; the present work uses firsthand accounts from practicing interpreters. To uncover interpreters’ personal experiences, the researcher created an online survey that resulted in 222 qualifying responses. Of the total number of respondents, 83% expressed that they have experienced vicarious trauma as the result of interpreting in mental health settings. However, 58% reported that they have not received any training related to managing the emotional impact of such interpreting assignments. Debriefing was chosen as the most utilized strategy (80%), but was also identified by some interpreters as a potential breach of confidentiality. While some interpreters have refined their own self-care routines, there is still a significant gap in educating interpreters about managing the adverse effects of vicarious trauma.

Seigfried-Spellar, K. C. (2018). [Assessing the psychological well-being and coping mechanisms of law enforcement investigators vs. digital forensic examiners of child pornography investigations](#). *Journal of Police and Criminal Psychology*, 33(3), 215–226. DOI:10.1007/s11896-017-9248-7

Previous research indicates law enforcement investigators and digital forensic examiners working child exploitation cases are at an increased risk for experiencing psychological distress; however, the roles of digital forensic examiners and investigators often overlap substantially when working child pornography cases. Thus, the current study was the first to compare the psychological well-being, job satisfaction, coping mechanisms, and attitudes toward mental health services for individuals working as either digital forensic examiners and/or investigators of child pornography cases. Law enforcement officers were solicited from the Internet Crimes Against Children task force listserv, and based on their current self-reported duties, 20 were classified as digital forensic examiners-only, 71 as investigators-only, and 38 as both digital forensic examiners and investigators of cases involving Internet child pornography. Results showed significant differences between groups; individuals performing both duties scored significantly higher on secondary traumatic stress, higher on feelings of worthlessness, and lower on concentration compared to digital forensic examiners-only. Individuals performing both duties also reported significantly lower scores on job satisfaction compared to investigators-only. Finally, individuals working both duties were significantly more likely to know someone who sought counseling as a result of work-related stress. The study's mental health implications and future research suggestions are discussed.

Brady, P. Q. (2017). [Crimes against caring: Exploring the risk of secondary traumatic stress, burnout, and compassion satisfaction among child exploitation investigators](#). *Journal of Police and Criminal Psychology*, 32(4), 305–318.  
DOI:10.1007/s11896-016-9223-8

Secondary traumatic stress (STS) and burnout are debilitating occupational hazards that inhibit helping professional's overall well-being. Much of the extant scholarship on this topic has focused on mental health and child welfare workers and not law enforcement officials who investigate Internet child exploitation. This study used data from 433 Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) Task Force personnel to explore the impact of individual and work-related factors associated with the risk of STS, burnout, and compassion satisfaction. Findings indicated that nearly one in four ICAC personnel exhibited low compassion satisfaction and high levels of STS and burnout. Individual-level protective factors for increasing compassion satisfaction and mitigating symptoms of STS and burnout included having a strong social support system outside of work and the frequent use of positive coping mechanisms. Work-related risk factors such as frequent indirect exposure to disturbing materials, low organizational support, and frequently feeling overwhelmed at work were all associated with higher STS and burnout and lower levels of compassion satisfaction. Policy implications and future avenues of research are discussed.

Caringi, J. C., Hardiman, E. R., Weldon, P., Fletcher, S., Devlin, M., & Stanick, C. (2017). Secondary traumatic stress and licensed clinical social workers. *Traumatology*, 23(2), 186–195. DOI:10.1037/trm0000061

This study examines levels of secondary traumatic stress (STS), compassion fatigue, burnout, and compassion satisfaction in social workers in the State of Montana. It also seeks to explain how specific organizational factors or peer support can potentially reduce the impact of these phenomena. A mixed methodology was utilized. Respondents ( $N = 256$ , response rate = 56%) completed 4 short measures: (a) the Social Work

Demographics/Workplace Questionnaire, (b) the Secondary Traumatic Stress Scale (STSS; Bride, Robinson, Yegidis, & Figley, 2004), (c) the Professional Quality of Life Scale (ProQOL) (Stamm, 2010), and (d) an original peer support survey. A smaller sample ( $N = 15$ ) of follow-up interviews were conducted to collect qualitative data. A theory-based approach guided the qualitative data analysis, for which ATLAS-Ti software was used. Findings indicate that social workers in the sample experience significant levels of STS ( $M = 33.63$ ,  $SD = 11.30$ ), with 40.9% ( $n = 105$ ) meeting the criteria for posttraumatic stress disorder, using the STSS ( $\alpha = .92$ ) as a proxy measure. ProQOL ( $\alpha = .76$ ) results confirm the presence of high levels of burnout and compassion fatigue on subscale scores, with  $t$  tests indicating that individuals performing case management reported lower levels than other groups. Age and time in current job were not found to be significant factors, whereas lower levels of job satisfaction and intent to look for other work were predictive of higher burnout and compassion fatigue scores. Qualitative data analysis revealed themes related to worker perceptions of factors that contributed to their levels of STS. Implications for policy and practice changes are offered.

Frey, L. L., Beesley, D., Abbott, D., & Kendrick, E. (2017). Vicarious resilience in sexual assault and domestic violence advocates. *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy*, 9(1), 44–51. DOI:10.1037/tra0000159

There is little research related to sexual assault and domestic violence advocates' experiences, with the bulk of the literature focused on stressors and systemic barriers that negatively impact efforts to assist survivors. However, advocates participating in these studies have also emphasized the positive impact they experience consequent to their work. This study explores the positive impact. Vicarious resilience, personal trauma experiences, peer relational quality, and perceived organizational support in advocates ( $n = 222$ ) are examined. Also, overlap among the conceptual components of vicarious resilience is explored. The first set of multiple regressions showed that personal trauma

experiences and peer relational health predicted compassion satisfaction and vicarious posttraumatic growth, with organizational support predicting only compassion satisfaction. The second set of multiple regressions showed that (a) there was significant shared variance between vicarious posttraumatic growth and compassion satisfaction; (b) after accounting for vicarious posttraumatic growth, organizational support accounted for significant variance in compassion satisfaction; and (c) after accounting for compassion satisfaction, peer relational health accounted for significant variance in vicarious posttraumatic growth. Results suggest that it may be more meaningful to conceptualize advocates' personal growth related to their work through the lens of a multidimensional construct such as vicarious resilience. Organizational strategies promoting vicarious resilience (e.g., shared organizational power, training components) are offered, and the value to trauma-informed care of fostering advocates' vicarious resilience is discussed.

McDonald, A. R., Middleton, J., Bassett, D. M., & Harris, L. (2017). [Organizational culture and climate factors impacting forensic interviewers' experiences of vicarious trauma](#). *Forensic Research & Criminology International Journal*, 4(4), 1-7.

Hazardous" is not an adjective that comes to mind when describing children's advocacy centers. The reality, however, is that those who work within these organizations, such as forensic interviewing professionals, often experience symptomology similar to those who receive services [1,2]. Data was collected utilizing an emergent, phenomenological design to better understand the context within which forensic interviewers experience, and are impacted by secondary trauma. A purposeful, representative sample (n=9) of forensic interviewing professionals participated in semi-structured interviews regarding their perceptions of vicarious trauma as it relates to their job as forensic interviewers. Analysis of the data was rooted in constructivist grounded theory [3]. Findings of this study point

to the importance of considering the impact of organizational context and systems on how forensic interviewers' are impacted by vicarious trauma.

Molnar, B. E., Sprang, G., Killian, K. D., Gottfried, R., Emery, V., & Bride, B. E. (2017). Advancing science and practice for vicarious traumatization/secondary traumatic stress: A research agenda. *Traumatology*, 23(2), 129–142. DOI:10.1037/trm0000122

Professionals working in the fields of trauma, victim assistance, mental health, law enforcement, fire response, emergency medical services, and other professions are exposed to traumatic events on a regular basis; in some cases, workers are exposed every day. Vicarious trauma (VT) refers to the exposure to the trauma experiences of others, considered an occupational challenge for all of these professions. Research can assist in development of strategies to avoid being left vulnerable to negative impacts of this work, known as vicarious traumatization or secondary traumatic stress (STS). This article reviews existing research and outlines a research agenda for addressing vicarious traumatization/STS in the workplace. The review is organized by the 4 steps of a public health approach: (a) defining the problem including measuring the scope or prevalence, (b) identifying risk and protective factors for negative outcomes, (c) developing interventions and policies, and (d) monitoring and evaluating interventions and policies over time. A research agenda for the field is put forward following these same steps.

Sprang, G., Ross, L., Miller, B. C., Blackshear, K., & Ascienzo, S. (2017). Psychometric properties of the Secondary Traumatic Stress–Informed Organizational Assessment. *Traumatology*, 23(2), 165–171. DOI:10.1037/trm0000108

This article describes the development and psychometric properties of the Secondary Traumatic Stress Informed Organizational Assessment (STSI-OA), a 40-item instrument designed to evaluate the degree to which an organization is STS-informed and able to respond to the impact of secondary traumatic stress in the workplace. A sample of 629

respondents representing multiple systems of care, job roles, and functions completed the STSI-OA. Analyses revealed a 5 factor structure that explained a large proportion of variance, excellent internal consistency, good test-retest reliability, and concurrent criterion validity with the Trauma System Readiness Tool Vicarious Trauma domain. Quartile scores and means were calculated to allow for comparisons. Based on the results of this analysis, it appears the STSI-OA total and domain scores can be used to create a blueprint for organizational learning, and to reliably track progress toward desired change over time.

Ahern, E. C., Sadler, L. H., Lamb, M. E., & Gariglietti, G. M. (2016). Wellbeing of professionals working with suspected victims of child sexual exploitation. *Child Abuse Review*, 26(2), 130-140. DOI:10.1002/car.2439

The present study examined police officers' and social workers' experiences of investigating child sexual exploitation (CSE) cases and the impact on their welfare. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with frontline social workers and law enforcement professionals. Practitioners reported that they seldom reacted emotionally during forensic interviews because they were attending entirely to the victims while gathering evidence. Although some practitioners employed post-interview stress management techniques, anticipatory coping strategies were seldom adopted, and most coping methods were employed outside of the workplace (e.g., spending time with family). Practitioners focused on the needs of young people, almost to the exclusion of their own. Many did not consider the negative emotional impact of CSE cases on their welfare. These findings have important implications for practitioner wellbeing.

Dagan, S. W., Ben-Porat, A., & Itzhaky, H. (2016). Child protection workers dealing with child abuse: The contribution of personal, social and organizational resources to secondary traumatization. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 51, 203–211.  
DOI:10.1016/j.chiabu.2015.10.008

The present study compared secondary traumatization among child protection social workers versus social workers employed at social service departments. In addition, based on Conservation of Resources (COR) theory, the study examined the contribution of working in the field of child protection as well as the contribution of background variables, personal resources (mastery), and resources in the workers' social and organizational environment (social support, effectiveness of supervision, and role stress) to secondary traumatization. The findings indicate that levels of mastery and years of work experience contributed negatively to secondary traumatization, whereas exposure to child maltreatment, trauma history, and role stress contributed positively to secondary traumatization. However, no significant contribution was found for social support and effectiveness of supervision. The study identifies factors that can prevent distress among professionals such as child protection workers, who are exposed to the trauma of child abuse victims. Recommendations are provided accordingly.

Dombo, E. A., & Blome, W. W. (2016). Vicarious trauma in child welfare workers: A study of organizational responses. *Journal of Public Child Welfare*, 10(5), 505–523.  
DOI:10.1080/15548732.2016.1206506

Child welfare is provided within an organizational context that both supports and thwarts the efforts of workers and administrators to meet the myriad of goals established by federal, state, and local regulation and professional bodies. As the field moves toward trauma-informed services for children and families the effect of trauma on workers has received less agency attention. Relationship between vicarious traumatization and turnover among child welfare professionals. This exploratory, qualitative study examines the level of knowledge administrators have regarding vicarious trauma and probes the



organizational responses of public child welfare agencies to the vicarious trauma experienced by workers.

Fisher, P. (2016). *Resilience, balance and meaning: Supporting our lives and our work in high stress, trauma-exposed workplaces*. Fisher and Associates, Inc.

This Resilience Workbook is designed to provide you with practical help in addressing the effects of workplace stress, burnout and trauma. You will see that it is designed as a highly interactive tool and you are encouraged to make the book your own by responding to the frequent questions, reflections and self-assessments. The material has been organized into three separate sections and we believe that you will find it most helpful to work through the book in sequence as each chapter builds on the work you have done previously.

Hamid, A. A., & Musa, S. A. (2016). The mediating effects of coping strategies on the relationship between secondary traumatic stress and burnout in professional caregivers in the UAE. *Journal of Mental Health, 26*(1), 28-35.  
DOI:10.1080/09638237.2016.1244714

Professional caregivers dealing with traumatized victims or mental health clients are at increased risk for developing the same symptoms as persons who are exposed directly to the trauma. This research was aimed at examining the relationship between secondary traumatic stress, burnout and coping strategies in 502 professional caregivers who work in schools, hospitals, charity institutes and welfare centers in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). A further aim was to test the mediating effect of coping on the relationship between burnout and secondary traumatic stress. Measures used in this study were the Professional Quality of Life Questionnaire (ProQOL), The General Health Questionnaire (GHQ-28), The Maslach Burnout Inventory: Human Services Survey (MBI-HSS) and Endler and Parker's Coping Inventory. Task-focused coping, personal accomplishment and

compassion satisfaction were negatively associated with secondary traumatic stress. Burnout, emotion-focused and distraction coping were positively related to secondary traumatic stress. Coping partially mediated the relationship between burnout and secondary traumatic stress. There were also significant gender differences in depersonalization and distraction coping. Efforts need to focus on improvement of caregivers' work environments, enhancing their coping skills and professional development.

Ivicic, R., & Motta, R. (2016). Variables associated with secondary traumatic stress among mental health professionals. *Traumatology*, 23(2), 196-204.  
DOI:10.1037/trm0000065

The current study investigated variables associated with secondary traumatization in mental health professionals. Participants included 88 psychologists, social workers, mental health counselors, and creative arts therapists. These participants completed the modified Stroop procedure, which is an objective measure of secondary trauma. They also completed the Secondary Trauma Scale, the Life Events Checklist, the Job Satisfaction Survey, and a demographics questionnaire. Results revealed that between 23 and 27% of respondents were positive for secondary traumatization. Whereas personal trauma history was associated with the modified Stroop and females reported more secondary trauma than males, no relationship was found between level of trauma exposure, quality of supervision, and job satisfaction to secondary traumatization. Overall results indicate a relatively high level of secondary trauma among mental health workers and also show the modified Stroop to be a valid method for studying secondary trauma.

Mehus, C. J., & Becher, E. H. (2016). Secondary traumatic stress, burnout, and compassion satisfaction in a sample of spoken-language interpreters. *Traumatology*, 22(4), 249–254. DOI:10.1037/trm0000023

The primary aim of this study was to better understand levels of secondary traumatic stress, burnout, and compassion satisfaction within the spoken-language interpreter community. An online survey was conducted utilizing the Professional Quality of Life measure with scales for each of these constructs. Responses from the 119 respondents show high levels of secondary traumatic stress but also high levels of compassion satisfaction relative to population norms. A secondary aim was to determine the relationship between each of these scales and trauma history, gender, and refugee status. None of these relationships were significant at the preset alpha levels. In light of our primary results, clinical agencies should consider how interpreters are being supported in trauma-related work. Future focus groups and semistructured interviews will be conducted with survey participants to explore what form this support could take.

Miller, B., & Sprang, G. (2016). A components-based practice and supervision model for reducing compassion fatigue by affecting clinician experience. *Traumatology*, 23(2), 153–164. DOI:10.1037/trm0000058

Published approaches to compassion fatigue in psychotherapists typically emphasize clinician self-care strategies. Implicit in the self-care emphasis is the assumption that trauma therapy encounters are inherently fatiguing, and that recovery occurs during the clinician's off-duty time. In contrast, the components for enhancing clinician engagement and reducing trauma (CE-CERT) model addresses the experience of the clinician concurrent with the treatment encounter. The clinical skill components are synthesized from evidence within the psychological treatment and neurophysiology literature relating to the management of difficult emotional states. The 5 proposed components are synthesized into an integrated model for the purpose of positively affecting the experience of clinicians during trauma treatment. We propose that effective

use of these evidence informed strategies will allow the clinician to remain emotionally regulated during treatment and, will, therefore, reduce compassion fatigue. The 5 skill categories comprising the components of the CE-CERT model are experiential engagement, managing rumination, intentional narrative, reducing emotional labor, and parasympathetic recovery strategies. These skills are defined and evidence is provided to support their use within the model. The model has immediate application for clinical training and supervision and can be used as a basis for operational definitions for use in effectiveness trials. © 2017 APA

Tehrani, N. (2016). [Extraversion, neuroticism and secondary trauma in Internet child abuse investigators](#). *Occupational Medicine*, 66(5), 403-407.  
DOI:10.1093/occmed/kqw004

Working with victims and perpetrators of child sexual abuse has been shown to cause secondary traumatic stress (STS) in child protection professionals. The aim of the study was to examine the role of gender and personality on the development of secondary trauma responses. A study of Internet child abuse investigators (ICAI) from two UK police forces. Participants completed a personality test together with tests for anxiety, depression, burnout, STS and post-traumatic stress disorder to assess secondary trauma. The data were normally distributed and the results were analysed using an independent *t*-test, Pearson correlation and linear regression. Among 126 study subjects (50 females and 75 males), there was a higher incidence of STS in investigators who were female, introverted and neurotic. However, there were lower levels of STS in the participants in this study than those found in other studies. Psychological screening and surveillance of ICAI teams can help to identify risk factors for the development of STS and identify where additional support may be required.

Wilson, F. (2016). Identifying, preventing, and addressing job burnout and vicarious burnout for social work professionals. *Journal of Evidence-informed Social Work*, 13(5), 479-483. DOI:10.1080/23761407.2016.1166856

Genuineness, concern for others, and empathy are characteristics used to describe the professional social worker. To this end, the social worker tirelessly works on behalf of and in collaboration with the client to move them from stagnant life situations into positive life situations. While the fundamental principles of social work are wonderful, the result for some workers is job burnout and/or vicarious trauma. The concepts of job burnout, its antecedents, and manifestations are thoroughly discussed in this article to provide a holistic overview of this phenomenon. The six antecedents: workload, control, values, fairness, reward, and community are discussed and linked to the manifestations of job burnout. When working with individuals who have been exposed to the depravity of life, the professional can take on the client's vulnerabilities, victimizations, and stress. The common term for this phenomenon is vicarious trauma. Professionals who work with trauma victims can often have issues in their personal and professional life as evidenced by reduced professional efficacy, increased emotional concerns, and physical concerns. The purpose of the author in this article is to provide an overview of job burnout, vicarious trauma, and a discussion about self-care responsibilities.

Fisher, P. (2015). *Building resilient teams: Facilitating workplace wellness & organizational health in trauma-exposed environments*. Fisher and Associates Solutions, Inc.

Dr. Patricia Fisher outlines a practical, realistic and effective approach to building team resiliency and cohesion. Through a series of guided discussions, participants will identify best practices for building resiliency on both an individual and organizational level. The workbook is designed to guide you and your teams through reflective and constructive conversation about ways to create safe, healthy and productive workplaces.

Hensel, J. M., Ruiz, C., Finney, C., & Dewa, C. S. (2015). Meta-analysis of risk factors for secondary traumatic stress in therapeutic work with trauma victims. *Journal of Traumatic Stress, 28*(2), 83–91. DOI:10.1002/jts.21998

Revisions to the posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) diagnostic criteria in the fifth edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5; American Psychiatric Association, 2013) clarify that secondary exposure can lead to the development of impairing symptoms requiring treatment. Historically known as secondary traumatic stress (STS), this reaction occurs through repeatedly hearing the details of traumatic events experienced by others. Professionals who work therapeutically with trauma victims may be at particular risk for this exposure. This meta-analysis of 38 published studies examines 17 risk factors for STS among professionals indirectly exposed to trauma through their therapeutic work with trauma victims. Small significant effect sizes were found for trauma caseload volume ( $r = .16$ ), caseload frequency ( $r = .12$ ), caseload ratio ( $r = .19$ ), and having a personal trauma history ( $r = .19$ ). Small negative effect sizes were found for work support ( $r = -.17$ ) and social support ( $r = -.26$ ). Demographic variables appear to be less implicated although more work is needed that examines the role of gender in the context of particular personal traumas. Caseload frequency and personal trauma effect sizes were moderated by year of publication. Future work should examine the measurement of STS and associated impairment, understudied risk factors, and effective interventions.

Hernandez-Wolfe, P., Killian, K., Engstrom, D., & Gangsei, D. (2015). Vicarious resilience, vicarious trauma, and awareness of equity in trauma work. *Journal of Humanistic Psychology, 55*(2), 153–172. DOI:10.1177/0022167814534322

This qualitative study examines the coexistence of vicarious resilience and vicarious trauma and explores the inclusion of intersectional identities in trauma work with torture survivors in specialized programs across the United States. A constructionist framework and a method of constant comparison discovered themes that speak about the effects

of witnessing how clients cope constructively with adversity, and intersectional identities in social context. The data suggest that trauma therapists can be potentially transformed by their clients' resilience in positive, but not painless, ways. Choosing to work in the trauma field with survivors of torture and politically motivated violence involves immersion in profound ongoing experiences of intertwined pain, joy, and hope, and expanding the boundaries of self— personally and professionally.

Newell, J. M., Nelson-Gardell, D., & MacNeil, G. (2016). Clinician responses to client traumas: A chronological review of constructs and terminology. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse, 17*(3), 306–313. DOI:10.1177/1524838015584365

This paper presents a chronologically-organized review of various concepts and constructs in the literature describing professional burnout, compassion fatigue, secondary traumatic stress reactions, as well as other related terms and constructs that have been used to describe these experiences among clinical practitioners and other social service professionals. A timeline will provide a graphic illustration of the historical relationships between the concepts under examination. This paper begins with a review of practitioner-related stress that primarily results from interaction with clients, followed by an examination of professional burnout, which is thought to result largely from environmentally-related issues. Finally, the paper concludes with a discussion of posttraumatic growth and compassion satisfaction.

Salloum, A., Kondrat, D. C., Johnco, C., & Olson, K. R. (2015). The role of self-care on compassion satisfaction, burnout and secondary trauma among child welfare workers. *Children and Youth Services Review, 49*, 54–61. DOI:10.1016/j.chidyouth.2014.12.023

Child welfare workers are routinely exposed to multiple traumatic events when working with children and families, and are at an increased risk of experiencing burnout and

secondary trauma. Self-care is often recommended as a restorative or protective activity against the negative effects of working with traumatized individuals, although few studies have examined the benefit of self-care empirically. Trauma-informed self-care (TISC) includes being aware of one's own emotional experience in response to exposure to traumatized clients and planning/engaging in positive coping strategies, such as seeking supervision, attending trainings on secondary trauma, working within a team, balancing caseloads, and work-life balance. Compared with generic personal care activities, TISC is likely to be especially relevant for child welfare workers. This study examined the role of TISC on compassion satisfaction, burnout and secondary trauma which was assessed by administering surveys to a sample of 104 child welfare case managers and supervisors. Almost one third of the sample reported high levels of burnout (29.8%) and secondary trauma (28.8%), and low levels of compassion satisfaction (31.7%). Results suggested that workers who engaged in higher levels of TISC experienced higher levels of compassion satisfaction and lower levels of burnout, although there was no relationship with secondary trauma. Findings provide preliminary evidence that TISC may be a beneficial practice to reduce risk of burnout and preserve workers' positive experience of their job, however workers experiencing secondary trauma are likely to need additional specialized intervention to assist them with their recovery. © 2015 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

Sansbury, B. S., Graves, K., & Scott, W. (2015). Managing traumatic stress responses among clinicians: Individual and organizational tools for self-care. *Trauma*, 17(2), 114-122. DOI:10.1177/1460408614551978

There is a growing interest in conceptual frameworks related to preventing stress responses among mental health clinicians working with survivors of trauma. The following paper comprehensively compares and contrasts vicarious traumatization with compassion fatigue (i.e. secondary trauma), and it considers how these two traumatic stress responses can lead to professional burnout. It reviews the historical development



and empirical support related to the effects of trauma work on clinicians, and it provides practical guidelines for both individuals and organizations to protect clinicians from traumatic stress responses.

Bourke, M. L., & Craun, S. W. (2014). Coping with secondary traumatic stress: Differences between UK and US child exploitation personnel. *Traumatology*, 20(1), 57-64.  
DOI:10.1037/h0099381

Research investigating how secondary traumatic stress impacts those who work in the field of child exploitation is in its early stages. In the current study we investigate how attempts to cope with secondary traumatic stress vary between investigators in the United States and their counterparts in the United Kingdom. After examining the best-fitting models we found both similarities and differences in predictors of secondary traumatic stress. For example, the level of self-reported difficulty and frequency of interactions with disturbing media were positively related to higher secondary traumatic stress scores in both groups; supervisory support, however, was related to lower secondary traumatic stress scores only in the U.S. sample. The implications and limitations of our findings are discussed.

Branson, D. C., Weigand, D. A., & Keller, J. E. (2014). Vicarious trauma and decreased sexual desire: A hidden hazard of helping others. *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy*, 6(4), 398-403. DOI:10.1037/a0033113

Vicarious trauma is a significant occupational hazard for behavioral health clinicians (BHCs), with potentially negative effects on the quality of personal life and interpersonal relationships. The purpose of this study was to assess the relationship between vicarious trauma (Secondary Traumatic Stress Scale) and sexual desire (Hurlbert Index of Sexual Desire). The constructivist self-development theory (CSDT) was the foundational study theory. The sample consisted of 163 volunteers selected from the Missouri Substance

Abuse Professional Credentialing Board (MSAPCB). Years of professional experience, sexual trauma history, gender, and age were computed as covariates. Bivariate correlations and multiple linear regression were utilized. A modest, yet significant inverse relationship was found between vicarious trauma and sexual desire,  $r = 0.24$ ,  $p = .002$ . Implications are negative dynamics to BHCs' service provision and personal lives. The results indicate that BHCs struggling with vicarious trauma may also notice a decrease in their level of sexual desire. © 2016 APA

Craun, S. W., & Bourke, M. L. (2014). The use of humor to cope with secondary traumatic stress. *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse*, 23(7), 840-852.  
DOI:10.1080/10538712.2014.949395

Professionals in the area of sexual violence often use humor, both lighthearted and gallows humor, in an attempt to counteract the effects of the work on their well-being. There is little research, however, on whether the use of humor is effective in reducing symptoms of secondary traumatic stress. In the current study, more than 500 Internet Crimes Against Children task force personnel were surveyed about their level of secondary traumatic stress and the coping techniques utilized to mitigate work-related stressors. The use of gallows and light-hearted humor were independently related to secondary traumatic stress scores, even controlling for other coping strategies. The two types of humor were not related to secondary traumatic stress in the same direction, nor at the same magnitude.

Dursun, O. B., Sener, M. T., Esin, I. S., Ançi, Y., & Yalin Sapmaz, Ş. (2014). Does working with child abuse cases affect professionals' parenting and the psychological well-being of their children?. *Journal of Trauma & Dissociation*, 15(5), 557-571.  
DOI:10.1080/15299732.2014.912713

Work in the field of sexual abuse is extremely stressful and may arouse negative personal reactions. Although these secondary trauma effects are well described on a personal level, there is not enough evidence to understand whether these professionals carry these effects to their homes, families, and offspring. This study aims to identify the effects of working with child abuse cases on the anxiety level and parenting styles of childhood trauma workers and on their children's well-being. A total of 43 health and legal system workers who worked with abused children in any step of their process and who had children constituted the study group, and 50 control cases, each working in the same institution and having the same occupation as 1 of the participants from the study group and having children but not working directly with children and child abuse cases, were included in the study. Participants were asked to fill out a sociodemographic form, the Parental Attitude Research Instrument, the trait portion of the State-Trait Anxiety Inventory, and an age-appropriate form of the Child Behavior Checklist for each child they had. Professionals in the study working with child abuse cases demonstrated significantly higher democratic parenting attitudes. Law enforcement workers working with child abuse cases demonstrated stricter and more authoritarian parenting strategies, as well as more democratic attitudes, than their colleagues. There was not a statistically significant relationship between child abuse workers' anxiety level and their children's well-being among control subjects.

Robinson-Keilig, R. A. (2014). Secondary traumatic stress and disruptions to interpersonal functioning among mental health therapists. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 29(8), 1477-1496. DOI:10.1177/0886260513507135

Disruptions within interpersonal relationships are often cited as a symptom of secondary traumatic stress (STS) and vicarious trauma among mental health therapists. However, the primary evidence to support these claims is based on theoretical explanations and limited descriptive data. The current study sought to test the theoretical model of STS and to extend prior research by directly measuring interpersonal and sexual disruptions and their association with STS symptomology. The study hypothesized that mental health therapists with higher levels of intrusion, avoidance, and arousal symptoms would also report disruptions in their interpersonal relationships. A total of 320 licensed mental health therapists completed the online study questionnaire. Results of the current study were mixed. Higher levels of STS symptoms showed a significant association with lower relationship satisfaction, lower social intimacy, less use of constructive communication patterns, and more use of avoidance communication and demand-withdrawal communication patterns. These relationships remained after controlling for gender, years of counseling experience, and exposure level to trauma clients. However, no association was found between STS, sexual activity interest, and sexual relationship satisfaction. Implications of these findings are reviewed.

Boyas, J. F., Wind, L. H., & Ruiz, E. (2013). Organizational tenure among child welfare workers, burnout, stress, and intent to leave: Does employment-based social capital make a difference? *Children and Youth Services Review*, 35(10), 1657-1669. DOI:10.1016/j.childyouth.2013.07.008

Research has shown that child welfare organizations have a prominent role in safeguarding their workers from experiencing high levels of job stress and burnout, which can ultimately lead to increased thoughts of leaving. However, it is not clear whether these relationships are shaped by their length of organizational tenure. A cross-sectional

research design that included a statewide purposive sample of 209 child welfare workers was used to test a theoretical model of employment-based social capital to examine how paths to job stress, burnout, and intent to leave differ between workers who have worked in a child welfare organization for less than 3 years compared to those with 3 years or more of employment in one organization. Path analysis results indicate that when a mixture of dimensions of employment-based social capital are present, they act as significant direct protective factors in decreasing job stress and indirectly shape burnout and intent to leave differently based on organizational tenure. Thus, organizations may have to institute unique intervention efforts for both sets of workers that provide immediate and long-term structures of support, resources, and organizational practices given that their group-specific needs may change over time.

Bradbury-Jones, C. (2013). Refocusing child protection supervision: An innovative approach to supporting practitioners. *Child Care in Practice*, 19(3), 253-266.  
DOI:10.1080/13575279.2013.785937

There is mounting empirical evidence regarding the potential negative impact of child protection work on practitioners' emotional and psychological well-being. Stress and burnout are endemic amongst this group of workers and there is increasing recognition of the influences of this on their decision-making regarding child protection issues. Supervision has been lauded as an important element in supporting practitioners. It creates opportunities for identifying stress and potential burnout and for implementing supportive mechanisms. However, many supervision models focus almost entirely on identification, referral and procedural issues to the exclusion of addressing practitioner's emotional needs. This paper presents an argument that technical-rational models of supervision fall short of meeting the emotional needs of those who engage in child protection work. A refocusing is suggested that encourages practitioners to adopt a reflective stance towards child protection practice, specifically one that focuses on the

affective aspects of child protection work. To achieve this, an innovative, reflective approach is proposed– termed the “Peshkin Approach to Reflection”, it is grounded in recent developments of reflective practice from within nursing that acknowledge the primacy of emotions. The paper outlines the key stages involved and illustrates its ability to enhance practitioners’ emotional well-being. Importantly, it also highlights its potential to impact positively on practice. It is advocated that the Peshkin Approach to Reflection be incorporated into child protection supervision to counter the traditional, long-standing technical-rational focus of most supervisory models. It will require empirical testing and evaluation to assess its full impact in a child protection context. However, based on use of the approach in other settings, it is likely to hold considerable benefit for practitioners who use it and, indirectly, the children they seek to protect.

Cieslak, R., Shoji, K., Douglas, A., Melville, E., Luszczynska, A., & Benight, C. C. (2013). A meta-analysis of the relationship between job burnout and secondary traumatic stress among workers with indirect exposure to trauma. *Psychological Services, 11*(1), 75–86. DOI:10.1037/a0033798

The study provides a systematic review of the empirical evidence for associations between job burnout and secondary traumatic stress (STS) among professionals working with trauma survivors, indirectly exposed to traumatic material. Differences in the conceptualization and measurement of job burnout and STS were assumed to moderate these associations. A systematic review of literature yielded 41 original studies, analyzing data from a total of 8,256 workers. Meta-analysis indicated that associations between job burnout and STS were strong (weighted  $r = .69$ ). Studies applying measures developed within the compassion fatigue framework (one of the conceptualizations of job burnout and STS) showed significantly stronger relationships between job burnout and STS, indicating a substantial overlap between measures (weighted  $r = .74$ ; 55% of shared variance). Research applying other frameworks and measures of job burnout (i.e., stressing the role of emotional exhaustion) and STS (i.e., focusing on symptoms

resembling posttraumatic stress disorder or a cognitive shift specific for vicarious trauma) showed weaker, although still substantial associations (weighted  $r = .58$ ; 34% of shared variance). Significantly stronger associations between job burnout and STS were found for: (a) studies conducted in the United States compared to other countries; (b) studies using English-language versions of the questionnaires compared to other-language versions, and (c) research in predominantly female samples. The results suggest that, due to high correlations between job burnout and STS, there is a substantial likelihood that a professional exposed to secondary trauma would report similar levels of job burnout and STS, particularly if job burnout and STS were measured within the framework of compassion fatigue.

Cohen, K., & Collens, P. (2013). The impact of trauma work on trauma workers: A metasynthesis on vicarious trauma and vicarious posttraumatic growth. *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy*, 5(6), 570. DOI:10.1037/a0030388

The current work examines the impact on trauma workers of working with people who have been traumatised within the framework of both vicarious trauma (VT) and various posttraumatic growth (VPTG) by using a meta-synthesis of findings from 20 published qualitative papers. The synthesis found that the impact of trauma work can potentially increase short and long term levels of distress and that such psychological impact can be managed through personal and organizational coping strategies. It was also found that trauma work leads to changes in schemas and day-to-day routines and that these changes can be both negative and positive. Such changes correspond to both VT and VPTG, but for VPTG to occur, trauma workers will need to be exposed to the client's own growth.

Dombo, E. A., & Gray, C. (2013). Engaging spirituality in addressing vicarious trauma in clinical social workers: A self-care model. *Social Work and Christianity*, 40(1), 89-104.

Research has shown that vicarious trauma results in great personal and professional costs for social workers (Bride, 2007). The social work profession has an obligation to their members, and those they serve, to ensure that those providing mental health interventions are functioning optimally (National Association of Social Workers, 2008). Burnout and vicarious trauma prevent workers from functioning at maximum capacity. Clinical social workers are particularly vulnerable to burnout with spiritual dimensions in the form of questioning the meaning of work, loss of purpose, hopelessness, and internalizing the suffering of their clients' trauma. Spiritual practices have often been engaged to lessen the effect of trauma and facilitate personal and professional growth (Siegel, 2010; Stern 2004). Social workers can re-engage with the meaning of their work through concrete spiritual practices that improve their ability to sustain the amount of emotion involved in working with trauma (Collins, 2005; Trippany, Kress & Wilcoxon, 2004). This article addresses ways social workers can support themselves and their work through spiritual self-care, in the service of improving client outcomes through sustained connection. Spiritually based practice will be explored as a way to re-connect to the meaning of the work and the satisfaction compassion can bring (Griffith & Griffith, 2002; Pargament, 2007). A self-care model will be presented to help individual workers address the impact of the work, and organizations to address the environmental and cultural contributors to vicarious trauma. This model will integrate spiritual practice and present specific spiritual self-care meditation practices.



Kulkarni, S., Bell, H., Hartman, J. L., & Herman-Smith, R. L. (2013). [Exploring individual and organizational factors contributing to compassion satisfaction, secondary traumatic stress, and burnout in domestic violence service providers](#). *Journal of the Society for Social Work and Research*, 4(2), 114–130. DOI:10.5243/jsswr.2013.8

Research on workplace wellness often neglects the role of organizational factors in preventing negative effects and promoting positive outcomes for service providers. Using a person–environment fit model, which highlights compatibility between an individual worker’s characteristics and his or her work environment, we examine key risk and protective factors that might contribute to the well-being of domestic violence services providers. Service providers working in domestic violence agencies completed a Web-based survey measuring their perceptions of organizational factors (e.g., workload, control, reward, community, fairness, organizational values) and outcome variables of provider burnout, secondary traumatic stress, and compassion satisfaction. Individual–organizational mismatch emerges as a significant risk factor for burnout and secondary traumatic stress, both of which are negative outcomes associated with less manageable workloads. Secondary traumatic stress is also associated with providers’ feelings of having little control over their work and spending more time in leisure, which might be in response to symptoms. Compassion satisfaction is positively associated with higher levels of work experience in domestic violence services and with providers who share the values of their organization. Organizational interventions that protect workers and promote these distinct dimensions of worker wellness can yield vital benefits associated with a healthy workforce.

Osofsky, J. D. (2013). Vicarious traumatization and the need for self-care in working with traumatized young children. In *Clinical Work with Traumatized Young Children* (pp. 336–348). The Guilford Press.

In this book, the issue of vicarious traumatization or compassion fatigue for individuals who work with traumatized young children and their families, including mental health

evaluators and therapists, judges, lawyers, child welfare professionals, first responders, and all other adults, has not been discussed directly. However, working with traumatized young children can take its toll because it often is very difficult to witness hardship and human suffering, and at the same time, as professionals, be required to maintain boundaries and professional roles, to make decisions about children's lives, and to take actions to help vulnerable young children and their families. Individuals find different ways of coping with these difficult feelings—some may just avoid thinking about it. In this chapter, the issues of vicarious trauma and compassion fatigue are defined and discussed, examples from different disciplines are presented, and suggestions that are offered relate to individual and professional strategies for prevention and intervention, including the importance of self-care.

Rhee, Y. S., Ko, Y. B., & Han, I. Y. (2013). [Posttraumatic growth and related factors of child protective service workers](#). *Annals of Occupational and Environmental Medicine*, 25(1), 6-16.

The aim of the study is to measure the level of vicarious trauma, posttraumatic growth (PTG), and other factors affecting PTG among child protective service workers. We include posttraumatic stress, social support, stress coping, and demographic data as independent variables. Data was collected from 255 full-time social workers from 43 child protective agencies as a complete enumeration and 204 included in the final analysis. The major findings of the study were as follows: The mean score of PTG was 44.09 (SD: 21.73). Hierarchical multiple regression was adopted and "pursuing social support as a way of coping with stress" was the strongest predictive factor ( $\beta=0.319$ ,  $p<0.001$ ) of PTG. We suggest that child protective workers are vulnerable to posttraumatic stress and mental health services are indicated. We also recommend various types of training for stress coping program, especially strengthening the social support system of the child protective service workers in South Korea.

Wies, J. R., & Coy, K. (2013). Measuring violence: Vicarious trauma among Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners. *Human Organization*, 72(1), 23–30.  
DOI:10.17730/humo.72.1.x5658p957k5g7722

Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners (SANEs) are now commonplace in the continuum of care for victims of sexual violence in the United States. The presence of SANE programs has increased precision in the use of rape kits, improved patient care, and increased the effectiveness of expert court testimony. However, SANEs are exposed to a working environment that demands a professional response to devastating acts of trauma and violence perpetrated towards adults and children. This exploratory article presents the rates of vicarious trauma found among the SANE sample as reported through the 17-item Secondary Traumatic Stress Scale to understand the extent of secondary victimization among these service providers. By placing vicarious trauma within the context of sexual violence victimization, we expose a hidden "site" of violence and call for expanding our definition of "victim" of gender-based violence.

Bonach, K., & Heckert, A. (2012). Predictors of secondary traumatic stress among Children's Advocacy Center forensic interviewers. *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse*, 21(3), 295–314. DOI:10.1080/10538712.2012.647263

This study examined various predictor variables that were hypothesized to impact secondary traumatic stress in forensic interviewers (n = 257) from children's advocacy centers across the United States. Data were examined to investigate the relationship between organizational satisfaction, organizational buffers, and job support with secondary traumatic stress using the Secondary Traumatic Stress Scale. The most salient significant result was an inverse relationship between three indicators of job support and secondary traumatic stress. Also significant to secondary traumatic stress were the age of interviewer and whether the forensic interviewer had experienced at least one significant loss in the previous 12 months. Implications for future research, training, program practice, and policy are discussed.

Levin, A., Besser, A., Albert, L., Smith, D., & Neria, Y. (2012). The effect of attorneys' work with trauma-exposed clients on PTSD symptoms, depression, and functional impairment: A cross-lagged longitudinal study. *Law and Human Behavior*, 36(6), 538–547. DOI:10.1037/h0093993

To date, few studies have examined mental health consequences among attorneys exposed to clients' traumatic experiences. A longitudinal, 2-wave, cross-lagged study was used in a cohort of attorneys (N = 107) from the Wisconsin State Public Defender's Office. We assessed changes in posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, and functional impairment over a 10-month period and tested the effects of intensity of contact with trauma-exposed clients on symptom levels over time. Attorneys demonstrated strong and significant symptom stability over time in PTSD, depression, functional impairment, and levels of exposure. Analyses involving cross-lagged panel correlation structural equation modeling path models revealed that attorneys' levels of exposure to trauma-exposed clients had significant positive effects, over time, on PTSD, depression, and functional impairment. Gender, age, years on the job, and office size did not predict any of the outcomes. Level of exposure to trauma-exposed clients predicted reduction of weekly working hours over time, but there was no reciprocal relationship between PTSD, depression, and functional impairment and level of exposure over time. These findings underscore the central role of exposure to trauma-exposed clients in predicting mental health outcomes and emphasize the need to support attorneys by managing the intensity of exposure as well as addressing emerging symptoms.

Michalopoulos, L. M., & Aparicio, E. (2012). Vicarious trauma in social workers: The role of trauma history, social support, and years of experience. *Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment & Trauma*, 21(6), 646–664. DOI:10.1080/10926771.2012.689422

Vicarious trauma, a disruption in schemas and worldview often accompanied by symptoms similar to those of posttraumatic stress disorder, occurs as a result of chronic secondary exposure to traumatic material. The aim of this study was to examine the role

of personal trauma history, social support, and experience level in the development of vicarious trauma among licensed social workers in Maryland (N = 160). Results indicated an increase in social support and in experience level of social workers predicted less severe vicarious trauma. In addition, an interaction effect between trauma history and social support trending on significance indicated higher levels of social support might help protect those without a trauma history but not those with a trauma history against vicarious trauma. Research and clinical implications are discussed.

Morse, G., Salyers, M. P., Rollins, A. L., Monroe-DeVita, M., & Pfahler, C. (2012). [Burnout in mental health services: A review of the problem and its remediation.](#) *Administration and Policy in Mental Health and Mental Health Services Research*, 39(5), 341–352. DOI:10.1007/s10488-011-0352-1

Staff burnout is increasingly viewed as a concern in the mental health field. In this article we first examine the extent to which burnout is a problem for mental health services in terms of two critical issues: its prevalence and its association with a range of undesirable outcomes for staff, organizations, and consumers. We subsequently provide a comprehensive review of the limited research attempting to remediate burnout among mental health staff. We conclude with recommendations for the development and rigorous testing of intervention approaches to address this critical area.

Pack, M. (2012). [Vicarious traumatisation: An organisational perspective.](#) *Social Work Now: The Practice Journal of Child, Work & Family*, 1, 14–23.

This paper is based on research that focused on investigating if a vicarious traumatization framework resonated with counsellors who were registered to undertake therapy with sexual abuse survivors in New Zealand. It was important to allow participants to tell their personal narratives of vicarious traumatisation as they had experienced it over their careers. This focus facilitated discussion of the factors that mitigate the effects of

vicarious traumatization and act as protective factors that can sustain counselors over the course of their careers.

Ben-Porat, A., & Itzhaky, H. (2011). The contribution of training and supervision to perceived role competence, secondary traumatization, and burnout among domestic violence therapists. *The Clinical Supervisor, 30*(1), 95-108.  
DOI:10.1080/07325223.2011.566089

This study examines differences between domestic violence therapists in Israel who had received specific training in the field and those who had not, with regard to the following variables: sense of role competence, secondary traumatization, and burnout. In addition, the study examines the correlation between the therapists' satisfaction with supervision on the one hand, and their sense of role competence, secondary traumatization, and burnout on the other. Participants included 143 social workers employed at centers for prevention of domestic violence and at battered women's shelters in Israel. The findings revealed no significant differences between the two groups of therapists in levels of burnout and secondary traumatization. However, significant differences between the two groups were found with regard to their sense of role competence in task knowledge/problem solving. Regarding satisfaction with supervision, no significant correlation was found with secondary traumatization and burnout. At the same time, a significant positive correlation was found between satisfaction with supervision and two components of role competence: task knowledge/problem solving and general competence.

Brockhouse, R., Msetfi, R. M., Cohen, K., & Joseph, S. (2011). Vicarious exposure to trauma and growth in therapists: The moderating effects of sense of coherence, organizational support, and empathy. *Journal of Traumatic Stress, 24*(6), 735-742. DOI:10.1002/jts.20704

Therapists who work with traumatized individuals can experience psychological growth following this vicarious exposure to trauma. The purpose of the present study is to examine the variables that may moderate such vicarious posttraumatic growth. Therapists (N = 118) completed measures of vicarious exposure to trauma and growth, as well as empathy, sense of coherence, and perceived organizational support. Results showed that having a strong sense of coherence negatively predicted growth ( $\beta = -.28$ ,  $p = .001$ ), whereas empathy was a positive predictor ( $\beta = .37$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Empathy also moderated the exposure to growth relationship when growth involved relating to others ( $\beta = -.20$ ;  $p = .018$ ). Organizational support did not predict growth. The results have implications for the recruitment, training, and supervision of therapists working with individuals who have experienced trauma.

Choi, G. Y. (2011). Organizational impacts on the secondary traumatic stress of social workers assisting family violence or sexual assault survivors. *Administration in Social Work, 35*(3), 225-242. DOI:10.1080/03643107.2011.575333

This research examines the influence of organizational characteristics on secondary traumatic stress of social workers who provide direct services to survivors of family violence or sexual assault. The sample ( $n = 154$ ) was recruited through the National Association of Social Workers' member list. The study found that social workers who received more support from their coworkers, supervisors, and work teams demonstrated lower levels of secondary traumatic stress. Social workers who also had more access to their organizations' strategic information exhibited lower levels of secondary traumatic stress. Several implications for social work administrators are suggested based on the findings.

Elwood, L. S., Mott, J., Lohr, J. M., & Galovski, T. E. (2011). Secondary trauma symptoms in clinicians: A critical review of the construct, specificity, and implications for trauma-focused treatment. *Clinical Psychology Review, 31*(1), 25–36.  
DOI:10.1016/j.cpr.2010.09.004

Advocates of the concept of secondary traumatization propose that clinicians who provide trauma-focused treatment may be particularly at risk for experiencing secondary trauma symptoms. This specific symptom presentation purportedly develops following exposure to the traumatic experiences described by their clients. Consequently, these professionals have advocated for increases in resources devoted to the prevention and treatment of secondary trauma symptoms (e.g., enhanced clinician training, increase in availability of treatment options for affected trauma workers, etc.). A review of empirical literature examining prevalence and specificity of secondary trauma symptoms in trauma clinicians is provided. Findings are mixed and often indicate that trauma clinicians are not frequently experiencing “clinically significant” levels of symptoms and that these symptoms may not be uniquely associated with trauma-focused treatment. Finally, it is argued that additional clarification and research on the criterion, course, and associated impairment are needed. Recommendations for future research are provided.

Kleim, B., & Westphal, M. (2011). Mental health in first responders: A review and recommendation for prevention and intervention strategies. *Traumatology, 17*(4), 17–24. DOI:10.1177/1534765611429079

The present article describes the prevalence and predictors of adverse mental health reactions in first responders, a population exposed to stress (rather than a population who are exposed). Mental health impairments in first responders exact considerable personal and public costs and are likely to negatively affect work performance, including providing care to trauma survivors. This article provides an update on first responders’ mental health and examines predictors of trauma related psychopathology in this



population. This information is of vital importance for the development and implementation of prevention and intervention strategies.

Mathieu, F. (2011). *The compassion fatigue workbook*. Routledge.

The Compassion Fatigue Workbook is a lifeline for any helping professional facing the physical and emotional exhaustion that can shadow work in the helping professions. Since 2001 the activities in this Workbook have helped thousands of helpers in the fields of healthcare, community mental health, correctional services, education, and the military. In addition to a comprehensive description of compassion fatigue and vicarious traumatization, The Compassion Fatigue Workbook leads the reader through experiential activities designed to target specific areas in their personal and professional lives. It provides concrete strategies to help the reader develop a personalized plan for identifying and transforming compassion fatigue and vicarious traumatization.

Nen, S., Astbury, J., Subhi, N., Alavi, K., Lukman, Z. M., Sarnon, N., Fauziah, I., Hoesni, S. M., & Mohamad, M. S. (2011). The impact of vicarious trauma on professionals involved in child sexual abuse cases. *Pertanika Journal of Social Science and Humanities*, 19(S), 147- 155.

There is an increasing awareness of psychological effects on working with trauma survivors (e.g., sexual abuse victims). However, little research focused on such issue. Adopting a qualitative approach, this study explored vicarious trauma (VT) among professionals working with child sexual abuse (CSA) cases in Malaysia. A total of 18 professionals (police officers, social workers, counselors, and medical social workers) were interviewed. Results indicated that respondents experienced shock and disbelief, confusion, fear, flashback, hyper vigilance, irritability, and sleep difficulties caused by work. Furthermore, their work also affected relationship with friends, family members, and

children. This study disclosed the fact that most of the professionals were not even aware that they could be negatively affected by their work with CSA victims. Also, the study emphasized the importance of information and training about possible risks of working with trauma survivors to reduce the occurrence of VT.

Richardson, K. (2011). Child protection social work and secondary trauma. In N. Tehrani (Ed.), *Managing trauma in the workplace: Supporting workers and organizations* (pp. 3-16). Routledge.

Although some of the issues discussed below may be relevant to other professionals, the term 'social worker' is used here to describe children and family social workers involved in child protection work. This chapter focuses on the impact of child abuse on children and their families and how, in undertaking the safeguarding task, social workers can encounter experiences which contribute to compassion fatigue and burn-out. Social workers must probe and analyze the difficulties faced by children and families and communicate these issues to others. This work can involve significant contact with children and families in distress, a requirement to demonstrate empathy and a necessity to communicate the nature of another's pain and suffering in an understandable form; this can be through the written or spoken word, for example, report writing or testimony.

Edelmann, R. J. (2010). Exposure to child abuse images as part of one's work: Possible psychological implications. *The Journal of Forensic Psychiatry & Psychology*, 21(4), 481-489. DOI:10.1080/14789940903540792

Given the rapid expansion in access to the internet in the past decade with information flow being difficult to police it is perhaps not surprising that the internet is so open to misuse. One such misuse is by child sex offenders for whom the internet has facilitated communication and the distribution of child abuse images. This has meant that various professionals involved in investigating cases are themselves exposed to varying degrees

and levels of such images. This paper examines the potential impact of viewing images of child abuse on the professionals concerned at a cognitive, emotional and psychosexual/interpersonal level. While there are certain issues to be aware of and a number of issues that warrant research there is no evidence to date that those exposed to child abuse material in the conduct of their work are affected to any evident negative degree.

Hernández, P., Engstrom, D., & Gangsei, D. (2010). Exploring the impact of trauma on therapists: Vicarious resilience and related concepts in training. *Journal of Systemic Therapies*, 29(1), 67-83. DOI:10.1521/jsyt.2010.29.1.67

An integrative training framework articulating multiple perspectives on the impact of trauma work is offered with a training/supervision exercise to address the complex and systemic relationships that affect therapists in both positive and negative manners. The concepts of vicarious trauma, vicarious resilience, compassion fatigue, resilience, posttraumatic growth, altruism born of suffering, and reciprocity are reviewed. The paper highlights the importance of vicarious resilience as a dimension of experience that counteracts the normally occurring fatiguing processes that trauma therapists experience.

Lane, E. J., Lating, J. M., Lowry, J. L., & Martino, T. P. (2010). Differences in compassion fatigue, symptoms of posttraumatic stress disorder and relationship satisfaction, including sexual desire and functioning, between male and female detectives who investigate sexual offenses against children: A pilot study. *International Journal of Emergency Mental Health*, 12(4), 257-266.

Law enforcement detectives who work with traumatized individuals, especially children who were victims of sexual abuse or assault, are likely to experience job-related emotional distress. The purpose of this study was to examine the relations among

compassion fatigue, probable PTSD symptoms, and personal relationship satisfaction, including communication and sexual satisfaction, in a sample of 47 male and female detectives. Responses to the administered questionnaires indicated a relation between compassion fatigue symptoms and probable PTSD symptoms. There also were compelling gender differences. For example, for male detectives, open communication with their spouse or significant other was negatively correlated with burnout, indicating the more open the communication, the lower the reported burnout. However, for female detectives there was a negative correlation between open communication with spouse or significant other and compassion satisfaction, suggesting that more open communication was related to lower levels of satisfaction with their ability to be a professional caregiver. Furthermore, although stepwise regression analysis indicated that years of service as a detective is independently associated with sexual desire, female detectives evidenced less sexual desire and more difficulty with sexual functioning than did male detectives. Implications of these preliminary findings are discussed and limitations addressed.

Skovholt, T. M., & Trotter-Mathison, M. (2010). *The resilient practitioner: Burnout prevention and self-care strategies for counselors, therapists, teachers, and health professionals* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Routledge. DOI:10.4324/9780203893326

Therapists and other helping professionals, such as teachers, doctors and nurses, social workers, and clergy, work in highly demanding fields and can suffer from burnout, compassion fatigue, and secondary stress. This happens when they give more attention to their clients' well-being than their own. Both students and practitioners in these fields will find this book an essential guide to striking an optimal balance between self-care and other-care. The authors describe the joys and hazards of the work, the long road from novice to senior practitioner, the essence of burnout, ways to maintain the professional and personal self, methods experts use to maintain vitality, and a self-care action plan.

Vivid real-life examples and self-reflection questions will engage and motivate readers to think about their own work and ways to enhance their own resilience. Eloquently written and supported by extensive research, helping professionals will find this a valuable resource for both a novice and an experienced practitioner.

Tehrani, N. (2010). [Compassion fatigue: Experiences in occupational health, human resources, counseling and police](#). *Occupational Medicine*, 60(2), 133–138.  
DOI:10.1093/occmed/kqp174

Background: This study examines the impact that working with distressed employees, clients and members of the public has on four caring professions: occupational health advisors (OHAs), human resource advisors (HRs), counselors (CLs) and family liaison officers (FLOs). Aims: To measure the levels of compassion fatigue in caring professions and to identify the mechanisms that lead to increased levels of personal growth. Methods: Two hundred and seventy-six professionals (64 HRs, 53 OHAs, 114 CLs and 45 FLOs) completed the Career Belief Inventory (CBI) (Tehrani, N. The cost of caring—the impact of secondary trauma on assumptions values and beliefs. *Couns Psychol Q* 2007; 20:1–15.) and Short-Form of the Goldberg questionnaire (Goldberg D, Bridges K, Duncan-Jones P, Grayson D. Detecting anxiety and depression in a general medical setting. *Br Med J* 1988; 297:897–899). The participants in the study were attendees at presentations or training courses on employee wellbeing. Survey involved in the study also measured sources of support and coping mechanism. Results: There were few differences in the level of negative beliefs between groups, although CLs were found to experience more feelings of isolation and FLOs and CLs were more likely to believe that there was no justice in the world. OHAs, CLs and FLOs were significantly more likely to demonstrate personal growth than HRs. Reflection on the work facilitated through professional or peer supervision and a healthy lifestyle was found to be associated with higher levels of personal growth and satisfaction with their performance at work. Conclusions: The results

suggest that the provision of professional or peer supervision may be helpful in increasing reflection and 'sense making' leading to personal development and growth. Other forms of support that were found to be helpful included taking exercise, healthy eating and engaging in a hobby.

Ben-Porat, A., & Itzhaky, H. (2009). Implications of treating family violence for the therapist: Secondary traumatization, vicarious traumatization, and growth. *Journal of Family Violence, 24*(7), 507–515. DOI:10.1007/s10896-009-9249-0

Our study dealt with the positive and negative implications of working with victims of family violence on therapists in terms of secondary traumatization, vicarious traumatization, and growth. In addition, we examined positive and negative changes that the therapists experienced in themselves, their lives, and their families as a result of their work. The research population consisted of 143 social workers employed in the field of family violence, and 71 social workers who were not employed in that field. Comparisons between the two groups were conducted for all of the research variables. The two groups did not differ significantly in levels of secondary traumatization. However, significant differences were found in levels of growth, as well as in levels of positive and negative changes that the participants experienced in themselves, their lives, and their families.

Chouliara, Z., Hutchison, C., & Karatzias, T. (2009). Vicarious traumatising in practitioners who work with adult survivors of sexual violence and child sexual abuse: Literature review and directions for future research. *Counselling and Psychotherapy Research, 9*(1), 47–56. DOI:10.1080/14733140802656479

The authors sought to summarize and evaluate evidence regarding vicarious traumatising (VT) in practitioners working with adult survivors of sexual violence and/or child sexual abuse (CSA). Methods and selection criteria: Relevant publications were identified from systematic literature searches of PubMed and PsycINFO. Studies were

selected for inclusion if they examined vicarious traumatization resulting from sexual violence and/or CSA work and were published in English between January 1990 and June 2008. Critical analysis and results: Ten studies met the criteria of the present review. In summary, VT levels in the field of sexual violence/CSA are high with negative effects, but do not appear to exceed those reported by professionals working with non-sexual violence or with sexual offenders. Further investigation is needed into predisposing and mediating factors before clear conclusions can be drawn. Conclusions: Previous research has suffered a number of methodological limitations regarding definitions, sampling, comparison groups, support arrangements and measurement. These factors compromise not only the rigour and generalizability of findings but also our ability to define VT as a useful concept. These limitations are discussed and recommendations made for a future research agenda.

Harrison, R. L., & Westwood, M. J. (2009). Preventing vicarious traumatization of mental health therapists: Identifying protective practices. *Psychotherapy: Theory, Research, Practice, Training*, 46(2), 203–219. DOI:10.1037/a0016081

This qualitative study identified protective practices that mitigate risks of vicarious traumatization (VT) among mental health therapists. The sample included six peer-nominated master therapists, who responded to the question, “How do you manage to sustain your personal and professional well-being, given the challenges of your work with seriously traumatized clients?” Data analysis was based upon Lieblich, Tuval-Mashiach, and Zilber’s (1998) typology of narrative analysis. Findings included nine major themes salient across clinicians’ narratives of protective practices: countering isolation (in professional, personal and spiritual realms); developing mindful self-awareness; consciously expanding perspective to embrace complexity; active optimism; holistic self-care; maintaining clear boundaries; exquisite empathy; professional satisfaction; and creating meaning. Findings confirm and extend previous recommendations for

ameliorating VT and underscore the ethical responsibility shared by employers, educators, professional bodies, and individual practitioners to address this serious problem. The novel finding that empathic engagement with traumatized clients appeared to be protective challenges previous conceptualizations of VT and points to exciting new directions for research, theory, training, and practice.

Krause, M. (2009). Identifying and managing stress in child pornography and child exploitation investigators. *Journal of Police and Criminal Psychology*, 24(1), 22–29. DOI:10.1007/s11896-008-9033-8

In the last decade, law enforcement personnel have increasingly been tasked to police the internet in an effort to staunch the production and distribution of child pornography and to investigate computer-facilitated child exploitation. These investigative personnel have encountered a range of assignment-specific challenges and strains as a result of their involvement in this taxing and novel investigative activity. In some cases, the cumulative effects of these strains, together with repeated exposure to highly disturbing images of abused children, have resulted in stress reactions that have commanded the attention of police managers and police psychologists alike. The present article is intended to provide an overview of the stresses unique to child exploitation and pornography investigations, common reactions to these stressors, procedural safeguards to mitigate the impact of this high-risk assignment, and two model programs designed to meet the needs of the current generation of “cyber cops.”

Lipsky, L. V. D., & Burk, C. (2009). *Trauma stewardship: An everyday guide to caring for self while caring for others*. Berrett-Koehler Publisher, Inc.



Phelps, A., Lloyd, D., Creamer, M., & Forbes, D. (2009). Caring for carers in the aftermath of trauma. *Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment & Trauma*, 18(3), 313-330.  
DOI:10.1080/10926770902835899

The potential impact on psychological well-being of working in the caring professions in the aftermath of trauma and disaster has been recognized for many years, with terms such as burnout, compassion fatigue, and vicarious traumatization coined to describe stress-related conditions. Although prevalent, these conditions do not affect all workers in the field. Various studies have investigated potential risk and protective factors. It is argued that the outcomes of this research should be used to guide practical interventions in the workplace designed to minimize stress-related problems. A framework that incorporates interventions at the primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention levels is outlined, and research investigating the efficacy of interventions at each of these levels is recommended.

Rakoczy, S. (2009). [Compassion fatigue in child welfare](#). *The New Social Worker*, 16(4), 16-18.

This article explores compassion fatigue in child welfare caseworkers, what the causes are, the consequences, and what can be done to address the problem. Findings from studies on compassion fatigue are shared and the proposed Teri Zenner Social Worker Safety Act is highlighted. This Act would set up a grant program that would provide workplace safety measures, as well as equipment and training for social workers and others who work with potentially dangerous clients. The need to ensure social workers have a degree from an accredited school or program of social work or social welfare is also discussed.

Townsend, S. M., & Campbell, R. (2009). Organizational correlates of secondary traumatic stress and burnout among sexual assault nurse examiners. *Journal of Forensic Nursing*, 5(2), 97-106.

This study explores correlates of secondary traumatic stress (STS) and burnout among SANE nurses. Cross-sectional interviews were conducted with nurses from a random sample of SANE programs. The interview measured organizational and demographic variables and current levels of STS and burnout. STS and burnout were found to be related but not identical processes. Organizational variables played a significant role in predicting both outcomes. The results have implications for increasing organizational support as a way of lessening the impact of STS and burnout.

Van Hook, M. P., & Rothenberg, M. (2009). [Quality of life and compassion satisfaction/fatigue and burnout in child welfare workers: A study of the child welfare workers in community based care organizations in Central Florida](#). *Social Work & Christianity*, 36(1), 36-54.

Given major problems of retention in child welfare programs, this study examined levels of compassion satisfaction, burnout, and compassion fatigue/vicarious trauma among child welfare staff members. These levels were measured in an anonymous survey using The Professional Quality of Life Survey and questions regarding ways respondents dealt with stress and their recommendations for organizations. Compassion satisfaction was positively associated with lower levels of burnout and fatigue. Levels of burnout and compassion fatigue were similar to other helping professions but higher for younger workers and both direct line staff and supervisors working with the most vulnerable and troubled situations. Respondents indicated the need for realistic caseloads and administrative support.

Burns, C. M., Morley, J., Bradshaw, R., & Domene, J. (2008). The emotional impact on and coping strategies employed by police teams investigating internet child exploitation. *Traumatology, 14*(2), 20–31. DOI:10.1177/1534765608319082

Work on Internet child exploitation (ICE) teams require individuals to perform a number of investigative tasks, including viewing graphic images and videos of young children being sexually assaulted and tortured, to identify victims and locate perpetrators. Individuals involved in this work may be at higher risk for experiencing secondary traumatic stress because of the graphic images and sounds to which they are exposed. The impact of ICE investigations and what helps and hinders coping with the work was explored using the Critical Incident Technique with 14 members of a Royal Canadian Mounted Police integrated ICE team. Results suggest that there are a number of organizational and personal strategies that can assist those who work in this field to cope more effectively.

Caringi, J. C., & Hall, J. R. (2008). Secondary traumatic stress and child welfare. *International Journal of Child and Family Welfare, 11*(4), 172–184.

Although secondary traumatic stress (STS) has garnered some attention in related human service fields, it has only recently begun to be investigated in child welfare. In this article I offer a detailed description of the problem of secondary traumatic stress (STS) in child welfare. The focus of this article is on child welfare in the United States; however the ideas and principles may cut across international systems of child protection. First I provide a background to justify a need for a continuing dialog regarding STS and its impact on workers. I then provide a comprehensive review of the literature including both the current state of research and emerging theory regarding STS. Also, I offer a rationale for more research regarding the impact of STS on child welfare workers. The current state of the existing STS literature provides indicators of future needs, however still is filled with mainly gaps and silences.

Osofsky, J. D., Putnam, F. W., & Lederman, C. S. (2008). How to maintain emotional health when working with trauma. *Juvenile and Family Court Journal*, 59(4), 91-102.  
DOI:10.1111/j.1755-6988.2008.00023.x

Vicarious traumatization, compassion fatigue, or secondary traumatization refers to the cumulative effect of working with survivors of traumatic life events as part of everyday work. Although this issue has been acknowledged and addressed among professionals such as police officers and medical professionals, it has been discussed less among juvenile and family court judges who also experience secondary traumatic stress. In fact, in one recent study, a majority of judges reported one or more symptoms of secondary traumatization. This article describes the common signs and symptoms of secondary trauma, job-related factors that contribute to secondary trauma among judges, and the potential negative impact on organizational performance. The authors conclude with specific recommendations tailored for juvenile and family court judges.

Sommer, C. A. (2008). [Vicarious traumatization, trauma-sensitive supervision, and counselor preparation](#). *Counselor Education and Supervision*, 48(1), 61-71.  
DOI:10.1002/j.1556-6978.2008.tb00062.x

Counselor educators have an ethical responsibility to prepare counselors and supervisors to detect and resolve vicarious traumatization in themselves and their supervisees. This article reviews relevant literature on vicarious traumatization and strategies to mitigate it. Also included is a review of the American Counseling Association's (2005) *ACA Code of Ethics* and the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs' (2007) proposed 2009 standards as each relates to trauma counseling and vicarious traumatization. Specific counselor preparation practices are suggested.

Bride, B. E., Jones, J. L., & MacMaster, S. A. (2007). Correlates of secondary traumatic stress in child protective service workers. *Journal of Evidence-Based Social Work*, 4(3/4), 69–80. DOI:10.1300/J394v04n03\_05

The purpose of this study was to add to the limited research on secondary traumatic stress in child welfare by investigating correlates of secondary traumatic stress (STS) in child protective services workers. Specifically, we examined the relationship between levels of STS in CPS professionals and personal history of trauma, peer and administrative support, intent to remain employed in child welfare, professional experience, and size of caseload. This study documents the existence of secondary traumatic stress in the population and the relationship between levels of secondary traumatic stress in CPS professionals and the group of potential correlates: personal history of trauma in the past year and lifetime, peer support, administrative support, intent to remain employed in child welfare, professional experience, and size of caseload.

Bride, B. E. (2007). Prevalence of secondary traumatic stress among social workers. *Social Work*, 52(1), 63–70. DOI:10.1093/sw/52.1.63

Social workers are increasingly being called on to assist survivors of childhood abuse, domestic violence, violent crime, disasters, and war and terrorism. It has become increasingly apparent that the psychological effects of traumatic events extend beyond those directly affected. Secondary traumatic stress (STS) is becoming viewed as an occupational hazard of providing direct services to traumatized populations. The purpose of the present study was to investigate the prevalence of STS in a sample of social workers by examining the frequency of individual symptoms; the frequency with which diagnostic criteria for posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) are met; and the severity of STS levels. Results indicate that social workers engaged in direct practice are highly likely to be secondarily exposed to traumatic events through their work with traumatized

populations, many social workers are likely to experience at least some symptoms of STS, and a significant minority may meet the diagnostic criteria for PTSD.

Way, I., VanDeusen, K., & Cottrell, T. (2007). Vicarious trauma: Predictors of clinician's disrupted cognitions about self-esteem and self-intimacy. *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse, 16*(4), 81-98. DOI:10.1300/J070v16n04\_05

This study examined vicarious trauma in clinicians who provide sexual abuse treatment (N = 383). A random sample of clinical members from the Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers and American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children were surveyed. Vicarious trauma was measured using the Trauma Stress Institute Belief Scale (Pearlman, 2003). Maltreatment was measured using the Childhood Trauma Questionnaire (Bernstein & Fink, 1998). Respondents reported high rates of childhood maltreatment. Simultaneous multiple regression analyses were used to examine relationships between gender, age, maltreatment history, and vicarious trauma. Male gender predicted greater disrupted cognitions about self-esteem and self-intimacy. Clinician age and childhood emotional neglect predicted greater disrupted cognitions about self-intimacy. Implications for education, practice, and research are discussed.

Adams, R. E., Boscarino, J. A., & Figley, C. R. (2006). [Compassion fatigue and psychological distress among social workers: A validation study](#). *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 76*, 103-108. DOI:10.1037/0002-9432.76.1.103

Few studies have focused on caring professionals and their emotional exhaustion from working with traumatized clients, referred to as compassion fatigue (CF). The present study had 2 goals: (a) to assess the psychometric properties of a CF scale, and (b) to examine the scale's predictive validity in a multivariate model. The data came from a survey of social workers living in New York City following the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center. Factor analyses indicated that the CF scale measured

multiple dimensions. After overlapping items were eliminated, the scale measured 2 key underlying dimension -- secondary trauma and job burnout. In a multivariate model, these dimensions were related to psychological distress, even after other risk factors were controlled. The authors discuss the results in light of increasing the ability of professional caregivers to meet the emotional needs of their clients within a stressful environment without experiencing CF.

Conrad, D., & Kellar-Guenther, Y. (2006). Compassion fatigue, burnout, and compassion satisfaction among Colorado child protection workers. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 30(10), 1071-1080. DOI:10.1016/j.chiabu.2006.03.009

The goal of this study was to understand better the risk of compassion fatigue (the trauma suffered by the helping professional) and burnout (emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced sense of personal accomplishment), and the potential for compassion satisfaction (the fulfillment from helping others and positive collegial relationships) among Colorado county child protection staff using the Compassion Satisfaction/Fatigue Self-Test Figley, C. R., & Stamm, B. H. (1996). Psychometric review of Compassion Fatigue Self-Test. In B. H. Stamm (Ed.), *Measurement of stress, trauma, and adaptation* (pp. 127-130). Lutherville, MD: Sidran Press. An additional goal was to test the relationship of these three constructs to each other. METHOD: A self-report instrument developed by Stamm and Figley was used to measure the risk of compassion fatigue and burnout and the potential for compassion satisfaction among 363 child protection staff participating in a secondary trauma training seminar. RESULTS: Participants were significantly more likely to have high risk of compassion fatigue, extremely low risk of burnout, and good potential for compassion satisfaction. Participants with high compassion satisfaction had lower levels of compassion fatigue ( $p=.000$ ; mean=35.73 high compassion satisfaction group, mean=43.56 low group) and lower levels of burnout ( $p=.000$ ; mean=32.99 high compassion satisfaction group, mean=41.69 low group).

CONCLUSION: Approximately 50% of Colorado county child protection staff suffered from "high" or "very high" levels of compassion fatigue. The risk of burnout was considerably lower. More than 70% of staff expressed a "high" or "good" potential for compassion satisfaction. We believe compassion satisfaction may help mitigate the effects of burnout.

Depanfilis, D. (2006). Compassion fatigue, burnout, and compassion satisfaction: Implications for retention of workers. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 30(10), 1067–1069. DOI:10.1016/j.chiabu.2006.08.002

The purpose of the Conrad and Kellar-Guenther (2006) study in this issue of the *Journal* was to understand better the risk of compassion fatigue (the trauma suffered by the helping professional) and burnout (emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced sense of personal accomplishment), and the potential for compassion satisfaction (the fulfillment from helping others and positive collegial relationships) among child protection staff in Colorado. In this study, approximately 50% of child protection staff suffered from high or very high levels of compassion fatigue, but the risk of burnout was considerably lower. Participants with high compassion satisfaction had lower levels of compassion fatigue and lower levels of burnout. Overall, more than 70% of staff expressed a high or good potential for compassion satisfaction. Based on the findings from this study, the authors believe that compassion satisfaction may help mitigate the effects of burnout.

Horwitz, M. (2006). Work-related effects in child protection social workers. *Journal of Social Service Research*, 32(3), 1–18. DOI:10.1300/J079v32n03\_01

Child welfare workers are exposed to a variety of workplace events that could overwhelm them. This study examined whether negative workplace events were associated with



workplace trauma effects amongst child welfare workers, and considered whether job support or job satisfaction moderated the influence of events on effects. Vicarious events were more highly associated with trauma effects ( $r = 0.54, p < 0.000$ ) than were direct events ( $r = 0.28, p < 0.000$ ), and neither job support nor job satisfaction moderated the relationship. Workplace trauma events accounted for substantial variability in workplace trauma effects ( $R^2 = 0.344$ ) in the final regression model tested. The discussion addresses opportunities for increasing worker safety, methods for supporting workers in managing negative effects and implications for future research.

Perron, B. E., & Hiltz, B. S. (2006). Burnout and secondary trauma among forensic interviewers of abused children. *Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal*, 23(2), 216-234. DOI:10.1007/s10560-005-0044-3

This study examined factors associated with burnout and secondary trauma among forensic interviewers of abused children. Sixty-six forensic interviewers who are affiliated with advocacy centers across the United States completed an online survey. The Oldenburg Burnout Inventory and Secondary Traumatic Stress Scale were used to measure burnout and secondary trauma, respectively. Results indicate that organizational satisfaction has a moderate inverse relationship with burnout and a slight inverse relationship with secondary trauma. The number of forensic interviews conducted or length of employment in forensic interviewing did not have a strong relationship with either burnout or secondary trauma.

VanBergeijk, E. O., & Sarmiento, T. L. L. (2006). The consequences of reporting child maltreatment: Are school personnel at risk for secondary traumatic stress? *Brief Treatment and Crisis Intervention*, 6(1), 79-98. DOI:10.1093/brief-treatment/mhj003

As mandated reporters, school personnel are exposed to child maltreatment. Often these experiences result in a range of emotional, psychological, and physical symptoms and in some cases these symptoms may comprise Secondary Traumatic Stress (STS). In this study, grounded theory methods were used to analyze the experiences of 28 school personnel involved in mandated reporting of child maltreatment. Based on these narratives, a conceptual model is proposed for the development of STS among school personnel. STS within this population is a result of an interaction between the individual characteristics of the reporter, the community's historical precedence for violence, the current level of violence in the community, reporter's fears of what might occur once a report has been made, and unintended consequences of previous reports of child maltreatment.

VanDeusen, K. M., & Way, I. (2006). Vicarious trauma: An exploratory study of the impact of providing sexual abuse treatment on clinician's trust and intimacy. *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse*, 15(1), 69-85. DOI:10.1300/J070v15n01\_04

This study examined vicarious trauma effects in male and female clinicians who treat sexual abuse survivors ( $n = 111$ ) and sexual offenders ( $n = 272$ ). The national survey was conducted using a random sample of clinical members of two professional organizations. Analyses tested the relationships between demographic variables, maltreatment history, client population served, and cognitions about trust of and intimacy with others, using the Trauma Stress Institute Belief Scale (TSIBS-R-L, Pearlman 2003), the Childhood Trauma Questionnaire (CTQ, Bernstein & Fink, 1998), and author-generated questions. Respondents reported high rates of multiple forms of childhood maltreatment; however there was no relationship between history of child sexual abuse

and vicarious trauma effects. Scores for self-reported disruption in cognitions about intimacy with others exceeded norms for mental health professionals. Sequential regression analyses were used to examine theoretically-derived variables. Implications for practice and research are detailed.

Wright, R., Powell, M. B., & Ridge, D. (2006). Child abuse investigation: An in-depth analysis of how police officers perceive and cope with daily work challenges. *Policing: An International Journal of Police Strategies & Management*, 29(3), 498–512.  
DOI:10.1108/13639510610684728

The purpose of the current study was two-fold: to explore police officers' perceptions of the daily challenges involved in child abuse investigation and how those challenges affect their ability to undertake child abuse investigations, and to explore how these challenges are managed on a daily basis. This study employed a qualitative research design. In depth interviews were conducted with a diverse sample of 25 police officers working in child abuse units across three Australian states. Inductive thematic analysis revealed that heavy caseload and collaboration with other professional groups are two key sources of negative work stress frequently associated with child abuse investigation. Further, despite the provision of organisational strategies aimed at reducing work stress, the officers tended to rely predominantly on informal coping mechanisms. This study has raised many questions for further research aimed at developing interventions to assist police organisations in managing work stress.

LaRowe, K. (2005). *Breath of relief: Transforming compassion fatigue into flow*. Acanthus Publishing.

This text explains compassion fatigue is pervasive among care giving professionals and family members who are caring for a loved one who is suffering, and also affects the rest society with the constant exposure to the sounds of suffering, the images of trauma, and

the threats of war and terrorism. FlowMotion is highlighted as a method for releasing the stagnant energy trapped in the body and breaking the adrenaline short circuit of compassion fatigue. Based on Qigong, an ancient Chinese marital art used to harmonize breath, energy, and movement, FlowMotion is a series of movements and breathing exercises designed to provide relief from physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual exhaustion. An introduction shares three basic governing principles of the Healer-Warrior philosophy: self-honesty, personal responsibility, and self-expression. Chapters then discuss the caregiving personality, the cost of caregiving, the impact of secondary stress on the body, the connection between the heart and the brain, and the power of breath. Following chapters describe breathing exercises for relief, awareness, acceptance, and transformation, and the process of FlowMotion and transformation energy into motion.

Regeher, C., Hemsworth, D., Leslie, B., Howe, P., & Chau, S. (2004). Predictors of post-traumatic distress in child welfare workers: A linear structural equation model. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 26(4), 331-346.  
DOI:10.1016/j.childyouth.2004.02.003

Two important bodies of literature explore the issue of stress in social workers, that investigating the impact of burnout and that investigating the impact of traumatic events. This study integrates these two concepts and tests a hypothesized model for predicting post-traumatic distress in child welfare workers. In this model, individual, incident and organizational factors combined to produce post-traumatic stress distress in child welfare workers. That is, individuals with a greater sense of control over their lives and a better ability to engage in meaningful relationships with others reported lower levels of distress. In addition, those who had less recent and less frequent exposures reported lower levels of distress. However, the strongest predictor was the organizational environment one aspect of which was ongoing, chronic stressors. It thus appears that critical events in child welfare practice are encountered by individuals whose resources

may already be taxed through coping on an ongoing basis with high levels of challenge and stress, thereby increasing the intensity of trauma reactions.

Bell, H., Kulkarni, S., & Dalton, L. (2003). Organizational prevention of vicarious trauma. *Families in Society: The Journal of Contemporary Human Services*, 84(4), 463-470. DOI:10.1606/1044-3894.131

For the past 30 years, researchers and practitioners have been concerned about the impact of work stress experienced by social workers. Although research on burnout has been a useful field of exploration, a new concern has arisen about work stresses specifically associated with work with victims of trauma. The concept of vicarious trauma provides insights into the stresses of this particular kind of work. Like the burnout research, early research on vicarious trauma has identified both personal and organizational correlates. In this article, the authors review the growing literature on the organizational components of vicarious trauma and suggest changes in organizational culture, workload, group support, supervision, self-care, education, and work environment that may help prevent vicarious trauma in staff.

Bride, B. E., Jones, J. L., MacMaster, S. A., & Shatila, S. (2003). The Tennessee Child Protective Services Supervisors Development Project: Evaluating process, outcome, and the role of secondary traumatic stress and burnout. *Professional Development: The International Journal of Continuing Social Work Education*, 6(2), 79-84.

This article provides an overview of the evaluation plan for the Tennessee Child Protective Services Supervisors Development Project. Specifically, it describes three primary components of the evaluation design: process evaluation, outcome evaluation, and examination of the role of secondary traumatic stress and burnout. Further, this article

describes a plan to use a Web-based survey and the instruments selected for data collection.

Nelson-Gardell, D., & Harris, D. (2003). Childhood abuse history, secondary traumatic stress, and child welfare workers. *Child Welfare: Journal of Policy, Practice, and Program*, 82(1), 5-26.

Social workers are exposed to trauma vicariously through the trauma of their clients. This phenomenon, called secondary traumatic stress, vicarious traumatization, or compassion fatigue, presents a risk of negative personal psychological consequences. Based on a sample of 166 child welfare workers and using standardized measures, the study findings document the link between a personal history of primary trauma, childhood abuse or neglect, and the heightened risk for secondary traumatic stress in child welfare workers.

Regehr, C., Chau, S., Leslie, B., & Howe, P. (2002). Inquiries into deaths of children in care: The impact on child welfare workers and their organizations. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 24(12), 885-902. DOI:10.1016/S0190-7409(02)00250-5

In recent years public inquiries into the murders of children have served to dramatically shift child welfare services throughout North America and Great Britain. The present study is a qualitative analysis of the impact of these death reviews and the subsequent changes to child welfare services on child welfare workers. The themes that emerged occurred at three primary levels, distress experienced by individual workers, radiated distress throughout the agency and weakened public and community support. Factors contributing to distress by individual workers included re-exposure to traumatic material, the all-consuming nature of inquiries and the critical nature of inquiries. Radiated distress occurred as a result of empathy for colleagues undergoing an inquiry and changes emanating from the inquiry which constricted practice and increased the policing

function of child welfare. Finally, negative media and public attention contributed to concerns that all members of child welfare organizations were under scrutiny and had become tainted. While accountability and continuous improvement of services are worthy goals, we must continue to search for accountability processes that do not have such a devastating impact on child welfare workers and their organizations.

Stevens, M., & Higgins, D. J. (2002). The influence of risk and protective factors on burnout experienced by those who work with maltreated children. *Child Abuse Review*, 11(5), 313–331. DOI:10.1002/car.754

Studied the degree (and type) of burnout and trauma symptoms, personal histories and coping strategies retrospectively reported by those who work with maltreated children and their families. A self-selected sample of 44 24–54 yr old workers in Victoria, Australia completed a self-report questionnaire assessing childhood maltreatment, family background characteristics, current adjustment, coping strategies and burnout. Results show that workers reported high levels of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization, and a low to moderate sense of personal accomplishment. Family background characteristics predicted the occurrence of maltreatment and current adjustment, and a personal history of maltreatment predicted current trauma symptoms but not burnout. Workers most frequently used problem-focused coping strategies and sought social support; however, coping strategies were not associated with the level of either trauma symptom or burnout. Despite employing positive coping strategies, their efficacy may be affected by other interpersonal, intra-individual and job resource issues.

Adams, K. B., Matto, H. C., & Harrington, D., (2001). The traumatic stress institute belief scale as a measure of vicarious trauma in a national sample of clinical social workers. *Families in Society*, 82(4), 363-371. DOI:10.1606/1044-3894.178

The authors report on a study of convergent and discriminant validity of the Traumatic Stress Institute Belief Scale (TSI) Revision L (Traumatic Stress Institute, 1994) as a measure of vicarious trauma in a random sample of master's level clinical social workers. Forty-nine items from six subscales of the TSI were used. The scale purports to measure disturbed beliefs that may be caused by direct traumatic experience or repeated exposure to details of clients' traumatic stories. Results of correlational analyses of the TSI score with study variables and exploratory multiple regression analysis on the TSI score indicate its association with younger age, more reported somatic symptoms, lower annual salaries, lower scores on the Perceived Social Support (PSS) Friends subscale (Procidano & Heller, 1983), and greater burnout as measured by the Maslach Burnout Inventory (Maslach & Jackson, 1986). TSI scores were not associated with social workers' personal trauma history, their reported weekly amount of face-to-face client contact, or a self-report of the level of intrusiveness of client material into the social workers' lives. TSI scores appear to be measuring perceptions about self and work that, like burnout, may relate to social workers' general outlook, not necessarily to the effects of traumatic stress, vicarious or otherwise. Significant overlap of the TSI with burnout scores in this social work sample suggests a lack of clear distinction between burnout and vicarious trauma.

Benatar, M. (2000). A qualitative study of the effect of a history of childhood sexual abuse on therapists who treat survivors of sexual abuse. *Journal of Trauma and Dissociation*, 1(3), 9-28. DOI:10.1300/J229v01n03\_02

This qualitative study explored the effect of a history of sexual abuse on therapists who work with survivors of childhood sexual abuse. A comparison was made between experience therapists who reported such a history and those who did not. Themes relating to vicarious traumatization (VT) were examined as well as data relating to



positive self-transformation (PST), a category relating to enduring change in therapists of a positive nature. No notable differences were evident between groups with regard to VT or PST. Overall similarities were more striking than differences in the two groups examined in this study. This result is consistent with some empirical literature but contradicts some other studies. Therapists' experience with trauma work, and similarities between patients' and therapists' trauma histories, appear to be important factors in evaluating the impact on therapists in their work with sexual abuse survivors. Experienced therapists with a childhood sexual abuse history do not appear to be more vulnerable to VT than their counterparts without such a history.

Dane, B. (2000). Child welfare workers: An innovative approach for interacting with secondary trauma. *Journal of Social Work Education, 36*(1), 27-38.  
DOI:10.1080/10437797.2000.10778987

Although child welfare workers (CWW) are assigned a critical role to protect children, little focus has been placed on helping them cope with stress and secondary trauma that can occur when they observe and hear the affect-laden experiences described by clients. This article summarizes two focus groups which provided data to develop a two day training module for CWW to gain knowledge and skills through didactic and experimental learning. The model offers coping strategies to respond to job stress and vicarious traumatization. Benefits and implications for agency and school collaboration are discussed.

Brady, J. L., Guy, J. D., Poelstra, D. L., & Brokaw, B. F. (1999). Vicarious traumatization, spirituality, and the treatment of sexual abuse survivors: A national survey of women psychotherapists. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, 30(4), 386–393. DOI:10.1037/0735-7028.30.4.386

Should psychotherapists limit their clinical work with trauma survivors to avoid being traumatized themselves? Vicarious traumatization (VT)—the symptoms similar to posttraumatic stress disorder and the disruption in cognitive schemas reported in clinicians who are exposed to the trauma material of their clients—was assessed in a national survey of 1,000 women psychotherapists. Therapists with higher levels of exposure to sexual abuse material reported significantly more trauma symptoms but no significant disruption of cognitive schemas. Spiritual well-being, a key area thought to be damaged by VT, was found to be higher for those clinicians who saw more sexual abuse survivors.

Shapiro, J. P., Dorman, R. L., Burkey, W. M., & Welker, C. J. (1999). Predictors of job satisfaction and burnout in child abuse professionals: Coping, cognition, and victimization history. *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse*, 7(4), 23–42. DOI:10.1300/J070v07n04\_03

This study investigated coping style, work-related cognition, and victimization history as predictors of job satisfaction and burnout in child abuse professionals. Subjects were 215 participants in a conference on sexual abuse victim treatment. We developed a questionnaire assessing a variety of cognitions related to work with human services clients. One of the findings was that job satisfaction showed no relation to items portraying simple optimism or pessimism about helping clients, but satisfaction was related to a number of cognitions that *combined* realism and hope in a distinctive fashion. The coping strategies of Planful Problem Solving, Positive Reappraisal, and Seeking Social Support were associated with positive work experience, and the coping mechanisms of Confrontive Coping, Escape/Avoidance, and Accepting Responsibility

were associated with negative work experience. Job satisfaction was higher in subjects reporting a childhood history of sexual abuse or neglect.

Anderson, D. G. (2000). Coping strategies and burnout among veteran child protection workers. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 24(6), 839-848. DOI:10.1016/S0145-2134(00)00143-5

The first objective was to learn how veteran (2 years or more) child protective service (CPS) investigations workers cope with job stress: and secondly, to examine the relationship between coping strategies and levels of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and sense of reduced personal accomplishment (burnout syndrome). Method: Cross-sectional, self-report methodology was used to measure coping strategies and the burnout syndrome. The voluntary subjects were 151 front-line CPS workers with at least 2 years experience in a southeastern Department of Social Services. They attended one of nine stress management workshops provided in various locations around the state. Quantitative analyses were run on the data. Results: These workers perceived themselves to use Engaged (active) coping strategies more than Disengaged (avoidant) strategies. Sixty-two percent of participants scored in the high range on Emotional Exhaustion, the aspect some researchers consider to be the heart of Burnout. Those who used Engaged coping were less likely to feel depersonalized and more likely to feel a sense of personal accomplishment. Those who used Disengaged coping were more likely to feel emotionally exhausted, depersonalized, and to have a sense of reduced personal accomplishment. Conclusion: Neither the use of active nor avoidant coping strategies saved these workers from Emotional Exhaustion. The problem-focused strategies they are taught and use most do not help deal with the emotional content and context of their work, suggesting the use of emotion-focused coping to prevent and remediate burnout.

Kinard, E. M. (1996). Conducting research on child maltreatment: Effects on researchers. *Violence and Victims, 11*(1), 65–69. DOI:10.1891/0886-6708.11.1.65

This article discusses child maltreatment research and the potential negative psychological consequences on the researchers themselves. Several strategies are suggested for providing support to staff conducting research on emotionally charged topics. Working in teams, encouraging involvement in community activism related to the research topic, limiting the number of consecutive hours reviewing case records, providing a forum for discussing case material and staff responses to the material, and maintaining a sense of humor are among the strategies suggested to minimize negative psychological consequences. Recommendations for future studies include systematic inquiries into the effects of conducting research on researchers to determine if staff responses to emotionally disturbing work varies by gender, ethnicity, age, education, personal experiences or professional background. Assessing staff members' knowledge and attitudes about the study topic at the beginning and the end of the project is also suggested as a means of providing information useful for tailoring support strategies to staff needs.

Manion, I. G., McIntyre, J., Firestone, P., Ligezinska, M., Ensom, R., & Wells, G. (1996). Secondary traumatization in parents following the disclosure of extrafamilial child sexual abuse: Initial effects. *Child Abuse & Neglect, 20*(11), 1095–1109. DOI:10.1016/0145-2134(96)00098-1

Disclosure or discovery of extrafamilial sexual abuse (ESA) has the potential to traumatize the entire family system. Little controlled research has examined the initial reactions of parents to this type of trauma. The present study evaluated the adjustment of 93 parents (63 mothers and 30 fathers) within 3 months of the disclosure of ESA. Parents' functioning was compared to that of a nonclinical comparison group of 136 parents (74 mothers, 62 fathers). Parent adjustment was assessed using self-report measures of psychological distress, parent competence, family functioning, marital functioning, life stressors, and

environmental support. Results revealed that mothers of sexually abused children, in comparison to mothers of nonabused children, experienced greater overall emotional distress, poorer family functioning, and lower satisfaction in their parenting role. Fathers of sexually abused children also experienced greater overall emotional distress relative to comparison fathers but their level of distress remained below that of mothers. Standard and hierarchical multiple regression on maternal self-reports revealed that mothers' satisfaction with their perceived level of environmental support predicted their emotional functioning. Abuse-related variables did not contribute to the prediction of emotional functioning. These results emphasize the need to expand our focus beyond the child victims to the traumatized families and to normalize the potential for all close family members to be vulnerable to experience adjustment difficulties following ESA.

Shapiro, J. P., Burkey, W. M., Dorman, R. L., & Welker, C. J. (1996). Job satisfaction and burnout in child abuse professionals: Measure development, factor analysis, and job characteristics. *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse*, 5(3), 21-38.  
DOI:10.1300/J070v05n03\_02

This study developed a measure called the Human Services Job Satisfaction Questionnaire (HSJSQ) and pilot tested the instrument with 215 participants in a training on sex abuse victim treatment. Forty-five of 49 items met criteria for part-whole correlation and correlation with a validation item, and so were retained in the HSJSQ. Scores were lower in subjects who reported a desire to change fields. Factor analysis indicated six factors, labeled Self-Actualization, Achievement Support, Job-Related Affect, Working Conditions, Professional Self-Esteem, and Futility/Avoidance. Relations between HSJSQ scores and a number of demographic, job, and professional variables are reported.

Figley, C. R. (Ed.). (1995). *Compassion fatigue: Coping with secondary traumatic stress in those who treat the traumatized*. Brunner-Routledge.

Covers compassion fatigue as secondary traumatic stress, survival strategies, Sensory-based therapy for crisis counselors, treating therapists with vicarious trauma, and prevention strategies for secondary traumatic stress disorder and compassion fatigue.

Pearlman, L. A., & Mac Ian, P. S. (1995). Vicarious traumatization: An empirical study of the effects of trauma work on trauma therapists. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, 26(6), 558–565. DOI:10.1037/0735-7028.26.6.558

This study examined vicarious traumatization (i.e., the deleterious effects of trauma therapy on the therapist) in 188 self-identified trauma therapists. Participants completed questionnaires about their exposure to survivor clients' trauma material as well as their own psychological well-being. Those newest to the work were experiencing the most psychological difficulties (as measured by the TSI Belief Scale; L. A. Pearlman, in press-a) and Symptom Checklist-90—Revised (L. Derogatis, 1977) symptoms. Trauma therapists with a personal trauma history showed more negative effects from the work than those without a personal history. Trauma work appeared to affect those without a personal trauma history in the area of other-esteem. The study indicates the need for more training in trauma therapy and more supervision and support for both newer and survivor trauma therapists.

Follette, V. M., Polusny, M. M., & Milbeck, K. (1994). Mental health and law enforcement professionals: Trauma history, psychological symptoms, and impact of providing services to child sexual abuse survivors. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, 25(3), 275–282. DOI:10.1037/0735-7028.25.3.275

A survey of 558 mental health and law enforcement professionals assessed current and past trauma experiences, exposure to traumatic client material, and the sequelae of both

of those types of personal and professional trauma experiences. Results indicated that 29.8% of therapists and 19.6% of officers reported experiencing some form of childhood trauma. The two groups differed in their reports of psychological symptoms, trauma specific symptoms, and work-related post-traumatic stress disorder symptoms. There was some evidence that professionals with a history of child abuse reported significantly higher levels of symptoms that have been associated with trauma survivors in past research. However, more proximal variables seem to have greater relevance to current functioning. The implications for training and prevention of secondary traumatization are discussed.

McCann, I. L., & Pearlman, L. A. (1990). Vicarious traumatization: A framework for understanding the psychological effects of working with victims. *Journal of Traumatic Stress, 3*(1), 131-149. DOI:10.1007/BF00975140

Within the context of their new constructivist self-development theory, the authors discuss therapists' reactions to clients' traumatic material. The phenomenon they term "vicarious traumatization" can be understood as related both to the graphic and painful material trauma clients often present and to the therapist's unique cognitive schemas or beliefs, expectations, and assumptions about self and others. The authors suggest ways that therapists can transform and integrate clients' traumatic material in order to provide the best services to clients, as well as to protect themselves against serious harmful effects.