

The law enforcement response to sexual assaults is under increasing scrutiny, and with that scrutiny increasing pressure to improve the investigation of this underreported crime. One reform in particular has been held up as a promising practice: using a trauma informed response in investigation sexual assault.

But what exactly is a “trauma informed response”? This thought provoking session will cover the major components of the trauma informed response and provide insight and examples of how to incorporate the understanding of trauma into all phases of the sexual assault investigation. The session will review cutting edge research to explain the neurobiology of trauma and how it effects the survivor’s memory and behavior before, during and after a sexual assault. Building on that research and using real-world examples the session will present the basics of integrating the knowledge of the neurobiology of trauma into the Forensic Experiential Trauma Interview technique. The session will include new, and not-so-new but often overlooked investigative strategies focused on the offender and designed to gather the evidence needed to successfully arrest, charge, prosecute and convict perpetrators of sexual assault.

#### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

As a result of this session, participants will be better able to:

1. Identify the traumatic nature of sexual assault.
2. List the ways that trauma effects the victim's memory and behavior before, during and after the assault.
3. List the most common behaviors of victims of sexual assault attributable to the trauma of the assault that have traditionally been misunderstood as indications of deception.
4. Identify the components of the Forensic Experiential Trauma Interview technique.