

# Ask Yourself: Am I Providing Trauma-Informed Care?



## Trauma can result from:

- Social Determinants of Health concerns related to transportation, housing, intimate partner violence, food, or utilities
- Individual or household substance use or mental health disorders
- Prior birth trauma
- Lack of Respectful Maternity Care (RMC)  
*...and other personal or psychosocial experiences across the life course.*

## Actionable Tips To Help Patients:

### Feel **SEEN**

- Unconditional positive regard
- Eye contact
- Acknowledge what you see (e.g., "You look uncomfortable, how can I help?")
- Grounding in the present

### Feel **HEARD**

- Remind them that their voice matters
- Use trauma-informed language
- Ask them how they would like to be supported (e.g., "Do you prefer distraction during the exam, or should I talk you through it step-by-step?")
- Share trauma disclosures with team (with patient consent) so the patient does not need to retell or relive trauma

### Feel **IN CONTROL**

- Always ask for consent before touching a patient in any way
- Knock before entering room and ask for permission to enter
- Give control to the patient for initiation and termination of procedures
- Help maintain modesty
- Reflect on your reaction to a birth plan/preferences
- Respect the purpose of a birth plan/preferences: it is what you need to know about the patient so you can provide them with excellent care.