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Purpose

Trauma-informed principles in practice

Trauma-informed principles (TIPs) support healing from adversity.
TIPs:

- Recognize the impact of trauma.
- Support conditions for healing.
- Minimize harm.

Teams can implement TIPs by:

- Developing practices to support healing.
- Promoting safety and trust.
- Collaborating with partners.

WE CAN'T DO THIS WORK ALONE!

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This toolkit was made possible from a trusting relationship and work done with **The Latina Center** located in Richmond, California. Through our collaboration over several years, there were insights and learnings we hope can benefit others as we share them in this toolkit.

The main takeaway is that implementing TIPs benefits everyone. Together, we can work to disrupt the trauma cycle and create paths for healing for ourselves and our communities.



Using this toolkit

This toolkit offers best practices for implementing TIPs. You will find tools and checklists that you can adapt.

Try to include colleagues and other service providers for support.

- Begin with a shared understanding as a team of the impact of trauma on people's well-being.
- Extend this understanding with partners and communities.

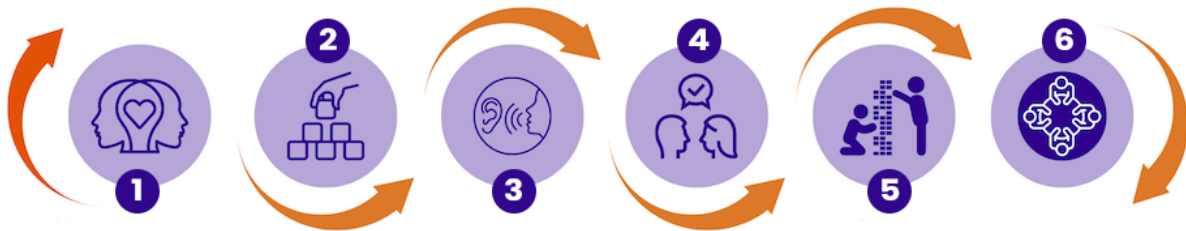
As you use this toolkit, consider the needs of the people you are working with to create an environment of belonging and inclusion. For example, consider accessibility needs when working with partners and communities. You may want to provide this information translated into other languages or in more audio or visual formats.

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Framework

Implementing trauma-informed principles in practice

This toolkit follows a collaborative change framework. This framework centers an understanding of TIPs so that we can better support healing. We encourage collaboration with other service providers and the people you are serving.



01

Understand TIPs

UNDERSTAND the effects of trauma, establish common ground, and learn about trauma-informed principles in practice.

02

Develop a roadmap

DEVELOP a roadmap. Consider the landscape, identify and cultivate relationships with potential partners, and develop a vision for the future.

03

Create spaces

CREATE spaces for dialogue and exchange. Take time to listen to stories that may have common threads as a tool to support our practice.

04

Co-design practices

CO-DESIGN practices together. Use what you are learning to inform your work. Foster a trusting environment in decision making. Be open to explore.

05

Implement practices

IMPLEMENT and use TIPs while addressing specific needs. Include community in implementation.

06

Amplify efforts

AMPLIFY practices and partnerships. Recognize and share what is working. Celebrate success.

The framework is non-linear. At any point you might move from one step to another. Or you can go back and review a point once more.

Each person and community experiences adversity and healing differently. You can adapt this framework to the people you are serving.

[Click here](#) to download the change framework in English.

Understand trauma-informed principles

Trauma-informed principles help us understand the impact that trauma can have in the communities where we work. There are six trauma-informed principles that guide a trauma-informed approach (SAMHSA, 2014). [Click here](#) to learn more. To learn more about the impact of trauma, please visit the module: [Trauma 101](#).

Building on these principles, [Trauma-Transformed](#) developed the following principles for Trauma-Informed Systems (TIS).



Create a space to develop shared understandings

- The impact of trauma is widespread.
- Many people we interact with on a daily basis experience trauma.
- We may have our own experiences of trauma.
- These experiences can shape a person's perspective and relationships.

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Establish common ground

- Create places where people feel safe
- Nurture relationships that support healing.
- Support each other and work towards similar goals
- Grow partnerships that will support our work.

Adopting a trauma-informed approach

Here are ways teams can commit to these principles:

- Recognize our own trauma, beliefs, biases and strengths.
- Promote safe, stable, and trusting relationships.
- Create dependable, healthy, and compassionate places of work.
- Empower others.
- Listen for stories that hold trauma in place or support healing.
- Provide spaces for recovery to happen.
- Meet people where they are at.
- Develop more inclusive spaces.
- Promote curiosity and open-mindedness.

Expand understanding of TIPs with partners

- Talk about how you understand each principle.
- Explore how these principles could look like in practice.
- Discuss potentially complicated issues.
- Develop shared language.
- Create a document to promote mutual understanding.
- Establish regular learning and check-in meetings.

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Use the following template to imagine how the principles could look in practice. Printable version [here](#) .

Trauma Informed Principles in PRACTICE



For a detailed explanation of these principles look [here](#).

En Español [aquí](#), para más información [aquí](#).

To refresh or learn more about the trauma-informed approaches, please visit the module: [Trauma Informed Approaches](#).

Develop a roadmap

Hopefully you gained some clarity about how to apply TIPs in your work in the last step.

In this step, we will apply the learning into action. Remember to include those you serve along with potential partners.

First, consider the landscape.

1. Make sure you have a good understanding of the population you are serving:
 - Age
 - Gender
 - Race / ethnicity
 - Socioeconomic status
 - Primary language
2. Understand cultural sensitivities to trauma within this population. (Look into cultural responsiveness [here](#))
3. Assess language capacity and language barriers that may exist.

Next, identify other potential partners

- Identify mental health professionals or organizations experienced in trauma-informed care.
- Collaborate with community leaders and advocates who understand the population's needs.
- Consider other providers, such as lawyers, law enforcement agencies that may serve the same population.

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- Establish what partnerships are already working. Repair or reach out to others.
- Recognize existing efforts and explore ways to improve.
- Continue to ask: Who is missing? Remember: The people you serve often know best!

Next, cultivate relationships with open communication.

- Invite partners from the last step to work together.
- Identify a primary contact person.
- Talk about TIPs for shared understanding.
- Host a meeting to explore how trauma affects the population you serve. Remember: If possible, include the people you are giving services to and the community.
- Share and invite others to take workshops that have been helpful in your work. Here are some suggestions, including online modules.
 - **Families Thrive Trauma Modules**
 - Call to Action - Prevention of Interpersonal Violence modules [here](#), en español [aquí](#))
 - Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)
 - Access ACEs handouts in Spanish [here](#).
 - **Cultural Responsiveness Module**
 - Implicit bias
 - LGBTQ, DEI



Then, identify what is already happening and build a vision for the future.

- Build on strengths as you envision the future. Here is a useful practice using scaling questions.

Imagine that your work together is a 10 out of 10 (we got this!) in your efforts to implement trauma-informed principles into practice.

- What would that look like?
- What would the people you serve notice? What would staff notice?

You can then ask, where are we now? On a scale of 1 (we are just getting started) to 10 (we are making excellent progress).

- For whatever number you have given, why have you given it this number (and not 1 lower?)
- What are you and others already doing?
- What is helping you to get to this number?
- What else is needed? What small steps can we take together?

Use this [checklist](#) as an example to guide you when providing services and adapt it as needed. In Spanish [here](#).

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Create spaces to listen to others' lived experiences

Creating spaces to listen and share stories to connect and learn from each other.

- Inform our work.
- Build community
- Identify common threads.
- Gain different and useful perspectives.

Foster opportunities for dialogue and exchange to happen.

- Recognize expertise.
- Empower by taking time to actively listen.
- Apply what you are learning to develop strategies.

“If you want to go fast, go alone.

If you want to go far, go together”

— African Proverb

Storytelling is a form of healing-centered engagement

Storytelling can shift from a deficit-based mental health model. It can expand possibilities and restore well-being. Remember there are many forms of storytelling, for example music, art, quilting.

When we focus on strengths stories we are better able to:

- develop connection,
- support healing and resilience, and provide hope.

Stories become a tool to support our practice.

Stories help:

- Integrate learning into what we do in our work and lives.
- Bring trauma-informed principles to life in a real and concrete way.



Bodiford and Burroughs, 2020

Click [here to read more](#) about how storytelling can help integrate trauma-informed principles into practice.

Click [here to listen to stories](#) from people integrating trauma-informed principles in their work.

Stories can be shared in many ways, some are written, some are told and others are shared through songs. Here's an example of collectively bringing light against domestic violence. ([In Spanish, English subtitles](#)). Another example [here](#).



Co-design trauma-informed practices

Co-design engages partners and those you serve. It helps design practices that are trauma-informed and healing-centered.

Remember: Stories from the last step can help shape trauma-informed practices.

Tips to co-design trauma-informed practices

- Center the voices and needs of those you serve.
- Pay attention to power dynamics. Address any imbalances. Click [here](#) to learn more.
- Ensure shared decision-making.
- Develop and agree on strategies and action plans.
- Be open to exploring alternative options.
- Explore other partnerships needed.
- Identify resources for different situations.
- Foster mutual support and sustainability. Click [here](#) to learn more.

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Implement trauma-informed principles in practice

While providing services

- Engage in continuous learning. Reflect on how you are providing services using trauma-informed principles.
- Empower teams. Creating leadership roles to advance trauma-informed principles in practice.
- Take time to make changes. Provide a realistic time frame for changes.
- Observe barriers. Develop ways to address them.
- Follow and/or adapt your action plan and checklist.
- Recognize (and celebrate!) small steps towards progress.

While working with partners

- Continue to develop and strengthen collaborative relationships. Revisit what relationships are working. Repair or reach out to others.
- Continue to ask: Who is missing?
- Recognize efforts. Talk about ways to improve.
- Consider what is working and consider the barriers. (look at previous charts)
- Continue to develop shared agreements with key partners. (Revisit - you can always circle back to continue learning about TIPs together).

Consider what is working: There may be things that are already in place.

Ask how we can:

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- Build from aspects/efforts that are already in place? (Avoid reinventing the wheel).
- Continue to strengthen trust by establishing regular communication.

Consider barriers: Explore barriers to developing relationships within our teams and with partners.

Ask how we can:

- Have open conversations (with providers and clients).
 - Improve on past obstacles. Be curious in a constructive way.
 - Accept limitations and setbacks. Be open to explore alternative approaches.
-

AIMS is an additional tool to implement small ideas into action. When it comes to making this practice change, what do you think it would take for you and your team to make it happen?

Ability - Having the skills, knowledge and ability to take action.

Interpersonal - Social and environmental influences that support action.

Motivation - Believing the action is important.

Sparks - Making actions routine.

Consider the following example about making a habit of riding a bike.

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Click [here to use the assessment](#).

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Amplify efforts

There is repetition in this toolkit. This helps to:

- Revisit best practices.
- Amplify efforts along the way.

Amplifying trauma-informed practices

- Take care to not re-traumatize people you serve.
- Foster reflection of your own and others' trauma.
- Have honest conversations. Recognize limitations.
- Stimulate growth. Engage in ongoing learning. Use a train the trainer approach.
- Adapt strategies to better meet your communities' needs.
- Empower each other. Foster leadership.
- Support champions, change agents and trauma-informed teams that identify needs/resources to ensure progress and sustainability.
- Build prevention efforts.

Amplify collaboration with other providers

- Co-design strategies.
- Continually align efforts.
- Address challenges.
- Stimulate collaborative growth learning. Create trauma-informed practice cohorts.
- Build shared prevention efforts.



Amplify positive experiences

- Recognize and celebrate success.
- Build on what is working.
- Share learning and stories.

Want to know more? Please contact our team. We will be glad to assist.
Contact info [here](#).