
Building a Trauma-Informed Workforce

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Agenda

01 Adverse Childhood Experiences

02 The Four Rs

03 Principles for trauma-informed organizations

04 Review of policies & practices

05 Literature review

06 Closing & questions

01 Adverse Childhood Experiences

Before your 18th birthday

Did a parent or other adult in your household often or very often
swear at you, insult you, put you down, or humiliate you?
act in a way that made you afraid you might be physically hurt?

Was a parent ever lost to you through divorce, abandonment, or other reason?

Did you live with someone who was a problem drinker or alcoholic, or who used street drugs?

Was a household member depressed or mentally ill, or did a household member attempt suicide?

Take the ACE Quiz - And Learn What it Does and Doesn't Mean (Starescheski 2015)

We Can Prevent Childhood Adversity (CDC 2021)

How do ACEs show up in the workplace?

02 The Four Rs

Provided by the Substance Abuse and
Mental Health Services Administration
(SAMHSA)



Realize

People at all levels of the organization or system have a basic realization about trauma and understand how trauma can affect families, groups, organizations, and communities, as well as individuals.

Recognize

People in the organization are also able to recognize the signs of trauma.

Respond

The program, organization, or system responds by applying the principles of a trauma-informed approach to all areas of functioning.

Resist

re-traumatization

A trauma-informed approach seeks to resist re-traumatization of staff as well as patrons.

03 Six principles for trauma-informed organizations

Safety

Transparency

Peer Support

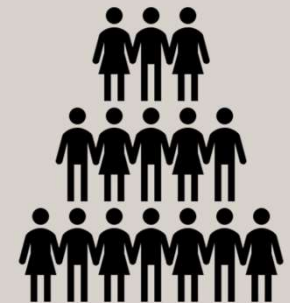
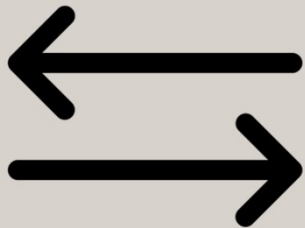
Collaboration

Empowerment

Culture, history, gender

04 Policies that support trauma-informed approaches

Characteristics of a trauma-informed organization



Writing organizational policies

Elements of a trauma-informed policy

Implementing trauma-informed policies

Trauma-informed HR practices

Hiring

Onboarding

Offboarding & turnover

Common/traditional view	Trauma-informed view
Employees choose their actions and behavior and need consequences	Employees want to do well but lack the skills or support, or have learned bad behaviors
Characterizes employee behavior negatively	Characterizes employee behavior constructively
Uses labels to describe employees	Reframes characteristics to identify strengths
Authoritarian	Collaborative
Minimizes coping strategies or tells employees to leave it at home	Creates a supportive work environment that offers healthy coping strategies
Performance-focused	Whole person-focused
Employee should know expectations	Expectations are communicated
Uses jargon	Uses language everyone can understand

Image credit: Milwaukee Public Schools
 "Trauma Informed" Student Codes of Conduct (Walters 2018)

Retain

Practicing the four Rs can
lead to the fifth.



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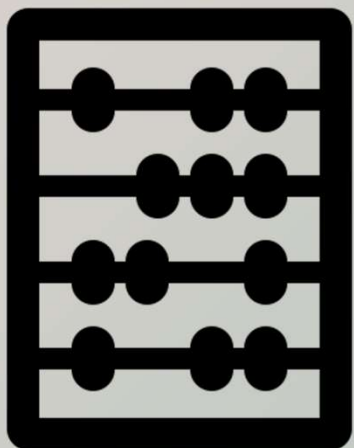
Retention factors

Benefits

Workload

Training

Acknowledgement



SAMHSA's Concept of Trauma and Guidance for a Trauma-Informed Approach (SAMHSA 2014)

White Supremacy Culture - Still Here (Okun 2021)

Advice for Implementation

SAMHSA's Concept of Trauma and Guidance for a Trauma-Informed Approach (SAMHSA 2014)

White Supremacy Culture - Still Here (Okun 2021)



Specific advice after a trauma situation

SAMHSA's Concept of Trauma and Guidance for a Trauma-Informed Approach (SAMHSA 2014)

Urban Library Trauma Study: Final Report (Comito, Zabriskie, et al. 2022)

Do

Decompress

Take it seriously

Communicate

Don't

Micromanage reactions

Judge their response

Ignore the event

(or be perceived to ignore it)

Outcomes

Retention

Customer service

Safer space for POC

05 Literature Review

Next Steps



Quick Start Tool Kit

CTRI: Crisis & Trauma Resource Institute

Trauma Informed Workplace Assessment

A Little Book about Workplace Culture

A Little Book about Trauma Informed Workplaces

Become a Trauma Informed Leader

Urban Library Trauma Study Final Report

06 Questions?

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