

Organizational Self-Assessment Guide

Thank you for your interest in advancing trauma-informed care within your organization. The purpose of this self-assessment is to help you determine which areas of trauma-informed care your organization leadership, staff, and stakeholders would like to target for advancement, as well as plan for implementation and sustainment of trauma informed change practices.

Who should participate in the self-assessment?

This process is designed to facilitate discussion of where your organization has been, and where you would like to go with regard to advancing TIC. It is intended to be an assessment process that leadership completes collaboratively, reflecting your organization as a whole. It will be important to decide which individuals and voices from your organization you would like to include in this discussion before completing the assessment.

It might be 2 key leaders who complete this together, or it could be a team of stakeholders from your organization. We hope you include individuals who offer perspectives important to advancing trauma-informed changes in your organization.

Completing the self-assessment

For each of the trauma-informed care components listed, there is a rating scale and comment section. The rating scale is intended to be a useful visual depiction of the trauma-informed work your organization has done, and the trauma-informed change your organization is interested in. The comment section provides an opportunity to reflect on your organization's journey towards trauma-informed care practices.

After going through each of the components, we ask you to rank the three trauma-informed care components your organization is interested in working on - from "not something we've worked on" to "currently working on this and a significant area of focus." There is also an option to skip rating a component if you feel you are not certain or aware if work in that area has been done. Please keep in mind that it is not necessary to have a specific rating to work on a TIC component. For example, some organization's may want to build off work they have already started, while others may want to begin to tackle an area they have less experience with.

Following this step, you will be prompted to answer a handful of questions related to implementing and sustaining TIC change within your area of interest.

We hope this assessment provides a positive opportunity to explore your trauma-informed care goals with your colleagues. If you have questions, please contact Melissa Bernstein at mbernstein1@rchsd.org

Please list all of the individuals involved in completing this self-assessment guide, along with their job title/role.

From those individuals, who do you foresee being part of the ACTS project moving forward?

Are there others in your organization not involved in the self-assessment process that you foresee being involved in the ACTS project moving forward?

| |
|-------------------------------|
| Trauma Training and Awareness |
|-------------------------------|

Knowledge about traumatic stress is a critical first step for staff to effectively understand, support, and serve those impacted by it.

Advancing Trauma Training and Awareness in the workforce can include:

- Trainings and/or workshops on the impact and prevalence of child trauma exposure for staff, supervisors, and managers
- Showing support and commitment to trauma training and awareness (e.g., allowing time out of staff's schedule to attend such trainings)
- Having systems in place to monitor the impact of training on the workforce
- Internal capacity to ensure that ongoing training and education for the workforce on trauma informed care is available
- A workforce culture where individuals feel knowledgeable and skilled to work sensitively and effectively with trauma survivors
- Available resources for staff and supervisors on ways to incorporate trauma-informed practice and supervision in their work

Please rate the extent to which your system or organization has worked on this area of TIC:

| | Trauma Training and Awareness | | | | |
|----------------|-------------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| NA | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Unable to Rate | Not something we've worked on | Previously worked on this but not currently | Currently doing a little work on this | Currently working on this | Currently working on this & a significant area of focus |

Please explain how you came to your rating (what have you done in the past or are currently doing to work on trauma training and awareness)?

| |
|----------------------------------|
| Secondary Traumatic Stress (STS) |
|----------------------------------|

A stronger and more resilient organization is one that supports and strengthens those exposed to the first hand emotional duress of another.

Advancing Secondary Traumatic Stress in the workforce can include:

- Providing opportunities for learning about and understanding the impact of STS through trainings and/or workshops
- Ensuring supervisors are trained in reflective supervision and managing STS with supervisees
- Staff are given adequate resources for self-care, including supervision, consultation, and peer support that addresses STS
- Staff perceive program managers and supervisors have an understanding of the emotional impact (burnout, vicarious trauma) associated with their work
- Self-care is encouraged and supported with policy and practice
- Procedures that are sensitive to the impact of trauma on the workforce (e.g., asking permission to discuss trauma narratives, use of grounding activities at the end of staffing's)
- Procedures to support physical and psychological safety for staff

Please rate the extent to which your system or organization has worked on this area of TIC:

| | Secondary Traumatic Stress | | | | |
|----------------|-------------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| NA | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Unable to Rate | Not something we've worked on | Previously worked on this but not currently | Currently doing a little work on this | Currently working on this | Currently working on this & a significant area of focus |

Please explain how you came to your rating (what have you done in the past or are currently doing towards advancing STS)?

| |
|----------------------|
| System Collaboration |
|----------------------|

Collaboration, service coordination, and information sharing among professionals from within and outside an organization is associated with more effective and efficient services for children, youth, and families impacted by traumatic stress.

Advancing Systems Collaboration can include:

- Being knowledgeable of the major voices for children and youth exposed to trauma within your community (e.g., child protective service leaders, trauma-informed treatment leaders)
- Working relationships with the systems that serve the children and families your organization works with.
- Establishing/continuing regular communication with the systems that serve the children and families your organization works with.
- Procedures in place for sharing pertinent information and data with those outside and within your organization
- Multidisciplinary teams that are knowledgeable and aware of the impact of child trauma
- Cross systems/multidisciplinary training to familiarize providers with other systems

Please rate the extent to which your system or organization has worked on this area of TIC:

| | System Collaboration | | | | |
|----------------|-------------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| NA | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Unable to Rate | Not something we've worked on | Previously worked on this but not currently | Currently doing a little work on this | Currently working on this | Currently working on this & a significant area of focus |

Please explain how you came to your rating (what have you done in the past or are currently doing towards advancing Systems Collaboration)?

| |
|-----------------------------------|
| Physical and Psychological Safety |
|-----------------------------------|

A sense of psychological and physical safety facilitates emotion regulation, creates an environment of trust, and helps children, youth, and families be present and engaged in services.

Advancing Physical and Psychological Safety can include:

- Having a physical environment that promotes a sense of safety, calming, and de-escalation for children, youth, and families
- Recognizing and addressing aspects of the physical environment that may be re-traumatizing and work with families on developing strategies to deal with this.
- Having physical safety and crisis protocols in place that are regularly practiced
- Knowing how to develop safety and crisis prevention plans.
- A workforce that is knowledgeable in differentiating trauma responses and challenging behavior, and able to respond to both
- Procedures focused on working with caregivers to model emotion regulation and de-escalation for children and youth

Please rate the extent to which your system or organization has worked on this area of TIC:

| | Physical and Psychological Safety | | | | |
|----------------|-----------------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| NA | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Unable to Rate | Not something we've worked on | Previously worked on this but not currently | Currently doing a little work on this | Currently working on this | Currently working on this & a significant area of focus |

Please explain how you came to your rating (what have you done in the past or are currently doing towards advancing Physical and Psychological Safety)?

| |
|---|
| Partnering with Children, Youth, and Families |
|---|

Collaborative partnerships between staff and consumers based on mutual respect and a common commitment to healing leads to increased engagement, retainment, and successful outcomes for children, youth, and families.

Advancing Partnerships with Children, Youth, and Families can include:

- Organizational policies and decisions that are conducted with transparency, with the goal of building and maintaining trust among children, youth, and families
- Understanding from the workforce that healing happens in the meaningful sharing of power and decision-making (e.g., assessment and treatment results are shared with the child and family and discussed as a team)
- Satisfaction surveys or measurement methods used to modify care when appropriate
- Children, youth, and family's strengths are recognized, built on, and validated
- Strengthening the experience of choice for children, youth, and family members
 - o Ensuring children and families are actively involved in identifying service or treatment goals
 - o Regular check-ins to assure that there is agreement about where treatment or services are focused.

Please rate the extent to which your system or organization has worked on this area of TIC:

| | Partnering with Children, Youth, and Families | | | | |
|----------------|---|---|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| NA | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Unable to Rate | Not something we've worked on | Previously worked on this but not currently | Currently doing a little work on this | Currently working on this | Currently working on this & a significant area of focus |

Please explain how you came to your rating (what have you done in the past or are currently doing towards advancing Partnerships with Children, Youth, and Families)?

| |
|--|
| Organizational Policies and Procedures |
|--|

Trauma-informed system change is driven and sustained by organizational policies and procedures that are championed and supported by leadership.

Advancing Organizational Policies and Procedures can include:

- Senior leaders that have basic knowledge of implementation principles, and have capacity and skills to facilitate implementation of trauma-informed change
- Senior leaders that are positioned within the organization to effectively provide oversight, guidance, and support to trauma-informed change initiatives
- A high level, clearly identified point of responsibility within the organization for trauma-informed administrative practices
- Written policies that explicitly include and support trauma informed principles
- Policies or protocols for workforce orientation, training, support, and job standards that are related to trauma
- A self-assessment to evaluate the extent to which current organizational policies are trauma-informed
- Hiring processes ensure that new employees align with trauma-informed values and approaches to care

Please rate the extent to which your system or organization has worked on this area of TIC:

| | Organizational Policies and Procedures | | | | |
|----------------|---|---|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| NA | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Unable to Rate | Not something we've worked on | Previously worked on this but not currently | Currently doing a little work on this | Currently working on this | Currently working on this & a significant area of focus |

Please explain how you came to your rating (what have you done in the past or are currently doing towards advancing Organizational Policies and Procedures)?

| |
|------------------------------|
| Culture, Diversity, & Trauma |
|------------------------------|

To understand how trauma affects children, youth, and families, we must first understand how life experiences and cultural backgrounds serve as key contextual elements for trauma and resilience

Advancing Culture, Diversity, and Trauma can include:

- Workforce development/training that addresses the ways identity, culture, community, and oppression can affect a person's experience of trauma, access to supports, and opportunities for safety
- Workforce knowledge and awareness on how culture influences the interpretation and meaning of traumatic events, the acceptability of support, and help seeking behaviors.
- Incorporating attention to culture and trauma in organizational operations and quality improvement processes
- Offering gender responsive services
- Recognizing and addresses historical trauma
- Institutionalizing cultural knowledge within the organization

Please rate the extent to which your system or organization has worked on this area of TIC:

| | Culture, Diversity, and Trauma | | | | |
|----------------|--------------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| NA | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Unable to Rate | Not something we've worked on | Previously worked on this but not currently | Currently doing a little work on this | Currently working on this | Currently working on this & a significant area of focus |

Please explain how you came to your rating (what have you done in the past or are currently doing towards advancing Culture, Diversity, and Trauma)?

| |
|---------------------|
| Screening Practices |
|---------------------|

Screening for child trauma provides workers the information they need to make decision that are better informed, more accurate, consistent, and reflective of the child, youth, and families voice

Advancing Screening Practices can include:

- Use of validated and developmentally appropriate instruments for trauma screening
- A workforce culture that understands the importance of screening for trauma symptoms no matter the initial presenting concerns
- Screening procedures that promote transparency, safety, and confidentiality (e.g., clarifying your role and what to expect from screening).
- Procedures to ensure that only necessary information for determining a history of trauma and the possible existence and extent of traumatic stress symptoms are elicited
- A workforce that is knowledgeable, skilled, and confident in managing children and youth's initial disclosure/discussion of trauma, as well as avoidance
- Procedures designed to provide feedback about the results of screening in a synthesized, simple, and compassionate manner to both children and their families
- Systems in place to collect screening information
- Systems in place for positive screens to be promptly referred to appropriate services
- Systems in place to reduce the negative consequences for inaccurate screening

Please rate the extent to which your system or organization has worked on this area of TIC:

| | Screening Practices | | | | |
|----------------|-------------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| NA | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Unable to Rate | Not something we've worked on | Previously worked on this but not currently | Currently doing a little work on this | Currently working on this | Currently working on this & a significant area of focus |

Please explain how you came to your rating (what have you done in the past or are currently doing towards advancing Screening Practices)?

| |
|----------------------|
| Assessment Practices |
|----------------------|

Trauma-informed assessment validates the family’s experience, begins the rapport building process, instills hope in positive outcomes, guides treatment, and provides an objective measure of progress.

Advancing Screening Practices can include:

- An assessment battery that gathers information on child trauma and behavioral health symptoms, and includes a clinical interview and behavioral observation.
- Use of validated and developmentally appropriate instruments
- A workforce that is aware of common co-occurring diagnoses
- Assessment procedures that promote transparency, safety, and confidentiality (e.g., clarifying your role and what to expect from the assessment).
- A workforce that is knowledgeable, skilled, and confident in managing children and youth’s initial disclosure/discussion of trauma, as well as avoidance
- Procedures to review and interpret assessment results with a trauma-informed lens
- Procedures designed to provide feedback about the results of assessment in a synthesized, simple, and compassionate manner to both children and their families
- Systems in place to collect and track assessment information
- Systems in place to promptly refer to appropriate services

Please rate the extent to which your system or organization has worked on this area of TIC:

| | Assessment Practices | | | | |
|----------------|-------------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| NA | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Unable to Rate | Not something we’ve worked on | Previously worked on this but not currently | Currently doing a little work on this | Currently working on this | Currently working on this & a significant area of focus |

Please explain how you came to your rating (what have you done in the past or are currently doing towards advancing Assessment Practices)?

| |
|--------------------|
| Referral Practices |
|--------------------|

Referring children, youth, and families to appropriate and effective services places them on a path to recovery and healing.

Advancing Screening Practices can include:

- Connection to and communication with trauma serving systems within your community
- Procedures to streamline referral processes across service systems
- Policies and procedures in place for when it is appropriate to refer an individual to treatment services
- A workforce that is knowledgeable of evidence based treatment services for children, youth, and families within the community, and advocates for appropriate referral placement

Please rate the extent to which your system or organization has worked on this area of TIC:

| | Referral Practices | | | | |
|----------------|-------------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| NA | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Unable to Rate | Not something we've worked on | Previously worked on this but not currently | Currently doing a little work on this | Currently working on this | Currently working on this & a significant area of focus |

Please explain how you came to your rating (what have you done in the past or are currently doing towards advancing Referral Practices)?

| |
|--|
| Services to Promote Growth, Well-Being, & Resilience |
|--|

The availability of evidence based trauma informed treatments mean shorter treatment time and better outcomes for children and youth, and increased workforce competence and confidence

Advancing Services to Promote Growth, Well-Being, & Resilience can include:

- Availability of trained, skilled, clinical providers in evidence based trauma focused treatments
- A workforce culture that adopts the consistent use of evidence based treatment services for children, youth, and families.
- Provision of services that are strength based and promote positive development
 - o Incorporation of children and youth's interests and strengths into treatment
 - o Emphasis on working with, supporting, and coaching caregivers
- Procedures to track treatment fidelity and respond to deviation from evidence based practices in helpful and supportive ways

Please rate the extent to which your system or organization has worked on this area of TIC:

| | Services to Promote Growth, Well-Being, & Resilience | | | | |
|----------------|---|---|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| NA | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Unable to Rate | Not something we've worked on | Previously worked on this but not currently | Currently doing a little work on this | Currently working on this | Currently working on this & a significant area of focus |

Please explain how you came to your rating (what have you done in the past or are currently doing towards advancing Services to Promote Growth, Well-being, and Resilience)?

Now that you and your organization are familiar with components of trauma-informed care, please rank the top three components that you and your organization would like to target for advancement in the foreseeable future.

The following questions are meant to facilitate a discussion that will help guide your organization in creating an implementation and sustainment plan for your area of desired change.

1. A few months from now, what would indicate that your top area of change was successful? What changes would need to be made?
2. What specific, observable outcomes would you like to see related to these changes?

Below are several factors that tend to lead to the successful implementation of change practices for organizations. As a group, please rate the extent to which you believe these factors are an area of strength or challenge for your organization. When completing these questions, keep in mind the parts of your organization that would be involved in this change.

1. Resources to carry out a change like this (e.g., time, expertise)

| | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|----------------------------------|
| Challenge for our organization | Somewhat of a challenge for our organization | Somewhat of a strength for our organization | Strength for our organization |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|----------------------------------|

2. Skilled staff to help carry out a change like this

| | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|----------------------------------|
| Challenge for our organization | Somewhat of a challenge for our organization | Somewhat of a strength for our organization | Strength for our organization |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|----------------------------------|

3. Leadership support (e.g., trust, respect) to carry out a change like this

| | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|----------------------------------|
| Challenge for our organization | Somewhat of a challenge for our organization | Somewhat of a strength for our organization | Strength for our organization |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|----------------------------------|

4. Motivated and committed staff to carry out a change like this

| | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|----------------------------------|
| Challenge for our organization | Somewhat of a challenge for our organization | Somewhat of a strength for our organization | Strength for our organization |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|----------------------------------|

5. Effective communication and collaboration within our organization

| | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|----------------------------------|
| Challenge for our organization | Somewhat of a challenge for our organization | Somewhat of a strength for our organization | Strength for our organization |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|----------------------------------|

6. Effective decision making within our organization

| | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|----------------------------------|
| Challenge for our organization | Somewhat of a challenge for our organization | Somewhat of a strength for our organization | Strength for our organization |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|----------------------------------|

7. Experience in strategic planning (e.g., timelines, goals, objectives) to carry out a change like this

| | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|----------------------------------|
| Challenge for our organization | Somewhat of a challenge for our organization | Somewhat of a strength for our organization | Strength for our organization |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|----------------------------------|

References

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. SAMHSA's Concept of Trauma and Guidance for a Trauma-Informed Approach. HHS Publication No. (SMA) 14-4884. Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2014.

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. Trauma-Informed Care in Behavioral Health Services. Treatment Improvement Protocol (TIP) Series 57. HHS Publication No. (SMA) 13-4801. Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2014.

NCTSN Pathways to Partnership Toolkit

Copyright © 2008 by the National Center for Child Traumatic Stress. All rights reserved. If you would like permission to license or adapt these materials, please contact Philip Little at (919) 682-1552, x237.