

Centering the Workforce in Trauma Informed Organizations

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Wellness at Work for Healthcare Supervisors

**MODULE 3B: CENTERING THE WORKFORCE
IN TRAUMA INFORMED ORGANIZATIONS**



OVERVIEW OF MODULE 3.B

Participants will become familiar with an evidence-based Trauma Informed Workplace Toolkit and how to utilize its tools and strategies for implementing a Trauma Informed Organization Readiness Assessment in a variety of settings.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1.

Examine how the healthcare workforce experiences trauma.

2.

Conduct a high-level assessment of your own organization using the Vicarious Trauma Organization Readiness Guide

3.

Apply results of the VTR Guide through a case study.



Trauma Informed Care

- Trauma-informed care (TIC) is an approach to care that recognizes the widespread impact of trauma and promotes environments of healing and recovery. It seeks to understand and respond to the signs and symptoms of trauma in patients, families, and staff, and to avoid re-traumatization.
 - Trauma Informed Care Implementation Center

What are the principles of trauma-informed care?

Following are recognized **core principles** of a trauma-informed approach to care that are necessary to transform a health care setting:



Safety

Throughout the organization, patients and staff feel physically and psychologically safe



Trustworthiness + Transparency

Decisions are made with transparency, and with the goal of building and maintaining trust



Peer Support

Individuals with shared experiences are integrated into the organization and viewed as integral to service delivery



Collaboration

Power differences — between staff and clients and among organizational staff — are leveled to support shared decision-making



Empowerment

Patient and staff strengths are recognized, built on, and validated — this includes a belief in resilience and the ability to heal from trauma



Humility + Responsiveness

Biases and stereotypes (e.g., based on race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, geography) and historical trauma are recognized and addressed

FRAMEWORK FOR WORKPLACE MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

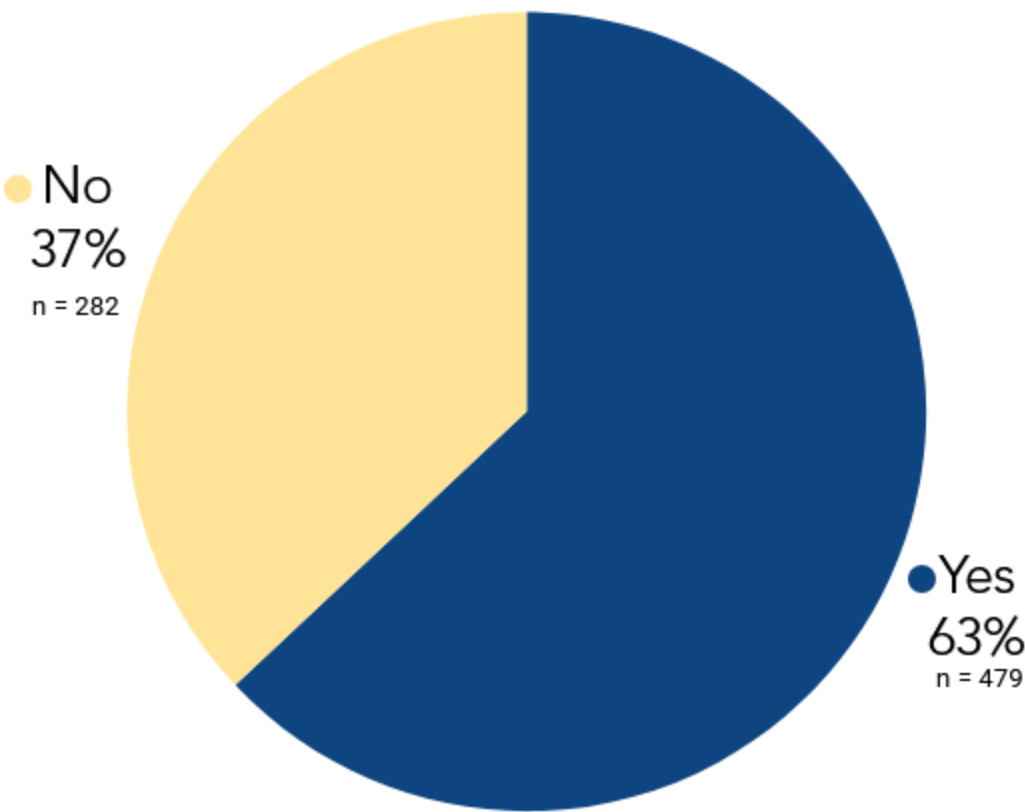
The US Surgeon General's framework identifies five essential components to promote well-being in the workplace.

Embracing these essentials can lead to a healthier and more inclusive work environment.



Who is responsible for employee wellness?

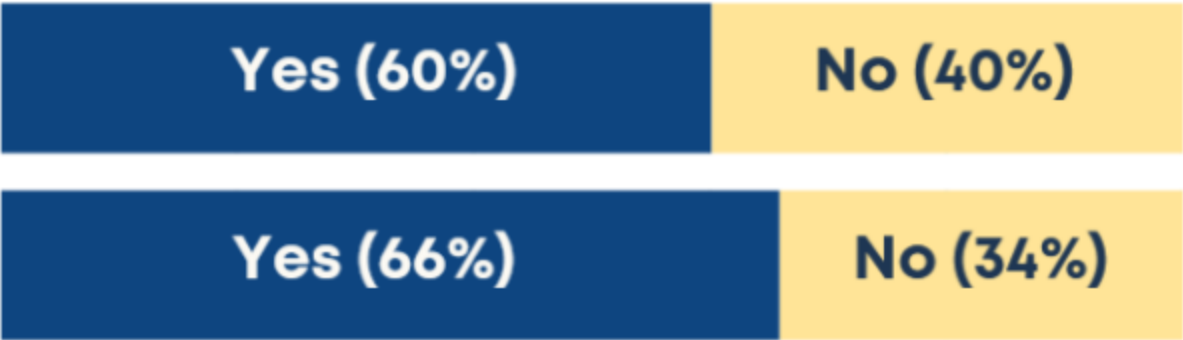
Do you think employee wellness is primarily an organizational responsibility?



Do you think that employee wellness is primarily an organizational responsibility?

Supervises others
n = 389

Does NOT supervise others
n = 372



KEY POINTS

Staff in health and social services will experience some form of trauma in the workplace.

We can reduce and mitigate impacts on staff, and help promote post traumatic growth and resilience, by creating a trauma informed structure to support staff.

We can go even further than mitigating impacts by promoting a culture that creates room for post traumatic growth.



The Vicarious Trauma Toolkit

- Developed by the Federal Department of Justice, Office of Victims of Crime
- Tools for EMS, Victims Services, Fire Services, and Law Enforcement
- We have adapted the tool
- Bibliography:
<https://ovc.ojp.gov/program/vtt/bibliography>
- Toolkit Website:
<https://ovc.ojp.gov/program/vtt/what-is-the-vt-org>



VICARIOUS TRAUMA ORGANIZATIONAL READINESS ASSESSMENT

AREA 1: *Leadership and Mission*

AREA 2: *Management and Supervision*

AREA 3: *Employee Empowerment and Work Environment*

AREA 4: *Training and Staff Development*

AREA 5: *Staff Health and Wellness*

THEORY

LOADING...



PRACTICE

Exercise

- Sit at the table with the topic area you are interested in. Rearrange yourself if needed.
- Briefly assess your organization in that area. (5 minutes)
- Share at the table group what was your score? Any surprises there?
- Large group share out.
- What strengths?
- What areas of improvement?

Case Study

A community-based organization that provides home and community based medical and behavioral health services in a culturally specific and language specific manner. The organization does this both with its own hired staff and through a network of contracted staff employed by other organizations working under its policies, practices, and funding. The clients of the organization are typically low income, experiencing medical or social determinants of health crises, and consist of individuals and families across the life span. They are from a rural area located not too far from an urban center, and serve White, Spanish Speaking Latine, and Native American populations from several different tribal groups. The service providers of the organization are reflective of the communities they serve. The leadership staff at the start of their work are all White.



Situation

The organization began experiencing turbulence with their staff when they had several staff quit, two organizations that had contracted staff developed unhappiness with the contract due to complaints from their staff, and two staff went on medical leave due to work related stress and mental health issues. The leadership staff decided to conduct an assessment with staff, mainly one on one discussions to start, to determine the issues and begin to build trust. They discovered stories of challenges between one leadership staff and direct service staff, mainly around favoritism and “harsh” and “unfair” communication patterns; conflict between staff that either erupted in open arguments, or was underground and resulted in rumors; work stress related to working with populations experiencing large group trauma related to poverty and deportations; and lack of clear organizational policies and resources related to employee resources, feedback processes, and corrective actions.

VTR Score



Leadership and Mission: 2.2



Management and Supervision: 2.3



*Employee Empowerment and Work
Environment: 2.9*



Training and Professional Development: 3.2



Staff Health and Wellness: 1.8

Table Group Activity

Review the VTR rating for each element for your topic area.

Based on the individual ratings for each topic area, make an action plan for the organization based on the question

ACTION PLAN

TIC Culture Policy

Communication Policy

Changes in Leadership Staffing

Agency wide training and mentoring on new policies

Toolkit for new policies

Raised Wages

Revised Job Descriptions

Trained Supervisor

Improved Performance Evaluation Systems

RESOURCES

[VT org assessment](#)

[TIC Culture Policy Sample](#)

[Communication Policy Sample](#)

[Case study](#)

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