



TRAUMA-INFORMED GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Building resilience at all levels of Public Health - Seattle & King County



TRAUMA UNDERSTANDING

Trauma and toxic stress negatively impact the health of individuals, communities, and systems. This includes intergenerational trauma, racism and oppression, and direct and vicarious trauma. When we build our collective knowledge about trauma and its impact, we can promote healing and resilience in ourselves and our communities.



SAFETY

Feeling safe decreases a person's sense of threat and allows them to thrive. We promote safety by establishing physically and emotionally safe environments where basic needs are met and interactions are consistent.



CULTURAL HUMILITY & RESPONSIVENESS

We come from diverse social and cultural groups that may experience and react to trauma differently. We approach one another with curiosity, and we strive to ensure that all people can share their full humanity by supporting their control, choices, and autonomy.



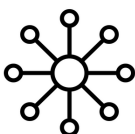
ANTI-RACISM & OPPRESSION

We acknowledge that individual and systemic racism and oppression inflict trauma on individuals, generations, communities, and systems. We recognize our relationships to privilege and power and how they interact with trauma. We take action to confront individual and systemic racism, and we promote anti-racism by valuing the unique strengths and resilience in people who experience historical and current trauma.



COMPASSIONATE RELATIONSHIPS

Safe, authentic and positive relationships are restorative to people and systems who have experienced trauma. We foster compassionate and dependable relationships by establish trusting connections with others that foster mutual wellness.



COLLABORATION & EMPOWERMENT

Trauma involves a loss of power and control that can make us feel helpless. We strive towards transparent decision-making and shared power across all levels of the organization to promote healing through empowerment and trust.



RESILIENCE & HEALING

All people have strengths and capacity for resilience to counteract the impact of direct and vicarious trauma. We support ourselves and others in building on their strengths and resilience by teaching and supporting reflective practices and self-care.

OUR VISION

is to create a public health department whose employees, programs, services and systems build resilience and support healing at all levels.

Trauma and toxic stress negatively impact the health of communities. Public Health promotes resilience and protective factors to reduce the negative impacts of trauma on our community's health. Our goal is to promote integration of core concepts of trauma-informed practice by creating a shared culture and common language, beginning with our own staff.

HOW WE ARE BUILDING AN ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE THAT PROMOTES HEALING & RESILIENCE



PACKING LIST

- ✓ King County Equity & Social Justice Work
- ✓ Research and learning on toxic stress, trauma & resilience

Learn more about trauma-informed systems.

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What do we mean by an organization or system that is trauma-informed?

We are working to be an organization that understands the widespread impact intergenerational trauma, racism and oppression, and direct and vicarious traumas have on individuals, communities, organizations and systems and understands potential paths for recovery and healing. Key aspects include: 1) recognizing the signs of trauma in communities; 2) integrating knowledge of trauma into policies and practices; 3) actively promoting healing and preventing re-traumatization among staff, communities and systems.

How is Public Health currently applying a trauma-informed approach?

- An assessment of our programs and services highlighted several examples:
- The Child Death Review committee members receive training and support as they do their work to understand the data behind children's deaths in our County.
- The Community Health Services Division provides training to staff to increase awareness of the potential role trauma plays in the lives of clients.
- The Assessment, Policy Development and Evaluation Unit measures protective factors and collects data on community strengths in addition to disease and adversity.
- Human Resources has developed ways to approach lay-offs with a trauma-informed lens.

I don't work with clients. How does this work apply to me?

Developing an organizational culture that understands the impact of trauma and works to support resilience and healing has the potential to impact everyone in our health department. We spend a lot of our time in the workplace so this culture change can make a big impact on us as staff, and ultimately on the many ways we interact with the community.

How does the County's Equity and Social Justice work connect with trauma-informed practices?

Our hope is that a trauma-informed approach can integrate with and complement our collective focus on Equity and Social Justice. For example, our Guiding Principles might be used as an additional tool to establish norms that acknowledge the ways power and oppression impact our staff or permeate our systems.