An Exploration of Community-Led, Trauma-Informed, Prevention-Oriented, Resilience-Building, & Healing-Centered Considerations for Strengthening Communities
What You Can Expect

1. HOW “TRADITIONAL” COMMUNITY CHANGE EFFORTS FALL SHORT
2. THE CASE FOR TRAUMA-INFORMED COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
3. WHAT WORKS BASED ON WISDOM FROM COMMUNITIES DOING THE WORK
4. LEGISLATION TO SUPPORT OUR VISION OF A PREFERRED FUTURE
5. OPTIONAL RESILIENCE PRACTICE/ BRAIN BREAK/BIO BREAK
6. ACTIVITY & DISCUSSION TO PROMOTE DIGESTION, REFLECTION, & CONNECTION
What is the Status Quo?

How “traditional” community change efforts fall short of addressing complex community needs and honoring indigenous community wisdom

- Lack breadth & depth of resources to support individual & collective trauma recovery
- Fail to acknowledge multidimensionality, full humanity & diverse lived experiences
- Based on existing oppressive, trauma-inflicting paradigms
What Gets in the Way of Transformation?
Common barriers to engagement & change implementation in trauma-impacted communities

- Chronic daily stressors experienced among those with trauma histories & the need to prioritize meeting basic needs before doing anything “extra”

- Community-based organizations & resources stretched too thin to support capacity-building efforts with the intentionality & sustained energy needed

- Messaging may not reach community members, or may even signal that community input is “considered” but not critical/centered

- Lack of a sense of belonging in & ownership of change efforts among community members

- Historical & ongoing oppression perpetuates feelings of unsafety & distrust in potential change partners, particularly those representing broader systems/institutions
What Gets in the Way of Transformation?
Common barriers to engagement & change implementation in trauma-impacted communities

- **SENSE OF FUTILITY** based on past experiences of over-promising & under-delivering, or of being harmed without attempts to repair
- **SCARCE RESOURCES** often gatekept by those with the most power & influence
- **LACK OF INTENTIONALITY AND RESPONSIVITY** to meet community members with lived experience where they are truly at

- **LACK OF SHARED UNDERSTANDING AND LANGUAGE** to conceptualize & address community trauma
The Case for a Trauma-Informed Approach

A trauma-informed approach can facilitate internal & external resources needed to advance positive change

- Self-efficacy
- Accountability & Ownership
- Shared Power
- Equity & Justice

- Sense of Acceptance & Belonging
- Social Capital
- Consistency
- Physical & Psychological Safety

- Connection & Cohesion
- Restored Trust in the Collective & of Local/Broader Institutions
- Community Stewardship
- Connection to Community or Cultural Identity
PRINCIPLES OF A TRAUMA-INFORMED APPROACH

**Safety**
- Physical & psychological safety are considered & prioritized
- Adaptive skills related to preserving safety are understood as protective and resourceful

**Trustworthiness & Transparency**
- Decisions are made and processes are conducted transparently
- Building trust is prioritized & intentional efforts are made

**Empowerment, Voice, & Choice**
- Individuals, family, group, & community strengths are validated & built upon
- Capacity-building is prioritized
- Belief in individual/collective resiliency, healing, & trauma recovery

**Collaboration & Mutuality**
- Meaningful opportunities for the sharing of decision-making & power are created
- Culture of doing with vs. to or for

**Cultural, Historical, & Gender Issues**
- Cultural stereotypes, oppression, & biases are intentionally addressed
- Recognition of cultural, historical, racial, historical, & collective trauma
- Factors of cultural resilience are honored & mobilized for healing

**Peer Support & Mutual Self-Help**
- Voices of lived experience are valued & amplified
- Mutual self-help/peer support are valued as vital to recovery & growth
- Opportunities exist for fellowship, solidarity, & healing
Considerations for Building Capacity & Engaging Communities in Trauma-Informed Change
Process Orientation & Flexibility
Commitment to Prevention Viewed Through a Systems Lens
Engaging a Multi-Generational Lifespan-Based Perspective
Mobilizing Strengths, Assets, Capacities, Skills, Gifts & Wisdom Through Community-Led Action
Continuously Creating Opportunities for the Co-Construction of Knowledge & Meaning
Grounding Awareness & Action in NEAR Wisdom
Diversifying Funding Streams & Tapping into an Abundance Mindset
Expanding the Evidence Base in an Accountable, Anti-Oppressive Way
Joining Individual, Family, Organizational, Institutional & Systems Reform with Place-Based & Community-Level Change
Resilience Investment, Support, & Expansion (RISE) from Trauma Act (S. 1426 & H.R.??)

• Creates a new HHS grant program to fund community-based coalitions that coordinate stakeholders and deliver targeted local services to address/prevent trauma
• Creates a new HHS grant program to support hospital-based trauma interventions to address mental health needs, prevent re-injury, & improve long-term outcomes
• Increases funding for the National Health Service Corps loan repayment program, in order to recruit more school-based mental health clinicians—with an emphasis on increasing representation across dimensions of diversity
• Enhances federal training programs at HHS, the U.S. Department of Justice, & the U.S. Department of Education to provide more tools for early childhood clinicians, teachers, school leaders, first responders, & community leaders
• Reauthorizes four critical federal programs: The Interagency Task Force on TIC, National Child Traumatic Stress Network, the CDC’s ACEs Data Collection program, & SAMHSA’s Trauma Support in Schools grant program
  ➢ FY ’23: $117 million in federal funding to support trauma research, training, coordination, & services

Community Mental Wellness & Resilience Act (S. 1452 & H. R. 3073)

• Establishes a competitive grant program at the CDC to create, operate, or expand community-based programs using a public health approach to build mental wellness & resilience
• Works within these programs to enhance the capacity of all residents for mental wellness & resilience to prevent and heal mental health challenges generated by disasters & toxic stress
  ➢ Incorporates a “set aside” to help address rural mental health disparities
• Supports community initiatives to build their own developmental and culturally appropriate strategies to enhance and sustain population-level mental wellness and resilience, with specific attention to those who have been made particularly vulnerable/who experience many risk factors limiting their ability to access optimal wellness
Optional Resilience Practice

Buzzing Breath/Bumblebee Breath (inspired by Bhramari Pranayama)

1. Get comfy!
2. Breathe in deeply through your nose, slowly filling your lungs.
3. Exhale with a closed mouth while making a humming sound.
4. Repeat 2 times, playing with different tones/volumes/vibrations if you’d like to.
5. Now, rest your tongue gently behind the top row of your teeth, relaxing your jaw while your mouth hangs open.
6. Breathe in deeply through your nose, slowly filling your lungs.
7. Exhale slowly and firmly while making a buzzing sound.
8. Repeat 2 times, playing with different tones/volumes/vibrations if you’d like to.
9. Raise your hands up to your face with your elbows pointed outward, level with your shoulders.
10. Place the tips of your thumbs on the cartilage outside of your ear openings with your elbows at your shoulders.
11. Press gently inward with your thumbs so that the opening is somewhat sealed.
12. Repeat the humming exhale sequence 2 times.
13. Repeat the buzzing exhale sequence 2 times.
Independent Reflection & Community Connection

July 2023 CTIPP CAN Reflection & Connection Activity: Community-Led, Trauma-Informed, Prevention-Oriented, Resilience-Building, & Healing-Centered Considerations for Strengthening Communities

1. What are you noticing/thinking about in terms of applying the information presented on the call to your community’s unique context and constellations of needs?

2. What is already working well in your community that is aligned with the principles explored today?

3. What are your best hopes for your community’s future? What do you want to see happen?

4. What strengths, resources, assets, and collaborative efforts do you notice are present in your community?

5. Where do you notice opportunities to build on/more robustly tap into these strengths, resources, assets, and collaborative efforts to support trauma-informed community engagement and change?

6. Based on what you know about your community’s context and history, what is important to pay attention to when engaging the voices of lived experience and integrating community wisdom into change efforts?

7. Reflect on your own personal strengths, skills, values, and priorities. What role do you see as fitting for you? What contributions do you envision yourself making to advance trauma-informed transformation?

8. Share examples of successes or positive experiences related to trauma-informed community change that you have personally witnessed or learned about. What can be learned from these examples?
GUIDE: Trauma-Informed Community Change

bit.ly/ctipp-change-models
August 16: Trauma-Informed Schools (CTIPP CAN Call)

bit.ly/ctipp-can-calls
Questions & Discussion

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