



*The more I learn about trauma-informed practice, the more I see that there needs to be a trauma-informed approach to our staffing, our programs and procedures, how we advocate, and even in our communications, our partnerships, our planning processes, governance and leadership.”*

— YWCA Toronto staff member

We believe that women and girls are resilient and capable of healing from experiences of trauma and violence.

[ywcatoronto.org/TIDE](http://ywcatoronto.org/TIDE)

The Trauma Informed Development Education program (TIDE) is supporting integration of trauma-informed practice across YWCA Toronto. This project has been made possible by a financial contribution from The Public Health Agency of Canada. The views expressed herein do not necessarily represent the views of PHAC.

# TRAUMA- INFORMED PRACTICE

at YWCA Toronto

An Introduction  
for Partners & Staff



**YWCA**  
TORONTO

A TURNING POINT  
FOR WOMEN



**United Way**  
Greater Toronto

**TIDE** Trauma  
Informed  
Development  
Education



*Trauma-informed practice is recognizing the degree and the impact of trauma in the lives of the people we work with, incorporating it into everything that we're doing.*”

— YWCA Toronto staff member

## ▶ WHAT IS TRAUMA?

Trauma involves a single experience, or repeated or multiple experiences, that overwhelm a person's ability to cope or integrate the ideas and emotions involved in that experience.

### Trauma can result from:

- child abuse and neglect
- witnessing violence
- accidents
- natural disaster
- sexual assault
- war and refugee experiences
- intergenerational events

### Trauma can affect:

- development
- how people cope and survive
- patterns of substance use
- physical health
- mental wellness
- social connections
- social involvement

## ▶ WHAT IS TRAUMA-INFORMED PRACTICE?

**Trauma-informed practice integrates an understanding of the effects of trauma on individuals, families, and communities into all aspects of programs, services, and organizational culture.**

**As a trauma-informed organization, at YWCA Toronto we strive to:**

- be welcoming
- offer choices to program participants
- create safety for everyone, including staff
- offer opportunities to learn wellness and coping skills to support healing and resilience
- connect people to needed services
- focus on people's strengths
- offer compassion and kindness

## ▶ OUR COMMITMENT

### Safety, choice, collaboration

YWCA Toronto is committed to trauma-informed practice and to ongoing organizational development and quality improvement.

- We recognize that many women who come to our programs have current or past experiences of trauma.
- All our staff learn about the signs of trauma and how to help girls and women develop new skills for coping.
- We offer connections to other community supports for healing and care.
- We work to ensure that all program participants experience safety, dignity and respect.
- Our staff have opportunities to practice wellness and coping strategies themselves, so they can care for themselves and better support women.
- As an organization, we continuously review our policies and procedures, and welcome new ideas on how to make our services safe for all.

