This presentation is one of a series developed in the course of a project of the YWCA Toronto in collaboration with the Centre of Excellence for Women’s Health, entitled TIDE (Trauma Informed Development and Education). The project has received financial assistance from the Public Health Agency of Canada, however the views expressed within are not necessarily those of PHAC.

The series is intended to support ongoing integration of TIP within the YWCA Toronto and other YWCAs across Canada.
These 4 principles help us apply trauma informed approaches:

1. Awareness of the prevalence and impacts of trauma, and the adaptations that individuals use to cope
2. Creating safety and fostering trust
3. Offering choice and control, fostering collaboration
4. Supporting the development of specific skills, as well as strengths and empowerment
AWARE

We can bring into our work awareness:

• Of the effects of trauma – the wide range of responses survivors have.
• Of the implications for service access (e.g. survivors possibly expressing feelings of rage, mistrust, fear, refusal of help).
• That TIP is applied universally – is not based on disclosure – we are not case-seeking for trauma, but instead it could be said we are seeking for (and enhancing) resilience
• Of the implications for service providers as well (vicarious trauma)

A poster on trauma effects, or postcards – can signal that your agency is trauma informed.
Central to trauma informed approaches are:

- Creating safety to discuss the challenges facing girls, women and gender diverse communities
- Safety that is physical, emotional, spiritual and cultural.
- Consideration of how to move from confrontational and directive approaches to ones that build relationship and trust

These documents offer ideas about creating safety in conversations and in our language:

CHOICE, COLLABORATION AND CONNECTION

- TIP is a relational practice
- Reparative of overwhelming and power-over experiences
- Supportive of individuals having agency, self determination and ‘power within’

This study shows how an agency can value relationship and connection, between mothers and children, between mothers and staff, and between staff in partnering agencies - and how that improves outcomes for women and children. [http://www.mothercraft.ca/index.php?q=publications]
STRENGTHS BASED

- TIP aligns well with what Indigenous experts have identified as the importance of starting from strengths not deficits.
- It involves acknowledging resilience and enhancing coping and healing strategies.

http://www.addictionresearchchair.ca/creating-knowledge/national/honouring-our-strengths-culture-as-intervention/
**Service providers need to be prepared to model and teach self regulation skills.**

**SKILL BUILDING**

**Grounding Activities and Trauma-Informed Practice**

- **Butterfly Hug**: Try a butterfly hug by crossing your arms (as if giving yourself a hug) and alternately tapping your left and right upper arm. Breathe and gently tap for a minute or two.

- **Obey Your Voice**: Sing the words to an inspiring or comforting song, e.g., "Tie a Yellow Ribbon" by Maria Piazzo. "Tie me up, tie me down, with a million ribbons in my life." To the music, imagine your favorite person saying the following in your own words and let the words resonate.

- **Breathe Deep**: Deep breathing, using the breath mindfully, can be a helpful tool in managing stress and regulating emotions. Start by taking a deep breath in through your nose, holding it for a few seconds, and then exhaling slowly through your mouth. Repeat this process several times.

- **Grounding Object**: Carry a grounding object such as a stone or photo in your pocket. Hold it for comfort when you need it.

- **Beach Fantasy**: Imagine you are lying on a beach. Feel the sand on your feet. Dig your feet in the sand. Notice the wind blowing your hair, the sound of the waves and birds, and the smell of the salt air.

- **Tree Hug**: Sit with your back against the trunk of a tree. Feel the tree's familiarity and comfort.

- **Fox Breath**: Take ten breaths. Focus your attention on each breath, on the way in and on the way out. Say the number of each breath to yourself as you exhale. Gradually, allow your breath to expand and fill every corner of your body.

- **Slow Your Heart**: Lie on your back on a comfortable surface. Focus on your heart rate. Notice any sensations you feel in your body.

- **Make a Sandwich**: Take time to make a sandwich or any other activity that you enjoy. Focus on the preparation process and the task at hand.

- **Safe Place**: Identify a place where you feel safe and secure. Visit this place in your mind whenever you need to feel calm.

**Mindfulness apps like calm.com can also be shared.**

**Info sheets or cards that show how to do simple grounding can be helpful, for people of all ages.**
Questions for discussion

- Do we/how do we inform clients about trauma?
- What are we already doing to create safety? What else might we do about the physical environment, the way we do intake, the way we discuss issues with clients?
- How are we integrating the teaching of coping skills?
Practice Scenario

You are meeting with a participant to share some news that you anticipate them being upset about (e.g. discharge from program)

- What are some of the things you could do before, during, and after the meeting to foster safety and trust?
- If, when you share the news with the participant, they become angry with you, yelling and accusing you of not doing your job, not helping people. How might you respond to this, in a trauma-informed way?
One of the participants asks if they can speak to you about something. They identify that they picked up a pregnancy test and just found out they are pregnant. They are scared and nervous and don’t know what to do.

• How could you navigate this, keeping the choice, control and collaboration principle in mind?
Practice Scenarios

- One of the participants has been using substances in the shelter/public spaces, and you need to address this. How might you approach this conversation in a trauma-informed way?

- This morning, one of the participants was verbally yelling and swearing at you (staff) and other participants, and then stormed out of the building. They have just returned, and you are needing to have a conversation with them about this behaviour. Historically, when you have tried to speak to them about this, they have avoided the conversation. How might you approach this?
For more info see

Implementing TIP sheet Principles sheets

Worksheet on principles

Use the worksheet as a staff group to discuss how you are applying the principles of trauma informed practice currently, and what is the stretch . . .

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principles</th>
<th>We are already...</th>
<th>Commitments for going forward</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increasing trauma awareness</td>
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<td>Providing safety-physical, emotional, social</td>
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<td>and moral</td>
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<td>Offering opportunities for repair, collaboration</td>
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<td>Offering opportunities for skill building, self</td>
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<td>regulation, grounding</td>
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