

Trauma-Informed Practices Assessment Tool for Title X Agencies



Title X Program recipients are expected to provide quality family planning services that are client-centered, culturally and linguistically responsive, inclusive, and trauma-informed. To create a trauma-informed culture, agencies must adopt trauma-informed approaches at both clinical and organizational levels.

This assessment tool is designed to help family planning organizations identify where they are already utilizing trauma-informed strategies, as well as opportunities for further integration. Agencies can use this tool to highlight progress, identify opportunities for improvement, and prioritize next steps. The assessment tool is organized to align with the [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration’s \(SAMHSA\) 10 implementation domains](#) for establishing a trauma-informed program and trauma-informed services. Each assessment item is meant to address both client and staff experiences, unless otherwise noted.

Follow these steps to complete the Trauma-Informed Practices Assessment:

1. Assemble a team that includes staff of diverse roles and responsibilities to ensure a variety of perspectives.
2. Using the table below, respond to each assessment item by marking the circle that best describes your agency.
3. Once your team has completed the assessment, reflect on your responses and together identify priorities for improving organizational capacity. Review the [Trauma-Informed Care Toolkit for Title X Agencies](#) for resources and tools related to each of SAMHSA’s 10 implementation domains.
4. As the initial team rolls out trauma-informed practices throughout your agency, consider revisiting this assessment periodically to track progress and identify next steps.

Building a trauma-informed culture at your family planning agency is an ongoing process. Consider making improvements in one or two domains to start. There is no single way to initiate and implement trauma-informed practices, and there is no expectation that an agency will accomplish every item in this assessment tool. In addition, your agency may be taking other steps to create a trauma-informed organizational culture that are not included in this assessment tool.

SAMHSA Domain	Describes us well	Almost there	Just getting started	Does not describe us
Governance and Leadership				
Leadership acknowledges that understanding the impact of trauma is central to effective service delivery.				
Leadership makes operational decisions that address the impact of trauma (e.g., implementing client-centered care, utilizing universal precautions, training staff in trauma-specific approaches, engaging referral sources); and recognizes that being anti-racist is central to providing trauma-informed care.				
Leadership communicates its support and guidance for implementing a trauma-informed approach. Leadership demonstrates buy-in and commitment to implementing trauma-informed strategies.				

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Policy				
Policies and procedures recognize the pervasiveness of trauma; and include a commitment to providing trauma-informed services and supports that promote well-being and prevent retraumatization.				
Systems, processes, and protocols promote transparency and accountability, with the goal of building and maintaining trust.				
Policies recognize the impact on staff of working with people who have experienced trauma. Consider: reflective supervision, flex-time and flex-place, reasonable accommodations, encouraging counseling through the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), and self-care options during work hours.				
Policies demonstrate a commitment to staff training on providing services and supports that are culturally responsive and trauma-informed.				
Physical Environment				
Family planning services are delivered in a physical environment that promotes a sense of physical safety and security for clients and staff. ¹				
Family planning services are delivered in an environment that promotes emotional safety and well-being for clients and staff. ²				
Agency provides space and time for staff members to practice self-care and build resilience (e.g., comfortable and relaxing break rooms, space to be physically active).				
Agency offers gender-responsive services and has mechanisms to address gender-related physical and emotional safety concerns (e.g., gender-affirming language and bathrooms, gender-responsive physical exams).				
Signage, posters, and pictures are responsive to the agency's client population (i.e., signage is easy to understand, available in the clients' languages, and prominently placed in the waiting room and exam room; photos and pictures are representative of the client population).				
Engagement and Involvement				
Policies ensure that clients with lived experience have an opportunity to participate in agency planning, governance, policy-making, services, and evaluation.				
Staff are committed to shared decision making about care and treatment, involving clients as leaders in their sexual and reproductive health care.				

¹A safe and secure physical environment includes, for example: a confidential space for sensitive discussions; an exam room with a comfortable temperature and natural light; a waiting room that has multiple seating options in a variety of sizes and that are appropriately placed; and environmental cues and stimuli establishing a quiet and calm atmosphere.

²An environment that promotes emotional safety and well-being includes, for example: Clients never have their backs to the door; bathrooms have locks; and staff are assigned to watch the comings and goings of people in and out of the clinic.

	Describes us well	Almost there	Just getting started	Does not describe us
Cross-Sector Collaboration				
Agency identifies and engages with community partners and referral agencies that have experience providing trauma-informed services.				
Agency engages with community partners in cross-sector training on trauma and trauma-informed approaches.				
Agency has established referral relationships with programs that provide behavioral health services, trauma treatment, and violence prevention services.				
Agency has established referral relationships with community partners that address food, housing, and other basic needs.				
Agency participates in community work groups, collaborations, or task forces to improve social determinants of health within the community.				
Screening, Assessment, and Treatment Services				
Staff recognize the widespread occurrence of trauma and treat all clients using a universal precautions approach.				
Clinical screening and assessment explore multiple dimensions of wellness and social determinants of health.				
After identification of trauma, family planning staff take next steps for safety, assessment, and referral or treatment.				
Clinicians discuss the process of the physical exam, give clear instructions for undressing, let the client know when they will be back, and ask for permission for every step of the exam or procedure.				
Staff respond to trauma disclosures by confirming the client's well-being in their daily life, asking how they can support the client throughout the visit and how the client would like the information documented. ³				
Training and Workforce Development				
Agency ensures that all staff receive basic training and continuing education on trauma, trauma-informed approaches, and social determinants of health, including their impact on sexual and reproductive health outcomes.				
All staff receive training on implicit bias, cultural humility, and cultural responsiveness in health care.				
All staff receive training on client confidentiality, mandatory reporting laws, how to practice these, and how to explain them to clients.				
Agency provides training to clinical service providers on how to develop safety and crisis prevention plans.				
Agency has access to a clinician with expertise in trauma and trauma-related interventions (on staff or available for regular consultation).				
Strategies are in place to support staff who may experience emotional stress or vicarious trauma when working with clients who have had traumatic experiences.				

³Staff can support a client throughout a visit by asking about how past experiences may impact the visit. The client is repeatedly assured that they are in control and are continuously asked about their comfort level. They are reminded of their choices. They are informed that it is normal and common for clients to stop or pause at any time. They are offered the option of having a support person present during breast, genital, and rectal examinations, as requested.

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Progress Monitoring and Quality Improvement				
Systems are in place to monitor agency progress toward becoming trauma-informed, soliciting feedback from both clients and staff.				
Processes are in place to monitor the extent to which clients and staff feel safe and valued.				
Feedback is periodically solicited from clients and staff, ensuring anonymity and confidentiality.				
Trauma-informed approaches are incorporated into quality improvement processes.				
Financing				
Budgets and resources are directed to trauma-informed professional development and training that is available to all staff.				
Budget allows for trauma-informed subject matter experts to provide ongoing education and consultation.				
Budget supports provision of a physically and psychologically safe environment for both clients and staff.				
Evaluation				
Agency has identified measures or indicators to assess progress toward becoming trauma-informed.				
Agency periodically conducts an organizational assessment of trauma-informed practices.				