

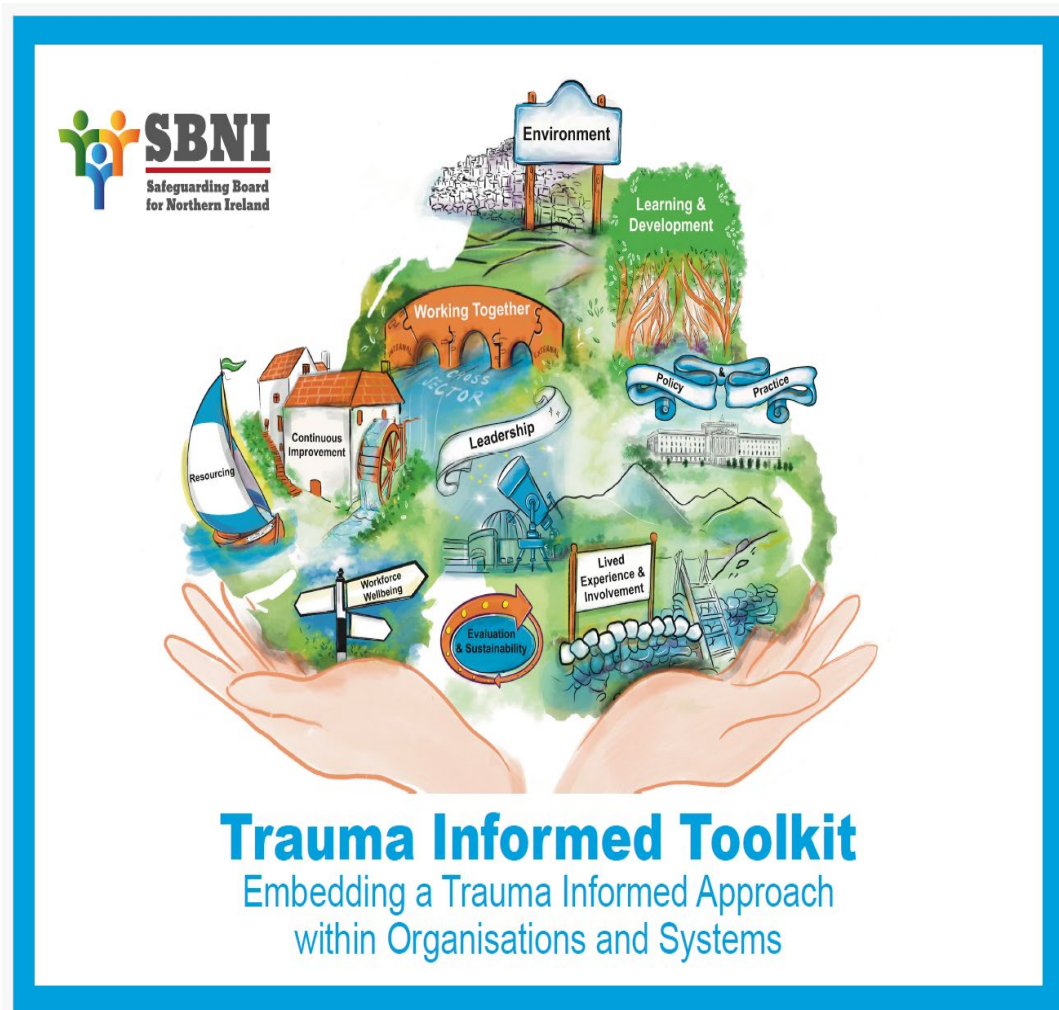
Developing Trauma Informed Organisations Northern Ireland update and a new Toolkit



Sheina Rigg
Orla Connolly



Dr Suzanne Mooney
Montserrat Fargas Malet



Session outline

- Background of TIP work: the journey
- Toolkit Demonstration
- QUB implementation research
- Organisational checklist
- Next steps
 - where to access the toolkit
 - how to use it
 - when to use it



Trauma Informed Team

Orla Connolly - Orla.Connolly@hscni.net

- Research and Partnerships

Aileen McGuinness – Aileen.Mcguinness@hscni.net

- Strategic Planning and Governance

Sheina Rigg - Sheina.Rigg@hscni.net

- Training and Resources

Marian Molloy - Marian.Molloy@hscni.net

- Training and Resources



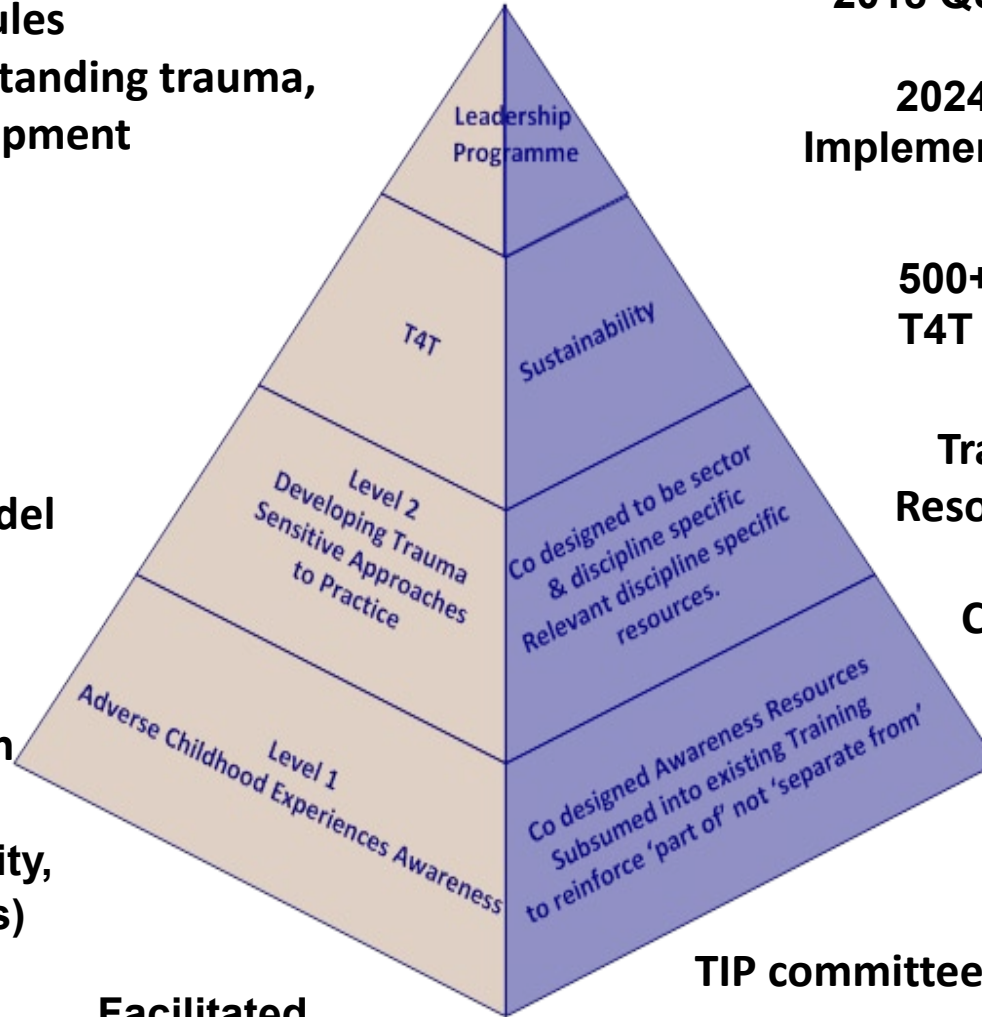
Trauma Informed Approach Implementation Framework for NI: 2018-2024

Level 1 & 2 training modules
Solihull Approach understanding trauma,
attachment, brain development

Pilots to support
organisational
implementation
across sectors

Sequential Intercept Model
and Universal Service
Delivery process model

Trauma Informed Oregon
One Small Thing Quality
mark (Justice, Community,
H&SC, C&V sector pilots)



2018 QUB Research

2024 QUB TIA
Implementation Report

500+ attended
T4T

Training brochure/
Resource development

Conferences

Organisational
/ workforce
development
support

Facilitated
Review / Support
Workshops

TIP committee

Knowledge
transfer



Trauma Informed: International Context



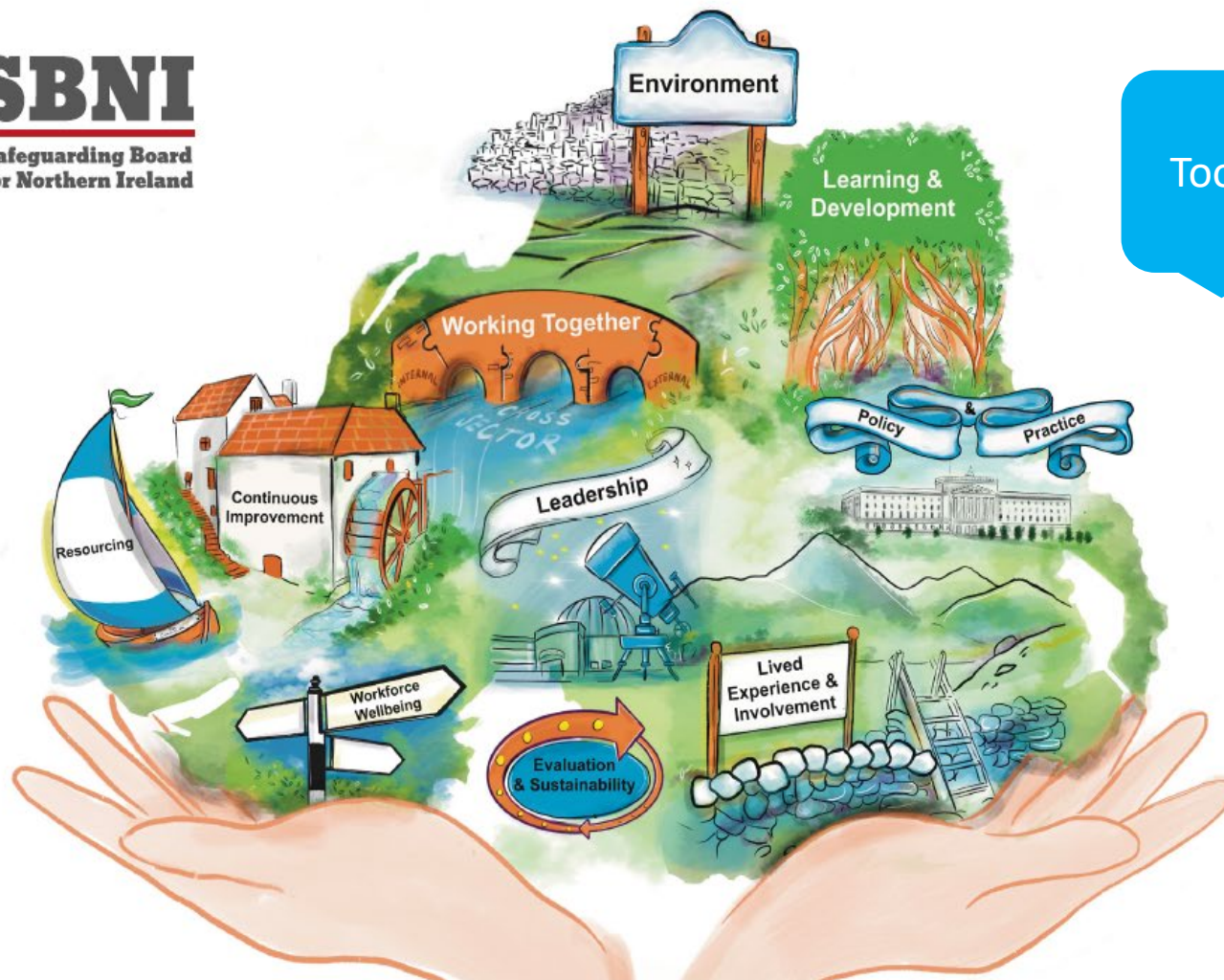
- Scotland
- Wales
- Ireland
- England
- Australia
- USA

“A program, organisation, or system that is trauma-informed **realizes** the widespread impact of trauma and understands potential paths for recovery; **recognizes** the signs and symptoms of trauma in clients, families, staff, and others involved with the system; and **responds** by fully integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, and practices, and seeks to actively **resist re-traumatization.**”

(SAMHSA, 2023)

“Trauma is one possible response to adversity. A traumatic event can be an experience, series of experiences, or circumstances but **resilience is possible with timely support.**” (Frameworks UK)





Trauma Informed Toolkit

Embedding a Trauma Informed Approach
within Organisations and Systems

Setting the Scene

About the toolkit

This toolkit has been designed to help organisations in Northern Ireland (NI) identify opportunities to embed trauma informed approaches across policy and practice. It is based on the local and international evidence base, existing learning, valuable insights from people with lived experience and good practice from the NI context.

It has six sections:

- **Section 1 – Setting the scene**

An overview of the context and how to use the toolkit

- **Section 2 – Key concepts**

A definition of trauma, trauma informed organisations and approaches

- **Section 3 – Six principles**

A summary of the **six trauma informed principles** (safety, trustworthiness, choice, collaboration, empowerment and inclusion)

- **Section 4 – Evidence & examples**

A summary of international and local evidence, including case studies and examples of trauma informed approaches across a range of organisations

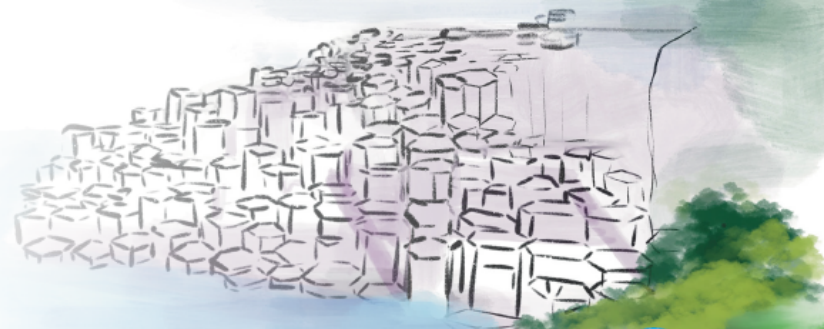
- **Section 5 – Organisational checklist**

A summary and organisational checklist is based on **ten organisational focus areas*** (leadership, learning and development, workforce wellbeing, lived experience and involvement, policy and practice, environment, working together, continuous improvement, resourcing, evaluation and sustainability)

*adapted from SAMHSA implementation domains 2014 [1]

- **Section 6 – Library**

A suite of resources to help you on your journey, including references.



Acknowledgement and thanks to:

- Lived experience focus group members
- SBNI Trauma Informed Committee
- Toolkit task and finish working group
- Organisations who were part of the user testing phase
- Those who contributed case studies and examples
- Local and international research base which informed the development of this toolkit
- Toolkit designers
- Funders (EPPOC)
- Local artist Beth McComish, whose illustrations are infused throughout the toolkit.



Toolkit Aims

The toolkit will:

- illustrate how trauma informed approaches can be embedded across your organisation
- build awareness of what the six trauma informed principles are and how to apply them
- highlight the evidence base on the benefits, barriers and enablers to a trauma informed approach
- showcase case studies and examples from across NI
- provide a practical self-assessment checklist, structured on the ten focus areas
- walk you through each aspect on your journey to becoming a trauma informed organisation.

Target Audience

- This toolkit was developed for the SBNi member agencies and partners; however, it can be used by **any organisation, team or service across the statutory, community or voluntary sectors**. It is designed specifically for NI, which has its own unique structure and history.
- This toolkit aims to help leaders, workforces, services and organisations **identify and reflect on progress**, strengths and opportunities for embedding a trauma informed approach across policy and practice. It aims to **complement existing organisational priorities, driving improvement, innovation and sustainable change**.

Why Trauma Informed?

The prevalence of adversity & trauma means that we need not only to focus on the people who seek support but equally on the people and systems who provide that support.

When we consider adversity and trauma in our workplaces & organisations, this can help in understanding our own responses and needs and those of the people we support.

A whole system trauma informed approach can only happen in the context of trauma informed and trauma responsive environments, policies, systems and organisations.



Adverse Childhood - Community - Cultural Experiences



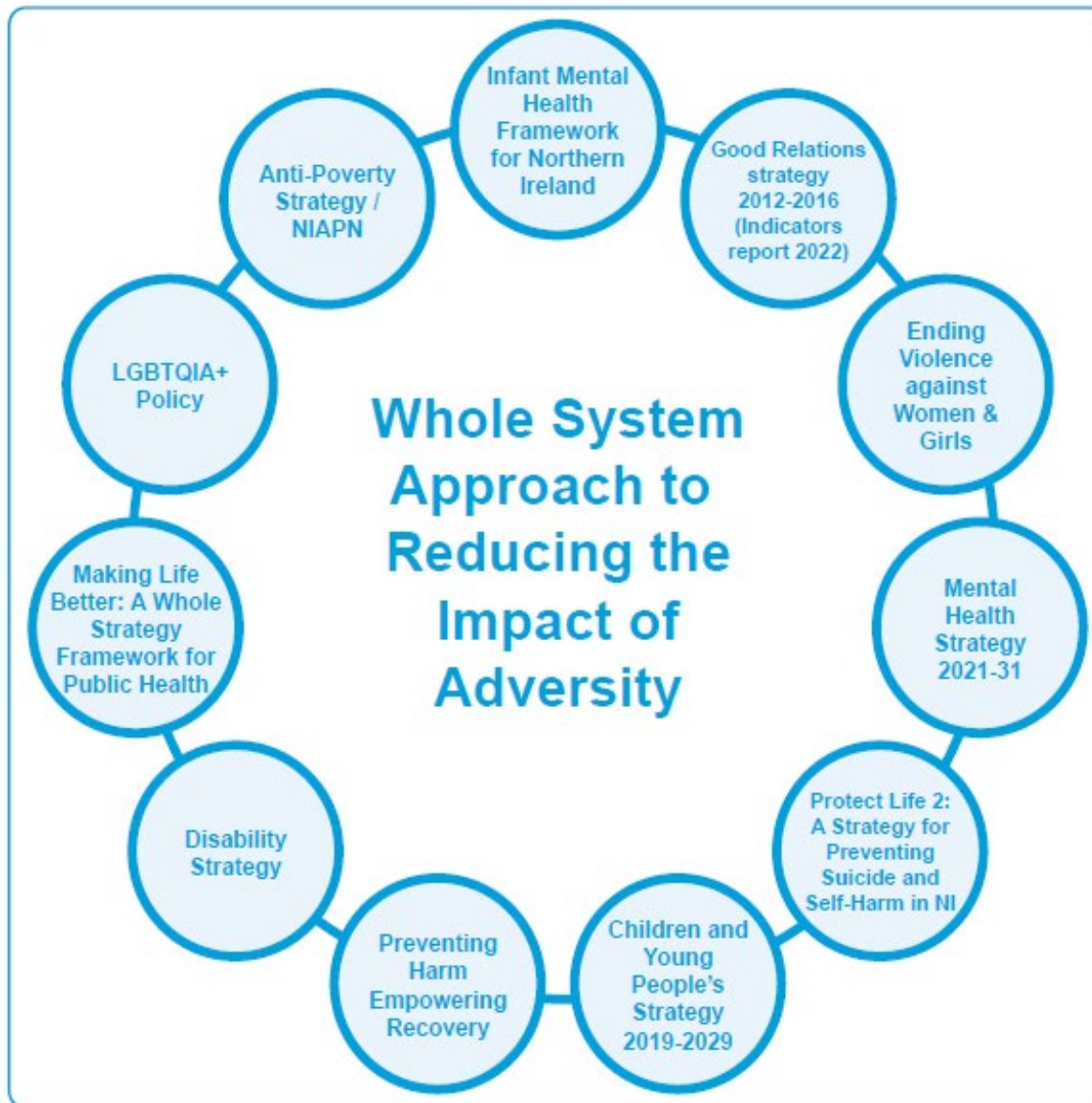
Context is key



This illustration is not meant to be an exhaustive list.

Whole System Approach

- Draft PfG extract -



Acknowledging the levels of trauma in our post-conflict society, **we will work across the Executive to embed trauma-informed, responsive systems;** systems that help people to easily navigate and access the support they need, when they need it, and for however long they need it for.

We will develop a trauma-informed public sector, equipping staff at all levels with the skills needed to work in partnership and support people as they rebuild a sense of control and empowerment in their lives.

Defining Trauma

It's about infusing our understanding of theories, models and concepts related to trauma, adversity and resilience.

Fully acknowledging the imprint of trauma and adversity means we understand:

- the stress response system – how stress and trauma affect our brain and bodies
- how trauma can impact our ability to feel safe and develop trusting relationships
- what promotes recovery and healing - why relationships matter - & how relationships are key to human development, regulation & resilience.

Relationships Matter

We can create environments and services that reduce stress and the risk of individuals becoming overwhelmed....This approach can prevent further trauma to anyone accessing and providing services.

- Being trauma informed helps us understand **why our early experiences matter**; and how overwhelming experiences across the lifespan can cause lasting physiological and psychological imprints, if not addressed.
- Connections with others, supportive and nurturing relationships (within and outside the family and community) can reduce the impact of trauma. Timely relational support can help counterbalance its negative effects.
- Being trauma informed emphasises the benefits of **supportive relationships, supportive working environments and supportive communities**.
- It means **we can all play a part** infusing what we know about adversity, trauma, and resilience in our efforts to strengthen related policies, programmes, and public agencies.



Section 2 – Key Concepts

- A trauma informed approach is a ...**whole-system organisational change framework** that aims to develop coherent cultures, policies and practices across systems of service delivery to enhance service user engagement and provide more effective care (Bunting et al.,2019a;De Candia,2014)
- Trauma informed approaches recognise that many service users, patients or clients of health social care, education and justice services will have been impacted by potentially traumatic adverse experiences across their life course, and therefore **a more responsive form of service delivery is required....**the six principles should underpin all service delivery. (QUB Mooney et al.2024)



Definitions



... a comprehensive,
whole-system approach...
that is **theoretically grounded**,
developmentally informed and
is **flexible enough** to be adapted to
each organization's **unique context**.

”

(Lowenthal, 2020, p. 188)

Six Principles



In light of the prevalence of trauma, it is important to understand why we need to embed trauma informed principles and values throughout an organisation. A trauma informed approach is about how and in what way a service is delivered, rather than simply what the service provides. By implementing the six trauma informed principles: safety, trustworthiness, choice, collaboration, empowerment and inclusion*, we can create environments and services that reduce stress and the risk of individuals becoming overwhelmed. This approach can prevent further trauma to anyone accessing and providing services.

Creating a trauma informed culture is about everyday behaviours and interactions. It is about how we do our business and how the six principles are infused into everything we do. The six principles need to be embedded into our interactions and engagements through language, tone and written communications. This will help us harness compassionate and supportive relationships, and will improve the culture in our work environments and communities.

*adapted from [24]

NI system change: TI principles



Barriers and Enablers of the Implementation of Trauma Informed Approaches in Northern Ireland

Dr Suzanne Mooney &
Montserrat Fargas Malet



Aims



UPDATE
EVIDENCE
BASE



MAP
IMPLEMENTATION
PROGRESS



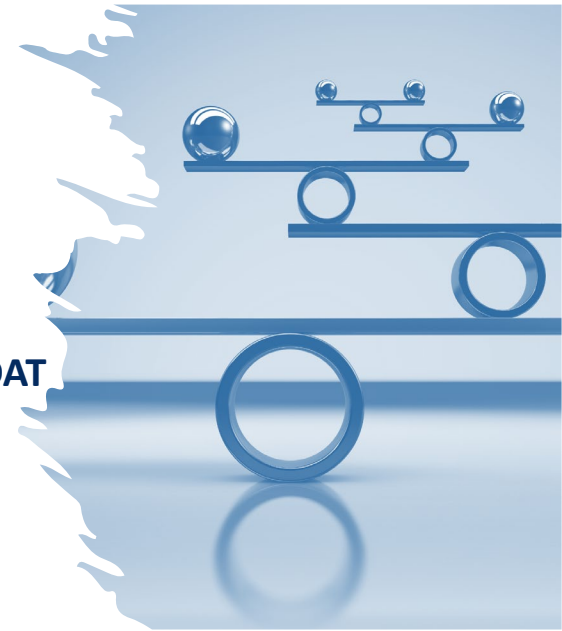
IDENTIFY
ENABLERS
BARRIERS
AND
CHALLENGES TO
PROGRESS



EXPLORE
WHAT
DIFFERENCE
MAKES



MAKE
RECOMMENDATIONS



The Organisational Review



Rapid Evidence
Assessment



Progress Mapping
– Online Survey
(n=53)



Sector-Specific
Regional Focus
Groups (n=52)



Mixed-Methods
Case Studies

The Case Studies



Fane Street
Primary School



Youth Justice
Agency



Thorndale
Parenting Service,
Salvation Army



BHSCT Belfast
Inclusion Health
Service

Definitions



“

... a comprehensive,
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”

(Lowenthal, 2020, p. 188)

Conceptualisation

Barriers & Challenges

“ There is a danger that this could become a **tick box thing**, and people go ‘well, what do we do now? what do we need to do to get our Gold Star for being trauma informed? and **then we can move on**”



HSC Trusts Focus Group

Enablers

“ There are HSC areas where policies such as reducing restrictive practice, MCA [Mental Capacity Act] legislation etc. are very pertinent, and therefore adhered to. **Whilst this is TIP, I don’t think that they would be perceived under that heading.**”



Survey submission - Frontline organisation, HSC, Statutory sector

TIA Implementation Domains



Organisational Development

Governance & Leadership

Financing & Resourcing

Collaboration (intra & inter-agency)

Policy & Procedures

Service user & Caregiver Involvement

Physical Environment

Progress Monitoring, Review & Evaluation



Workforce Development & Support

Universal & Specialist Training

Ongoing/Routine Support, Reflective Practice, Supervision & Consultation

Staff Wellbeing Initiatives



Service Design & Delivery

Everyday Strength-Based Relational Practices to promote engagement & avoid re-traumatisation

Routine Inquiry/Assessment inclusive of Trauma/Adversity History

Trauma/Adversity History taken account of in Care/Intervention Planning

Access to Tailored & Specialist Services, Supports & Interventions

Organisational Development

Enablers

Barriers & Challenges



Leadership buy-in
(inter-departmental –
aligned initiatives)



Shared vision - message
consistency



Implementation plan &
structures (horizontal
leadership)



Make a start & cascade learning

Organisational Development

Enablers



Leadership buy-in
(inter-departmental –
aligned initiatives)



Shared vision - message
consistency



Implementation plan &
structures (horizontal
leadership)



Make a start & cascade learning

Barriers & Challenges



Size/multi-site – more complex



Low priority, 'luxury' - not 'core
business'



Limited dedicated funding &
commissioning



Fragmentation/siloed services &
disciplines



Lack of a NI Assembly & Executive

Workforce Development and Support

Enablers

Barriers & Challenges



Staff buy-in – ‘the magic wand’



Staff involvement

throughout – build

collective sense of purpose



Culture of staff support & collaboration



Context-specific training & support

Workforce Development and Support

Enablers



Staff buy-in – ‘the magic wand’



Staff involvement throughout – build

collective sense of purpose



Culture of staff support & collaboration



Context-specific training & support

Barriers & Challenges



Lack of staff buy-in



COVID impact – fatigue, ‘traumatised workforce’



Staff burnout & turnover



Challenging staffing situations



Space & time – Overstretched systems

“

...to implement this and **make it meaningful**... you need **time and space** to think about it, to understand it, to integrate it, to apply it, you need a bit of space and time in order to be able to do that. And actually, when services are just **running from pillar to post**, that's a **massive, massive challenge**. ”



HSC Trusts Focus Group

“

We **don't have the time to do it regularly**. That's the problem, we just don't always have this space and time for reflective practice. **But when we do, it's really enlightening** because there's such a **wealth of wisdom and knowledge** within the team. ”



Belfast Inclusion Staff Focus Group



Challenges on Outcomes (& Perceived Benefits)



What to measure? And how? Context-specific



Capturing the range of benefits



Long-term nature of some benefits

Service user // staff // organisational



“

... our strap line is we're on **the journey** to becoming a trauma informed organisation.

And I do think it's a journey. **I don't think it's a destination.** I think... your staff teams change, your management changes, other priorities come in and you're constantly having to **revisit what we've learned**...

You've implemented something, you think that's grand. Then you realise, actually... **is anybody actually doing** what we've supposed to have implemented? **You're going back.** You're reminding people, you're **building in mechanisms to evaluate and review**, and then...

You're going back again, so it's **a constant journey.** ”



Senior Management Focus Group, YJA

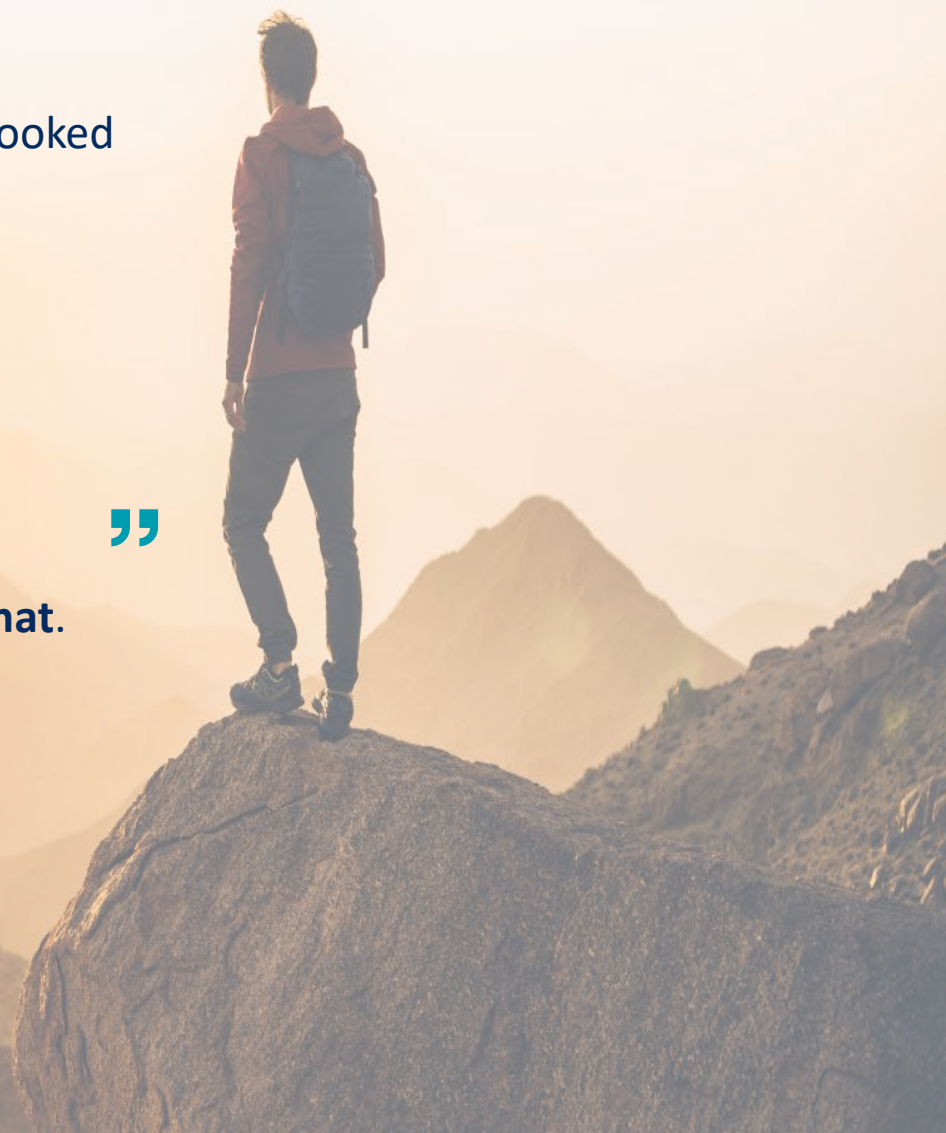
“

There are **no downsides** to this at all.
And actually sometimes that can be overlooked
as well. (...) whether that be
from a workforce point of view,
organisational responsibilities,
services to customers,
the experience of customers.
**If you're doing all this stuff, it's just
a better place for everybody. Simple as that.**

”



Cross-sector/Regional Focus Group



Recommendations



TIAs as theoretical framework to underpin current policy developments in NI



A trauma informed strategy needed to advance implementation across sectors and settings



The development of a regional inter-departmental **research and outcomes strategy**



A regional NI trauma informed resource hub or centre required to facilitate organisational leadership and networking



A regional training framework should be developed



THANK YOU

Questions & Comments

Suzanne Mooney
s.mooney@qub.ac.uk



Examples



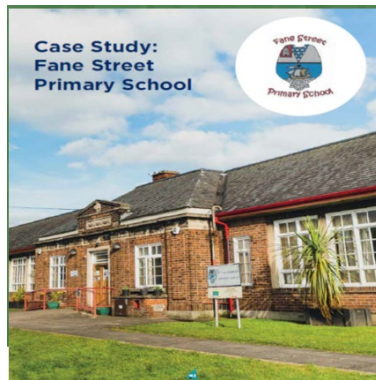
In this section, we have included a sample of sector specific examples from across NI. We intend to add new examples to the toolkit on a periodic basis.

- Education
- Health and Social Care
- Justice
- Community & Voluntary
- Cross sector collaboration

Further examples of trauma informed approaches (TIA) are infused throughout the phase two supplementary material available on each focus area.

For example, leadership in action examples are in the leadership focus area and examples of workforce wellbeing initiatives are in the corresponding focus area.

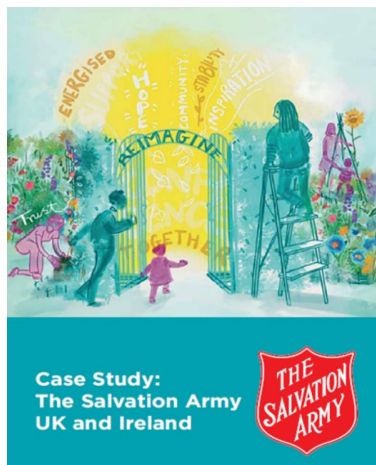
The Benefits of Applying a Trauma Informed Approach



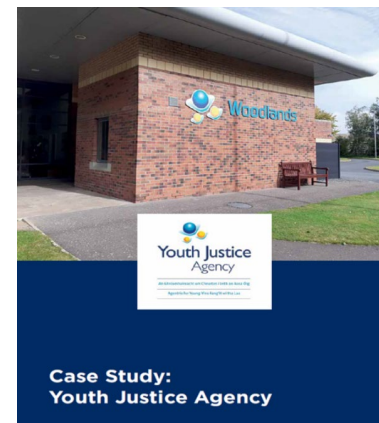
[Implementing Trauma Informed Approaches in Northern Ireland Case Study: Fane Street Primary School \(safeguardingni.org\)](#)



[Implementing Trauma Informed Approaches in Northern Ireland Case Study: Belfast Inclusion Health Service \(safeguardingni.org\)](#)



[Implementing Trauma Informed Approaches in Northern Ireland Case Study: Salvation Army \(safeguardingni.org\)](#)



[Implementing Trauma Informed Approaches in Northern Ireland Case Study: Youth Justice Agency \(safeguardingni.org\)](#)



Setting the
Scene

Key
Concepts

Six
Principles

Evidence &
Examples

Organisational
Checklist

Library

Leadership

Learning and
Development

Workforce
Wellbeing

Lived Experience
and Involvement

Policy and
Practice

Environment

Working
Together

Continuous
Improvement

Resourcing

Evaluation and
Sustainability

Organisational Checklist



Organisational Checklist

The organisational checklist is a practical resource that can be used to provide either a baseline or review of your organisation's progress. It is primarily intended to identify areas for improvement and support planning, rather than serve as a scoring matrix. Its core function is to support organisations to measure progress.

“A thorough, measurable assessment:

- helps a system or organisation determine areas for improvement and areas of strength across all levels of the system or organisation
- allows an organisation to assess capacity and target training activities and strategic planning
- helps the leadership and staff understand the need for a TIA
- provides data to validate TIA need and assess readiness for TIA implementation.” (SAMHSA 2023)



Organisational Checklist

You can complete this as a leader, complete as a team or as a service.
Choose the areas you want to start with, you might like to prioritise one or two areas.

In each section you are asked to rate your organisation's progress by identifying your most frequently occurring score from that focus area using the following scale (Please score 1- 5):

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 | Little or no indication of trauma informed actions in practice or in policy in this focus area – action is required to establish a suitable starting point. |
| 2 | Some elements of a trauma informed approach being applied in this focus area though only in isolated projects – action is required to consider how to cascade a trauma informed approach more widely. |
| 3 | Evidence of trauma informed implementation with change being applied in multiple areas – actions planned for further implementation. |
| 4 | Trauma informed approaches broadly deployed across this focus area – multiple actions ongoing and under review. |
| 5 | Trauma informed approaches fully embedded across this focus area – actions are continually evaluated. |

Organisational Checklist

Next steps

Step 1: Complete organisational checklist, download an editable version [here](#)



Step 2: Analyse results and select priority focus area/s



Step 3: Attend relevant focus area workshops/consult TIP team/SBNI website

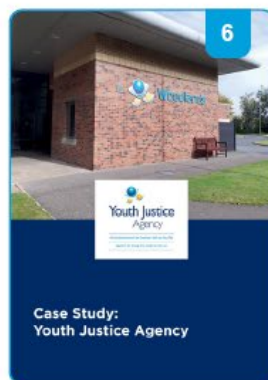
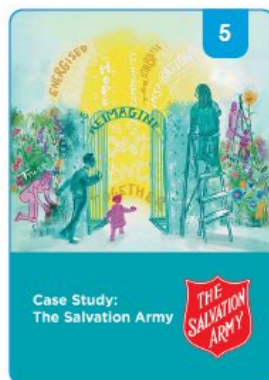
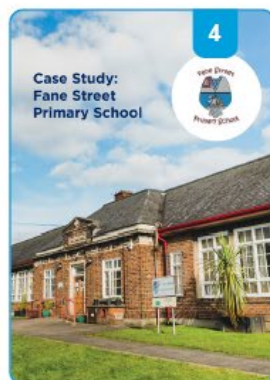


Step 4: Start developing your organisational action plan



Step 5: Build support networks to continue the implementation journey

Resources



1. [Executive Summary: We are on a Journey - Implementing Trauma Informed Approaches in Northern Ireland](#)
2. [Full Report: We are on a Journey - Implementing Trauma Informed Approaches in Northern Ireland](#)
3. [Implementing Trauma Informed Approaches in Northern Ireland Case Study: Belfast Inclusion Health Service](#)
4. [Implementing Trauma Informed Approaches in Northern Ireland Case Study: Fane Street Primary School](#)
5. [Implementing Trauma Informed Approaches in Northern Ireland Case Study: Salvation Army](#)
6. [Implementing Trauma Informed Approaches in Northern Ireland Case Study: Youth Justice Agency](#)
7. [Online Training Brochure - safeguardingni.org](#)



Evidence

Organisational transformations are three times more likely to succeed if they systemically identify the enablers and barriers to implementation and subsequently try to design mechanisms to address them. [25]

In 2022/23 Queen's University Belfast (QUB) was commissioned by the Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland (SBNI) to undertake research to:

- update the previous QUB Evidence Review [13] sharing key components of effective trauma informed approach (TIA) implementation in diverse real-world settings
- conduct online organisational surveys to map progress across key sectors in NI
- establish a senior leadership strategic overview of implementation across NI
- capture the organisational learning from cross sector case studies
- provide recommendations for advancement of trauma informed approaches across NI.



Implementation of Trauma Informed Approaches

Throughout this toolkit we will outline the benefits, barriers and enablers that have been identified in NI by infusing the findings and recommendations from the research report. The report was called "We are on a Journey" - **Implementing Trauma Informed Approaches in Northern Ireland** [10]. The team published their findings in 2024 producing an executive summary and full report (click on blue arrow):



References

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23. Key-Terms-Related-to-Realizing-the-Widespread-Impact-of-Trauma.pdf ([traumainformedoregon.org](#))
24. Office for Health Improvement & Disparities. 2022. *Working definition of trauma-informed practice*. GOV.UK. Available at [Working definition of trauma-informed practice - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
25. Treisman, K (2021) A treasure box for creating trauma-informed organizations: a ready-to-use resource for trauma, adversity, and culturally informed, infused and responsive systems. Jessica Kingsley publishers.
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27. McFadden, P (2020). Two sides of one coin? Relationships build resilience or contribute to burnout in child protection social work: shared perspectives from leavers and stayers in Northern Ireland. *International Social Work*, 63, 164-176.

Vision for Northern Ireland

**Our whole systems understands
why relationships matter**

**Substance use support
for underlying pain**

Tackle isolation

Early intervention

Prevention

Parents feel supported

Compassionate communities

Community support

**Understand ways to
support regulation**

Diversionary activities

Safe communities

Community informed

Connecting our services & systems

Financial stability

Proportionate therapeutic support

Relational support

Connected communities

Mental Health Promotion

Supported workforce

Supportive organisations

Supporting emotional literacy

Education and employment support

This illustrates a positive vision for NI where a trauma informed approach enhances outcomes for the whole of society.

Continuous Improvement

Your feedback matters

- The toolkit is a live document and we welcome all suggestions for improvement. Please contact the SBNI on SBNI.info@hscni.net entitled 'Toolkit', to share your feedback or any examples for inclusion.



Trauma Informed Organisational Toolkit Implementation Workshops

Embedding a Trauma Informed Approach

Participants will be guided to reflect and identify areas for development and receive additional resources to support them on their journey.

Target audience:

- those who have completed trauma informed training (a minimum requirement of Level 1 & 2 or equivalent)
- those in a leadership, policy development, or commissioning role
- those who wish to support trauma informed development in their organisation.

You can register for the workshops through this link [Workshop Registration](#) or sign up through the SBNi website [Events & Training \(safeguardingni.org\)](#)

Trust	Date / Time	Venue
Western	04.11.2024 1pm - 5pm	Silverbirch Hotel, Omagh
	18.11.2024 1pm - 5pm	Waterfoot Hotel Derry / L'Derry
Belfast	25.11.2024 1pm - 5pm	HSC Leadership Centre Belfast
	12.12.2024 9am - 1pm	NICVA Belfast
Northern	05.12.2024 9am - 1pm	Dunsilly Hotel Antrim
	10.12.2024 1pm - 5pm	ECOS Centre Ballymena
South Eastern	06.11.2024 1pm - 5pm	Lagan Valley Island Lisburn
	15.11.2024 1pm - 5pm	Lagan Valley Island Lisburn
Southern	29.11.2024 9am - 1pm	The Junction Dungannon
	03.12.2024 1pm - 5pm	Craigavon Civic Centre Craigavon

Venue Summary

Trauma Informed Organisational Toolkit Implementation Workshops

4 November 2024 | 1 - 5pm
Silverbirch Hotel, Omagh

Trauma Informed Organisational Toolkit Implementation Workshops

6 November 2024 | 1 - 5pm
Lagan Valley Island, Lisburn

Trauma Informed Organisational Toolkit Implementation Workshops

15 November 2024 | 1 - 5pm
Lagan Valley Island, Lisburn

Trauma Informed Organisational Toolkit Implementation Workshops

18 November 2024 | 1 - 5pm
Waterfoot Hotel, Derry/Londonderry

Trauma Informed Organisational Toolkit Implementation Workshops

25 November 2024 | 1 - 5pm
HSC Leadership Centre

Trauma Informed Organisational Toolkit Implementation Workshops

29 November 2024 | 9am - 1pm
The Junction, Dungannon

Trauma Informed Organisational Toolkit Implementation Workshops

3 December 2024 | 1 - 5pm
Craigavon Civic Centre, Craigavon

Trauma Informed Organisational Toolkit Implementation Workshops

5 December 2024 | 9am - 1pm
Dunsilly Hotel, Antrim

Trauma Informed Organisational Toolkit Implementation Workshops

10 December 2024 | 1 - 5pm
ECOS Centre, Ballymena

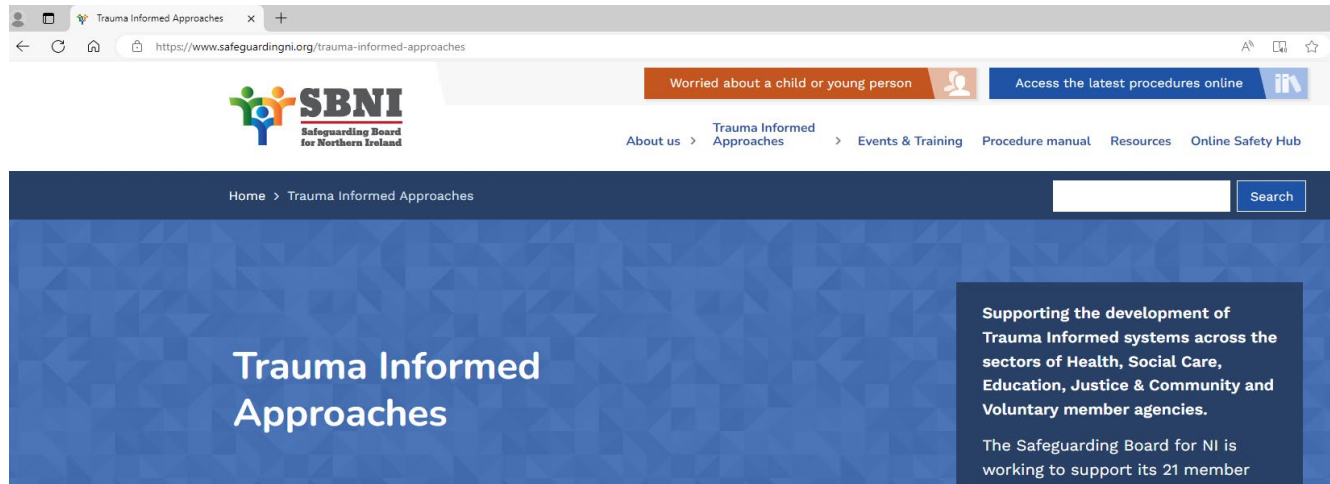
Trauma Informed Organisational Toolkit Implementation Workshops

12 December 2024 | 9am - 1pm
NICVA

[Events & Training \(safeguardingni.org\)](https://safeguardingni.org)



SBNI Website About the Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland (safeguardingni.org)



WATCH THE RECORDING



Agenda

- Professor Daniel Muijs (Head of School of Social Sciences, Education and Social Work) - Welcome
- Ms Bernie McNally Independent Chair, Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland - Opening address
- Dr Suzanne Mooney (QUB) - Implementing Trauma Informed Approaches in NI - Study overview & key findings
- Reflections from the Case Studies (Education, Justice, Health & Social Care , Voluntary/Community Sector) - TIA implementation in practice
- Julie Harrison (Permanent Secretary, Northern Ireland Office) - Closing remarks
- Q & A
- Dr Mandi McDonald - Thanks & Close

Solihull Approach - first responders and frontline health & social care services

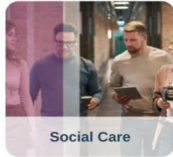
Understanding your wellbeing in high pressure environments:



Health Care and Ambulance



Police



Social Care



Firefighters

What does it include:

1. Trauma and wellbeing
2. Going through a traumatic experience
3. Trauma memories
4. Recognising trauma
5. Our feelings
6. Containment
7. Communicating feelings
8. Anxiety and depression
9. Processing trauma
10. Recovering from trauma
11. Trauma in the general population
12. Organisational trauma

Level 1 Introduction 'Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Awareness' and Trauma

Level 2 Introduction to 'Developing a Trauma Sensitive Approach to Practice'



Solihull Approach CPD - Free Online Courses for Professionals



The following online courses enhance understanding of trauma informed approaches, building on the SBNI modules. Each takes approximately 4 hours to complete. They can be completed in short units.

Learning & Development



Understanding Trauma
Complexities of trauma; recognising, processing and recovery



Understanding Brain Development
Brain development from antenatal to adolescence and its significance for mental health and emotional wellbeing in children and teenagers.



Understanding Attachment
Supporting healthy attachment and the value of containment and reciprocity for the quality of attachment.

Summary Infographic

Trauma Informed Organisations and Systems



* Resist re-traumatisation
Adapted from SAMHSA

Embedding a Trauma Informed Approach



Finally...

- Please promote the Toolkit within your organisation
- Consider who is best to complete the checklist or a specific focus area (considering collective leadership approaches) and who will attend the interactive Toolkit workshops
- **THANK YOU** for taking the time to attend today.

We invite you to continue to play a role in embedding a trauma informed approach across organisations, systems and workplaces.



Trauma Informed Toolkit

An implementation resource to embed a trauma-informed approach within organisations and systems.



Trauma Informed Toolkit (safeguardingni.org)