

# Trauma-Informed Organizations: A Warren/Clinton County Learning Community

Warren and Clinton County organizations are invited to participate in the newly formed Trauma-Informed Organization Learning Community which will provide free training and professional consultative services. Participating organizations will be aided in modifying their practices to be more cognizant of the trauma their customers may have suffered and are reacting to, as well as the secondary trauma experienced by staff. This opportunity is being funded by Mental Health Recovery Services of Warren and Clinton Counties.

A trauma-informed approach can be implemented in any type of service setting or organization. This approach is much more global and should be distinguished from trauma-specific treatments which are designed specifically to address the consequences of trauma and to facilitate healing.

Thus, this isn't just for behavioral health organizations! Because of the prevalence, we interact with individuals everyday who have experienced traumatic events. All organizations can become trauma-informed — including domestic violence programs, children's services, court systems, jails, probation offices, job and family services, food pantries, homeless shelters, medical providers, developmental disabilities, schools, etc.

*Please consider sending a representative from your organization to learn more about this important endeavor.*

## Our Consultant

Our consultant and coach, *Kristine Buffington*, will be educating and leading us through this process. She is a Licensed Independent Social Worker with Supervisory Designation with a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology and a Master's Degree in Social Work. She has 30 years of experience in the field of social work as a case manager, clinical therapist, agency administrator, and a national trainer and consultant regarding issues of child traumatic stress and trauma-informed care. She is an affiliate member of the National Child Traumatic Stress Network and has been a participant and chair of a number of national and state level committees to address traumatic stress, child welfare, and juvenile justice issues. Her current focus is to advocate for trauma-informed care system transformation.

## Logistics

Our first Learning Community Meeting will be:

Friday, September 18, 2015 ♦ 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.  
Young Center, Warren County Board of Developmental Disabilities  
801 Drake Road Lebanon, OH 45036

*Consultant/Coaching services are fully funded by MHRS*

## Registration

Register no later than September 17th at <http://goo.gl/forms/zZRxUM2LSj>,  
by going to [www.mhrsonline.org/events](http://www.mhrsonline.org/events), or by calling 513-695-1695

For more information, contact  
Patti Ahting, MHRS, [pahting@mhrswcc.org](mailto:pahting@mhrswcc.org) or 513-695-1695  
212 Cook Road, Lebanon, OH 45036

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## Trauma Matters

In recent years, an increased national focus has been placed on trauma. Once considered an abnormal experience, multiple studies have demonstrated that upwards of 60% of U.S. adults have suffered or witnessed at least one trauma.

Individuals who have survived trauma vary widely in how they experience and express traumatic stress reactions. These reactions vary in severity. They can dramatically influence how individuals respond to the environment, relationships, and interventions or other services. Those same characteristics can also shape the assumptions that trauma victims make about their world, their future, and themselves. Trauma informed services bring to the forefront the belief that trauma can affect an individual's well

-being, including physical and mental health. This reinforces the importance of acquiring trauma-specific knowledge and skills to meet the unique needs of those we serve.

In essence, a trauma-informed organization views traumatic stress reactions as *normal* reactions to *abnormal* situations and recognizes that these reactions have served an adaptive purpose for the traumatized individual. Through the use of various principles, an organization can provide a safe and supportive environment to encourage recovery.

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*"Trauma results from an event, series of events, or set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or threatening and that has lasting adverse effects on the individual's functioning and physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being." — SAMHSA*

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## What do we hope to accomplish?

The Ohio Departments of Mental Health and Addiction Services and Developmental Disabilities recently launched a statewide Trauma-Informed Care Initiative (TIC). Building upon this foundation, we hope to expand and share this information with our local partners.

TIC is an approach that explicitly acknowledges the role trauma plays in people's lives. *TIC means that every part of an organization or program understands the impact of trauma on the individuals they serve.* Adopting a trauma-informed care model promotes a greater sense of safety, security and equality.

Our TIC Initiative is being directed by the six Guiding Principles of Trauma-Informed Care from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). What we know is that this is a "change process" which will require a several month commitment by champions within an organization.

But we also know that the benefit of this focus not only facilitates better customer/client service and outcomes, but also decreases staff stress.

By joining together on this project, we can create meaningful change for individuals in our community.

### Looking for more Information?

SAMHSA  
<http://www.samhsa.gov/ntic/trauma-interventions>

Ohio Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services  
<http://mha.ohio.gov/traumacare>

CDC-Adverse Childhood Experiences Study  
<http://www.cdc.gov/>