CTIPP

VISION FOR A
TRAUMA-INFORMED
SOCIETY

ctipp.org/ctipp-vision

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The Campaign for Trauma-Informed Policy and Practice (CTIPP) envisions a future where individuals, families, organizations, communities, and systems stand empowered to realize their full potential.

Our vision presents a variety of concrete considerations that are critical to preventing and mitigating trauma and adversity, as well as promoting resiliency, recovery, healing, and growth so that all are supported to flourish and thrive.

WHAT SHAPES THE VISION

The vision is intended to be as comprehensive as possible in what it proposes is needed to align our society with the broad-scale transformation we want to see happen without being overly complex, duplicative, or so granular that it is not a universally useful template for a diverse range of advocates and communities to utilize as a template to inform their work of advancing change.

The primary factors that give shape to the vision are the six core principles of a trauma-informed approach. The actions proposed align with and seek to operationalize these principles, with a grounding in building on what is already happening and what we know works based on keeping current with:

- Proposed and enacted public policy
- Insights from contemporary research
- Demonstrated promising practices
- Emerging findings from the field and efforts underway
- Wisdom shared and unmet needs expressed by people with lived experience of trauma and adversity

TRAUMA-INFORMED, RESILIENCE-BUILDING, HEALING-CENTERED, PREVENTION-ORIENTED, AND COMMUNITY-LED APPROACHES BENEFIT US ALL

CTIPP recognizes that the utility of trauma-informed transformation transcends political divides and differences. Our vision presents a nonpartisan opportunity for all policymakers and all people to come together in collaboration and solidarity to address the root cause of many of society's most pressing challenges.

THE SUM IS GREATER THAN THE PARTS: THE INTERDEPENDENCE AND INTERCONNECTEDNESS OF ALL DIMENSIONS IN THE VISION

To ease information digestion, support a deeper understanding of what initiatives are proposed to seek to accomplish, and improve accessibility and navigability for those engaging with the vision, the vision is organized into "dimensions." We also recognize that it is realistically unlikely that any person or community would have the capacity, interest, and resources to take on every action outlined across all of the proposed dimensions.

An initial focus on a few activities within one or two specific dimensions may help advocates and communities find an entry point into trauma-informed advocacy and change work, positioning them to continue building momentum and self-efficacy to take further action across dimensions over time.

We choose to use the term "dimensions" to conceptualize and convey this reality while also acknowledging the multifaceted and interconnected nature of all aspects of the vision. This language is important to us because we have seen how the siloed nature of the way our society, systems, and structures have come to operate can pose a significant challenge to the wide-scale change that the vision seeks to enliven. Yet, a holistic, comprehensive approach to transformation that brings us closer to the world we envision extends beyond taking action in only one dimension and instead demands a collaborative, coordinated approach at the local and broader levels. The dimensions of the vision represent a "both/and" approach rather than an "either/or" mindset, meaning that enormous potential and opportunities abound for any and all who wish to contribute to change.

OUR VISION AS A LIVING, BREATHING, AND GROWING TEMPLATE

We live, and we learn. Just as the work of becoming trauma-informed is an ongoing, iterative process of learning and growth that is never really "done," the vision we have proposed here is intended to be an ever-evolving anchor for our work. We intend to update and build upon what we have assembled within each dimension of this vision as learnings, circumstances, needs, and norms continue to evolve and emerge over time.

Notice something that feels important to specifically uplift across any of the dimensions below? We welcome your feedback to help us continue to clarify and shape the movement's collective vision for a preferred future!

TOGETHER, WE CAN...

BUILD A JUST AND EQUITABLE LEGAL SYSTEM FOR ALL

While it is well-established that experiencing trauma is more normative than not given the high percentage of people who self-report having lived experience of trauma and adversity, people who are involved with the legal system disproportionately nearly universally—report significant trauma histories leading up to becoming system-involved.

Further, interactions with the legal system are often themselves experienced as traumatic or re-traumatizing by people who become involved. Interactions with law enforcement, navigating court appearances and related obligations, experiencing unfair and unequal treatment, being subject to punitive ideologies, interfacing with carceral institutions, and encountering barriers to community re-entry all can cause harm and further perpetuate trauma and injustice. Those who are directly involved are not the only people who are exposed to harm and trauma by interfacing with the legal system.

For instance, the people who care about those who become involved in the legal system, as well as the communities to which such people belong, are subject to harmful personal experiences as well as the enforcement of policies, practices, and dynamics that often significantly impair their own well-being.

In particular, children and younger people whose caregivers become involved with the legal system are made significantly more vulnerable to becoming system-involved themselves, as well as to experiencing challenges with their mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual health in ways that have the potential to powerfully shape their life trajectory.

It is also important to acknowledge the impacts of the work on those who interface with these systems and how occupational hazards such as secondary traumatic stress, compassion fatigue, moral distress, and burnout can not only adversely impact their well-being but also can manifest in people unintentionally reinforcing re-traumatizing dynamics toward others.

These and other factors indicate that the legal system currently operates in a manner that undermines its purpose to ensure safety for all. Integrating trauma-informed principles, policies, protocols, and practices in the legal system has the potential to reduce rates of incarceration, bolster the public's sense of safety, build trust in the legal system as well as related actors and institutions, break intergenerational cycles of inequity and oppression, improve holistic health outcomes, and increase access to fairness and justice for all.

This dimension of the vision calls for us to:
- Support and fund the establishment of trauma-informed and trauma-responsive policies, protocols, and physical environments in agencies, organizations, and institutions within the legal system, building in minimum standards and accountability practices
- Set for standards requiring consideration of trauma-informed principles in the design of the physical spaces those who are involved with the legal system engage with, such as courts and carceral institutions
- Require all legal system entities (e.g., courts, carceral facilities, law enforcement agencies, etc.) to allocate a portion of their annual budget towards the implementation and maintenance of trauma-informed services, programming, and mentoring for their staff as well as for people who are involved with the legal system
- Minimize practices that contribute to institutional trauma, re-traumatization, violence, brutality, and human rights violations within the legal system, while institutionalizing humane, compassionate, and evidence-informed approaches to supporting recovery
- Eliminate the use of restraint and seclusion in carceral settings—ideally universally, or beginning with enacting special protections first among those who are particularly vulnerable, such as pregnant people, younger people, people living with developmental/intellectual disabilities, and survivors of trafficking
- Ensure people who become legal system-involved retain access to natural light, fresh air, exercise, opportunities for social interaction, enrichment activities, holistic health supports, and families
- Implement alternatives to physical force, such as verbal de-escalation techniques, crisis intervention training, and other trauma-informed techniques to prevent or reduce the need for force whenever safe and feasible
- Require education and training on trauma as well as trauma-informed practices among all law enforcement, court personnel, attorneys, judges, carceral settings, and others who work within the legal system

- Some possible steps in lieu of universal education/training:
  - Require legal system-related settings to have at least one person trained in trauma-informed and trauma-responsive approaches in order to operate, be licensed/certified, and/or receive public funding
  - Require those who provide services to those who identify as survivors or victims of crimes to receive trauma-informed sensitivity, interviewing, and investigation training
- Provide alternatives to incarceration that reduce harm for individuals and communities, such as:
  - Implement restorative justice processes and practices that are rooted in repairing harm based on what all parties involved express they need to heal and feel safe
    - Some examples include circles that allow for a dialogue between survivors and those who perpetrated harm, community service, and family conferencing
  - Expand pre-arrest and pre-trial diversion programs
  - Develop problem-solving courts grounded in therapeutic jurisprudence
  - Financially support the creation and expansion of trauma-informed mentoring and peer support programs within court systems, carceral institutions, and community-based organizations serving individuals involved with the legal system
- Build community capacity to support greater safety, transparency, care, and connection to reduce violence, such as
- Engage formal and informal community leaders to spearhead initiatives, events, and practices that bring together people in the community to discuss how to support one another and keep each other—and the community-as-a-whole—safe in ways that fit for them
- Create paid roles enlisting community members with lived experience of both perpetrating and surviving violence to leverage their wisdom and build additional skills to interrupt violence
- Disseminate accessible information to the community to help shine a light on the nature and impacts of trauma, bring awareness to how this may influence the ways humans treat one another, and collaborative solutions to shift harmful practices that have been normalized toward embodying a culture of collective care
- Enhance cross-sector collaboration and coordination
  - Create referral pathways to help identify those who would benefit from trauma-informed prevention and early intervention services to thwart legal system-involvement
  - Create strong partnerships between courts, law enforcement entities, and community-based providers of programming and services to help children and families of those who are incarcerated address and cope with related stress and trauma

- Include a variety of people and groups who are invested in and/or impacted by change at all levels of the legal system, along with community members with lived experience interfacing with the legal system, in any and all working groups, task forces, and other entities convened to make recommendations for changes to existing standards and practices
- Eliminate bias, discrimination, and disproportionality in the legal system
  - Establish transparent, standardized, and enforced procedures and policies that hold law enforcement accountable for misconduct such as profiling and excessive use of force
  - Establish ethical rules and standards, as well as entities to ensure accountability, to ensure technology used by actors within the legal system, from surveillance tools to data-driven algorithms, are utilized ethically, fairly, and in a trauma-informed manner
  - Provide services and supports to help people living with disabilities—who are disproportionately system-involved—navigate the legal system and have their rights protected
  - Integrate learnings on cultural humility and intersectionality into training and education for the full legal system workforce
  - Eliminate legal system-related fees and fines levied upon younger people in juvenile legal settings, as well as those demonstrated to be racially discriminatory
  - Require judges to consider additional factors in mitigation when determining the appropriate sentence for someone who has plead to an offense, including factors such as a history of trauma/ACEs, and a person's positive involvement in the community
- Support workforce wellness and wholeness
  - Require training for all regarding the effective recognition of vicarious/secondary traumatic stress as well as post-traumatic stress commonly experienced among those who work within the legal system
  - Invest in training and programming to equip the workforce with the knowledge, tools, and access to resources that support healthy, effective stress management and that promote holistic well-being
  - Establish clear, accessible policies and procedures for reporting and addressing workplace- and job-related trauma and stress without fear of retaliation
  - Fund access to support groups, mentoring programs, and other opportunities for peer-to-peer learning and support among members of the workforce
  - Develop and implement awareness campaigns and educational programs that teach individuals and communities about trauma-informed practices and how to work together to create safe and supportive environments

ADVANCE CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

A rising tide of research affirms that environment- and climate-related issues are inextricably linked to increased experiences of traumatic stress and adversity. Climate and environmental trauma span a wide variety of stress-inducing experiences such as witnessing or experiencing natural disasters like floods, wildfires, hurricanes, or droughts, experiencing food insecurity or water scarcity, resource overexploitation, being exposed to pollution or toxins, facing displacement and resettlement in relation to extreme weather events, and the disruption of ecological processes.

In addition to the challenges associated with recovery following such events and experiences, the threat of exposure to climate- and environmental-related trauma and related consequences itself continues to remain an urgent concern on the minds of many. Prolonged uncertainty and worsening conditions evoke feelings of powerlessness, grief, disconnection, and fear that ripple through entire communities and societies.

Further, groups already marginalized by our systems and institutions are disproportionately exposed to environmental burdens and their devastating consequences. Among these groups, climate and environmental trauma often compound with existing challenges such as economic hardship, social inequality, political instability, and poor community infrastructure to create greater vulnerability to devastation as well as additional barriers to recovery when significant environmental events happen.

Driven by the urgency of climate and environmental threats to health, safety, and holistic well-being, CTIPP prioritizes building resilience for all. This work, rooted in trauma-informed principles, equity, and justice, is a collective endeavor. It is vital we all stand together to ensure that resilience is not a privilege but a fundamental right accessible to all. Through this united action, we create a sustainable future where everyone thrives.

This dimension of the vision calls for us to:
- Establish a national entity (and/or state-level entities) responsible for researching and disseminating best practices in trauma-informed interventions, as well as for providing technical assistance and support to communities seeking to build climate and environmental resilience

- Build infrastructure to make communities safer and more resilient to withstand environmental/climate-related threats
- Strengthen environmental regulations, protections, and enforcement/accountability mechanisms for both private and public entities
- Increase funding for trauma-informed, culturally-responsive mental health services in communities disproportionately impacted by climate and environmental adversity
- Require those who work within emergency preparedness, mitigation, management, and recovery to be trained on trauma-informed approaches and trauma-responsive interventions
- Fund initiatives that build resilience and adaptive capacity at the community level
  - Provide grants for pilot programs and other implementation initiatives that promote community-based preventive approaches to protecting against the harms of climate and environmental trauma
  - Develop and implement pre-disaster trauma-informed preparedness programs in vulnerable communities to educate community members about the potential mental health impacts of environmental disasters, train them in coping skills and resilience-building techniques, and identify and address pre-existing mental health needs
  - Establish sustainable community hubs that provide access to resources and services to support resilience and well-being such as community gardens, green spaces, renewable energy sources, and trauma-informed support services
  - Support the development of media literacy programs to help individuals and communities critically evaluate information about climate change and environmental risks so they may stand empowered to make informed choices for themselves
  - Invest in infrastructure development projects that prioritize historically underserved communities, focusing on projects that enhance resilience to climate change and address environmental health-related disparities
  - Support and fund efforts to train community members and service providers in communities that are particularly susceptible to environmental and climate-related harm in skills, tools, and practices that promote resilience and support trauma recovery (e.g., Mental Health First Aid, Community Resiliency Model, etc.)
- Incorporate trauma-informed principles into emergency response protocols, ensuring that responses to crises are supportive and minimize re-traumatization
- Create a dedicated funding mechanism to support community-led initiatives addressing the root causes of environmental injustice and promoting environmental justice solutions
  - Ensure equitable access to clean air, water, food, and safe housing, particularly for those disproportionately impacted by climate and environmental injustice

- Prioritize infrastructure development in historically disenfranchised communities as well as those impacted by past environmental harms to enhance resilience
- Develop restorative justice practices to address environmental harms and promote healing and reconciliation
- Fund projects and initiatives to address the harm related to climate and environmental injustice inflicted on communities (e.g., legacy pollution, dumping, orphaned oil/gas wells)
- Build protective factors to create thriving communities and eliminate disparities with attention to the social, environmental, and political determinants of health, mental health, and well-being
- Work in partnership with tribal communities to invest in Indigenous-led efforts to address historical trauma, work toward repairing harm done to land acquired through colonization, and support tribal communities building resilience to climate and environmental disasters and events

- Allocate funding to support evidence-informed and promising trauma recovery programs in communities vulnerable to being significantly impacted by environmental disasters and events
  - Require that such interventions reflect the diversity of the community and are informed by the cultural values, beliefs, and traditions of the communities impacted
- Promote trauma-informed media reporting practices that avoid sensationalizing environmental and climate-related disasters and focus on solutions and stories of resilience
- Provide funding, mentorship opportunities, and trauma-informed leadership development training for younger person-led initiatives working on climate/environmental justice and equity to support a strong future workforce to continue building resilience
- Support research on the intersection of climate change, environmental injustice, and trauma, promoting collaboration between researchers, communities, and policymakers to support a sustainable, resilient future for all
- Work with international partners to develop and implement policies and initiatives that address climate change and environmental justice in a trauma-informed manner

PARTNER IN ACTION TOWARD RECOVERY AND RESILIENCE

As complex challenges require solutions that transcend individual efforts, collaboration is the cornerstone of building a future where everyone thrives. By forging partnerships, we can harness the power of diverse perspectives and expertise, unlock a wealth of resources, and support coordinated action towards specific goals, such as building resilient communities and promoting collective well-being.

By incorporating multiple viewpoints in building and sustaining trauma-informed communities and systems of care, we collectively gain a deeper understanding of complex problems, leading to more effective and sustainable solutions, as well as greater individual and collective resiliency to withstand future challenges.

Additionally, by pooling strengths and resources, as well as by building trust and mutual understanding, we stand equipped to address challenges with greater efficiency and scale, extending the reach of trauma-informed change and amplifying the associated positive impacts and outcomes.

It is critical that all cross-sector, cross-system action that takes place is taken in partnership with people with lived experience of trauma and adversity. Authentic co-creation demands that all people who are actively involved feel a sense of ownership over the solutions proposed, which makes it of great importance to ensure that opportunities to participate are accessible, equitable, and meaningful rather than tokenistic or only in relation to minor concerns.

Through collaborative, coordinated efforts, the feelings of commitment and inclusion among all who are invested in and/or impacted by trauma-informed transformation create a higher likelihood that change initiatives will be successful and sustained over time. There is also a continuous education process that emerges through collaboration, where learning from each other and disseminating knowledge across diverse contexts allows all involved to continually improve and build upon efforts underway.

Collaboration is not simply a means to an end; it is the foundation for a more just, equitable, and resilient society. By working together, we can create a future anchored in strength, shared purpose, and action to ensure everyone has access to the resources and support they need to heal, thrive, and reach their full potential.

This dimension of the vision calls for us to:
- Create and fund grant programs to fund community-based coalitions and groups that collaborate with and help coordinate community members and others who are invested in and impacted by change in action to address and prevent trauma and build resilience
- Create and implement shared decision-making frameworks, structures, and processes to ensure that all people and groups who are invested in and impacted by change efforts have a meaningful voice in decision-making
- Write language into legislation that requires the involvement of people with lived experience of trauma and adversity on any and all committees, task forces, working groups, and other entities convened to implement change within the state, system, sector, or community
  - Require the ongoing active involvement of individuals and communities with lived experience of trauma and adversity to strengthen programmatic coordination and policy alignment with their needs and goals
- Devise systems to support the secure sharing of information between partners with informed consent from people utilizing services and supports to reduce re-traumatization associated with re-telling one's story to multiple different entities to get support, obtain benefits, access services, and other such activities
  - Implement safeguards to ensure privacy and confidentiality of personally identifiable information is protected
  - Develop transparent communication channels and ensure regular updates are provided to all people and groups who are invested in and impacted by change
- Facilitate partnerships between healthcare, education, law enforcement, social services, and other sectors to create seamless care pathways and provide integrated trauma-informed services
- Provide funding and resources to facilitate cross-sector, cross-system partnerships and develop collaborative infrastructure, such as shared data systems and communication platforms
- Increase access to meaningful civic participation and engagement
  - Create and fund community-based initiatives that foster a sense of reciprocity and a sentiment of collective responsibility for well-being, and encourage community members to support each other in healing and recovery

- Fund and implement collaborative cross-sector training programs to educate all community members and professionals—not just those who hold direct support roles —about trauma, trauma-informed approaches, and related concepts
  - Incentivize participation by attaching grant funding or other benefits to implementing a trauma-informed approach for both private and public organizations and entities
- Implement collaborative evaluation processes that are community-driven and measure progress towards desired outcomes
  - Ensure data is collected, stored, and shared ethically and securely, with clear informed consent processes in place
- Fund long-term investments to support ongoing collaborative efforts and initiatives, thus supporting sustainable practices toward building resilience and supporting positive change

CHAMPION VETERANS, SERVICE MEMBERS, AND THEIR FAMILIES

The sacrifices of our nation's veterans, service members, and their families extend far beyond the battlefield. From the direct impact of war and combat to the challenges of transitioning back to civilian life, invisible wounds persist, impacting mental health, physical well-being, spiritual wellness, and social relationships.

Many who have served report experiencing symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, anxiety, and substance use disorders. These issues not only affect individual well-being but also impact the strength and resilience of military families and communities.

While entities exist that themselves are dedicated to supporting veterans, service members, and their families, people navigating these programs and systems of care often endorse that they fall short of being accessible and effective in meeting their multifaceted needs, sometimes even exacerbating existing challenges and bringing about re-traumatization.

Factors such as inadequate funding to make trauma-specific services accessible as well as the complexity and fragmentation of the systems of care that currently exist comprise barriers to full recovery.

A trauma-informed approach seeks to bridge these gaps through coordinated, integrated systems co-created through authentically and meaningfully engaging the perspectives of veterans, service members, and their cared-for ones in the design and delivery of services and supports. Trauma-informed policies also work to reduce the stigma surrounding mental health issues commonly faced by veterans and service members. This, in turn, promotes greater accessibility to high-quality, right-fit services and supports.

CTIPP aspires to support the co-construction of a comprehensive care network that not only addresses immediate challenges but also contributes to the long-term well-being and resiliency of our veterans, service members, and their families. By fostering a sense of safety, shared purpose, and belonging, veterans, service members, and their families will be more supported to integrate and heal from trauma and flourish beyond the constraints of visible and invisible wounds.

This dimension of the vision calls for us to:
- Fund programs connect those transitioning from military to civilian life to supportive services to help with acquiring stable housing, receiving needed mental and behavioral health services, securing employment, and facilitating family reintegration
- Create integrated care pathways to ensure seamless transitions between service providers and programs, reducing stress and promoting timely access to comprehensive care
  - Foster collaboration between government agencies, non-profit organizations, community members, and other people and groups invested in change to develop and implement comprehensive solutions
  - Invest in and promote telehealth services, mobile apps, and other technological solutions to support remote access to services, especially for those in rural or underserved areas or on bases that are more isolated
- Expand reimbursement for evidence-based, evidence-informed, and promising trauma-informed and trauma-specific interventions

- Increase opportunities for veterans, service members, and their families to choose their providers and service settings, including accessible, timely reimbursement mechanisms for those seeking care outside of the Department of Veterans Affairs
- Enhance the cultural responsiveness of existing programs and services so that they are relevant and responsive to the needs of people from diverse backgrounds and identities
  - Include interventions and resources tailored to different populations within the veteran and military community, such as women, people of color, and LGBTQIA2S+
- Address the disproportionate representation of veterans and those with military service in unhoused populations, people experiencing substance use-related challenges, and individuals who perpetuate violence, trauma, and adversity
  - Increase funding for housing assistance programs specifically for veterans and families of people serving in the military
  - Provide short-term financial assistance and other supports to help veterans transition into permanent housing
  - Implement innovative housing models, such as micro-apartments and shared housing, that are affordable and accessible to veterans
  - Develop specialized courts and diversion programs for veterans involved in the legal system
  - Create and fund programming and other opportunities for veterans to participate in meaningful activities and social events
  - Increase funding for participatory action research on the disproportionate representation of veterans in unhoused populations, substance use-related challenges, and violence
  - Develop and implement preventive mental health programs to address challenges proactively, focusing on resilience-building, stress management, and coping strategies
- Enhance substance use treatment programs targeted to support veterans and service members
  - Increase funding for promising trauma-informed and trauma-specific substance use treatment programs and interventions
- Expand and fund initiatives that offer trauma-informed peer support networks and mentorship programs for active-duty military personnel, returning service members, and veterans
- Provide more robust supports to address military sexual trauma
  - Improve confidential reporting systems and protections against retaliation
  - Implement prevention programs to address the culture of sexual assault and harassment within the military
  - Bring external entities to investigate and adjudicate cases

- Build a trauma-informed military culture
  - Implement anti-harassment and other protective initiatives with accountability measures within the military system to ensure people can report identity-based discrimination without fear of retaliation
  - Equip military personnel and leadership with knowledge and skills to engage in a trauma-informed manner
  - Develop and implement support initiatives that explicitly recognize and address moral injury and moral distress among veterans as well as active duty and returning service members
- Fund programming and supports for family members of those who serve in the military
  - Encourage the active participation of veterans and their families in the development and implementation of policy initiatives
  - Provide services to address the trauma and stress inherent in family separation and disconnection during the cycle of deployment
  - Embed trauma-informed support systems within all programming conducted by the Department of Defense Education Activity, which is responsible for planning, directing, coordinating, and managing prekindergarten through 12th grade educational programs for military families
  - Provide resources and support to families of veterans who are struggling with substance use, mental health challenges, or other issues
  - Develop programs that help families understand trauma and its impact on veterans to support successful reintegration among all involved
  - Cover costs of respite care and other forms of support to caregivers of veterans
- Engage the Interagency Task Force on Trauma-Informed Care to make recommendations in creating coordinated, collaborative, and accessible trauma-informed, trauma-responsive, and trauma-specific actions to address and prevent trauma-related challenges

FORTIFY RESILIENT AGING AND END-OF-LIFE EXPERIENCES

Effective services and supports for healthy transitions and holistic well-being are not currently universally accessible for older adults. As our world's aging population steadily grows, a concerning reality emerges: our society is not well-equipped to address the diverse array of evolving and emerging needs of this demographic.

Insufficient resources, fragmented care systems, and a lack of trauma-informed approaches leave older adults and their caregivers facing significant hurdles in their shared pursuit of dignified and resilient aging.

Without intervention, the escalating demands of an expanding aging population, along with the increased need for those doing the work of caregiving to be more robustly supported, threaten to exacerbate these challenges, contributing to a landscape where positive aging experiences are out of reach for many.

Aging, bereavement, and end-of-life experiences are inherently complex, with various aspects bringing peace and feelings of strength, and others evoking sorrow and pain. Grief, loss, shifting roles of identity and place, changes to physical, cognitive, and mental health-related factors and capacities, increased dependence on caregivers, greater vulnerability to neglect, abuse, or exploitation, increased feelings of loneliness and isolation, and other challenges can emerge for older adults at this stage of life.

While many endorse feeling healthy, supported, and fulfilled when reflecting upon their aging experiences and the end-of-life care they have received, others' experiences can be characterized as traumatic. Further, older adults who already endorse significant trauma histories are more susceptible to being adversely impacted by stressors that evolve and emerge in one's older years.

Research suggests that people with trauma histories are more likely to experience earlier onset and increased severity of age-related conditions such as heart disease, stroke, and dementia. This cumulative effect, often referred to as allostatic load, emphasizes the need for tailored support systems that address the unique healthcare needs of older adults with trauma histories.

CTIPP sees within this urgent challenge significant opportunities for systemic and institutional transformation so that older adults may receive the comprehensive, compassionate support they deserve. By getting radically honest about uplifting these challenges as well as presenting solutions grounded in realistic hope for change, we can destigmatize essential conversations surrounding aging and end-of-life experiences. It is through these processes that we all may come together to pave the way for a more robust and responsive network of services and supports for healthy aging and end-of-life care.

There is no time better than now to join in action toward cultivating a culture where the aging process is met with acceptance and grace, and where everyone stands empowered to navigate significant life transitions across the life course with dignity, compassion, and resilience.

This dimension of the vision calls for us to:
- Increase funding for community-based programs supporting older adults aging in place
  - Establish and fund programs promoting social engagement and community connection among aging and older adults
  - Partner with community organizations as well as a diverse body of older adults to inform service design and delivery
  - Implement and create reimbursement pathways for programs to combat isolation through in-home visitation services and technology-based interventions, particularly for individuals with limited mobility or social support to increase safety, trust, connectedness, and choice
  - Create networks to help make connections between older adults and community engagement opportunities to volunteer and make meaning
- Allocate resources to have ongoing training for providers to learn about implementing the trauma-informed care principles
  - Ensure all relevant workforce members engage with content specifically covering building resiliency and well-being when working with older adults and in end-of-life care
  - Train all relevant workforce members on trauma-informed interviewing and referral pathways
  - Hold organizations and systems of care accountable to anchoring in trauma-informed approaches to pain management and symptom control that honor self-determination and respect individualized needs

- Promote cross-sector collaboration to provide comprehensive, integrated care and a full suite of wraparound services to support holistic well-being
  - Ensure these go beyond "bare minimum" for survival to meaningfully support thriving, which may include supports for: affordable and accessible housing, specialized health and mental health supports, voice and choice in accessing long-term care options, and supportive in-home services like house cleaning, hygiene management, and food preparation services
- Fund the creation and sustainment of accessible, free groups for older adults to engage peer support
  - Examples may include: grief groups tailored to older adults addressing increased loss and trauma, reminiscence groups fostering purposeful social connections, integration, and positive cognitive functioning, and so forth
- Implement programs to provide trauma-informed physical, spiritual, emotional, and logistical aid related to end-of-life planning, preparation, and decision-making processes
  - Require services and programming for older adults receiving any public funding to be culturally- and linguistically-relevant, honoring the many traditions, perspectives, and approaches to aging and dying
  - Provide funding to expand access to supportive services for such processes, such as the use of death doulas as well as free legal aid to create a will
- Introduce trauma screening tools across care settings to better understand and co-create care plans to address the complex needs of older adults with diverse lived experience
  - Develop culturally and linguistically appropriate assessment tools sensitive to various belief systems and diverse experiences across the life course
- Fund and provide additional federal- and/or state-level oversight to ensure adult protective systems function through a trauma-informed lens
  - Enhance identification and reporting mechanisms to protect older adults who may be vulnerable to abuse, neglect, or exploitation
  - Strengthen whistleblower protections for individuals reporting exploitation within adult protective systems
  - Support families as well as professional/formal and non-professional caregivers in attending to their well-being while supporting older adults
  - Develop a framework to enhance collaboration between care facilities and families of older adults, ensuring transparent communication and holistic care
  - Establish support groups to address direct and secondary traumatic stress, burnout, moral distress, and compassion fatigue, among caretakers of older adults
  - Expand accessible, affordable trauma-informed respite care programming and services

- Increase opportunities for family caregivers to receive support and compensation and/or paid leave to reduce the burden of taking care of others and increase the likelihood of retaining the capacity to deliver compassionate care
- Educate family members about trauma and a trauma-informed approach to supporting aging loved-ones
- Fund participatory action research to help identify and address systemic barriers contributing to health disparities for older adults with trauma histories
- Launch public awareness campaigns to educate the general populace on the impact of trauma on aging and end-of-life experiences
  - Partner with media outlets to promote positive narratives about aging, end-of-life care, and dying well

DRIVE COLLECTIVE WELL-BEING WITH A PUBLIC HEALTH APPROACH

Trauma, in its many forms, leaves an indelible mark on our individual and community life. How our systems and institutions respond to trauma recovery plays a pivotal role in determining the trajectory of individual well-being and the broader health landscape of our world. Indeed, the conditions under which people are born, grow, live, work, play, and connect have a significant influence on individual and collective experiences and outcomes.

Engaging action through a public health frame helps shift us from simple responding to trauma on an individual level when it has already occurred, toward cultivating a culture of well-being achieved through proactively investing in well-being as well as leveraging positive protective factors to maximize intergenerational well-being and support individual and collective flourishing.

Embedded within a public health approach is the recognition of the inherent resilience within individuals and communities, which can be unlocked and built upon to prevent and mitigate the impacts of trauma.

A trauma-informed public health approach is built upon an acknowledgment that, even in the face of adversity, there exists a wellspring of strength that can be harnessed to navigate challenges and promote recovery.

CTIPP stands at the forefront of recognizing the potential synergy between trauma-informed care and leading-edge knowledge on the social, environmental, and political determinants of health and mental health.

By creating change within our systems and institutions based on awareness of the interconnectedness of these factors, we collectively are able to develop effective strategies to prevent trauma from occurring in the first place, as well as to reduce the prevalence and cascading impacts of potentially-traumatic experiences that are not preventable.

This dimension of the vision calls for us to:
- Support a universal precaution for trauma by implementing comprehensive public education initiatives and public awareness campaigns
- Create financial incentives and regulatory structures to encourage primary healthcare providers to utilize trauma-informed screening, assessment, treatment, and referral procedures to promote earlier detection of trauma symptomology and impacts, increase patient education and empowerment, and facilitate referrals to support increased access to holistic supports, as needed
- Promote a focus on building on protective factors to create thriving, self-led communities and eliminate disparities in relation to the occurrences of trauma and ACEs
- Support activities to promote both primordial and primary prevention
  - Promote healthy attachment, positive parenting practices, life skills training, positive coping strategies, and nurturing environments to mitigate the risk of early trauma
  - Implement policies that address social, environmental, and political determinants of health and mental health, such as poverty, inequality, housing insecurity, and discrimination, which are significant contributors to trauma exposure
  - Ensure stable housing environments to protect individuals and families from displacement and instability, known risk factors for trauma
  - Integrate trauma-informed practices into early childhood education programs to foster resilience and emotional regulation from an early age
  - Fund and expand programs that provide trauma-informed parenting support and education, addressing the root causes of potential trauma in the family unit
  - Reduce barriers to food security programs and increase access to healthy, affordable food, including making programs like WIC, SNAP, and TANF more accessible and equitable

- Increase protections to reduce evictions
- Close loopholes to reduce discrimination in housing practices
- Increase accessibility to mental health resources, including affordable counseling and mental health services, to address stressors before they escalate and compound
- Increase equitable access to financial education, planning, and management resources
- Increase the supply of and equitable access to affordable housing with integrated and/or accessible local community-based wellness supports
- Invest in community-based programming that addresses specific community needs and promote healthy behaviors, such as anti-bullying programs, substance use harm reduction and prevention initiatives, and conflict resolution workshops
- Mandate trauma-informed content to be integrated into education, training, professional development, and licensure acquisition requirements for the healthcare workforce
  - Require universities and other higher educational institutions with degree programs geared toward educating individuals who intend to work in medical and/or healthcare-related jobs to incorporate trauma content into the curriculum to receive accreditation with relevant entities
  - Develop standardized training content on individual, collective, and intergenerational trauma and trauma-informed approaches to care
  - Require content on intercultural practice, focusing on culturally-bound/locality-specific manifestations of trauma with attention to community diversity and demographics to thwart misdiagnosis/inappropriate treatment planning
  - Educate healthcare professionals on historical injustices inflicted on specific populations and implement strategies to repair harm and rebuild trust
  - Increase training and resources for healthcare professionals to address the emotional and psychological impacts of their work
- Implement policies and practices that create safe and supportive work environments, reducing stress and promoting well-being for the workforce
  - Establish a tax on licensed firearms dealers, firearms manufacturers, and ammunition vendors to fund programs that address the causes and harms of gun violence and related trauma
- Fund participatory action research exploring the relationship between experiencing trauma across the life course and related health outcomes, highlighting the benefits of trauma-informed approaches to promote positive outcomes and advance health equity
  - Engage individuals, groups, families, and communities with lived experience of trauma and adversity in devising, implementing, and evaluating trauma-informed healthcare systems through trauma-informed methods such as empowerment evaluation

- Maximize connections and collaboration among healthcare, social services, and community-based organizations to ensure coordinated care for trauma survivors
    - Award funding to build integrated care providers that are "one-stop shops," combining the delivery of multiple health and human services to increase equitable access to quality services in rural, urban, tribal, and other underserved, under-resourced areas afflicted by transportation-related and other barriers to care
- Expand trauma-informed home visiting programs in primary care settings to support individuals and families affected by trauma
    - Expand public healthcare program coverage to include culturally diverse traditional healing practices
    - Partner with and empower communities to develop culturally-relevant and sustainable trauma-informed initiatives
- Ensure equitable access to telehealth and online resources for individuals with limited access to traditional healthcare services

EXPAND THE TRAUMA-INFORMED, HEALING-CENTERED WORKFORCE

At the core of CTIPP's overarching vision for trauma-informed transformation lies the acknowledgment that personal, organizational, communal, collective, and systemic narratives often intersect with experiences of trauma and adversity. This necessitates a deliberate approach to noticing, acknowledging, responding to, and addressing trauma across all levels. This process shines a light on the importance of expanding the trauma-informed, healing-centered workforce—a critical step in fostering a society that not only recognizes trauma but actively works towards prevention, healing, and growth.

This involves not only equipping professionals across all sectors and systems with the knowledge and skills to engage sensitively and responsively with people affected by trauma but also ensuring that all members of the workforce have the knowledge and skills to interact in a way that minimizes the risk of re-traumatization.

Building a resilient, trauma-informed, and healing-centered workforce is a multifaceted activity. Accessible and equitable post-secondary education programs are tasked with going beyond theoretical knowledge, incorporating practical training, reflective practice, and accountability measures. Education and skills-based training regarding trauma and a trauma-informed approach is embedded in professional licensure and certification requirements.
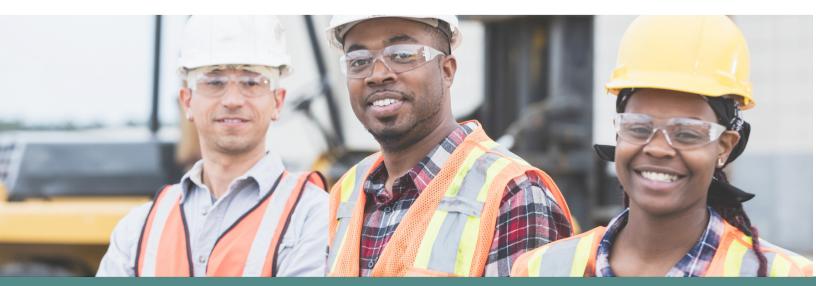
Ongoing support and professional development opportunities are essential to equip the workforce so that they stand empowered to engage in alignment with the trauma-informed principles with others as well as address the potential for secondary traumatic stress, vicarious trauma, and other work-related challenges within themselves.

Investing in a trauma-informed workforce is an investment in the future. By providing meaningful structural supports, we can create a sustainable workforce equipped to navigate the challenges of trauma-informed practice while protecting their own wellness. The ripple effects of taking action to support the workforce extends beyond individuals, fostering lasting positive changes within our communities, systems, and institutions.

This dimension of the vision calls for us to:
- Devise and implement standards that cultivate a trauma-informed learning environments in higher education institutions to support a broader number of people with lived experience of trauma and adversity
- Destigmatize, incentivize, and provide accessible, equitable pathways for trade school and the pursuit of trades-related careers
- Provide pathways and paid opportunities for people with lived experience of trauma and adversity to work in peer support roles
- Mandate that post-secondary programs relevant to trauma-affected populations integrate trauma-informed education and training in order to obtain accreditation
  - Establish standards for relevant degrees and programs to require foundational knowledge on trauma in the curriculum
- Implement ongoing professional development requirements across relevant fields that include trauma-informed training to ensure that existing professionals stay current with evolving best practices and research
- Allocate dedicated funding streams to support the development and implementation of trauma-informed training programs for professionals across sectors
  - Establish national standards and resources for trauma-informed training programs to ensure quality and consistency across all disciplines
  - Develop statewide or national data collection systems to track the progress of trauma-informed workforce initiatives and identify what is working well as well as areas for improvement/further research

- Assure funding is for all staff versus just direct service providers
- Engage workforce leaders in targeted education efforts to emphasize the importance of trauma-informed approaches and provide technical assistance to support leaders implementing trauma-informed change
- Provide mechanisms to support volunteer education and responsiveness to trauma in organizations, agencies, and other entities that rely on volunteers to operate
- Ensure equitable access to online training and resources for individuals with limited access to traditional training methods
- Establish a national or state-level task force focused on workforce well-being, bringing together experts, practitioners, policymakers, and people with diverse lived experiences to identify trauma-informed, healing centered, resilience-building best practices to support a healthy, thriving, compassionate workforce
  - Develop state- or national-level standards and guidelines for trauma-informed practices within organizations and systems of care, outlining expectations for creating a supportive work environment and incorporating trauma-informed principles into workplace culture
  - Establish standards in relevant disciplines to reduce the possibility of harm/re-traumatization in roles with high trauma exposure (e.g., requirements to limit caseloads, mandating breaks and dedicated private spaces to take them, requiring a resource list for staff including accessible and affordable well-being supports, etc.)
- Recognize and provide funding for specific training and resources to protect the workforce against occupational hazards such as secondary traumatic stress, vicarious trauma, compassion fatigue, moral injury, and burnout
  - Also provide funding to support workplaces implementing resources and supports for staff demonstrated to bolster positive impacts of the work, such as vicarious post-traumatic growth, vicarious resilience, compassion satisfaction, and moral courage
  - Provide choice and access to support the workforce in obtaining trauma-informed, culturally-responsive mental health support, counseling, and self-care activities that fit for them
  - Require the Occupational Safety and Health Administration to establish secondary traumatic stress/vicarious trauma as an occupational hazard and establish regulatory mechanisms accordingly
- Develop and promote reflective trauma-informed supervision models that provide guidance, support, and reflection for professionals, acknowledging the potential impact of their work on their well-being
- Integrate a lens of equity, justice, and cultural humility into all aspects of workforce development initiatives to dismantle systemic racism and ensure equitable access to resources and opportunities for all professionals

- Integrate trauma-informed competency standards into professional codes of ethics and standards of practice across relevant fields, enshrining a commitment to trauma-informed principles and building in accountability for members of such professions to keep current with emerging and evolving knowledge and practices
- Require trauma-informed content and skills assessments as part of licensure and certification processes for all relevant professions
- Create financial incentives for organizations and systems of care that are adopting or demonstrating ongoing commitment to sustaining trauma-informed practices
- Engage technology and other strategies to facilitate collaboration and knowledge-sharing between different sectors to ensure a comprehensive and coordinated approach to workforce development
- Increase diverse representation among the workforce—and particularly in organizational/systems leadership—to buoy trust, safety, and empowerment among populations, groups, and communities with lived experience of trauma and adversity as marginalized, oppressed, disenfranchised, or otherwise excluded or underrepresented
  - Incentivize the adoption of trauma-informed hiring practices that prioritize a strengths-based approach to bringing candidates with lived experience of trauma and adversity into sustainable careers with pathways for advancement
- Create workforce development programs to support people with diverse lived experience serving in meaningful roles in the workforce and progressing in their careers
- Establish peer support programs within organizations and systems to provide professionals with a network of colleagues who understand the challenges of interfacing with trauma on the job and can offer mutual aid
- Support the establishment of resource banks/lists to promote awareness about local entities, agencies, organizations, and practitioners that provide trauma treatment among the workforce such that, when someone recognizes signs and symptoms of trauma on the job, they can provide and/or pursue appropriate trauma-informed recommendations and referrals

GROW THE EVIDENCE BASE FOR TRAUMA-INFORMED, TRAUMA-RESPONSIVE, AND TRAUMA-SPECIFIC PRACTICES, PROGRAMS, AND SUPPORTS

While trauma and its related impacts have been a part of the human experience for millennia, trauma as a field of study is relatively young. We are continuing to learn about what helps and what hurts every day thanks to developments and innovations from those building upon our knowledge base on trauma-informed approaches, the field of Neuroscience, Epigenetics, ACEs, and Resilience (NEAR science), and other important frameworks that inform our individual and collective responses to trauma and adversity.

In policymaking, leveraging the best research is crucial to ensure our systems and institutions enact effective solutions. Despite significant progress in recent years, gaps in knowledge and limitations in existing research and understanding warrant further investigation to inform effective advocacy as well as implementation.

It is critical that we persist in refining our understanding of trauma's complex dynamics, exploring the varied pathways to healing, and rigorously evaluating the effectiveness of various interventions across diverse experiences and identities.

Building a robust evidence base is not merely an academic exercise; in fact, it is important as we continue to expand the evidence base on trauma-informed, healing-centered, and resilience-building practices and protective factors that we redefine our society's concept of what constitutes "strong evidence."

Integrating the expertise and wisdom of lived experiences of navigating trauma and adversity into shared learning ensures that all ways of thinking, being, knowing, doing, and relating carry equal weight in devising cross-system, cross-sector solutions for individual and collective transformation.

Expanding our evidence base, drawing both from lived experience of trauma and adversity as well as trauma-informed research methods such as participatory action research and empowerment evaluation, are essential investments in our world's well-being, paving the way for the development and implementation of effective trauma-informed, trauma-responsive, and trauma-specific practices, programs, and supports so that all may flourish and thrive.

This dimension of the vision calls for us to:
- Direct grant funding to deepen knowledge on trauma science, NEAR concepts, and other relevant research to better understand impacts of chronic stress, adversity, and trauma across the life course
    - Establish and support state-level and community-level trauma-informed research collaboratives that bring together diverse groups and individuals who care about and/or stand to be impacted by change efforts, including researchers, practitioners, and individuals with lived experience of trauma and adversity
- Ensure equity in research funding distribution, prioritizing research to advance the knowledge base related to healing and preventing trauma among groups and populations that have traditionally been excluded from or less centered in existing research
    - Fund studies addressing disparities in trauma experiences and responses among diverse communities
    - Support learning around addressing intergenerational trauma as well as implementation of resilence-based and culturally-sustaining practices to counter impacts of individuals and groups with legacies of trauma
    - Establish mechanisms for ongoing review and improvement of trauma-informed research protocols
- Allocate direct grant funding to promote inclusive, transparent, and participatory research practices that engage individuals and communities with lived experience of trauma and adversity
    - Incentivize meaningful collaboration between researchers and those with lived experience of trauma and adversity
    - Implement and standardize trauma-informed protections and mechanisms to thwart exploitation and harm in research practices
- Promote open access to research findings to ensure wider accessibility and knowledge sharing
- Task federal- or state-level entities to translate research findings into practical tools and resources for diverse audiences as well as to disseminate such findings to raise public consciousness
- Support studies on trauma-informed, trauma-responsive, and trauma-specific approaches and interventions

- - Incentivize collaboration and partnerships between federal research agencies, academic institutions, entities engaged in practice-based research, and trauma-impacted individuals, groups, communities, and populations to generate and advance empirically-supported intervention development and implementation
  - Provide grants to pilot and evaluate trauma-responsive and trauma-specific programs and interventions in various settings
- Integrate trauma-informed research methods and principles into research curricula at public universities
- Incentivize ongoing professional development for researchers across various disciplines on trauma-informed methodologies
- Expand appropriations for innovative education and research to evaluate and scale trauma-informed integrated service models for individual and collective recovery and prevention
- Allocate funding to investigate effective interventions for collective healing and prevention
  - Fund research efforts to better understand, prevent, and respond to large-scale collective traumas (e.g., pandemics, natural disasters, etc.)
- Develop replicable, reliable, and valid standardized tools to expand knowledge and understanding of trauma, its impacts, and diverse recovery pathways
  - Develop regulatory measures that protect privacy while facilitating the sharing of information on best practices for detecting, treating, and preventing trauma

BUILD COMMUNITY CAPACITY AND RESILIENCE

While the need for accessible and effective trauma-informed services is undeniable, many current policies and practices sustain silos and inhibit interprofessional collaboration. This fragmented approach often limits access to the comprehensive and coordinated care that individuals and communities require to heal, tap into resilience, and thrive.

Overcoming barriers to communities building and leveraging capacity to support whole-person well-being is vital to realize the vision of truly trauma-informed systems and institutions.

<u>A trauma-informed frame for vibrant, engaged, and connected community life</u> promotes a holistic way of thinking about the interconnectedness of individual well-being, community health, and social justice.

This approach also promotes evidence-informed interventions and promising practices that have been shown to enhance both individual and population-level health outcomes in a diverse array of communities across the globe. Improving and expanding access to community-based supports, from building capacity within existing community-based settings to fostering innovative collaborative models that establish new community-led ways to address unique localized needs, is a vital aspect of creating resilient, self-healing cultures in communities.

Community-based supports are most effective when they are grounded in the needs and aspirations of the communities they serve. A trauma-informed approach ensures community members have ownership of change efforts, fostering a sense of agency and honoring self-determination, which is particularly significant among populations that historically have been oppressed, disenfranchised, or marginalized by the status quo.

Through trauma-informed community change efforts that are culturally-relevant and responsive to local contexts, community members stand empowered to work together to leverage strengths, gifts, and innate wisdom and sustain a healthy, vibrant, and connected community life.

It is time to move away from a focus on individual pathology and towards a strengths-based approach that acknowledges the impact of life experiences and community context.

By shifting the question from "What's wrong with...?" to "What happened to...?" and "What's strong with?" we can reorient our thinking and behavior towards promoting whole-person wellness, fostering shared understanding, supporting mutual meaning-making, and cultivating a culture of collective care in the communities in which we live, work, play, grow, and connect.

This dimension of the vision calls for us to:
- Establish dedicated funding streams for trauma-informed community-based programs and initiatives to ensure sustained support
    - Prioritize funding for communities that are disproportionately impacted by trauma
    - Ensure programs that address the unique needs of diverse communities, including marginalized and underserved populations

- Fund a variety of community-based programs aimed at preventing trauma and promoting resilience and recovery, such as out-of-school time programs, restorative community mediation practices, housing-first initiatives, vocational and educational support, nature connection programs, arts, and enrichment programs, etc.
  - Foster the cultivation and growth of local peer support networks to provide essential community-based support systems
- Support innovative models of service delivery that leverage technology and promote equity as well as accessibility
- Include people with diverse lived experience and members of trauma-impacted communities in task forces, committees, working groups, and other entities guiding service delivery
- Establish an entity at the state or national level to devise training standards as well as to provide resources and technical assistance to communities seeking to build capacity and implement trauma-informed change
  - Create online resources and platforms for collaboration and sharing of best practices, promoting continuous learning among practitioners
  - Establish regional hubs to provide guidance and support to local communities in implementing trauma-informed approaches
  - Devise standards, evaluation mechanisms, and accountability practices to ensure community-based programming, resources, and services are accessible, equitable, and meet the unique, individualized needs of each community they are intended to serve through a trauma-informed lens
  - Allow for activities that extend beyond "just" service delivery that align with a trauma-informed approach, such as upgrading physical environments and creating green spaces or community gardens to promote physical and psychological safety, increasing community cohesion and connectedness, as well as bolstering a sense of community pride
- Allocate funding to replicate and scale up successful community-based programs within each state, emphasizing community-led implementation to integrate local context effectively
  - Prioritize funding for community-based services that respect and uphold traditional cultural healing practices, ensuring services and supports reflect the diversity of the community in which they are available
- Link state or federal funding to the implementation of a trauma-informed approach and provision of evidence-informed trauma-responsive/trauma-specific services in community-based settings
  - Establish mechanisms for monitoring and enforcing compliance with trauma-informed standards to ensure program integrity and fidelity to aligning with the principles of a trauma-informed approach
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INCREASE POSITIVE EXPERIENCES IN EARLY YEARS

The initial years of life are more than a developmental stage; they are a critical window of opportunity where the cornerstones of a person's future are laid. During this time, young ones are forming the neural pathways and social-emotional skills that will shape their future trajectories.

A robust and growing body of research confirms that positive and protective experiences in these formative years, characterized by safe, stable, nurturing environments and supportive relationships, are essential for fostering healthy development and building the capacity to navigate life's challenges, laying the foundation for lifelong health, well-being, and resilience.

Based on a nuanced understanding of how the interplay between a young child's immediate surroundings and the broader societal context shapes their development, it is clear that it is important that change initiatives go beyond merely mitigating and preventing harm by intentionally and actively promoting positive early experiences known to contribute to the flourishing of young minds as well as more positive experiences and outcomes along the life course.

At the micro level, the focus is on nurturing the immediate relationships surrounding the child—those with parents, caregivers, and educators. These relationships are pivotal in shaping children's perceptions and responses to the world, forming a secure base from which they can explore and grow.

This requires a multi-generational approach as caregivers must themselves feel well and also develop insight, self-awareness, capacity, and self-regulation strategies in order to show up for little ones in a way that is trauma-informed.

At the mezzo level, resources and institutions such as accessible, trauma-informed childcare, and education settings play a significant role in providing consistent and compassionate support, reinforcing what is experienced and established in the home.

By streamlining processes and fostering an inclusive environment, these settings can become sanctuaries of learning, connectedness, and resiliency.

At the macro level, advancements that reflect a collective commitment to fostering resilience and enable the creation of supportive frameworks necessary for the adoption of trauma-informed curricula and training are needed to ensure that every adult interacting with children—from healthcare providers to parents to pediatricians to educators to neighbors—understands and applies the principles of a trauma-informed approach.

A society where the well-being of babies and children is prioritized and actively nurtured will lead to a brighter, more resilient future for everyone. Through engaging a conscious and intentional collective commitment to trauma-informed transformation, we can rewrite the narrative for countless people, shaping their early experiences into a springboard for intergenerational health, well-being, and resilience.

This dimension of the vision calls for us to:
- Create a national or statewide task force on early childhood trauma-informed care to make recommendations for standards, as well as to oversee and provide technical assistance on the development and implementation of trauma-informed and trauma-responsive practices
- Establish a national mandate for integrating a trauma-informed approach into organizations and systems of care that interface with babies, young children, and their families
    - Require all childcare professionals to have foundational and ongoing training in trauma, developmental adversity, NEAR concepts, trauma-informed approaches, and related topics
    - Integrate content on building practical skills such as co-regulation strategies, social-emotional learning practices, positive coping, and other concrete tools providers can use in their roles
    - Increase funding for trauma-informed early childhood initiatives to support leadership implementing organizational culture change as well as a healthy workforce to implement their learnings in their roles
    - Develop accountability standards to ensure that the foster system, early childhood education settings, and all other child- and family-strengthening organizations and systems of care are acting in alignment with the principles of a trauma-informed approach
- Require that state education standards in early childhood-related programs include competencies and engagement with curricula in trauma-informed practices, with the adoption of such being a condition for state or federal funding

- Establish tax breaks and other incentives for businesses that provide childcare benefits to their employees
- Expand access to guaranteed paid leave for all parents and caregivers, allowing them time to bond with their newborn and adjust to parenthood
- Create and fund programming specifically to support mental health among children up to age 5
- Expand access to high-quality, affordable/free, trauma-informed childcare as well as early education settings for children under 5
  - Offer scholarships or sliding scale pricing to low-income families
  - Ensure services are culturally-responsive and developmentally-appropriate
  - Provide trauma-informed training, support, funding, and equitable pathways to accreditation for home-based childcare centers
  - Ensure that all families have access to information and services in their preferred language
- Strengthen partnerships to ensure all infants and children with special needs have access to comprehensive, coordinated healthcare services, including primary care, specialty care, and behavioral health services
  - Increase funding for programs that provide medical equipment, supplies, and other resources to such children and families
  - Expand access to respite care and other supports for families and caregivers of children with special needs
- Reduce barriers to participation in essential services and programming that support healthy development among babies and young children
  - Allocate funding to provide transportation vouchers or subsidies to offset the cost getting to and from appointments
  - Require state- or federally-funded facilities to provide options for evening and weekend appointments to accommodate working families
  - Utilize telehealth and online platforms to provide remote access to services and support where feasible
  - Reduce administrative burdens for families by improving care coordination and simplifying billing and insurance processes
  - Provide education and training programs for families and caregivers on advocating for their children
  - Provide financial assistance to families with low incomes to help offset the costs of childcare and other expenses related to caring for a new baby
- Expand and enhance ready-for-school initiatives
- Create standards for and fund the creation of a national universal preschool program

- Implement universal home visiting programs to provide families with support and guidance on child development, positive parenting practices, and trauma-informed approaches
- Provide free or low-cost prenatal care to all pregnant people, regardless of income or insurance status to support infants in experiencing a healthy start
- Expand access to prenatal and postnatal care in underserved communities through telehealth, mobile units, and community-based clinics

- Create and allocate funding for pilot programs to improve outcomes for infants, children, and younger people who have experienced or are at risk of experiencing trauma, and their families
- Provide funding to support existing community organizations and businesses such as libraries, community centers, and other settings to offer free or discounted services to meet the needs of the community
- Integrate social-emotional curriculum into childcare and educational settings for young children
- Create opportunities for family engagement and education
  - Offer interventions and support programs that help parents build positive relationships with their children and manage stress effectively
  - Provide avenues for parents and caregivers to participate in their child's education and build strong relationships with teachers, aides, and other staff
  - Key topics to cover include child development, ACEs and PACEs, the importance of healthy attachment in early years, coping with caregiver stressors that make babies more vulnerable to adversity (e.g., crying, post-partum depression, parental substance use, economic pressures, social isolation, etc.)
  - Promote parent/caregiver peer groups and other community-based initiatives that connect families with resources and build social support networks
  - Waive fees for filing for a marriage license when people opt into taking a formal training course with either state-wide or federal standardized curriculum on ACEs (including the impacts of divorce and separation, abused, and neglect, as well as broader ACEs-related experiences, attachment science, and positive parenting practices
  - Integrate cultural considerations into family engagement and education initiatives given the influence such factors have on parent behaviors and perspectives regarding important topics such as discipline, supporting infant self-regulation, affection and attachment, what constitute "normal" infant behaviors, and so forth
- Create partnerships to help communities identify, gather, and synthesize relevant data and use data to generate trauma-informed solutions
- Expand the adoption of restorative justice practices and other alternatives to punitive discipline
- Create federal programming to monitor and enforce health insurance parity requirements for coverage of infant and early childhood mental health services
- Streamline trauma-informed application, intake, and referral processes for early childhood care, education, and development programs
  - Make these processes accessible in multiple languages and formats
- Implement trauma-informed disciplinary practices
  - Utilize restorative justice approaches and focus on positive behavior reinforcement

- Fund continued research on indicators of aspects of a young child's environment that can support a sense of safety, stability, and bonding
- Promote training and trauma-informed administration of trauma and adversity screening procedures and tools to improve prevention and inform early intervention to children and their families as needed
  - Increase referral processes to support adults in caregiving roles to address their own traumatic past
- Fund the creation and maintenance of safe, welcoming, stimulating, and enriching indoor and outdoor environments for babies and young children
- Engage in public awareness and education campaigns about trauma and the importance of positive experiences in early years to garner support for building environments, relationships, parenting, and community experiences that promote thriving among young children

HEAL WOUNDS TO ACHIEVE COLLECTIVE INTERGENERATIONAL WELL-BEING

We stand at a crucial juncture in history, where the legacies of racial, historical, cultural, and intergenerational trauma continue to cast long shadows over individuals and communities. These and other experiences of trauma perpetrated at the interpersonal, community, collective, systemic, and structural levels have inflicted soul wounds and have left behind enduring pain, distrust, and disconnection. Yet, within the depths of this pain lies a powerful potential for healing and transformation.

Guided by the principles of trauma-informed care and the voices of those directly impacted by legacies of trauma, we can achieve collective and intergenerational well-being. It is through embracing cultural recovery, reclaiming ancestral wisdom, and nurturing resilient lineages that people who have been impacted by historical, cultural, racial, and other forms of collective and intergenerational trauma stand empowered to move toward recovery, joy, peace, and flourishing.

To accomplish this, it is imperative for our systems and institutions to act with intentionality to mend the fabric of our society, ensuring that the principles of <u>accessibility, belonging, diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice</u> are integrated in transformative action. Through repairing harm as well as engaging in reconciliation and truth-telling initiatives, we can begin to address these deep wounds and support people in reclaiming their narratives as stories of survival, strength, capacity, and resiliency. Together, these trauma-informed policies represent a call to action. They invite us to embark on a shared journey towards collective healing, where the burdens of the past no longer define our present or future. By acknowledging the pain, getting radically honest, honoring lived experience surviving trauma and/or adversity, and investing in a more just and equitable tomorrow, we can build a trauma-informed, healing-centered society where all have the opportunity to thrive.

This dimension of the vision calls for us to:
- Support and fund community storytelling projects, cultural preservation and revitalization efforts, as well as commemoration and remembrance events to provide opportunities for communities to collectively acknowledge and process their shared experiences of trauma, build resilience, and promote healing and reconciliation
- Support and invest in culturally specific community-based healing programs that cater to diverse needs and traditions and which foster cultural knowledge, identity, pride, and resilience
  - Amend Medicaid and Medicare to include coverage for traditional healing services provided by qualified Indigenous healers
  - Provide financial incentives as well as the development of co-location models for providers to collaborate with culturally-specific healers and leaders in providing support and services
  - Support the development of innovative payment models for traditional healing services, such as direct billing and bundled payments
  - Provide funding and resources directly to tribal governments to support the development and delivery of culturally-sustaining healing and supportive services
- Establish truth and reconciliation commissions to document historical trauma and promote accountability and healing
- Create opportunities for different generations to share their experiences and learn from each other
- Invest in community-led projects in neighborhoods and tribal communities affected by historical, cultural, racial, or other collective trauma experiences
- Fund cultural heritage initiatives as well as for cultural and historical preservation projects that support communities in reclaiming their narratives
- Direct financial resources and technical assistance to community-based businesses and entrepreneurs, particularly those led by individuals from historically marginalized groups

- Establish community-based healing and resilience centers in historically marginalized and disenfranchised communities to offer a range of culturally-specific, trauma-informed services and supports to the community
- Invest in leadership development programs for individuals and groups directly impacted by historical, cultural, and racial trauma so that they are positioned to play an active role in shaping change
- Promote social cohesion and build bridges between diverse communities through cultural exchange and intergroup dialogue
- Implement comprehensive reparations programs informed by communities and individuals impacted by historical injustices, such as slavery, colonization, and discrimination
- Invest in community-based violence prevention programs and address the root causes of violence and crime
    - Require trauma-informed training for law enforcement officers, focusing on trauma-informed de-escalation and community-building
    - Eliminate cash bail and other pretrial detention practices that disproportionately impact low-income individuals and communities of color
    - Fund further research on individual and collective impacts of decarceration, abolition, and alternative ways to promote justice
- Implement restorative and transformative justice practices in place of harsh, punitive legal system-based solutions to address harm, promote healing, and hold individuals accountable without perpetuating trauma
- Support the recovery of individuals impacted by trauma and provide them with opportunities for healthy integration into and meaningful participation in society
- Create economic empowerment and job training programs for communities disproportionately affected by trauma
- Increase funding for affordable housing programs to address racial disparities in housing access and quality
- Pilot universal basic income as well as baby bond programs in communities disproportionately impacted by historical and intergenerational trauma to assess this approach's effectiveness in promoting economic justice and well-being
- Invest in community land trusts and other initiatives that promote collective ownership and control of housing assets
- Replace immigration policies that call for criminalization, family separation, deportation, and incarceration, all of which have been connected in the research to intergenerational trauma and related adverse outcomes
- Integrate culturally-responsive trauma-informed practices into all educational settings, including curriculum, pedagogy, and school climate
    - Restructure school disciplinary systems to eliminate punitive practices and move toward more restorative justice approaches to disrupt the school-to-prison pipeline

- Develop and implement training programs for employers and job training programs that incorporate trauma-informed principles and practices to create more inclusive, supportive, and diverse workplaces
- Implement screening for trauma as a routine part of medical and mental health care, with appropriate referral systems to better identify and support people who would benefit from trauma-responsive and trauma-specific interventions
- Fund educational initiatives that accurately and inclusively teach about historical injustices and their ongoing impacts
- Respect tribal sovereignty and self-determination in all aspects of policy development and implementation
- Invest in the creation of trauma-informed community centers and public spaces that facilitate healing and connection
- Promote culturally-relevant mental health literacy and engage in campaigns to destigmatize seeking help for mental health challenges

FOSTER ACCOUNTABLE, TRAUMA-RESPONSIVE LOCAL, STATE, AND FEDERAL GOVERNMENTS

To hold our local, state, and federal governments accountable for aligning their work with the principles of a trauma-informed approach calls for a full-scale transformation of our public institutions and the foundational principles guiding them.

Governments have the unique capacity to either perpetuate cycles of trauma and hardship through their policies and practices, or to break these cycles by committing to creating environments of healing and resilience. The adoption of trauma-informed public policy is therefore a crucial step towards ensuring that every level of government operates and legislates with an awareness of and sensitivity to trauma and its pervasive impact on individuals and communities.

The guiding philosophy behind trauma-responsive government is the understanding that policies cannot be one-size-fits-all. Instead, they must be adaptable, equitable, and sensitive to the varied experiences of those they serve. This entails a paradigm shift where governments listen to and incorporate the voices of those who have been historically marginalized or affected by trauma, ensuring that these individuals are not only heard but are active participants in the policy-making process.

It is about creating a government that is not only responsive but also restorative, recognizing past injustices and actively working towards reconciliation, healing, and continually integrating learnings to better serve and support all people.

Beyond training, trauma-responsive government requires a commitment to systemic change, which includes the evaluation and reformation of existing policies and procedures through a trauma-informed lens.

It calls for the creation of new frameworks that prioritize psychological safety, community collaboration, and the restoration of dignity to those who have been disempowered and disenfranchised by our systems and structures. It is vital that this transformation is also reflected in the allocation of resources, ensuring that funding is directed towards initiatives that uphold trauma-informed principles, promote healing, and support community resilience.

Embedding the tenets of a trauma-informed approach into the heart of public service is a critical aspect of creating, implementing, and sustaining practices multi-level practices that are responsive to the needs of all.

Advocates and activists are called upon to encourage governments at all levels to align with the intent, action, and accountability measures needed to move beyond seeing individuals as simply the sum of their past experiences and instead recognize the inherent resilience and capacity for healing within each person and community.

Enshrining this acknowledgment in law ensures that human experiences are honored, and that future generations continue to benefit from a society that prioritizes compassion and care in addressing emerging and evolving needs.

This dimension of the vision calls for us to:
- Implement mandatory foundational training and ongoing education requirements for all government employees at all levels on trauma and the principles of a trauma-informed approach
  - Implement mechanisms for public transparency and accountability in government operations related to trauma-informed practices
  - Provide intensive assistance to advance responsiveness to trauma among agencies that service trauma-impacted individuals, families, groups, communities, and populations (e.g., Bureau of Prisons, Veterans Administration, Customs and Border Protection, Employment Training Administration, Bureau of Indian Affairs, etc.)
- Enforce a policy-making mandate that requires all proposed policies to be evaluated through a trauma-informed, equity-focused lens
- Shift funding priorities towards initiatives that align with trauma-informed principles, such as trauma-specific mental health services, restorative justice programs, and community-based healing programs
- Conduct a comprehensive review of existing government policies and procedures through a trauma-informed lens, identifying and addressing policies that may inadvertently contribute to stress, adversity, trauma, or re-traumatization
- Streamline administrative processes to reduce unnecessary bureaucracy and improve accessibility for individuals seeking services

- Update emergency response protocols to include trauma-informed approaches during natural disasters, public health emergencies, and crises
  - Ensure that disaster relief efforts are trauma-informed, providing psychological support alongside physical aid
- Implement trauma-informed practices in public transportation and build infrastructure to support increased use, focusing on safety and accessibility for all passengers, including those with trauma histories
- Develop clear and consistent guidelines for interactions between all government officials and members of the public, ensuring fairness, respect, cultural sensitivity, and trauma-informed communication
- Create opportunities for public oversight, input, and feedback on trauma-informed policy development and implementation, ensuring that the needs and perspectives of diverse communities are reflected in government decisions
- Conduct regular assessments of public program effectiveness and allocate resources based on evidence-based practices and community needs
- Develop innovative financing mechanisms, such as public-private partnerships and social impact bonds, to support the implementation of trauma-informed programs
- Reform laws and revise operations of governmental entities and agencies that contribute to various forms of state-sanctioned family separation, including training on the trauma of such experiences
- Integrate trauma-informed principles into public programs and initiatives, setting standards for organizations receiving public funding to adopt and implement trauma-informed practices
- Devise legislation that protects individuals from discrimination based on their experiences with trauma
- Advance resolutions and/or other formal acknowledgments among policymakers declaring trauma to be an epidemic, public health concern, and/or otherwise a critical issue to address through structural, institutional, and systemic trauma-informed change (e.g., establishing a Trauma-Informed Care Awareness Day annually, having a ceremony where trauma survivors can share resilient narratives and meaning-making experiences to uplift the power of a trauma-informed approach in promoting healing, etc.)
- Continue to fund the Interagency Task Force on Trauma-Informed Care to develop recommendations and standards for trauma-informed recognition, referral, treatment, mitigation, and other supports across the lifespan
- Foster a culture of compassion and support within government agencies by promoting open communication, peer support networks, and employee wellness programs
  - Educate the full public workforce on the impacts of doing work that interfaces with trauma, such as moral injury, secondary traumatic stress, burnout, compassion satisfaction, moral courage, vicarious resilience, and vicarious post-traumatic growth

- Encourage leadership development programs that equip government officials with the skills and knowledge needed to create trauma-informed workplaces and implement trauma-responsive internal policies
- Develop standardized metrics and evaluation tools to track the progress of trauma-informed interventions and policies
- Establish clear reporting requirements for government agencies to track and report progress on trauma-informed initiatives
  - Use data to inform policy decisions, identify best practices, and ensure that resources are allocated effectively to address the needs of trauma-impacted communities
- Conduct nationwide campaigns to educate the public about trauma, its effects, and the importance of resilience-building

CULTIVATE WELL-BEING AND RESILIENCE IN SCHOOLS

Schools have the potential to be powerful allies in nurturing the well-being and resilience of young learners. However, this potential is often hampered by traditional, "one-size-fits-all" approaches that overlook the impact of trauma on students' lives and learning. A growing body of research and practice highlights the importance of trauma-informed policies and practices in creating learning environments where all students can thrive.

Transformative action demands embracing a whole-student, whole-school, and whole-community approach to create safe, welcoming, nurturing, and inclusive learning environments for K-12 learners.

By prioritizing the mental and emotional health of all students and redefining what "academic success" means and looks like, we can pave the way for a future generation that is not only equipped with key knowledge to function in the world but also emotionally resilient and well-equipped to face life's challenges with insight and fortitude.

The call for a <u>trauma-informed education system</u> is not simply a trend; it is a fundamental shift in our understanding of how humans learn and grow. It is possible to transform schools into havens of healing, learning, and growth for all children, ensuring that they have the opportunity to thrive, the capacity to contribute positively to the world around them, and the compassionate supports and resources needed to realize their full potential. An investment in aligning learning environments and school systems with a trauma-informed approach is an investment in the future of our communities and our planet.

This dimension of the vision calls for us to:
- Increase the prevalence of mental and behavioral health supports in schools
  - Leverage connection points with in-school providers to assess for and identify trauma-impacted students and families and connect them to appropriate trauma-informed resources
  - Create and fund grants to pilot integrated school-based health centers
  - Utilize funding to train and hire more school counselors, psychologists, and other school-based mental health professionals so that ratios of supporters to students is lower
- Require all of the education workforce to get foundational education and regular ongoing training on trauma, NEAR science, a trauma-informed and trauma-sensitive approach, child development and attachment, and other allied topics demonstrated to be connected to improved student outcomes
  - Ensure those who interface directly with students are educated and trained on trauma-informed de-escalation, non-violent communication and conflict resolution techniques, compassionate approaches to mediation, positive behavior intervention and supports, and restorative practices
  - Include requirements to promote equity and belonging in the classroom, such as cultural humility, implicit bias, historical and cultural trauma, and other related topics
  - Train staff to consider a trauma-informed lens when acting in the capacity of mandated reporter
- Create and fund grants that connect schools and community-based organizations to increase students' access to trauma-informed services and supports
- Provide additional supports for students and families facing housing, dealing with food insecurity, or living in poverty
- Utilize grants to provide students vulnerable to trauma inherent in such situations with direct academic supports, such as tutoring, additional transportation, nutrition supports, hygiene items, and access to out-of-school enrichment activities
- Expand free breakfast/lunch programs, and end initiatives that collect "debt" from students who are not able to pay for school-provided meals

- Create and fund accessible opportunities for students' families, caregivers, and interested community members to learn about development and build skills to create healthy, supportive home and community environments
- Fund exploring alternative models to school safety
  - Move away from increasing school resource officers and metal detectors toward creating affirming, safe environments by hiring non-law enforcement entities, such as school safety coaches or safety teams, who can monitor the environment for safety and build positive school community relationships through a trauma-informed lens
- Authorize the Department of Education to award competitive grants for establishing and supporting trauma-informed mentoring and peer support programs for trauma-impacted students
- Adopt and enforce the Handle with Care law, ensuring that the workforce of all entities involved are trained on how to respond appropriately to students who have experienced trauma
- Provide frequent opportunities for students and families to have a voice and give feedback in the development of policies, protocols, and practices in school systems
- Fund the expansion of programs demonstrated to create a positive, supportive, and affirming school climate
  - Include extracurricular activities such as sports, music, nature-based, and art programming
  - Include programming and strategies to help students contribute positively to combat discrimination, bullying, cyberbullying, and harassment
- Create standards for trauma-informed emergency response protocol
  - Ensure that students and personal with different abilities are provided equal access to safety during a disaster or emergency situation
  - Make trauma-specific supports available to all students and staff following a critical incident in the school or in the broader community
  - Include training on integrating psychological safety and trauma recovery into the plans, such as by providing content on psychological first aid
  - Decrease the frequency of lockdown drills, and ensure that ones that do happen integrate a trauma-informed approach, such as by including age-appropriate explanations of drills to students, notifying about their occurrence in advance particularly for students with trauma histories or mental health challenges, and other such measure to mitigate potential stress and harm
- Integrate a trauma-informed approach into discipline decisions such as expulsion, suspension, or placing students in an alternative setting
  - Require school administrators to look more holistically at factors such as a student's home environment, positive classroom and community contributions, history of ACEs or trauma, and other factors that have been demonstrated to have a direct and substantial relationship with student behaviors

- Develop clear and restrictive national guidelines on seclusion and restraint, severely limiting the use of such practices to emergency situations where there is an immediate threat of harm to self or others, potentially banning such responses entirely in the longer term
  - Establish clear criteria for what practices may be used, when, and how to minimize discretion and potential for misuse
  - Encourage the use of trauma-informed de-escalation techniques, calming spaces, sensory supports, and positive communication strategies to address challenging behaviors without resorting to physical interventions
- Prioritize resources for schools that actively promote accessibility, belonging, diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice in their learning environments
- Broaden curriculum to equip students with the capacity to self-regulate, make healthy choices for themselves, and other important life skills
  - This includes developmentally-appropriate, culturally-sensitive, inclusive, and trauma-informed education and skill-building on topics such as social-emotional learning, personal well-being, health and sexual safety, etc.
- Increase supports provided to the education workforce
  - Require schools to provide training on and make meaningful efforts to address compassion fatigue, secondary traumatic stress, and burnout among staff and administrators
- Engage the Interagency Task Force on Trauma-Informed Care to develop trauma-informed standards schools must meet as well as to provide technical assistance for implementation, monitoring, sustainment, and outcome evaluation, or create and fund a special national entity specifically to focus on trauma-informed change implementation in school settings that receive public funding

STRENGTHEN THE FOUNDATION FOR WHOLE-PERSON, WHOLE-COMMUNITY HEALTH

In advancing the concept of whole-person and whole-community health, it is essential to recognize the multifaceted nature of human well-being. Holistic health is not a static destination and is certainly not "just" the absence of illness or pathology. Mental and behavioral health are not siloed entities, but integral components of overall health.

It is important that those advocating for and advancing the implementation of trauma-informed changes to support health and well-being for all conceptualize health and the constructs that comprise it as dynamic and multifaceted.

Achieving human health and well-being is contingent upon complex, interconnected factors including physical resilience, emotional stability, intellectual engagement, social connection, and spiritual fulfillment. How we think about and experience each of these domains are further shaped by the world that we live, grow, work, play, learn, and connect in—environmental influences, occupational demands, societal norms, and financial realities all play a role in the health and well-being we experience, as well as how we navigate stress, challenge, and change.

The acknowledgment of the broader context and the interplay of a variety of factors in shaping experiences and outcomes lies at the heart of supporting whole-person and whole-community health. This includes recognizing that trauma, adversity, inequities, and systemic and structural stressors can erode the very foundations of health and well-being.

The pursuit of whole-person and whole-community health is a collective journey that demands that we create environments and systems that not only respond to mental and behavioral health challenges but also proactively support the development of resilience and well-being.

This underscores the importance of comprehensive, trauma-informed policies and practices across all sectors and systems. It requires an ecosystem of care that removes barriers and actively integrates a variety of physical, emotional, intellectual, social, spiritual, occupational, environmental, and financial health resources, services, and supports.

As we move forward, it is crucial to continue advocating for and implementing trauma-informed changes that recognize and embrace the complexity and interconnectedness of all aspects of human health.

This dimension of the vision calls for us to:
- Engage in efforts to reframe the conversation around mental and behavioral health, moving away from stigma and shame towards narratives that recognize the impacts of trauma as well as the strength, resilience, and wisdom embedded in coping and survival strategies with which people with lived experience of trauma and adversity have engaged
- Increase equitable access to trauma-informed, high quality mental and behavioral health services, particularly in trauma-impacted communities
    - Create requirements for Medicaid and Medicare to reimburse trauma-specific interventions as well as culturally-sustaining and healing practices for all
    - Eliminate pathologizing and limiting practices within insurance reimbursement policies, such as the need for providers to present a formal diagnosis for services to be covered, as well as placing time limits on how many sessions are covered given the non-linear, highly contextual pathways to healing and recovery
    - Increase access to online mental health resources and therapy platforms
    - Fund opportunities for individuals with lived experience of trauma and adversity to attend and facilitate trauma-informed peer support groups
- Require comprehensive foundational and ongoing training on trauma and trauma-informed approaches among all of the workforce in the mental, behavioral, and physical health sectors
    - Increase training for assessing trauma and providing appropriate, non-retraumatizing referrals in mental, behavioral, and physical healthcare settings and systems
    - Ensure the workforce is equipped with training on the impacts of the work, including constructs such as vicarious trauma, burnout, compassion fatigue, and moral distress, as well as vicarious resilience, vicarious post-traumatic growth, compassion satisfaction, and moral courage
- Require all mental, behavioral, and physical healthcare settings to implement trauma-informed policies, practices, protocols, and resources to support a healthy, compassionate, trauma-responsive workforce

- Require all mental, behavioral, and physical healthcare settings to implement trauma-informed policies, practices, protocols, and resources to support a healthy, compassionate, trauma-responsive workforce
- Make receiving public funding contingent upon providing a formal plan to promote trauma-informed practices organization-wide and have a centralized entity set minimum standards as well as review organizational plans
- Create and fund requirements that community-based organizations and settings in significantly trauma-impacted areas employ a Chief Resilience Officer, Director of Workplace Well-Being, or other dedicated role to encourage providing meaningful structural supports as well as trauma-informed engagement with to the workforce
- Encourage employers to offer programs supporting financial wellness and mental/behavioral health supports to employees
- Enact regulations to safeguard privacy and confidentiality in telehealth-based mental and behavioral health services and supports, while also ensuring care provided is aligned with ethics evidence-informed best practices for trauma recovery
- Adopt a harm reduction approach to addressing behavioral health and substance use
  - Reform laws to treat substance use as a public health issue rather than a criminal offense
  - Train providers on important structural components contributing to individual and group substance use challenges such as racism, poverty, oppression, stigmatization, and marginalization
  - Fund and pilot supervised consumption sites so individuals can use substances safely and access healthcare support if needed
  - Implement needle exchange programs, providing clean needles to reduce the risk of diseases
  - Prioritize using restorative justice practices over legal system involvement for people who are charged with non-violent offenses
  - Increase the use of diversion courts to reduce people with substance use challenges placed in carceral institutions
  - Expand access to medical-assisted treatment for opioid and other substance dependencies
  - Implement comprehensive education programs about the risks and safer practices of substance use, particularly given the influx of the presence of fentanyl in street drugs
  - Provide stable housing for people who use substances, without preconditions of sobriety or treatment participation
  - Integrate mental health services with substance use programs
- Establish and finance more mobile crisis response teams with trauma-informed training to address mental and behavioral health challenges in the community, independent of law enforcement involvement

- Enhance the 988 mental health emergency service operations to integrate a trauma-informed approach to reduce re-traumatization
  - Promote trauma-informed de-escalation and support safe solutions to reduce hospitalizations following 988 calls
  - Ensure all operators and responders have been trained in a trauma-informed approach
  - Ensure the staff reflects diverse backgrounds and is trained in cultural humility to effectively assist callers from all communities and backgrounds
  - Create systems for feedback from service users and their families to continually refine and improve the service
- Prioritize funding for organizations and systems of care that are dedicating time, energy, and resources to providing trauma-informed, trauma-responsive, and trauma-specific services and supports
- Increase participation and representation of diverse people with diverse lived experiences in the workforce
  - Pursue pathways for paid professional positions facilitating peer support groups
  - Create and fund grant, scholarship, and fellowship programs to provide more pathways to educational opportunities and professional roles for trauma survivors within the mental, behavioral, and physical healthcare sectors
- Identify and address shortages in prevention and early intervention programs, especially in trauma-impacted communities and areas populated heavily by groups or populations that research demonstrates as being more likely to experience trauma
- Provide funding to support culturally-responsive education and support for pregnant people, including access to doula services, nutritional coaching, and other resources and services to promote healthy prenatal, perinatal, and postpartum experiences
- Enhance public transportation and infrastructure to expand access to healthcare and community resources
- Fund the development of community-based centers, green spaces, cultural programs, arts and other expressive activities, and other resources for social and physical activities as well as building community connections
- Establish a minimum standard for employers to require some mental health days in addition to sick and vacation time for part- and full-time employees
- Incorporate mental health considerations in responses to environmental crises, wide-scale disasters, and other experiences of collective trauma
- Reform child- and family-strengthening systems and entities to anchor more faithfully in the principles of a trauma-informed approach to support healthy, thriving, whole families
- Fund the development of resources that enhance awareness about addressing and preventing trauma as well as actionable steps individuals and communities can take to work together to reduce re-traumatization

- Create panels consisting of Create panels consisting of trauma survivors, mental health experts, and community leaders to inform policy development
- Engage the Interagency Task Force on Trauma-Informed Care to help develop recommendations for healthcare- and holistic wellness-related systems to implement, as well as to provide technical assistance to support trauma-informed change implementation
- Support research on trauma effects and resilience-building strategies
- Implement national curriculum changes to require including mental health education, social-emotional learning, and other allied topics from early childhood through high school settings
- Create public awareness campaigns to normalize and destigmatize experiences of trauma as well as mental/behavioral health challenges, as well as promote individual and collective healing-centered ways of engaging with others as well as resilience-building practices
  - Engage in initiatives to educate about the disproportionalities in mental health, especially concerning trauma exposure
  - Ensure affirming, trauma-informed messaging, particularly in campaigns targeted for communities and groups that have been impacted by trauma

HARNESS NEAR SCIENCE FOR DEVELOPMENTAL RESILIENCE

The echoes of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and developmental adversity (DA) resonate across generations, shaping individual experiences and collective challenges. The landmark ACEs studies conducted by the CDC and Kaiser Permanente as well as the research based on the Philadelphia Expanded ACE Survey shone a spotlight on the widespread prevalence and indelible impacts of certain early life experiences.

While these key learnings catalyzed significant action toward expanding what we know about and how we work together to address childhood trauma, a new, more holistic lens is emerging to illuminate the path towards supporting healing and resilience along the life course.

This lens, aptly named NEAR, converges leading-edge findings from the fields of Neuroscience, Epigenetics, ACEs, and Resilience science, offering a comprehensive framework for understanding how experiences of trauma and adversity contribute to our biological and psychological landscapes.

By harnessing the power of NEAR, we can move beyond simply recognizing the impact of adversity, toward unlocking the potential for positive intergenerational change, rewriting the broader societal narrative from one of vulnerability to one of empowerment.

NEAR science supports a trauma-informed, healing-centered, resilience-building approach as it highlights the dynamic interplay between biological, environmental, and social factors in shaping individual and collective experiences and outcomes across the lifespan.

The aim is to foster environments and systems that not only identify and respond to the impacts of trauma but also actively nurture paths to recovery and resilience.

The emerging and evolving research about the human experience is clear: embedding individual-, community-, and system-level protective factors, supporting Protective and Compensatory Experiences (PACEs, sometimes colloquially referred to as Positive Childhood Experiences), and maximizing access to intrapersonal, interpersonal, and community-based factors that build capacity and resilience to navigate stress, challenge, and change are all vital parts of cultivating individual and collective prevention, healing, recovery, and growth.

This dimension of the vision calls for us to:
- Establish within each state an "Office of Resilience" or similar entity to support ongoing research, standardize recommendations based on lessons learned and best practices, develop and share trauma-informed resources, and provide technical assistance to support organizations, communities, and systems of care in implementing supports for individual and collective resilience
- Establish community centers offering free resources, information, referrals, and support for resilience building in trauma-impacted communities
- Create protections against inappropriate ACEs screening practices, the misuse of ACE scores in clinical decision-making processes and individual-level care, and potential stigmatization/bias that can stem from mandating ACE screenings and the sharing of personal information regarding ACEs in databases without the proper training, privacy safeguards, or informed consent processes about how entities will utilize individual ACE scores
  - Implement specialized training programs for providers on trauma-informed and appropriate ACEs screening procedures and interpretation, focusing on ethical use and avoiding potential stigmatization
  - Establish standardized processes for primary healthcare providers who do screen for ACEs and trauma to refer people to trauma-responsive and trauma-specific services, ensuring seamless integration of care
- Invest in and coordinate community-based education on PACEs, DA, NEAR, positive parenting practices, the buffering impact of connectedness and co-regulation, trauma-informed de-escalation and communication, and other relevant topics to build capacity and increase self-efficacy and empowerment to make health- and wellness-promoting choices among community members
  - Support pregnant people, caregivers, and families with implementing trauma-informed care, mindfulness practices, and attachment building strategies to support positive family environments for children to learn, develop, and thrive in
- Define clear criteria for programs and services to qualify for public grant funding based on their adherence to trauma-informed, evidence-based practices
- Adopt upstream solutions such as early intervention to address and mitigate the impacts of adversity that has already occurred as well as practices that can prevent individual and collective trauma/adversity from occurring

- Fund programs that promote supportive relationships and enriching resources demonstrated to support Protective and Compensatory Experiences in settings that interface with children and younger people
  - Prioritize funding and access to early mental health interventions for infants and children to foster resilience from the outset
- Invest in programs that boost executive functioning, self-regulation, and social-emotional learning in educational settings
- Provide grants to support community-wide initiatives for holistic early childhood development, focusing on building capacity for individual and collective emotional, cognitive, and social growth
- Enhance trauma-informed wraparound service referral processes among primary healthcare and pediatrician providers with the understanding that such settings are often the first line of detection for trauma and the need for additional child, family, and/or community support
- Focus on rehabilitation, education, and family support rather than punishment for younger people who engage in behaviors rooted in trauma responses
- Provide funding and create regulations to ensure physical environments, such as schools and healthcare facilities, are designed with trauma-informed principles to foster a supportive culture of safety, connectedness, belonging, and well-being
  - Implement predictable routines, clear communication, and access to developmentally- and linguistically-appropriate resources and supports
- Fund and promote workforce development programs focused on expanding the number of professionals skilled in trauma-informed care
- Increase funding for participatory action research on PACEs, trauma, and developmental adversity to discover new interventions and approaches
- Integrate trauma-informed social-emotional learning and resilience building into age-appropriate education
- Bolster access to paid leave for parents and caregivers at birth/adoption, as well as during times of significant family stress, challenge, or change to promote family empowerment in addressing issues in ways that fit for them
- Increase reimbursement for trauma-informed, trauma-responsive, and trauma-specific interventions and practices and incentivize increasing access to trauma recovery in communities with complex needs to disrupt intergenerational cycles of violence, trauma, and adversity while increasing well-being across the lifespan
- Develop and fund collaborative networks of government entities, organizations, experts, and people with lived experience of trauma and adversity from diverse communities to create statewide multi-generational support systems that promote positive childhood experiences and assists in the healing of primary and secondary trauma in adults

- Implement economic supports that provide assistance to families affected by trauma, particularly after significant life or community events
- Invest in arts and cultural programs as tools for community healing and expression
- Require community- and school-based sports and recreation programs to adopt trauma-informed practices to receive public funding
- Fund continued expansion of the evidence base of NEAR as well as interventions and practices that support holistic intergenerational well-being
- Provide trauma-informed parenting classes and resources for free in communities, particularly those that have been impacted by trauma or which have a high population of marginalized or disenfranchised groups
- Develop public education campaigns to raise awareness about ACEs, developmental adversity, NEAR science, and effective trauma-informed, healing-centered, resilience-building, and community-led solutions
  - Increase awareness and education related to attachment science and the importance of the first three years of life in healthy development and producing positive outcomes/experiences across the lifespan

NURTURE HEALTHY, CONNECTED, RESILIENT, AND THRIVING FAMILIES

In conceptualizing "family" within the framework of a trauma-informed approach, CTIPP embraces a broad and inclusive definition. Family, in this context, extends beyond the "traditional nuclear model" to encompass any group of individuals who share a deep bond, history, and commitment to each other's future.

This expansive view recognizes the diverse forms that families can take, including blood relatives, extended families, chosen families, as well as community networks of people engaged in caring for one another, all of which play a crucial role in nurturing health, connectedness, resilience, and thriving dynamics that underscore our vision of transformation. upporting families in this holistic way requires policies and practices that are flexible, adaptive, and responsive to the unique needs and circumstances of each family and community.

A trauma-informed, healing-centered, resilience-building, and community-led approach involves creating systems of care that are attuned to the varied dynamics within families, understanding that each member's experiences, strengths, and challenges contribute to the overall well-being and functioning of the system.

This approach necessitates a shift from a "one-size-fits-all" model to tailored interventions, resources, and sustainable supports that respect and honor the complexity of family structures and relationships.

In practice, this means advocating for policies that provide families with the resources and support they need to thrive. It includes ensuring access to quality healthcare, mental health services, educational opportunities, and economic stability. It entails applying the principles of a trauma-informed approach to promoting the safety, well-being, and permanency of children and families. It means championing initiatives that foster resilience-building, nurturing environments where families can grow and flourish together.

CTIPP supports holding child- and family-strengthening systems of care and our broader institutions to account to demonstrate a commitment toward creating a world where every family, regardless of its form, has the opportunity to experience well-being, connectedness, and resilience.

This underscores CTIPP's deeply-held belief that, when families have what they need to thrive and support one another in living meaningful, self-determined lives, communities and societies flourish for generations to come.

This dimension of the vision calls for us to:
- Require all members of the child- and family-strengthening workforce to engage in foundational and ongoing training and continuing education on trauma and adversity along the life course, along with trauma-informed, resilience-building, healing-centered responses and practices relevant to their workforce roles
- Increase avenues for meaningful family participation, voice, and collaboration in creating policies and practices, requiring representation of people with lived experience of trauma and adversity within all task forces, working groups, and other entities convened through legislation to implement change within child- and family-strengthening systems
- Reform policies related to mandated reporting and resulting family separation through a trauma-informed lens
    - Establish a standardized mandated reporter training on the topics of trauma and trauma-informed approach, as well as on the historical discrimination and inequity embedded in previous discriminatory and more paternalistic approaches to family surveillance

- Implement review processes for existing policies, procedures, and trainings, encouraging a move from "mandated reporting" toward "mandated supporting" through a trauma-informed lens
- Implement policies focused on providing support services to families at risk of separation due to factors like financial instability, mental health issues, or substance abuse, aiming to address these issues before separation becomes necessary
- Require greater collaboration with families and more robust connection to community-based supports to build skills and bolster the capacity of all members to support whole-family well-being before turning to temporary or permanent separation, except in cases of significant immediate danger or urgency
- Devise strategies to repair the harms of bias and oppression across family-supporting systems
- Ensure that in cases of separation involving families from diverse cultural or linguistic backgrounds, appropriate cultural and language support is provided
- Require age-appropriate incorporation of the child's voice into collaborative decision-making processes regarding removal
- Establish mentorship and peer support programs for families, including kinship caregivers, young people, parents with marginalized identities, members of the workforce, and other community members interested in contributing to strengthening families that are grounded in trauma-informed principles
- Provide accessible community-based training for family members in mental health first aid, mindfulness, trauma-informed communication, and other positive coping strategies to enhance their ability to support each other
- Invest in local programs that focus on building resilience and well-being in families, especially in trauma-impacted communities
- Support increased access to services that address substance use, trauma, and other mental/behavioral health-related challenges for pregnant and parenting people
- Expand access to trauma-informed, family-centered home visiting, particularly for new and expectant parents in areas that are under-resourced and/or trauma-impacted
- Develop policies that preserve human and civil rights as well as address the unique needs and challenges of families consisting of members of diverse and historically marginalized communities of identification
  - Ensure trauma-informed supports meet diverse needs within families with members who are LGBTQIA2S+, who racially identify within the global majority, who are blending different cultural backgrounds, who have mixed immigration status, and other groups that have been oppressed by systems and institutions, or who are otherwise more vulnerable to experiencing trauma and adversity
- Fund programs that provide parents with skills and resources to foster positive family dynamics

- Make evidence-informed family counseling services more accessible and affordable
  - Enhance telehealth options to make services more accessible for families, as well as to increase provider diversity and family choice in selecting right-fit counselors
- Create community-based family wellness centers offering a range of services geared towards family health and well-being
  - Fund recreational programs that encourage family participation and bonding
  - Fund cultural activities that encourage family participation and cultural education
  - Disseminate resources to help families learn about trauma-informed, resilience-building engagement with one another
  - Fund connection-building opportunities such as establishing community gardens as a means of promoting family bonding and access to fresh, nutritious food
- Increase supports to caregivers of children, older people, and those with different abilities or special needs who require caregiving assistance
  - Fund resources and opportunities for respite care
  - Expand education for caregivers on trauma-informed care as well as the impacts of caregiving, such as compassion fatigue, vicarious trauma, burnout, compassion satisfaction, vicarious resiliency, and other potential impacts
  - Increase financial and logistical support for kinship caregivers
- Provide legal support to families navigating custody, housing, immigration, and other legal challenges
- Enhance data sharing to promote awareness, collaboration, alignment, and coordination of trauma-informed care across systems and sectors while preserving privacy, confidentiality, and choice about who receives what personal information
- Increase targeted supports and resources for foster and adoptive families
  - Mandate in-depth, trauma-informed training for all prospective foster and adoptive caregivers, focusing on understanding trauma, attachment issues, and effective parenting strategies for children who have experienced trauma

- Provide training in cultural competency and inclusivity for foster and adoptive families, especially when the child comes from a different cultural or ethnic background
- Provide continuous support and resources for foster and adoptive families, including access to counseling, peer support groups, and respite care
- Implement improved screening processes for foster and adoptive placements to ensure the best match between children and families, considering the child's needs and cultural background, as well as each family's strengths and capabilities
- Fund and develop post-adoption support services to assist families in addressing any challenges that arise after adoption
- Provide financial assistance to foster and adoptive families to cover the costs associated with raising a trauma-impacted child who may have specialized needs
- Establish networks for foster and adoptive families to share experiences, offer support, and build community
- Facilitate the continuity of relationships and connections for children in the foster system, including maintaining ties with siblings, extended family, and previous caregivers where appropriate
- Devise inclusive housing policies that cater to the needs of different family structures
  - Expand rental assistance programs to include diverse family structures, ensuring that eligibility criteria do not exclude non-traditional families
  - Provide financial assistance and educational programs to help low-income families, irrespective of their structure, achieve homeownership in safe, well-resourced communities
  - Revise zoning laws to allow for more multi-family housing units, which are crucial for extended families living together
  - Strengthen laws to protect diverse family structures from discrimination in renting, buying, or obtaining mortgages
  - Encourage the development of housing projects that include amenities for multi-generational families, such as playgrounds, daytime programming for older people to connect, and community centers housing enrichment activities for family members of all ages and backgrounds
- Enhance access to integrated trauma-informed holistic healthcare services in community settings, making supports for well-being more accessible to all family members
- Provide free legal representation to families facing separation, ensuring they have access to fair legal advice and advocacy in their language of choice
- Establish family reunification programs when family separation has occurred, offering counseling, support, and resources to both parents and children, facilitating a safe and healthy reunion process
- Increase choice and access to programming and services that help families make decisions about whether and how to add children to their families

- Engage public awareness campaigns to generate greater understanding and adoption of trauma-informed approaches to nurture family and community well-being
  - Create programs that improve digital literacy and education around connecting to trauma-informed supports, helping families access online resources and services
  - Support the creation of apps and online resource databases focused on family health, wellness, and resource navigation
  - Increase awareness of and education on the importance of self-and collective care, particularly in communities where families are navigating high levels of stress, challenge, change, and/or trauma
  - Create a national helpline dedicated to providing guidance and resources to families in need of trauma-informed support
- Incentivize workplaces adopting trauma-informed, family-friendly policies, such as flexible working hours and parental leave
- Increase access to and expand the range of nutrition assistance programs to ensure food security for families
- Fund studies that explore the dynamics of trauma within diverse family structures and effective trauma-informed interventions
- Adopt multigenerational approaches to trauma recovery and resilience-building demonstrated to disrupt the transgenerational transmission of trauma
- Engage the Interagency Task Force on Trauma-Informed Care to make recommendations in creating a trauma-informed and trauma-responsive child- and family-strengthening systems, as well as to provide technical assistance to support, monitor, and evaluate fidelity and outcomes related to the implementation of its recommendations
- Advocate for policies ensuring equal pay and work equity to alleviate financial stress on families and eliminate disparities that disproportionately impact people with diverse lived experience of trauma and adversity
  - Offer free, accessible financial counseling to families with histories of trauma or oppression, helping them navigate financial challenges and build generational wealth and stability
- Fund and expand access to trauma-informed supportive services and non-punitive recovery programs for families impacted by intimate partner violence, family violence, or other household challenges that increase family members' vulnerability to experiencing trauma
- Invest in early childhood programs that support the holistic development of children in a family setting
- Integrate family support services within schools to facilitate easier access to necessities and resources that promote well-being for families

- Develop family-centered substance use treatment programs that provide supports and engage family members in recovery activities
- Increase funding to expand access to affordable childcare options that support working families
- Promote and fund community capacity-building initiatives that support families in having protective and compensatory experiences as well as accessing resources that the research highlights as critical to increasing positive family experiences and well-being

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