

Office of the Child Advocate
Childhood Trauma Task Force Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, February 4th, 2020
1:00pm-3:00pm

Task Force Members or Designees Present:

Janice LeBel (DMH)
John Millet (Probation)
Rachel Wallack (Juvenile Court)
Claudia Dunne (CPCS)
Andrea Goncalves-Oliveira (DMH)
Laura Brody (DCF)
Stacy Cabral (DESE)
Tammy Mello (Children’s League)
Nicole Daley (DPH)
Katherine Hughes (Parent Child Trauma Resources)

Other:

Members of the Public

OCA Staff:

Melissa Threadgill (OCA)
Kristi Polizzano (OCA)
Melissa Williams (OCA)

Meeting Commenced: 1:07pm

Welcome and Introductions:

Ms. Threadgill welcomed the attendees to the Childhood Trauma Task Force (CTTF) meeting, and each person introduced themselves.

Ms. Threadgill reviewed the agenda.

Approval of Minutes from January Meeting:

Ms. Threadgill held a formal vote on the approval of the January 7, 2020 Childhood Trauma Task Force meeting minutes. The January 7, 2020 meeting minutes were approved.

Continued Discussion on Draft Framework for Trauma-Informed and Responsive Practice in Massachusetts:

Ms. Threadgill discussed the changes that were made to the *Framework for Trauma-Informed and Responsive Practice in Massachusetts* after the feedback received during the last CTTF meeting held on January 7, 2020. She explained today's focus will be on reviewing the previously made edits and to make any outstanding changes.

Vision Statement

CTTF members had no edits for the Vision Statement section of the TIR framework.

Domain One: Organizational Leadership

CTTF members had no edits for Domain One of the TIR framework.

Domain Two: Training and Workforce Development

Ms. Threadgill explained Domain Two is divided into three sections. The first section is on building a trauma-informed and responsive workforce, the second section focuses on training approaches, and the third discusses the importance of creating a healthy work environment. After reviewing Domain Two in detail, the CTTF members agreed to the following changes:

1. In the second section under the second main bullet, add the impact and role of a person's individual past experiences and include trainings on how to recognize internal vulnerabilities and how to respond when this happens.
2. In the second section, add trainings around unconscious bias.
3. In the third section, add a sentence about vicarious trauma and potential support and strategies for building resiliency.

Domain Three: Policy and Decision-Making

Ms. Threadgill explained Domain Three focuses on the importance of having trauma-informed and responsive policies in an effort to mitigate re-traumatization. After reviewing Domain Three in detail, the CTTF members agreed to the following changes:

1. Reframe the first bullet point so it resonates with everyone as not all agencies/organizations may identify as working with people/children with trauma. Specifically, relate the first bullet point to a broader range of sectors (i.e. law enforcement).
2. In the second bullet point, take out the beginning phrase "are aware."
3. In the introduction paragraph to Domain Three, include the importance of recognizing and understanding not only individual trauma, but community trauma as well.

4. Outside of Domain Three towards the beginning of the TIR Framework, include a note explaining this document interchanges the terms “child” and “youth” but applies to any person ages 0-18 years.

Domain Four: Physical Environment

After reviewing Domain Four in detail, the CTTF members agreed to the following changes:

1. Remove the third to last bullet point about creating a space that takes into consideration the needs of the individuals using the space and include it into the introduction of the section. Use the phrase “should drive…” instead of “take into consideration…”.
2. Include bullet points on things to consider after the introduction.
 - a. Create a healthy space for the staff.
 - b. Along with accessible materials/directions, have a staff person available to help (second to last bullet point).
 - c. Include the populations being served into the process of designing a physically safe space.
3. Include a bullet point on how the safe environment should extend during community engagements (i.e. recognize sirens can be traumatizing itself).

One of the CTTF members discussed the importance of the color of the room (activating vs. inhibiting) as well as the temperature of the room. They also discussed how images of nature are considered to be more calming. This CTTF member will send Ms. Threadgill supporting literature that can be added to the introduction section to address the importance of a trauma-informed environment.

Domain Five: Continuous Quality Improvement

After reviewing Domain Four in detail, the CTTF members agreed to the following changes:

1. In the introduction, add a sentence explaining organizations should have a clear written out plan for CQI. The bullet points should then explain some aspects to consider within the plan.
2. Explicitly state how often the CQI plan should take place and who is responsible for implementing the CQI efforts.
3. Within the introduction, flip the first sentence to focus on children and families instead of the organizations and systems as they are in place for the populations being served.

Guiding Principles

Principle One: Safety

After reviewing Principle One, the CTTF members agreed to the following edits:

1. Add “to thrive and grow, everyone needs safety...” and “children and youth who have experienced trauma especially need a sense of safety...” into the introduction paragraph.
2. Add the phrase “social-emotional safety” to capture the relationship aspect.
3. In the introduction paragraph, discuss the importance for caregivers to understand the behaviors the children are exhibiting as behaviors are an expression of need and feelings that cannot be put into words.
4. Remove “psychological” in the second to last sentence.
5. Move the last sentence of the last paragraph first.
6. Add the following examples:
 - a. Engaging an appropriate caregiver.
 - b. Creating a safe and supportive environment for staff (e.g. two staff go out during a response).
 - c. Creating a nurturing environment to capture the infancy stage as modeling adults’ behaviors focus more on children and youth.

Principle Two: Transparency and Trust

After reviewing Principle Two, the CTTF members agreed to the following edits:

1. Add a sentence in the second paragraph about the importance of recognizing trust issues exist within a family unit and how there could be a power differential.
2. In the training section of Domain Two, add something about having an understand that trust is different within each family.

Principle Three: Empowerment, Voice, and Choice

After reviewing Principle Three, the CTTF members agreed to the following edits:

1. Typo: flip the words “own their lives” to “their own lives” in the second sentence of the second paragraph.
2. In the second paragraph, add “should work with them and empower them” instead of just empower them.
3. Include caregivers into the third paragraph so it reads, “...children and youth by including them and their caregivers...”.
4. Separate the sentence “In situations where a youth has caused harm...” to make it a new paragraph.
5. Include the concept of roles and how each organization has the capacity to actively solicit empowerment, voice, and choice through different functions such as advisory councils and partnerships.

6. Note that different cultures may consider different options for empowerment and choice and this should be understood when children/youth are using their voice and choice. Separate what you would do versus what safe choices are an option even if you personally wouldn't consider them.
7. In the last paragraph, add a sentence about using the feedback received to make changes and listen to what people have to say instead of just collecting the feedback and not doing anything with it.

Principle Four: Equity and Cultural Humility

After reviewing Principle Four, the CTTF members agreed to the following edits:

1. Add the concept of ageism.
2. Add a note that some agencies/organizations serve youth until age 22.

Ms. Threadgill discussed the possibility of changing the title of Principle Four to make it more inclusive and appropriate to the message the section is trying to convey. Task force members mentioned using a different term from cultural humility as that term is not understood across all sectors. Ms. Threadgill asked members to think about the title and they can discuss their thought during the next meeting.

Continued Discussion on Implementing the TIR Framework in MA:

Ms. Threadgill moved the conversation towards continuing the discussion on the necessary resources needed to implement the TIR Framework within all Massachusetts organizations and systems. In order to do so, she would like to gather sector-specific feedback on the draft Framework to make sure the Framework is useful for everyone and to address any concerns various sectors may have. Ms. Threadgill asked CTTF members how to effectively solicit feedback from various sectors.

CTTF Members suggested the following avenues to gather feedback:

1. Children's League of MA Meetings
2. MA Police Chiefs and Municipal Police; they are currently in the process of restructuring their trainings.
3. Graduate Schools; students often learn different concepts in the classroom than what is being practiced in the field.
4. Substance Abuse Services (Institute for Health and Recovery)
5. Youth Advisory Boards
6. School Nurses and Emergency Responders
7. Daycare Providers

8. School Resource Officers
9. Shelter Placements (DHCD)
10. SAMSHA Regional Coordinator

Ms. Threadgill discussed she will be presenting and talking to different people in the education field to gather their feedback and input. She will be attending the upcoming Safe and Supportive Schools (SaSS) statewide meeting on March 16, 2020 and suggested having a session during lunch if people want to offer their feedback on the framework. She is also speaking with the Principal's Association for their feedback.

Ms. Threadgill explained the next steps are to finish the TIR Framework document, issue it as a draft, and hold a listening sessions across the state to gather and incorporate feedback. Afterwards, the document can be edited and finalized. Ms. Threadgill asked everyone to send her an email with any organizations/sectors that may be missing from the above list as well as any strategies on how to reach out to everyone.

Ms. Threadgill discussed her plan for implementing the TIR Framework through a statewide TIR practice resource and coordination hub. Part of this plan is to build a resource website with guides, checklists, ongoing research, and practice updated. She asked CTTF members what functions they believe would be helpful to have on the website. Task force members suggested looking at the ACES Connection and National Childhood Traumatic Stress Network websites for ideas. It was recommended to include a search function to look for resources by specific locations across the Commonwealth. It was also suggested the website could be a place for organizations to provide referrals and information as well as linking other already existing resource guides. Lastly, it was suggested structuring the website based on the TIR Framework document.

Ms. Threadgill then asked for suggestions on functions that could be helpful within the Coordination Hub. Suggestions included keeping a contact list/directory with organizations that have already implement the TIR work, informational webinars, online forums for people to discuss and get advice from others, a technical assistance section for agencies so they have someone to contact when looking for help. CTTF members along with members of the public suggested looking at Carrie Harp (National RFK) and the State Leadership Team for the Pyramid Model as lead examples of great convening.

Closing Comments:

Ms. Threadgill noted the next meeting will be held on Monday, March 9th, 2020 from 1pm-3pm at One Ashburton Place (10th Floor) and thanked everyone for attending today's meeting. She stated she will send out an invitation to the Safe and Supportive Schools meeting.

The meeting adjourned.

Adjournment: 2:55pm