

Childhood Trauma Task Force

Oct 22nd, 2019

1pm – 3pm

Agenda

- Welcome and Introductions
- Approval of Minutes from Oct 1 Meeting
- Presentation & Discussion with Dr. Laurie Leitch
- Annual Legislative Report Outline
- Discussion: Creating Guidelines for Trauma-Informed Practice in Massachusetts
- Next Meeting

ANNUAL LEGISLATIVE REPORT OUTLINE

Introduction & Background

- Description of statutory mandate/directives
- Description of CTTF work process
- Definitions of key terms (e.g. trauma)
- Background information on childhood trauma
 - ACEs (what they are and their impact on physical, behavioral and mental health outcomes)
 - What we know re: ACES prevalence
 - Moving beyond ACES (other types of trauma)

Findings

- 1. Significant Awareness & Training Efforts Have Already Been Made:** There have been numerous, significant and impactful efforts in recent years to make services and systems “trauma-informed”
- 2. Next Step: Solidifying Understanding of What “Trauma-Informed” Means in Practice:** While these efforts have succeeded in raising awareness about the impact trauma can have on children and families, there is not widespread agreement/understanding of what it means to be trauma-informed in practice
- 3. There is a Role for the State to Play in Helping Organizations/Systems Become Fully TIR:** Massachusetts can do more to help support child-serving organizations in becoming fully trauma-informed and responsive (TIR)
- 4. More Investigation Needed on Best Practices for Identifying/Responding to Childhood Trauma:** There is not a consistent statewide approach to identifying and responding to children who have experienced trauma, and there is disagreement amongst professionals about the best ways to do so

Finding #1: There have been numerous, significant and impactful efforts in recent years to make services and systems “trauma-informed”

- Include brief descriptions of:
 - Individual state agency efforts
 - Cross-agency efforts (e.g. Defending Childhood Initiative)
 - Community-based efforts
 - Provider-level efforts, including training

Finding #2: While these efforts have succeeded in raising awareness about the impact trauma can have on children and families, there is not widespread agreement/understanding of what it means to be trauma-informed in practice

- Many agencies and providers report being trauma-informed, but there is no clear/consistent/universal definition of what this means in practice (Findings from Survey; Interviews)
- Training efforts have helped increase awareness and knowledge. Due to funding and other limitations, however, training efforts are too often “one and done”
 - One-time trainings lose effectiveness over time (e.g. staff turnover means not all staff trained; concerns about knowledge retention from one-time training)
 - Work may stop at training – not incorporated into policies and practice long-term

Finding #3: The state can do more to help support child-serving organizations in becoming fully trauma-informed and responsive (TIR)

- TIR practice is still relatively new, and our understanding of “what works” and how to best implement it continues to evolve
- At this point in time, state government can support child-serving organizations by providing:
 - More clarity and guidance: what does TIR look like in practice, and how does that vary by practitioner type and setting?
 - More consistency across state agencies
 - Statewide definitions and guidance on TIR care
 - Consistency across RFPs/contracts
 - More implementation technical assistance
 - Resources organizations can use for assessing and improving adoption of TIR practices within their work
 - Dissemination of research with guidance on what it means for practice
 - Funding to support workforce development and implementation of evidence-based interventions

Finding #4: There is not a consistent statewide approach to identifying and responding to children who have experienced trauma, and there is disagreement amongst professionals about the best ways to do so

- Survey results show limited availability of trauma services:
 - Less than 50% of surveyed community-based service providers report conducting trauma-screenings and/or assessments with youth
 - Less than 50% of surveyed community-based service providers report using an evidence-based trauma intervention (mostly larger provider organizations)
- There are disagreements among researchers, advocates and practitioners about the use of trauma screenings/assessments (setting, timing, whether universal trauma screenings would be beneficial or harmful)
- Other approaches include focusing on:
 - Creating “trauma-sensitive” climate rather than identifying/responding to specific children
 - Building strengths & protective factors (e.g. positive relationships with adult caregivers) for all youth, given high prevalence of childhood trauma
 - Delivering targeted interventions to youth who are very likely to have experienced trauma (e.g. youth who are refugees; youth who have witnessed violence or an overdose)
- This is an area that needs further investigation and discussion

Recommendations/Next Steps

1. Massachusetts should develop and adopt **Guidelines for Trauma-Informed and Responsive Practice**
 - Include information on purpose and audience
 - Note that CTTF will issue recommended guidelines in 2020
2. Massachusetts **should provide more support for child-serving organizations seeking to adopt the TIR Practice guidelines**
 - Support could include: TIR Practice Resource Website, TIR Guidelines Communication/Education Plan, Implementation Technical Assistance
 - CTTF will include more detailed recommendations for needed support in 2020
3. CTTF should **continue investigating best/promising practices for identifying/responding to childhood trauma**, and issue additional recommendations as needed

Annual Legislative Report

Proposed Plan for Completion

Task	Timeline
Review detailed outline of report & provide feedback	October 22 nd Meeting
Review draft report & provide feedback	November 7 th Meeting (Draft to committee by November 1 st)
Review final report	December Meeting (TBD)

Next Meeting

- November 7th, 10am – 12pm
 - Ashburton, 21st Floor, Room 1
- Agenda:
 - Review of Annual Report Draft
 - Continued Discussion of Guidelines Document
- Please fill out Doodle for December Meeting