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Workshop 3- Assessing your Setting

Key takeaways:

- The intent behind a trauma-informed assessment is to use a systematic approach to evaluate different areas of your setting--both the things that are working well and the areas that could be improved. The information you gather in the assessment will help guide the development of specific goals and activities.
- There are a number of different trauma-informed assessment tools that exist, most of which are based on the Trauma-Informed Program Self-Assessment Scale developed by Drs. Roger Fallot and Maxine Harris. All of these tools encourage you to look at a variety of domains in your setting. You can find many in the additional resources.

Five domains that are common across these tools are:

  - Supporting staff development
  - Creating a safe supportive environment
  - Assessing and planning services
  - Involving consumers
  - Adapting policies

- Redesigning our systems and structures requires us to consider the values of diversity, equity, and inclusion in ALL of these domains.
- The process of assessing is as important as the assessment itself. Taking a trauma-informed approach means considering how you will integrate your values and potentially the principles of this work into your process. Remember, it's not about the nail.

Activity: Work through the following questions with your team. (You may use the worksheet as a tool to support the activity.) Consider how you might utilize your team to collect feedback on the needs and the strengths of your setting. Getting a variety of perspectives is important so consider what format is best (anonymous survey, interviews, etc) to get honest input. Be careful to avoid implementing this process in a vacuum. Get outside of your comfort zone!

1) **Explore with your team:**
   - **What are the things my organization is already doing to support a trauma-informed approach? (strengths)**
   - **What are some of the challenges within your organization? (needs)**
2) **Discuss how your team will approach the assessment process.**
3) **Continue to practice communicating your vision for a trauma-informed approach to key stakeholder(s).**

Assessing Your Setting

This worksheet is meant to be an informal tool to support you and your team in assessing your setting. This is not an exhaustive list of categories or questions. You can adjust to meet the needs of your setting. We encourage you to utilize the additional resources for ideas. You may also want to review existing tools found in the additional resources.

Supporting Staff Development	Creating a Safe Supportive Environment	Assessing & Planning Services	Involving Consumers	Adapting Policies
• Staff at all levels of the program receive training and education on traumatic stress and its impact. • Topics related to trauma are addressed in team meetings. • Staff members receive individual supervision from a supervisor who is trained in understanding trauma. • The agency provides opportunities for staff input into program practices. • ETC....	• Staff members ask consumers for their definitions of physical safety. • Materials are posted about traumatic stress (e.g. what it is, how it impacts people, and available trauma-specifics resources). • The agency informs consumers about the extent and limits of privacy and confidentiality (kinds of records kept, where/who has access, when obligated to make report to police/child welfare). • ETC....	• The intake assessment includes questions about social supports in the family and the community. • The program informs consumers about why questions are being asked. • Staff collaborates with consumers in setting their goals. • Consumer goals are reviewed and updated regularly. • The program educates consumers about traumatic stress and triggers. • ETC....	• Current consumers are given opportunities to evaluate the program and offer their suggestions for improvement in anonymous and/or confidential ways (e.g. suggestion boxes, regular satisfaction surveys, meetings focused on necessary improvements, etc) • The program recruits former consumers to serve in an advisory capacity. • Former consumers are invited to share their thoughts, ideas and experiences with the program. • ETC....	• The program has written policies outlining professional conduct for staff (e.g. boundaries, responses to consumers, etc • The program involves staff in its review of policies. • The program has written policies outlining professional conduct for staff (e.g. boundaries, responses to consumers, etc). • Written policies are established based on an understanding of the impact of trauma on consumers and providers. • ETC....

Considerations For the Assessment Process

Introducing the assessment process

- Gaining buy-in
  - Why should I care?
  - Customize to individual need ing buy-in
- Who will have input?
  - Staff
  - Consumers
  - Administration
- Evaluating strengths and needs
  - Qualitative vs quantitative
  - Formal vs informal

Including an assessment tool

- What tool will we choose?
  - Existing
  - Created by team
- How will we administer a tool?
  - Electronically
  - On paper
  - In person
- When will we administer a tool?
  - During a team meeting
  - On own time
  - 1:1
- How will we analyze the information collected?