Illinois ACEs Response Collaborative

**MISSION**

to catalyze the movement to prevent trauma across the lifespan, promote thriving, and put the issue of trauma on the forefront of the equity agenda in Illinois.

**VISION**
a resilient and equitable Illinois in which individuals, families, communities, and systems—including health care, education, criminal justice, business, and legislative bodies—have access to the resources they need to prevent trauma, heal, and thrive.

- Policy and advocacy
- Capacity building
- Research translation and dissemination
Context

• Use of TI approach in organizations and service delivery
• Policies have caused, and continue to cause, significant trauma to individuals, families, and communities
• Growing interest among Illinois policymakers
• Collaborative uniquely position to lead this effort
  • Rebecca Levin, Executive Director, Strengthening Chicago’s Youth, Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children’s Hospital of Chicago
  • Anita Weinberg, Director, ChildLaw Policy Institute, Loyola University School of Law
  • Elena Quintana, Executive Director, Institute on Public Safety & Social Justice, Adler School of Professional Psychology
  • Misty Brown, Program Coordinator, Institute on Public Safety & Social Justice, Adler School of Professional Psychology
Context


Elizabeth A. Bowen, PhD, and Nadine Shaantia Murshid, PhD

Trauma-informed care is a service provision model used across a range of practice settings. Drawing on an extensive body of research on trauma (broadly defined as experiences that produce enduring emotional pain and distress) and health out-
Trauma-Informed Policymaking Tool

Objectives

- Integrating the science of early adversity into policy, including recognizing the widespread impact of trauma and its disproportionate impact on marginalized groups

- Preventing trauma by identifying and eliminating its sources

- Avoiding re-traumatizing people

- Addressing historical trauma, and promoting resilience and healing to help individuals, families, and communities thrive
Trauma-Informed Policymaking Tool

PRINCIPLES OF TRAUMA-INFORMED POLICYMAKING

In this section, we will define each trauma-informed principle and describe its application in both the process of policymaking and its outcome: the resulting policy, benefit, and/or program. Programs are provided with tools to ensure stakeholders understand and have their perspectives integrated into policy, and policymakers should hold themselves accountable for answering these and other related questions.

SAFETY

Ensure the physical and emotional safety of vulnerable populations.
- Ensure: all stakeholders feel safe participating in the policymaking process.
- Outcome: emotional and physical safety of vulnerable populations is prioritized.
- Ask: whose safety is being prioritized?

TRUSTWORTHINESS AND TRANSPARENCY

Make decisions with transparency, with the goal of building and maintaining trust.
- Process: transparency about what is resolved, how decisions are made, and the intended goals of the policy.
- Outcome: policies and the resulting programs and benefits are clearly linked, including the breadth of services offered, along with clear participation and feedback. How are accountability mechanisms placed in agencies, programs, and initiatives?
- Ask: what is your intent about the policy is a stakeholder, and how is it made accessible to the community?

PEER SUPPORT

Involve wisdom and experiences, the collective work to advance policy. Working towards policy change together is a healing experience.
- Process: involve sharing of lived experiences among peers and the development of healing in communities.
- Outcome: sustainable relationships are developed, particularly among individuals with shared experiences of trauma.
- Ask which stakeholders are being involved?

COLLABORATION AND MUTUALITY

Level power differences in shared decision-making.
- Process: individuals who will be impacted by policy will have equal representation.
- Outcome: included in the policy-making process. Shared experiences and perspectives are prioritized as much as, or more than, outside professional experience.
- Ask: what measures are in place to ensure that every policy that is impacted by the policy has equal representation in decision making?

STRENGTHS-BASED APPROACH

Recognize, build on, and valorize individual and community strengths and experiences and imagine a belief in resilience and the ability to heal from trauma.
- Process: individuals and communities are empowered to build on their strengths to identify the strategies that will help them lead better and more meaningful lives.
- Outcome: policies are more effective at promoting healing because they recognize individual and community strengths and experiences.
- Ask: how does the policy build on community strengths to address trauma caused by past policies?

SOCIAL JUSTICE

Acknowledge the long legacy of trauma and trauma-informed practices that continue to shape trauma.
- Process: recognize that a non-trivial cause approach to understanding the origins of issues, challenges, and solutions.
- Outcome: the best interests are served when decisions are informed by lived experiences and informed by the cumulative impact.
- Ask: how does this policy address race/ethnicity/what populations will be impacted by this policy?

The Collaboration seeks to listen to the following members for their input: Windy Greer, Roberta Leavy, NCI, Diana Quonwuang, PhD, and Andréa Wendling, JD, WCRN.
Trauma-Informed Policymaking Tool

**Safety**: Ensure the physical and emotional safety of vulnerable populations
- **Process**: All stakeholders feel safe participating in the policymaking process
- **Outcome**: Physical and emotional safety of vulnerable populations is prioritized
- **Ask**: Whose safety is being prioritized?

**Trustworthiness and transparency**: Make decisions with transparency, build and maintain trust
- **Process**: Transparency about who is involved, how decisions are made, and goals
- **Outcome**: Policies, programs, and benefits are clearly defined, including breadth of services offered, eligibility criteria, and timelines; accountability measures in place
- **Ask**: What information about the policy is available, and how is it made accessible to the community?
**Trauma-Informed Policymaking Tool**

**Peer support:** Individuals with shared experiences collectively work to advance policy; this is a healing experience

- **Process:** Promote sharing of lived experiences among peers and development of healing relationships
- **Outcome:** Sustained relationships are prioritized, particularly among individuals with shared experiences of trauma
- **Ask:** Which relationships are being prioritized?

**Collaboration and mutuality:** Level power differences for shared decision-making

- **Process:** Individuals impacted by policy outcomes have equal voice. Lived experience and firsthand knowledge are prioritized as much as, or more than, professional experience
- **Outcome:** Policies work to dismantle root causes of power differences and reflect needs of community
- **Ask:** What measures are in place to ensure that every group impacted by the policy has equal representation in decision-making?
Trauma-Informed Policymaking Tool

**Strengths-based approach**: Recognize, build on, and validate individual and community strengths and integrate a belief in resilience and the ability to heal from trauma

- **Process**: Individuals and communities are empowered to build on strengths to identify strategies that will help them heal from trauma
- **Outcome**: Policies recognize strengths and are more effective at promoting healing
- **Ask**: How does the policy build on communities’ strengths?

**Social justice**: Acknowledge the ongoing impact of historical trauma and challenge the systemic and institutional oppression that continues to create trauma

- **Process**: Use a root cause approach to understand origin of issues, challenges, and outcomes
- **Outcome**: Policies narrow disparities in the experiences and impact of trauma, and promote equity
- **Ask**: How does this policy address root causes? Which populations will benefit from this policy?
Next Steps

- Dissemination: legislators, advocates, communities, etc.

• Evaluation

• Feedback and modification