**Developing Trauma Informed Organisations Northern Ireland update and a new Toolkit** 





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### Dr Suzanne Mooney Montserrat Fargas Malet



### **Session outline**

- Background of TIP work: the journey
- Toolkit Demonstration
- QUB implementation research
- Organisational checklist
- Next steps
  - where to access the toolkit
  - how to use it
  - when to use it



### **Trauma Informed Team**

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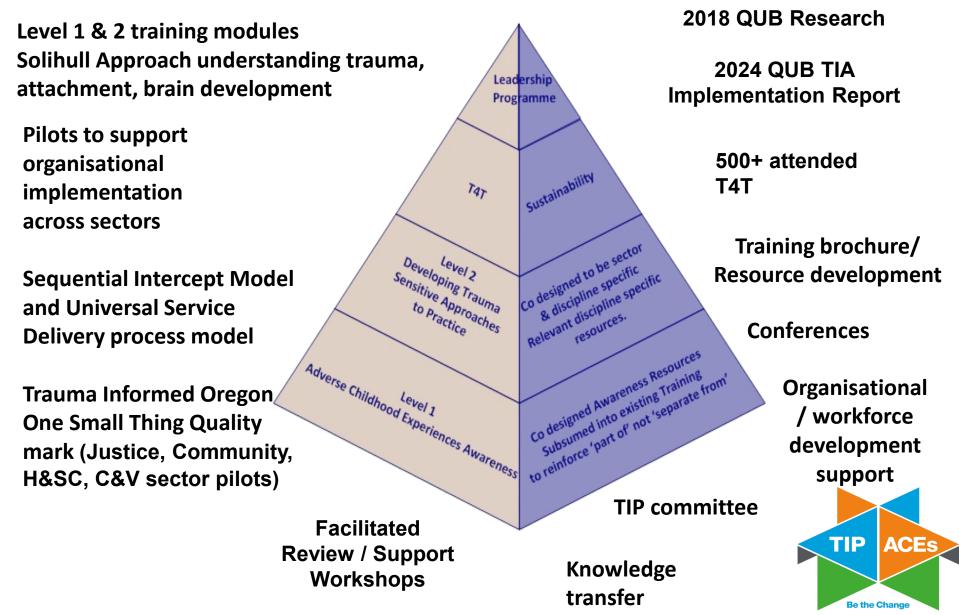
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• Training and Resources



### Trauma Informed Approach Implementation Framework for NI: 2018-2024



# **Trauma Informed: International Context**

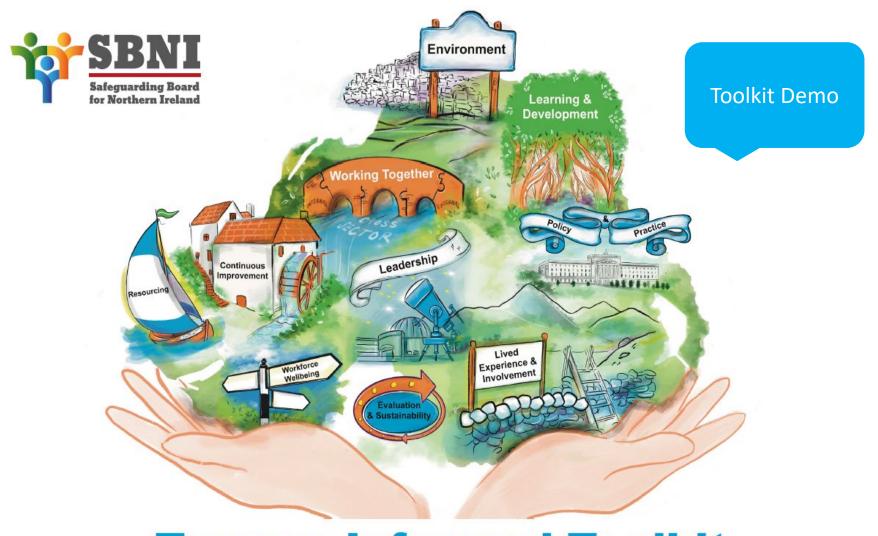


"A program, organisation, or system that is trauma-informed *realizes* the widespread impact of trauma and understands potential paths for recovery; *recognizes* the signs and symptoms of trauma in clients, families, staff, and others involved with the system; and *responds* by fully integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, and practices, and seeks to actively *resist retraumatization.*"

(SAMHSA, 2023)

"Trauma is one possible response to adversity. A traumatic event can be an experience, series of experiences, or circumstances but **resilience is possible with timely support**." (Frameworks UK)





### Trauma Informed Toolkit Embedding a Trauma Informed Approach

within Organisations and Systems

Setting the Scene Key Concepts

Six Principles Evidence & Examples Organisational Checklist

Library

## **Setting the Scene**

#### About the toolkit

This toolkit has been designed to help organisations in Northern Ireland (NI) identify opportunities to embed trauma informed approaches across policy and practice. It is based on the local and international evidence base, existing learning, valuable insights from people with lived experience and good practice from the NI context.

It has six sections:

- Section 1 Setting the scene
   An overview of the context and how to use the toolkit
- Section 2 Key concepts
   A definition of trauma, trauma informed organisations and approaches
- Section 3 Six principles

A summary of the **six trauma informed principles** (safety, trustworthiness, choice, collaboration, empowerment and inclusion)

#### Section 4 – Evidence & examples

A summary of international and local evidence, including case studies and examples of trauma informed approaches across a range of organisations

#### Section 5 – Organisational checklist

A summary and organisational checklist is based on **ten organisational focus areas**\* (leadership, learning and development, workforce wellbeing, lived experience and involvement, policy and practice, environment, working together, continuous improvement, resourcing, evaluation and sustainability) \*adapted from SAMHSA implementation domains 2014 [1]

#### Section 6 – Library

A suite of resources to help you on your journey, including references.

## **Acknowledgement and thanks to:**

- Lived experience focus group members
- SBNI Trauma Informed Committee
- Toolkit task and finish working group
- Organisations who were part of the user testing phase
- Those who contributed case studies and examples
- Local and international research base which informed the development of this toolkit
- Toolkit designers
- Funders (EPPOC)
- Local artist Beth McComish, whose illustrations are infused throughout the toolkit.



### **Toolkit Aims**

The toolkit will:

- illustrate how trauma informed approaches can be embedded across your organisation
- build awareness of what the six trauma informed principles are and how to apply them
- highlight the evidence base on the benefits, barriers and enablers to a trauma informed approach
- showcase case studies and examples from across NI
- provide a practical self-assessment checklist, structured on the ten focus areas
- walk you through each aspect on your journey to becoming a trauma informed organisation.



## **Target Audience**

This toolkit was developed for the SBNI member agencies and partners; however, it can be used by any organisation, team or service across the statutory, community or voluntary sectors. It is designed specifically for NI, which has its own unique structure and history.

This toolkit aims to help leaders, workforces, services and organisations identify and reflect on progress, strengths and opportunities for embedding a trauma informed approach across policy and practice. It aims to complement existing organisational priorities, driving improvement, innovation and sustainable change.



### **Why Trauma Informed?**

The prevalence of adversity & trauma means that we need not only to focus on the people who seek support but equally on the people and systems who provide that support.

When we consider adversity and trauma in our workplaces & organisations, this can help in understanding our own responses and needs and those of the people we support.

A whole system trauma informed approach can only happen in the context of trauma informed and trauma responsive environments, policies, systems and organisations.



### Adverse Childhood - Community - Cultural Experiences



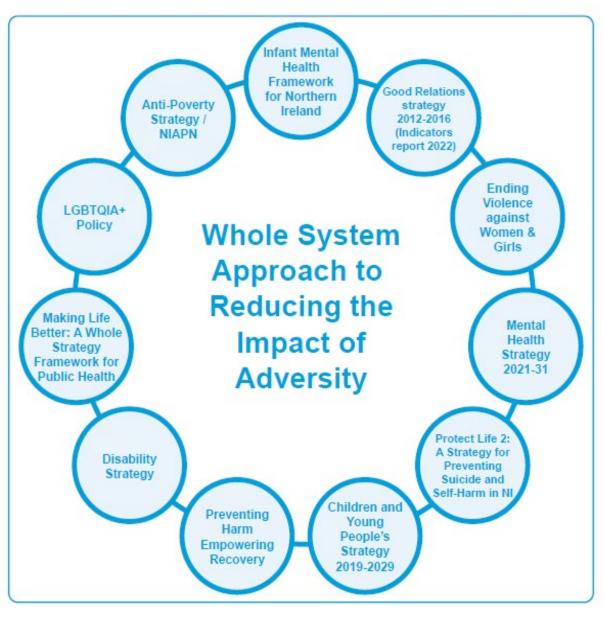
### **Context is key**



This illustration is not meant to be an exhaustive list.



### Whole System Approach - Draft PfG extract -



Acknowledging the levels of trauma in our post-conflict society, we will work across the Executive to embed trauma-informed, responsive systems; systems that help people to easily navigate and access the support they need, when they need it, and for however long they need it for.

We will develop a traumainformed public sector,

equipping staff at all levels with the skills needed to work in partnership and support people as they rebuild a sense of control and empowerment in their lives.

### Defining Trauma

It's about infusing our understanding of theories, models and concepts related to trauma, adversity and resilience.

Fully acknowledging the imprint of trauma and adversity means we understand:

- the stress response system how stress and trauma affect our brain and bodies
- how trauma can impact our ability to feel safe and develop trusting relationships
- what promotes recovery and healing why relationships matter - & how relationships are key to human development, regulation & resilience.



### **Relationships Matter**

We can create environments and services that reduce stress and the risk of individuals becoming overwhelmed....This approach can prevent further trauma to anyone accessing and providing services.

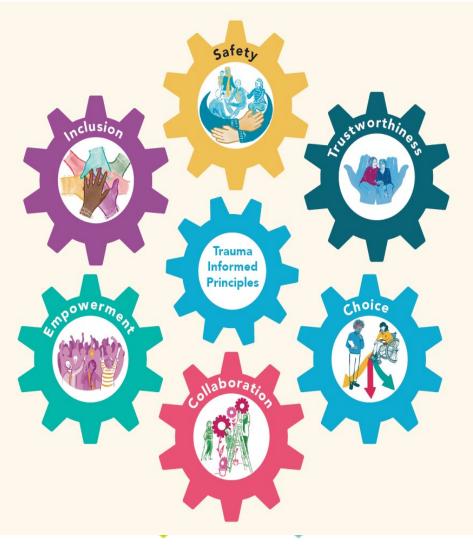
- Being trauma informed helps us understand why our early experiences matter; and how overwhelming experiences across the lifespan can cause lasting physiological and psychological imprints, if not addressed.
- Connections with others, supportive and nurturing relationships (within and outside the family and community) can reduce the impact of trauma. Timely relational support can help counterbalance its negative effects.
- Being trauma informed emphasises the benefits of supportive relationships, supportive working environments and supportive communities.
- It means we can all play a part infusing what we know about adversity, trauma, and resilience in our efforts to strengthen related policies, programmes, and public agencies.



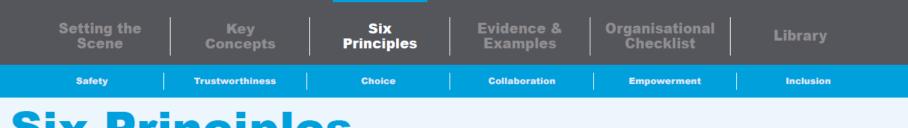
### **Section 2 – Key Concepts**

- A trauma informed approach is a ...whole-system organisational change framework that aims to develop coherent cultures, policies and practices across systems of service delivery to enhance service user engagement and provide more effective Care (Bunting et al.,2019a;De Candia,2014)
- Trauma informed approaches recognise that many service users, patients or clients of health social care, education and justice services will have been impacted by potentially traumatic adverse experiences across their life course, and therefore a more responsive form of service delivery is required....the six principles should underpin all service delivery. (QUB MOONEY et al.2024)

## Definitions



... a comprehensive, whole-system approach... that is theoretically grounded, developmentally informed and is flexible enough to be adapted to each organization's unique context.



### **Six Principles**



In light of the prevalence of trauma, it is important to understand why we need to embed trauma informed principles and values throughout an organisation. A trauma informed approach is about how and in what way a service is delivered, rather than simply what the service provides. By implementing the six trauma informed principles: safety, trustworthiness, choice, collaboration, empowerment and inclusion\*, we can create environments and services that reduce stress and the risk of individuals becoming overwhelmed. This approach can prevent further trauma to anyone accessing and providing services.

Creating a trauma informed culture is about everyday behaviours and interactions. It is about how we do our business and how the six principles are infused into everything we do. The six principles need to be embedded into our interactions and engagements through language, tone and written communications. This will help us harness compassionate and supportive relationships, and will improve the culture in our work environments and communities.

\*adapted from [24]



### **NI system change: TI principles**



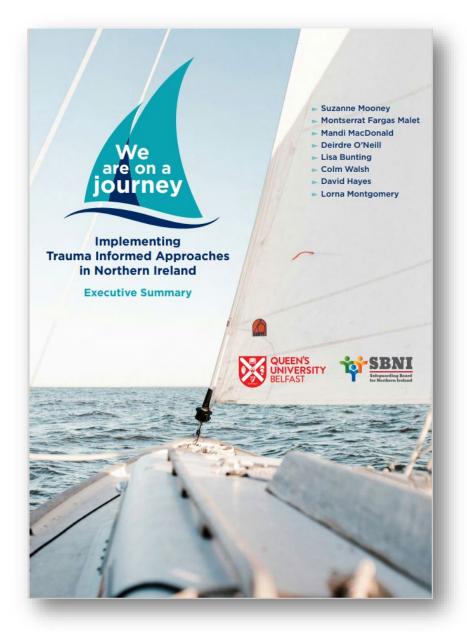
TIP ACES Be the Change

### Barriers and Enablers of the Implementation of Trauma Informed Approaches in Northern Ireland

Dr Suzanne Mooney & Montserrat Fargas Malet







## Aims



## The Organisational Review



Rapid Evidence Assessment



Progress Mapping – Online Survey (n=53)



Sector-Specific Regional Focus Groups (n=52)



Mixed-Methods Case Studies

## The Case Studies



Fane Street Primary School



Youth Justice Agency



Thorndale Parenting Service, Salvation Army



BHSCT Belfast Inclusion Health Service

### Definitions



... a comprehensive, whole-system approach... that is theoretically grounded, developmentally informed and is flexible enough to be adapted to each organization's unique context.

"

(Lowenthal, 2020, p. 188)

### Conceptualisation

#### **Barriers & Challenges**

#### **Enablers**

#### "

There is a danger that this could become **a tick box thing**, and people go 'well, what do we do now? what do we need to do to get our Gold Star for being trauma informed? and **then** we can move on??



HSC Trusts Focus Group

#### 

There are HSC areas where policies such as reducing restrictive practice, MCA [Mental Capacity Act] legislation etc. are very pertinent, and therefore adhered to. Whilst this is TIP, I don't think that they would be perceived under that heading.



Survey submission - Frontline organisation, HSC, Statutory sector

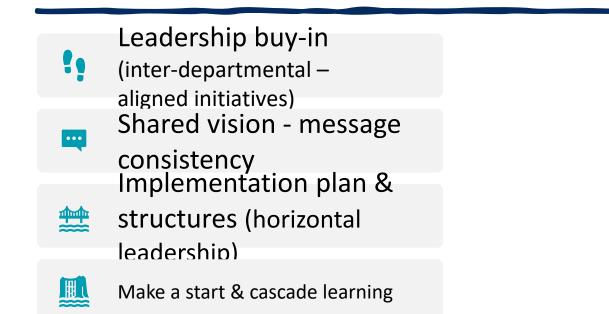
## **TIA Implementation Domains**



### **Organisational Development**

#### **Enablers**

#### **Barriers & Challenges**



### **Organisational Development**

#### **Enablers**

### **Barriers & Challenges**



•••

Leadership buy-in

- (inter-departmental aligned initiatives) Shared vision - message
  - consistency Implementation plan &
- structures (horizontal leadership)



Make a start & cascade learning

- <sup>••</sup> Size/multi-site more complex
- Low priority, 'luxury' not 'core business'
- Limited dedicated funding & commissioning
- Fragmentation/siloed services & disciplines
- <sup>a</sup> Lack of a NI Assembly & Executive

### Workforce Development and Support

#### **Enablers**

#### **Barriers & Challenges**

- Staff buy-in -'the magic wand' Staff involvement
   throughout - build collective sense of purpose Culture of staff support & collaboration
- Context-specific training & support

### Workforce Development and Support

#### **Enablers**

### **Barriers & Challenges**

- Staff buy-in –'the magic
   wand'
   Staff involvement
- throughout build
   collective sense of purpose
   Culture of staff support &
   collaboration
- Context-specific training & support

- Lack of staff buy-in
- COVID impact fatigue, 'traumatised workforce'
- Staff burnout & turnover
- Challenging staffing situations
- Space & time Overstretched systems

"

...to implement this and make it meaningful... you need time and space to think about it, to understand it, to integrate it, to apply it, you need a bit of space and time in order to be able to do that. And actually, when services are just running from pillar to post, that's a massive, massive challenge.

HSC Trusts Focus Group

#### "

We don't have the time to do it regularly. That's the problem, we just don't always have this space and time for reflective practice. But when we do, it's really enlightening because there's such a wealth of wisdom and knowledge within the team.

Belfast Inclusion Staff Focus Group

### Challenges on Outcomes (& Perceived Benefits)







What to measure? And how? Context-specific

Capturing the range of benefits

Long-term nature of some benefits

### Service user // staff // organisational

#### "

... our strap line is we're on **the journey** to becoming a trauma informed organisation.

And I do think it's a journey. I don't think it's a destination. I think... your staff teams change, your management changes, other priorities come in and you're constantly having to revisit what we've learned...

You've implemented something, you think that's grand. Then you realise, actually... **is anybody actually doing** what we've supposed to have implemented? **You're going back**. You're reminding people, you're **building in mechanisms to evaluate and review**, and then...

You're going back again, so it's a constant journey.

•••

Senior Management Focus Group, YJA

#### "

There are **no downsides** to this at all. And actually sometimes that can be overlooked as well. (...) whether that be from a workforce point of view, organisational responsibilities, services to customers, the experience of customers. If you're doing all this stuff, it's just a better place for everybody. Simple as that.



Cross-sector/Regional Focus Group

### Recommendations





TIAs as theoretical framework to underpin current policy development s in NI A trauma informed strategy needed to advance implementati on across sectors and settings

The development of a regional interdepartmental research and outcomes strategy

A regional NI trauma informed resource hub or centre required to facilitate organisational leadership and networking A regional training framework should be developed





# THANK YOU

# **Questions & Comments**

Suzanne Mooney s.mooney@qub.ac.uk



Setting the Scene	Key Concepts	Six Principles	Evidence & Examples	Organisational Checklist	Library	
		Evidence	Examples			

#### Examples



In this section, we have included a sample of sector specific examples from across NI. We intend to add new examples to the toolkit on a periodic basis.

- Education
- Health and Social Care
- Justice
- Community & Voluntary
- Cross sector collaboration

Further examples of trauma informed approaches (TIA) are infused throughout the phase two supplementary material available on each focus area.

For example, leadership in action examples are in the leadership focus area and examples of workforce wellbeing initiatives are in the corresponding focus area.



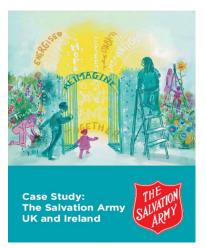
### The Benefits of Applying a Trauma Informed Approach



Implementing Trauma Informed Approaches in Northern Ireland Case Study: Fane Street Primary School (safeguardingni.org)



Implementing Trauma Informed Approaches in Northern Ireland Case Study: Belfast Inclusion Health Service (safeguardingni.org)



Implementing Trauma Informed Approaches in Northern Ireland Case Study: Salvation Army (safeguardingni.org)



Case Study: Youth Justice Agency

Implementing Trauma Informed Approaches in Northern Ireland Case Study: Youth Justice Agency (safeguardingni.org)







The organisational checklist is a practical resource that can be used to provide either a baseline or review of your organisation's progress. It is primarily intended to identify areas for improvement and support planning, rather than serve as a scoring matrix. Its core function is to support organisations to measure progress.

"A thorough, measurable assessment:

• helps a system or organisation determine areas for improvement and areas of strength across all levels of the system or organisation

- allows an organisation to assess capacity and target training activities and strategic planning
- helps the leadership and staff understand the need for a TIA
- provides data to validate TIA need and assess readiness for TIA implementation." (SAMHSA 2023)



You can complete this as a leader, complete as a team or as a service. Choose the areas you want to start with, you might like to prioritise one or two areas.

In each section you are asked to rate your organisation's progress by identifing your most frequently occurring score from that focus area using the following scale (Please score 1- 5):

- 1 Little or no indication of trauma informed actions in practice or in policy in this focus area – action is required to establish a suitable starting point.
- 2 Some elements of a trauma informed approach being applied in this focus area though only in isolated projects action is required to consider how to cascade a trauma informed approach more widely.
- 3 Evidence of trauma informed implementation with change being applied in multiple areas – actions planned for further implementation.
- 4 Trauma informed approaches broadly deployed across this focus area multiple actions ongoing and under review.
- 5 Trauma informed approaches fully embedded across this focus area actions are continually evaluated.

#### Next steps

Step 1: Complete organisational checklist, download an editable version here

Step 2: Analyse results and select priority focus area/s

Step 3: Attend relevant focus area workshops/consult TIP team/SBNI website

Step 4: Start developing your organisational action plan

Step 5: Build support networks to continue the implementation journey

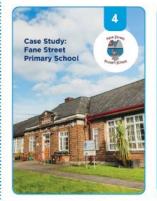


#### Resources















Case Study: Youth Justice Agency

- 1. Executive Summary: We are on a Journey Implementing Trauma Informed Approaches in Northern Ireland
- 2. Full Report: We are on a Journey Implementing Trauma Informed Approaches in Northern Ireland
- 3. Implementing Trauma Informed Approaches in Northern Ireland Case Study: Belfast Inclusion Health Service
- 4. Implementing Trauma Informed Approaches in Northern Ireland Case Study: Fane Street Primary School
- 5. Implementing Trauma Informed Approaches in Northern Ireland Case Study: Salvation Army
- 6. Implementing Trauma Informed Approaches in Northern Ireland Case Study: Youth Justice Agency
- 7. Online Training Brochure safeguardingni.org







## **Evidence**

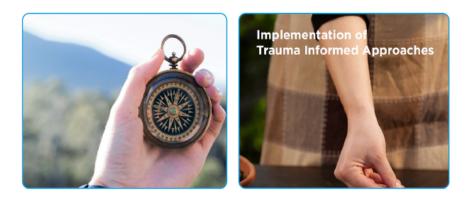
Organisational transformations are three times more likely to succeed if they systemically identify the enablers and barriers to implementation and subsequently try to design mechanisms to address them. [25]

In 2022/23 Queen's University Belfast (QUB) was commissioned by the Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland (SBNI) to undertake research to:

- update the previous QUB Evidence Review [13] sharing key components of effective trauma informed approach (TIA) implementation in diverse real-world settings
- conduct online organisational surveys to map progress across key sectors in NI
- · establish a senior leadership strategic overview of implementation across NI
- · capture the organisational learning from cross sector case studies
- provide recommendations for advancement of trauma informed approaches across NI.



Implementing Trauma Informed Approaches in Northern Ireland



Throughout this toolkit we will outline the benefits, barriers and enablers that have been identified in NI by infusing the findings and recommendations from the research report. The report was called "We are on a Journey"- **Implementing Trauma Informed Approaches in Northern Ireland [10]**. The team published their findings in 2024 producing an executive summary and full report (click on blue arrow):





## References

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- McFadden, P (2020). Two sides of one coin? Relationships build resilience or contribute to burnout in child protection social work: shared perspectives from leavers and stayers in Northern Ireland. *International Social Work*, 63, 164-176.





This illustrates a positive vision for NI where a trauma informed approach enhances outcomes for the whole of society.

## **Continuous Improvement**

#### Your feedback matters

 The toolkit is a live document and we welcome all suggestions for improvement. Please contact the SBNI on <u>SBNI.info@hscni.net</u> entitled 'Toolkit', to share your feedback or any examples for inclusion.



#### Trauma Informed Organisational Toolkit Implementation Workshops

Embedding a Trauma Informed Approach

Participants will be guided to reflect and identify areas for development and receive additional resources to support them on their journey.

Target audience:

- those who have completed trauma informed training (a minimum requirement of Level 1 & 2 or equivalent)
- those in a leadership, policy development, or commissioning role
- those who wish to support trauma informed development in their organisation.

You can register for the workshops through this link <u>Workshop Registration</u> or sign up through the SBNI website <u>Events & Training</u> (safeguardingni.org)

Trust	Date / Time	Venue	
	04.11.2024	Silverbirch Hotel,	
Western	1pm - 5pm	Omagh	
, cottern	18.11.2024	Waterfoot Hotel	
	1pm - 5pm	Derry / L'Derry	
	25.11.2024	HSC Leadership Centre	
D. 16 .	1pm - 5pm	Belfast	
Belfast	12.12.2024	NICVA	
	9am - 1pm	Belfast	
	05.12.2024	Dunsilly Hotel	
Northern	9am - 1pm	Antrim	
Northern	10.12.2024	ECOS Centre	
	1pm - 5pm	Ballymena	
	06.11.2024	Lagan Valley Island	
South	1pm - 5pm	Lisburn	
Eastern	15.11.2024	Lagan Valley Island	
	1pm - 5pm	Lisburn	
	29.11.2024	The Junction	
Southern	9am - 1pm	Dungannon	
Journenn	03.12.2024	Craigavon Civic Centre	
	1pm - 5pm	Craigavon	



## **Venue Summary**

#### Trauma Informed Organisational Toolkit Implementation Workshops

4 November 2024 | 1 - 5pm Silverbirch Hotel, Omagh Trauma Informed Organisational Toolkit Implementation Workshops 6 November 2024 | 1 - 5pm Lagan Valley Island, Lisburn Trauma Informed Organisational Toolkit Implementation Workshops 15 November 2024 | 1 - 5pm Lagan Valley Island, Lisburn

Trauma Informed Organisational Toolkit Implementation Workshops 18 November 2024 | 1 - 5pm Waterfoot Hotel, Derry/Londonderry Trauma Informed Organisational Toolkit Implementation Workshops 25 November 2024 | 1 - 5pm HSC Leadership Centre Trauma Informed Organisational Toolkit Implementation Workshops 29 November 2024 | 9am - 1pm The Junction, Dungannon Trauma Informed Organisational Toolkit Implementation Workshops 3 December 2024 | 1 - 5pm Craigavon Civic Centre, Craigavon

#### Trauma Informed Organisational Toolkit Implementation Workshops

5 December 2024 | 9am - 1pm Dunsilly Hotel, Antrim Trauma Informed Organisational Toolkit Implementation Workshops

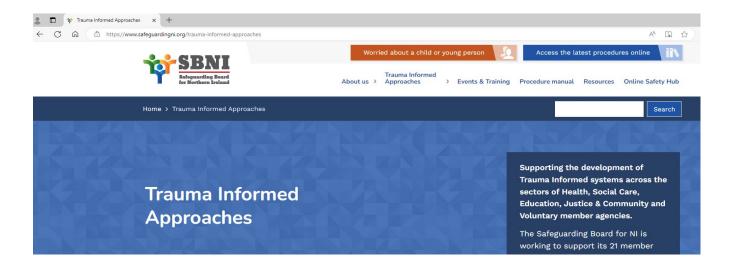
10 December 2024 | 1 - 5pm ECOS Centre, Ballymena Trauma Informed Organisational Toolkit Implementation Workshops

12 December 2024 | 9am - 1pm NICVA



#### Events & Training (safeguardingni.org)

#### **SBNI Website** <u>About the Safeguarding Board</u> for Northern Ireland (safeguardingni.org)



#### WATCH THE RECORDING



#### Agenda

- Professor Daniel Muijs (Head of School of Social Sciences, Education and Social Work) -Welcome
- Ms Bernie McNally Independent Chair, Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland -Opening address
- Dr Suzanne Mooney (QUB) Implementing Trauma Informed Approaches in NI - Study overview & key findings
- Reflections from the Case Studies (Education, Justice, Health & Social Care, Voluntary/Community Sector) - TIA implementation in practice
- Julie Harrison (Permanent Secretary, Northern Ireland Office) - Closing remarks
- Q & A
- Dr Mandi McDonald Thanks & Close

Understanding your wellbeing in high pressure environments:





8: Anxiety and depression 9: Processing trauma 10: Recovering form trauma 11: Trauma in the general population Level 1 Introduction 'Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Awareness' and Trauma

Level 2 Introduction to 'Developing a Trauma Sensitive Approach to Practice'



#### Solihull Approach CPD - Free Online Courses for Professionals



The following online courses enhance understanding of trauma informed approaches, building on the SBNI modules. Each takes approximately 4 hours to complete. They can be completed in short units.

Learning & Development





Understanding Trauma Complexities of trauma; recognising, processing and recovery



Understanding Brain Development Brain development from antenatal to adolescence and its significance for mental health and emotional wellbeing in children and teenagers.

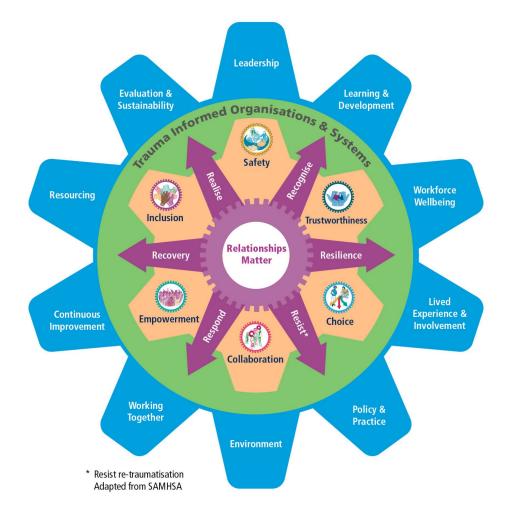


Understanding Attachment Supporting healthy attachment and the value of containment and reciprocity for the quality of attachment.





#### Summary Infographic Trauma Informed Organisations and Systems







#### **Embedding a Trauma Informed Approach**



### Finally...

- Please promote the Toolkit within your organisation
- Consider who is best to complete the checklist or a specific focus area (considering collective leadership approaches) <u>and</u> who will attend the interactive Toolkit workshops
- THANK YOU for taking the time to attend today.
   We invite you to continue to play a role in embedding a trauma informed approach across organisations, systems and workplaces.





Worried about a child or young person

Access the latest procedures online

**Trauma Informed** About us >

Approaches

> Events & Training Procedure manual Resources

Search

**Online Safety Hub** 

Home > Resources > Trauma Informed Toolkit

#### **Trauma Informed** Toolkit



An implementation resource to embed a trauma-informed approach within organisations and systems.

# **Trauma Informed Toolkit** (safeguardingni.org)

