Transition to Independence Process (TIP)
Trauma Informed Considerations for Youth & Young Adults

Patrice Fetzer, LISW-S
TIP Model Consultant

Welcoming
☐ There is welcoming and age appropriate signage and décor in lobbies and front doors. Have young people do a walk through and give you ideas for improvements.
☐ Front desk has friendly and welcoming people that enjoy having conversations with and encouraging young people.
☐ Hire young people with lived experience to work at your front desk.
☐ Ensure a trauma informed workforce and wraparound team that specializes in engaging and empowering youth and young adults.
☐ Partner with an organization or site where youth and young adults would feel most comfortable for office or meeting space.

Safe and Secure Environments
☐ Take time to learn what the young person needs to feel safe and secure and then help them create safe and secure environments in their homes, schools, places of employment and in counseling offices and wraparound team meetings.
☐ Ensure that housing or living environments are in locations where they feel safe. Provide accommodations to environments to improve feelings of safety.

Regulation/Stress Management
☐ Educate young people about the impact of trauma and stress on the brain.
☐ Help young people identify their trauma triggers and what they can do to counteract the symptoms.
☐ Educate the family, caregivers, providers, and teachers about the impact of trauma and strategies that decrease symptoms and build resiliency.
Help young people identify and access strategies that decrease their stress and anxiety (i.e.-animals, music, art, exercise, sports, yoga/meditation/BrainGym, walks, sensory items) in their homes, school, and community.

Help young people create and follow their own crisis and safety plan and prevention plan.

Assessment/Strengths Discovery/Intake Processes

- Provide a choice of where they would be most comfortable to meet (office, home, library, coffee shop, walk in park).
- Include peer support as part of this process to outreach, offer hope and provide support and assistance with navigating the resources and services they may need.
- Assessment and Strengths Discovery are to be “conversation or chat” not an inquiry and make sure it is on the terms and comfort level on the young person.
- Ask what happened to you, not what's wrong with you?
- Focus on their strengths, interests, and hope for their future.
- Ask what the young person wants and need and then be about helping them with what they shared with you.

Transition to Independence Process (TIP)

Trauma Informed Considerations for Youth & Young Adults (cont’d)

Developmentally and Culturally Appropriate Choice of Service and Support Options

- Facilitate educated and voluntary choice of options. Many young people are not ready to voluntarily choose psychiatric or counseling services right away or want to talk about their trauma experiences so offer other engaging entry options.
□ Peer support, TIP facilitator (i.e.-CPST or case manager) with focus on assistance with basic needs, employment, or housing is often the preferred point of entry.

□ Once safety, security, and basic needs are met, trust is built, and time is allowed to learn more about the service options, the impact of trauma, and how counseling and psychiatric services might help, young people will willingly choose the services and feel in control of their own choice – which is a vital component to trauma informed care.

□ Provide opportunity for counseling sessions that includes animals, music, art, and/or physical movement (based on interest of the young person).

□ Use social media, texting, and peers to educate and inform about the impact of trauma and service and support options.

□ Connect young people with mentors and activities of interest. This is also age appropriate “respite” for both the caregiver and the young person.

□ Offer parents and other caregivers with skills and support to navigate this often challenging stage of development in a trauma informed and empowering way.

□ Involve young people in your program development and program evaluation

□ Use the power of social media, texting, and peers to engage and educate.

□ Ensure lots of opportunities to teach and support around new experiences and skills until competent and confident to do on own (i.e. – making phone calls, navigating community resources, taking the bus, college visits). Provide opportunities for young people who have succeeded with certain competencies and experiences to share their skills and experiences with other young people (bus mentors, college mentors, life skill mentors, resource navigators).

□ Provide opportunities for young people to help others and share their story – tremendous healing power, supports feeling valued and respected, and engages other young people into the supports and services they might need.
Strategies for engaging, educating, supporting, and empowering ALL young people to reach their potential! ~Patrice Fetzer, LISW-S, TIP Model Consultant