# Guiding Principles
## of Trauma-Informed Systems of Care

**SAFETY**

Throughout the organization, staff and the people they serve feel physically and psychologically safe.

**TRUSTWORTHINESS AND TRANSPARENCY**

Organizational operations and decisions are conducted with appropriate transparency and the goal of building and maintaining trust among staff, clients, and family members of those receiving services.

**PEER SUPPORT AND MUTUAL HELP (RECOVERY)**

The organization recognizes the value of "lived experience" by employing peer support staff or by offering peer support groups. Leadership recognizes that all people, and the organization itself, is capable, whole, and resourceful.

**COLLABORATION AND MUTUALITY**

There is true partnering and leveling of power differences between staff and clients and among organizational staff from direct care staff to administrators. There is recognition that healing happens in relationships and in the meaningful sharing of power and decision-making. The organization recognizes that everyone has a role to play in a trauma-informed approach. **One does not have to be a therapist to be therapeutic.**

**EMPOWERMENT, VOICE AND CHOICE**

Throughout the organization and among the clients served, individuals' strengths are recognized, built on, and validated and new skills developed as necessary. The organization aims to strengthen the staff's, clients', and family members' experience of choice and recognizes that every person's experience is unique and requires an individualized approach. This includes a belief in strengths and resilience and in the ability of individuals, organizations, and communities to heal and promote recovery from trauma. This builds on what clients, staff, and communities have to offer, rather than responding to perceived deficits.

**CULTURAL, HISTORICAL AND GENDER ISSUES**

The organization actively identifies and changes cultural stereotypes and biases (e.g., based on race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, geography), offers gender responsive services, leverages the healing value of traditional cultural connections, and recognizes and addresses historical trauma.

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TRAUMA-INFORMED SYSTEMS OF CARE
Cultivating Compassionate Culture