







TRAUMA
informed

Trauma-Informed Practices in Your Club

Becoming trauma informed is not as hard as it seems. You don't need to be a therapist or counselor, specific funding or grants, or special initiative to begin. You only need yourself, the 7 Key Elements of a Trauma-Informed Club, and the commitment to learning and growing.

To begin your journey, use this tool to help you identify practices you are already doing in your Club. The practices listed inside the boxes are examples of trauma-informed practices that many Clubs do! After you circle what you're already doing, brainstorm new practices, and identify ways to make those practices consistent and intentional, launching you and your Club toward being trauma-informed!

The 7 Elements of a Trauma-Informed Club

	<p>Awareness</p> <p>Understanding the impact of trauma helps Club professionals to better understand the behaviors of the people you work with, and work alongside. A trauma-informed Club recognizes that behaviors are shaped by experience. It works to answer deeper questions around the root cause of the behavior, and the underlying circumstances. It asks the question, "What can the Club do to address the issues and support the individual?"</p>
	<p>Safety</p> <p>Physical and emotional safety is important for all people and is even more critical for those that have experienced trauma. When people do not feel physically or emotionally safe, they react from a place of survival (fight, flight or freeze). A trauma-informed Club prioritizes physical and emotional safety for youth, families, and staff in Club policies, staff practices, and Club programming.</p>
	<p>Trust</p> <p>Trust and transparency are key to building emotionally safe relationships with youth, families, staff, and communities. When people do not feel they cannot trust their environment or relationships, they do not feel safe. A trauma-informed Club uses transparent communication, has clear expectations, and works to create relationships rooted in trust.</p>
	<p>Equity</p> <p>Historical, systematic, and pervasive racism, sexism, poverty, and disenfranchisement are profound traumas that cross generations and live in our communities to this day. A trauma-informed Club actively confronts bias, dismantles hate, and employs responsive, culturally relevant programming and services for youth, families, staff, and communities.</p>



Empowerment, Voice & Choice

When people experience trauma, they experience a loss of power and control in their lives. People regain that power when they are provided opportunities for voice and choice, and feel empowered to make decisions about things that impact them. A trauma-informed Club understands concerning or challenging behavior as youth trying to regain a sense of control in their lives. It aims to empower youth, families, and staff by encouraging them to use their voices, make choices, and have ownership over their Club, lives, and future.



Mutual Collaboration

True partnership, through mutual collaboration, builds trust, safety, and a sense of empowerment. This is important for all people at the Club, but is especially important for those who have experienced trauma. A trauma-informed Club mutually collaborates with its youth, families, communities, and staff by working to level power differences, and encouraging all people to work together. Youth, families, and staff are provided opportunities to work together, build mutual trust and respect, and solve problems.



Connection & Growth

Resilience to navigate challenging experiences and heal after trauma is built through consistent, healthy, and respectful relationships. Boys & Girls Clubs professionals are uniquely positioned to provide a space for authentic connection and growth for young people. A trauma-informed Club recognizes that all youth, but especially those that need us most, have a need for safe, stable, and supportive relationships. It creates an environment where youth, families, staff, and whole communities can connect through culturally relevant experiences.

Staff Activity

Below is a menu of common practices that are trauma-informed. Review the list of practices in each category and circle the practices that you or your Club already does well. Then complete the reflection questions on the next page.

Trauma-Informed Practices Menu

 <p>Awareness</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusive Practices • Emotional Check-Ins • Family Needs Assessment • Youth Needs Assessment • Safety Plans • Success Plans • Calm Corner • Zen Den • Referrals • Behavior Support Toolkit • Programs Adapted as needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suicide Prevention Training • Mental Health Training • Trauma-Informed Training • ACEs Training • Youth Social Emotional Skill Building • Staff Social Emotional Skill Building • Collaborative Behavior Support Plan
 <p>Safety</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emotional Check-Ins • Unsafe Behavior Policy • Mandated Reporting • Teaching Coping Skills • Teaching Emotional Regulation • New Member Orientation • Clear and enforced policies • Clean space • Spaces are hazard free 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small Ratios • Background Checks • Incident Reporting • Incident Response • New Staff Training • Behavior Support Training • Behavior Support Practices • Additional Support Staff • Staff Breaks
 <p>Trust</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visual Schedules • Staff In/Out Board • Expectations Posted • Consistent Follow Through • Concerns Follow-Up • Transparent Communication • Group Agreements • Policies Consistently Followed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respectful Workplace Culture • Staff Coaching & Supervision • Youth/Family Information Protected • Advance Notice on Changes • Sharing Feedback • Sharing Survey and Data



Equity

- Restorative Practices
- Diverse Images
- Diverse Materials
- Multilingual Resources
- Inclusive Spaces
- Unbiased Discipline Procedures
- Youth Grouped by Developmental Age
- Culture is Represented and Celebrated
- Check and Address Biases
- Policies Examined for Bias
- Practices Examined for Bias
- Strengths Based Language
- Person First Language
- BGCA's Racial Equity Resources
- Suspensions and Expulsions are externally reviewed
- Support and services are equitable, not equal



Empowerment, Voice & Choice

- Youth Voice
- Social Emotional Skill Building
- Teach Problem Solving
- Youth Led Projects
- Youth Led Dialogues
- Youth Advisory Council
- Family Advisory Council
- Pulse Checks
- Keystone/ Torch Club
- Youth, Family, Staff Surveys
- Encouragement & Recognition
- Youth Involved in Goal Setting
- Youth Involved in Support Plans
- Youth Involved in Decision Making
- Families Involved in Decision Making



Mutual Collaboration

- Parents/Caregivers as Board Members
- Parents/Caregivers Lead Programs
- Youth Involved in Annual Planning
- Families Involved in Annual Planning
- Youth Involved in Fundraisers
- Families Involved in Fundraisers
- Youth Led Community Engagement
- Youth Designed Spaces
- Families and Staff are Partners in Youth Success
- Staff and Youth are Partners
- Staff Involved in Decisions Making
- "By All, For All" Mentality



Connection & Growth

- 5 Key Elements
- Youth Program Quality (YPQ)
- Mentorship
- Small Caseloads
- Active Listening
- Warm Welcomes
- High Staff Retention
- Youth of the Month
- Youth and Family Check-Ins
- Staff Supervision
- Family Nights
- Staff Feedback Opportunities
- Staff Engaged in Community & Schools
- Relationships are Prioritized
- All Youth & Families are Known by Name
- Staff Bio Board
- Staff Reflect Community Served

Reflection Questions

1. List additional practices that your Club does here:

Safety	
Trust	
Awareness	
Equity	
Empowerment, Voice & Choice	
Mutual Collaboration	
Connection & Growth	

2. List 3 ideas for each element that your Club could begin doing:

Safety	
Trust	
Awareness	
Equity	
Empowerment, Voice & Choice	
Mutual Collaboration	
Connection & Growth	

Meeting Agenda

Welcome (5 minutes)

- Introduce any new members to your team.
- Provide space for employee recognition through shout-outs for a job well done.

Introduction (5 minutes)

- **Topic/Meeting Purpose:**
 - Club leadership, management and youth development professionals will learn what practices they are already doing that are trauma-informed, and brainstorm ways to increase them.
- **Why:**
 - The first step to implementing the 7 Key Elements of a Trauma-Informed Club is to identify what we are already doing that is trauma-informed. Most of us are already doing these practices, but we don't realize it! The key to making any one of them trauma-informed, and to begin to create a trauma-informed Club, is to do them intentionally and consistently.

Icebreaker/Teambuilding (10 minutes)

- Ask participants what trauma-informed places feel like by asking, "Think of a place where you feel safe, welcomed, and completely comfortable? Where is that place and what makes it feel that way?"
- Allow each participant to share one at a time.

Meeting Content (20 minutes)

- **Main Points:**
 - Staff will learn the specifics of the 7 Key Elements and what practices are already part of our Club.
 - Staff will learn what trauma-informed practices we can add to make us even more effective for our youth, families, and each other.
 - To become a fully trauma-informed Club, we must practice all seven Elements intentionally and consistently. But we don't have to get there all at once. This activity will help us identify what we do now so that we can strengthen it, and what we can add in as we move forward.
- **Activity:**
 - First, individually or as a team read the 7 Key Elements of a Trauma-Informed Club.
 - Next, complete the worksheet that follows the 7 Key Elements by circling practices that you already do in your Club or Youth Center and listing any additional practices.
 - Then, brainstorm individually or as a group 3-5 things you can do for each element that will make it more intentional and consistent. You can also use this section to describe what ideas you have for improving or adding additional practices that you didn't have or hadn't thought of.
 - Finally, once everyone is done, move to Planning for Action.

Planning for Action (15 minutes)

- Discussion

- After you have completed the worksheet as a team, or individually, take a few moments to share what ideas came up for you while reading the practices.
- Ask the group the following:
 - What can we start doing today? What do we add in after today, and when?
 - What is our plan for keeping this alive and intentional?
 - How can we ensure that what we start can be consistent and permanent?
- Next Steps
 - Identify what resources you need to get started today and what you need to sustain (ex., regular meetings, more training, other team members involved, etc.)

Reflection (5 minutes)

Ask staff to evaluate the effectiveness of the meeting and their ability to apply the information learned.

Total time: 1 hour