**Greater Williamsburg Trauma-Informed Community Network**

**Trauma-Informed Agency Self-Assessment**

**Frequently Asked Questions**

**What is the GW-TICN?**

The Greater Williamsburg Trauma-Informed Community Network’s is a group of private and public organizations and individuals interested in leveraging the science of Adverse Childhood Experiences and trauma to build relationships and advance a common agenda around resilience. The GW-TICN serves individuals and families throughout Williamsburg, James City County, York County and the City of Poquoson. The GW-TICN meets regularly to share ideas and resources with the goal to support a trauma-aware, resilient, and compassionate community.

**What is the purpose of conducting an agency self-assessment?**

The GW-TICN has developed an agency self-assessment (aka “tool” or “survey”) to evaluate the needs and strengths of their community agencies. The tool will gather feedback from employees about the agency practices and policies to determine if they are trauma-informed and promote resiliency for their staff and their clients.

**Should my agency participate in the self-assessment?**

If you are a human working within an agency that provides services to humans, then yes! The GW-TICN hopes that all human serving agencies in Greater Williamsburg will practice trauma-informed care. The benefits to being a “Trauma-Informed Agency” include:

* + Recognizing and responding to the impact of trauma on mental health and physical well-being
  + Transforming agency policies and practices to reduce trauma among clients AND staff by focusing on empathy and better engagement with people.
  + Maintaining a work environment that addresses and reduces secondary traumatic stress
  + Increasing overall wellbeing and building resilience on an individual and organizational level

The GW-TICN is encouraging all community agencies to participate in the agency self-assessment. It is essential that the agency’s leadership team supports the assessment process in order to get engagement and participation from *all* agency employees.

**Who in the agency should complete the assessment?**

GW-TICN recommends all agency employees including leaders, administrative staff, volunteers, and any staff who are working with the public should complete the assessment tool.

**How does an individual complete the assessment?**

The agency self-assessment is organized into five “domains” or areas to be examined:

* Organizational policies and leadership
* Staff development and training
* Physical and supportive environment
* Engagement and consumer involvement
* Service delivery

Survey respondents are asked to read through each item and use the scale ranging from *minimally* to *fully* to evaluate the extent to which they agree that their agency incorporates each practice into daily programming. Respondents are asked to provide answers on their experience in their agency over the past twelve months. Respondents are encouraged to answer with their initial impression of the question as honestly and accurately as possible. Remember, respondents are not evaluating their individual performance, but rather, the practice of the agency as a whole. Respondents should complete the self-assessment when they have ample time to consider their responses.

**How does the assessment help with trauma-informed care?**

The information collected will be compiled to evaluate agency needs and inform future training or services the GW-TICN can facilitate or support. Data collected from agencies will be compiled for review of strengths and areas for potential growth. Data will also be compiled to inform how the GW-TICN can support the larger community.

**How do I obtain the assessment?**

Agencies should designate one point of contact, an *Agency Facilitator*, to coordinate the dissemination of the survey to the agency staff. The GW-TICN Coordinator will email the agency’s distinct survey link to the Agency Facilitator.

**When should my agency complete the assessment?**

Agencies have 60 days to complete the survey and there are two time periods this year to participate in the assessment. The first cohort of agencies will complete the assessment between September 1, 2023 and October 31, 2023. The second cohort of agencies will complete the self-assessment between February 1, 2024 and March 31, 2024. The Agency Facilitator will indicate which cohort they’d like to participate in by contacting the GW-TICN Coordinator, Shari Wiltshire at [gwticn757@gmail.com](mailto:gwticn757@gmail.com), 30 days in advance of the cohort start date.

**How does an Agency Facilitator disseminate the assessment?**

The Agency Facilitator will receive the link to their distinct Survey Monkey tool by email to distribute directly. A survey in pdf format can be provided, if needed for accessibility. It is the responsibility of the Agency Facilitator to enter the surveys completed by paper into the survey tool in order for the information to be compiled with the other data.

**How long does the assessment take?**

The survey should take a maximum of 15 minutes to complete.

**How does an Agency Facilitator ensure that everyone completes the assessment?**

Agency Facilitators are encouraged to send regular reminders to employees to complete the survey. Agencies only have a 60-day period to complete the survey so email reminders from leadership may be helpful. The Agency Facilitator can also check with the GW-TICN Coordinator to monitor the number of surveys completed before the 60-day deadline.

**Where does the data get collected?**

The United Way of the Virginia Peninsula has a paid account with Survey Monkey. Each agency's data will be stored and then compiled collectively with other TICN member agencies.

**Are the survey responses anonymous?**

Names are not collected in the survey. Participants are asked to indicate which agency they are with and there is an option to indicate department/unit.

**How do I review my agency data?**

After your cohort’s deadline the Agency Facilitator will receive a link to review their agency’s data. Agencies are encouraged to schedule a follow-up discussion to review trends and opportunities for training.

**What will the GW-TICN do with this data?**

Completed surveys from all agencies will be reviewed to help revise the GW-TICN’s Strategic Plan. In addition, the GW-TICN will identify opportunities to train professionals across the community.

**Who should I contact if I have questions?**

Contact the GW-TICN Coordinator, Shari Wiltshire, at [gwticn757@gmail.com](mailto:gwticn757@gmail.com).