Gather Information & Identify Opportunities

A trauma-informed and healing-centered assessment is critical for agencies to identify opportunities for trauma-informed and healing-centered approaches, to highlight their current practice, and to measure progress in implementation. An organization that is actively working through the Gather Information & Identify Opportunities module is at *Trauma-Responsive* on the Roadmap to Healing.

CONSIDERATIONS

» Methods to gather information:

- **External or internal**: Who will lead the process for gathering information? Someone from outside the organization (i.e., an external consultant) or staff internally?
  - External consultants can offer useful expertise and guidance. Their neutrality is a benefit when gathering information. However, there will likely be a cost associated with an external consultant.
  - Internal staff can efficiently and effectively gather information because they understand the inner workings of the agency. Lack of neutrality is a consideration as well as staff capacity. Adding this task to full workloads can be challenging.
- **Informal or formal process**: Agencies may choose to use an existing assessment instrument or conduct a more informal process.
  - Formal Process: Tools such as NASTAD's Program Readiness Assessment for TIA can also be used in this module. Other tools, such as the Trauma-Informed Oregon's (TIO) Standards of Practice, provide categories in which to consider trauma-informed and healing-centered practice, more generally.
  - Informal Process: An agency can engage in an informal process to identify opportunities for trauma-informed and healing-centered approaches and current practices. This information can be gathered during trainings, at regular staff meetings, and using comment boxes internal surveys.

» Focus areas when collecting information:

- A program within the agency (e.g., counseling or emergency assistance program)
- A location or site (e.g., mobile unit, or housing site)
- A point in time for clients or staff (e.g., agencies may focus specifically on intake or new hire onboarding)

» Ensure perspectives of persons with lived experience are incorporated into the assessment.

ACTIONS

- Identify an assessment tool that will work best for your agency. There are many to choose from:
  - NASTAD's Program Readiness Assessment for TIA can be adapted to fit all RWHAP recipient settings.
  - TIO's Standards of Practice (general use) or Standards of Practice (for health care settings)
  - Agency Environmental Components for Trauma-Informed Care can be used for a physical and emotional safety assessment.
  - Direct service providers might appreciate participating in a trauma lens exercise where trauma-informed approaches for client behaviors are identified.
- Schedule time to complete the assessment. Decide whether a workgroup will complete the assessment, or if all staff will be involved.
- After the assessment has been completed, communicate the results back to all staff.

STATE EXAMPLE
WASHINGTON

Washington State Department of Health does monthly "open forums" with their provider agencies to acknowledge any harm or potential trauma the health department can cause their sub-recipient agencies, and actively listens to the grievances brought to them by community partners.