

Fairfax County



Part of the Partnership for a Healthier Fairfax

Orientation Guide

February 2023

www.bit.ly/fairfaxTICN

Welcome to the Fairfax County Trauma-Informed Community Network! This guide was developed in spring 2018 to ensure that all new network members (we are always growing!) have same basic network history and context. We look forward to working with you!

Trauma Defined:

3 E's: Event, Experience, Effects

Trauma refers to experiences that cause intense physical and psychological stress reactions. It can refer to a single event, multiple events, or a set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as physically and emotionally harmful or threatening and that has lasting adverse effects on the individual's physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being.

SAMHSA 2014

What does it mean to be trauma-informed?

4 R's: Realize, Recognize, Respond, And Resist Re-traumatizing

A program, organization, or system that is trauma-informed:

Realizes the widespread impact of trauma and understands potential paths for recovery;

Recognizes the signs and symptoms of trauma in clients, families, staff, and others involved with the system;

Responds by fully integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, and practices; and

Seeks to actively resist re-traumatization

A trauma-informed approach can be implemented in any type of service setting or organization. -SAMHSA 2014

What is a Trauma-Informed Community Network?

Who: Professionals & community members interested in getting involved in a multi-disciplinary, multi-agency effort to implement and support Trauma-Informed Care initiatives across the Health, Housing, Human Services and Education Systems:

- ◆ County Government Staff
- ◆ School System Staff
- ◆ Professionals from Higher Education
- ◆ Non-Profit Partners
- ◆ Private Service Providers
- ◆ Community Members

Trauma Awareness and implementation of the principles of Trauma-Informed Care do not belong to any one agency or discipline. Networks across the Commonwealth of Virginia are facilitating:

- ◆ Opportunities for cross agency workforce development
- ◆ The adoption of core competencies for the child/youth serving workforce
- ◆ A comprehensive Systems of Care approach/response to trauma
- ◆ The development of a shared language across Human Services Agencies and their partners as it relates to trauma, its impact, and creating a culture of trauma-informed care

Network goals include:

- ◆ Creating a mechanism for information sharing, collaboration, and the sharing of resources
- ◆ Telling the story of Trauma-Informed efforts across our community, increasing awareness, and identifying areas that the group can collectively build upon
- ◆ Increasing the capacity of county government, FCPS, and their partners to implement the principles of Trauma-Informed Care and to build resiliency in the individuals, families and communities that they serve

You can learn a bit more about other networks across the Commonwealth by visiting the Voices for Virginia's Children website here: [Trauma-Informed Community Networks - Voices for Virginia's Kids Voices for Virginia's Children \(vakids.org\)](http://Trauma-Informed Community Networks - Voices for Virginia's Kids Voices for Virginia's Children (vakids.org))

Further information about state-level coordination and support of the work can be found here:

[Office of Behavioral Health Wellness \(OBHW\) - Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services](#)

[Office of Trauma and Resilience Policy - Virginia Department of Social Services](#)

History of the Fairfax TICN

In 2013 the Partnership for a Healthier Fairfax (PFHF) - a coalition of community members and organizations that are working together to strengthen the public health system and improve community health, conducted a Community Health Needs Assessment and published a Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP). The CHIP included goals and strategies related to promoting wellness and destigmatizing mental health. One of the teams that was formed to work on the goals of the CHIP was the Promoting Mental Health team. That group meets regularly to share resources related to mental health promotion across the county. A sub-group of that team (originally called the "trauma workgroup") came together in late 2014 with the task of developing a basic trauma awareness training for non-clinicians working with children and youth. That training was developed by the multi-disciplinary workgroup, who then moved on to explore the creation of a larger interagency team to help promote the training and other trauma related initiatives across the county.

Around that same time in the Greater Richmond area (City of Richmond, Henrico County, Chesterfield County) there was a growing network of professionals interested in trauma-informed care that was meeting regularly and calling themselves a "Trauma-Informed Community Network." Members of the Fairfax workgroup consulted with the folks from Richmond, and became the first jurisdiction to borrow the model and structure.

The Fairfax TICN held its first meeting in May 2015 and is currently one of thirty across the Commonwealth of Virginia. The TICN LISTSERV reaches over 600 people, who represent over 60 different organizations. Some of the agencies represented include:

Department of Neighborhood & Community Services
Department of Family Services
Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board
Domestic and Sexual Violence Services
Healthy Minds Fairfax
Juvenile & Domestic Relations District Court
Health Department
Department of Housing & Community Development
Fairfax County Public Schools
George Mason University School of Social Work
Fairfax County Council PTA
The Gil Institute for Trauma & Recovery
Dominion Hospital
Neighborhood Health
Northern Virginia Legal Services
Northern Virginia Family Service

Autumnleaf Group
Court Appointed Special Advocates
Cornerstones
Inova
FACETS
Formed Families Forward
Tahirih Justice Center
Shelter House
Virginia Family Preservation Services
SCAN of Northern Virginia
Voices for Virginia's Children
SafeSpot Children's Advocacy Center
Domestic Violence Action Center
Family Pass Fairfax

The Fairfax TICN meets on the first Tuesday of every other month (February, April, June, August, October, and December) from 10:00-12:00. All meetings are open for anyone to attend, though we do send out an Outlook Calendar invitation via our LISTSERV so we know generally how many people to expect at each meeting. There is a monthly e-mail message that goes out to the LISTSERV, along with occasional e-mail messages to highlight time-sensitive training or advocacy opportunities.

Much of the work is done outside of network meetings in time-limited, as-needed sub-committees, and over e-mail/phone, as well as in existing related meetings across the county. The network has many active members who may not attend network meetings, but participate in a variety of other ways, and benefit from the ongoing communication facilitated by the TICN. Examples of subgroups that have been active in the past include; the Integrated Health Collaborative, the Coalition for Trauma-Informed Housing & Homeless Services and the ACE Interface Presenter Cohort.

How is the Trauma-Informed Community Network funded?

Partners in Prevention Fund

Fairfax County Government's health and human services agencies established the Partners in Prevention Fund (PIPF) in 2006 as a collaborative prevention initiative. The PIPF is managed by the Department of Neighborhood and Community Services (NCS) Prevention Unit, under the guidance of the Deputy County Executive and an advisory team comprised of representatives from the various health and human services agencies.

The County has undertaken a multi-disciplinary effort to improve the lives of children, youth, and their families through a comprehensive system of prevention – a collaborative and integrated approach to achieving common goals. Research has shown that a prevention-oriented approach can have a positive impact on the quality of life of citizens by reducing criminal activity, drug/alcohol abuse, teen pregnancy, childhood obesity, school dropout rates, bullying, suicides, and other poor outcomes.

The following have been identified as shared outcomes for children and youth in Fairfax County. We aim to achieve these outcomes for all children and youth in Fairfax County. We also aim to ensure that disparities – whether based on race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, geography, disability, or any other circumstance – are identified and eliminated.

- Children get a healthy start in life.
- Children enter kindergarten ready to succeed.
- Children and youth succeed academically.
- Children and youth are healthy.
 - Children and youth are physically healthy.
 - Children and youth are socially, emotionally, and behaviorally healthy and resilient.
- Children and youth are safe and free from violence and injury.
- Youth earn a post-secondary degree or career credential.
- Youth enter the workforce ready to succeed.
- Youth contribute to the betterment of the community.

See: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/health-humanservices/scypt/overview-and-approach> for more information.

Thus, the PIPF was designed to leverage existing county and community resources in order to help achieve these outcomes. The PIPF funds a variety of initiatives within Fairfax County government, including pilot programs, staff trainings, and community-wide professional networks like the TICN.

The TICN has also received project specific grant funding from the Family & Children's Trust of Virginia (FACT) and from American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) dollars awarded to Fairfax County following the Covid-19 pandemic.

What drives the work?

- ◆ Individual agency and private/non-profit organization strategic plans
- ◆ Virginia State-Wide TICN Network Collaboration
- ◆ Healthy Minds Fairfax Blueprint: [Fairfax-Falls Church Children's Behavioral Health System of Care Blueprint for 2016-2019](#)

Goal 11: Trauma-Informed Care Community

- Build clinical capacity for the provision of trauma-specific, evidence-based interventions in our public and private provider communities
- Continue to build capacity for non-clinical staff to implement trauma-informed practices in their settings
- Increase public awareness of the prevalence and impact of trauma
- Develop shared screening and referral processes for individuals impacted by trauma
- Integrate the concepts of trauma-informed care into organizational culture

◆ Fairfax-Falls Church Community Children's Behavioral Health Plan 2023-2027

Key Area: System Level Change: To infuse equity and trauma-focused care through the behavioral health system for children, youth, and their families.

Goal 1: Ensuring that children's behavioral health services is seen through an equity lens.

Goal 2: Continuing to integrate trauma-informed practice into all public and private child serving agencies

- ◆ One Fairfax- the county's racial and social equity policy. Building a trauma-informed county requires an intentional focus on the historical and systemic traumas experienced by members of our community. To move trauma awareness and resilience forward in our community, we must also consider equity. <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/topics/one-fairfax>
<https://www.fcps.edu/onefairfax>

What resources does the TICN offer?

Free Training:

1. Basic Trauma Awareness (Trauma 101)

90-minute training provided upon request to groups of 8 or more at the location of their choosing. There is also an on-demand webinar version of this training for the child/youth serving workforce available on the TICN website.

2. The Trauma-Informed Supervisor

Full-day training offered to groups of 35 or more upon request at the location of their choosing. Open enrollment sessions are also available several times per year and are promoted via the TICN LISTSERV.

3. Secondary Traumatic Stress & Self Care Basics Workshop

2 hour training provided upon request to groups of 8 or more at the location of their choosing.

4. The Cost of Caring

Full-day training offered to groups of 25 or more upon request at the location of their choosing. Open enrollment sessions are also available several times per year and are promoted via the TICN LISTSERV.

5. Building Resilient Communities & Understanding Adverse Childhood Experiences

The ACE Interface curriculum, offered with support from the Virginia Department of Behavioral Health & Developmental Services, covers neurobiology, epigenetics, ACEs and resilience in a flexible format that offers a variety of options in terms of presentation length and style. Minimum audience size is based on the desired length of the presentation.

Printed Materials:

ACE's Infographics, Posters, Fact Sheets & other educational and awareness building resources.

[A Guide to Educating Children, Youth & Families about Trauma and Resilience](#)

[Using a Trauma Lens to Create Forms](#)

[Trauma-Sensitive Strategies for Direct Service Staff](#)

[A Guide to Trauma-Informed Approaches for Service Providers](#)

[Poster: Trauma-Informed Approaches for Service Providers](#)

Requests for materials can be made on the TICN website, where many of the materials can also be downloaded for printing: <http://bit.ly/fairfaxTICN>

Trauma-Informed Spaces Facility Review Checklist:

The checklist can be downloaded from the TICN website and used across service delivery sites. The TICN can provide technical assistance, to include the establishment of a cross-disciplinary team to complete the checklist on-site, and to discuss recommendations that come out of the process.

[Trauma-Informed Spaces](#)

[Facility Review Checklist](#)

Technical Assistance:

TICN members come from a variety of agencies and organizations, and are involved in system level work across the county. As agencies look to incorporate trauma-informed practices, policies and procedures into their strategic plans, etc. the TICN is available for consultation and collaboration.

What has the TICN done in Fairfax so far?

Trauma Resolution

In November 2017, Fairfax became the first county in Virginia to recognize the importance of trauma awareness in service delivery in health, human services and education. Our Board of Supervisors passed a resolution declaring Fairfax a "Trauma-Informed County."

WHEREAS, health and social science research reveals that experiences in the first few years of life can impact the biology of the human brain and body, influencing the person's physical and mental health over his or her lifetime; and

WHEREAS, chronic stress in early childhood caused by conditions such as extreme poverty; or "trauma" such as abuse, neglect, parental mental illness or substance abuse, and violence can be toxic to a child's developing brain; and

WHEREAS, the Adverse Childhood Experience Study and local studies have found a strong correlation between the number of adverse childhood experiences and a person's risk for disease and negative health behaviors. For example, a person with four or more adverse childhood experiences was 2.2 times more likely to have heart

disease, 84% of Fairfax County Juvenile Probation clients in 2015 reported having experienced at least one traumatic event, and Fairfax County youth who have experienced intimate partner violence were up to 4 times as likely to have attempted suicide as those who hadn't; and

WHEREAS, supportive, stable relationships between children and their families, caregivers, and other important people in their lives can help buffer them from the effects of toxic stress and trauma; and

WHEREAS, early intervention and prevention of toxic stress and trauma through educational, juvenile justice, criminal justice, health and mental health, and other youth-serving systems can support health and well-being; and

WHEREAS, the Fairfax County Trauma-Informed Community Network is helping prioritize these approaches and is encouraging the adoption of trauma-informed practices, as it is more effective and less costly to positively influence the architecture of a developing brain than to address poor learning, health, and behaviors later in life; and

WHEREAS, through the Children's Behavioral Health System of Care Blueprint, the county's health and human services system and its partners have committed to enhancing the community's ability to effectively identify and respond to children and families who have been exposed to trauma by implementing trauma-informed practices; therefore be it

Resolved, that Fairfax County will continue to work to take into account the principles of early childhood brain development and will, whenever possible, consider the concepts of toxic stress, early adversity, and buffering relationships, and note the role of early intervention and prevention as strategies to achieve a lasting foundation for county residents who can benefit from the adoption of trauma-informed practices and service delivery models.

2016 PIPF Annual Report (includes a summary of TICN accomplishments)

[2016 Report](#)

2017 PIPF Annual Report (includes a summary of TICN accomplishments)

[2017 Report](#)

2018 PIPF Annual Report (includes a summary of TICN accomplishments)

[2018 Report](#)

How many people has the TICN reached?

ACE Interface Presentations

2019- 373
2020 – 707
2021- 596
2022- 298

Basic Trauma Awareness Training

2015- 291
2016- 1,121
2017- 2,014
2018- 2,680
2019- 1,142
2020- 408
2021- 392
2022- 736

The Trauma-Informed Supervisor Training

2015- 60
2016- 114
2017- 115
2018- 119
2019- 190
2020- 0
2021- 80
2022- 20

Secondary-Traumatic-Stress/Self-Care Training

2016- 175 (STS/Self-Care Basics Workshop)
2017- 225 (The Cost of Caring)
2018- 138 (The Cost of Caring); 412 (STS/Self-Care Basics Workshop)
2019- 173 (The Cost of Caring); 107 (STS/Self-Care Basics Workshop)
2020- 518 (STS/Self-Care Basics Workshop)
2021- 60 (STS/Self-Care Basics Workshop)
2022- 21 (The Cost of Caring); 87 (STS/Self-Care Basics Workshop)

Trauma-Informed Spaces

2016- 8 sites reviewed

2017- 9 sites reviewed

2018- 3 education/information sessions facilitated

2019- 2 education/information sessions facilitated

Mini-grant opportunity to fund small county government projects

2020- 2 sites reviewed

Mini-grant opportunity to fund small county government projects

2021- 2 education/information sessions facilitated

Mini-grant opportunity to fund small county government and partner projects

2022- 2 education/information sessions facilitated

9 trainings – 144 attendees

Mini-grant opportunity to fund small county government and partner projects

Film Screenings

2015- 150 (Paper Tigers)

2016- 250 (Resilience)

2017- 1,596 (Resilience)

2018- 1,483 (Resilience)

2019- 768 (Resilience); 200 (Broken Places)

2020- 80 (Resilience)

2021 - 30 (Resilience)

Additionally, our printed materials (Trauma Fact Sheet, Psycho-Education Guide, etc.) have been shared widely across the county.

What can you do as a member of the TICN?

Attend network meetings to learn about trauma-informed initiatives across the county

Attend network meetings to share what is going on in your agency or organization related to trauma-informed care implementation

Attend network meetings to meet like-minded professionals and neighbors, and to identify resources to bring back to your agency or community

Develop a strategy to communicate within your own agency or organization about trauma-informed initiatives in the county

Bring printed materials to your agency, neighborhood (community centers, etc.), conferences and other settings where it makes sense to spread the word about trauma & resilience

Attend TICN trainings, and promote them to your colleagues

Help set-up trainings for audiences within your sphere of influence

Engage with other network members, and learn about upcoming events by joining the Fairfax TICN Community Page on PACEs Connection: [Home | Fairfax County Trauma-Informed Community Network \(VA\) | PACEsConnection](#)

Stay up to date on trainings, events and other information by joining the LISTSERV on the TICN website: <http://biy.ly/fairfaxTICN>

Serve on teams to help network members review their own spaces, and bring in a TICN team to review your space using the Facility Review Checklist Tool

As your role allows, advocate for trauma-informed policies at the agency, county, state and federal government levels (you will learn what those opportunities might be from attending network meetings and reading TICN communications)

Advocate for trauma-informed policies, practices and procedures within your own personal and professional spaces

Become a TICN trainer and facilitate Basic Trauma Awareness training, ACE Interface and more!

Read and learn along with other TICN members as part of the annual TICN Book Club

Acronym Guide

CASA- Court Appointed Special Advocates

CSB- Community Services Board

CSP- Coordinated Services Planning

CSA- Children's Services Act

CHIP- Community Health Improvement Plan

DFS- Department of Family Services

DVAC- Domestic Violence Action Center

FCCPTA- Fairfax County Council of PTAs

FCPS- Fairfax County Public Schools

HCD- Housing and Community Development

HD- Health Department

HMF- Healthy Minds Fairfax

JDRDC- Juvenile & Domestic Relations District Court

LSNV- Legal Services of Northern Virginia

NCS- Department of Neighborhood & Community Services

NVFS- Northern Virginia Family Service

DSVS- Domestic & Sexual Violence Services

OPEH- Office to Prevent and End Homelessness

ON- Opportunity Neighborhood

PFHF- Partnership for a Healthier Fairfax

PIPF- Partners in Prevention Fund

SAMHSA- Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration

SCAN- Stop Child Abuse Now

SCYPT- Successful Children & Youth Policy Team

STBH- Short Term Behavioral Health Service for youth

TICN- Trauma-Informed Community Network

Key Contacts

NCS Cross-Systems Prevention Unit

<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/neighborhood-community-services/prevention>
ncs-prevention@fairfaxcounty.gov
[@ffxyouththrive](https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/youththrive)

Chrissy Cunningham, Prevention Coordination Specialist

TICN Coordinator

703-324-5509, christina.cunningham@fairfaxcounty.gov

Hallie Jackson, Prevention Specialist

Trauma-Informed Spaces Project Manager

hallie.jackson@fairfaxcounty.gov

ACE Interface Master Trainer Team

[Presentation Request Website](#)

Chrissy Cunningham, Prevention Coordination Specialist

TICN Coordinator

Christina.Cunningham@fairfaxcounty.gov

Marla Zometsky, Wellness, Health Promotion & Prevention Manager

Marla.Zometsky@fairfaxcounty.gov

Fairfax County Public Schools

<https://www.fcps.edu/>

<https://www.fcps.edu/student-wellness-tips>

Lisa Phifer, SEL and Trauma-Informed Practices Specialist - lwphifer@fcps.edu

Lori Harkin Huse, School Social Work Supervisor - lmharkinhuse@fcps.edu