

# Elements of Trauma-Informed Design

## Color

- Cool colors (blue, green purple) have a calming effect
- Lighter colored rooms appear more open, less crowded, and promote feelings of safety
- Pops of color add visual interest

## Artwork

- Use landscape or nature scenes, especially if there's a lack of natural light or nature views
- Place strategically to add visual interest and provide distraction, which helps to alleviate stress and discomfort and promotes feelings of satisfaction

## Aesthetics

- Goldilocks approach—not stark and institutional, not cluttered and overwhelming
- Free of stacks of paper, boxes, and other clutter
- Clean, neat, and well-cared for vibe

## Layout

- Accessible to all
- Prevents crowding
- Preserves line of sight
- Furniture faces out from walls
- Seating is placed kitty-corner
- Separate areas for quiet vs engagement
- Furniture isn't too high to see over



## Signage

- Clear, clean, and well lit
- Well maintained (no missing letters, etc.) and up to date
- Available in multiple languages
- Both indoor and outdoor
- Provides easy to understand navigation instructions

## Plants

- Promotes connection to the natural world
- Plants are well cared for
- Dead or dying plants are routinely removed from space
- Images of plants or artificial greenery can be used in spaces that can't support growing plants

## Lighting

- Maximizes natural light and window space
- Lights don't flicker, buzz, or hum
- Uses lower level lighting when possible
- Features task lighting (controllable reading lamps) for individual choice

## Furniture

- Natural fibers and materials
- Durable and easy to clean
- Free of stains, tears, etc.
- Appropriately sized
- Modular designs
- Features enhance sense of privacy like chairs with arm rests, items well spaced, etc.