



# **Implementation of Trauma Informed Practice in Northern Ireland**

**August 2020**

**Northern Ireland Strategic  
Steering Group for Trauma Informed Practice**

## Introduction

This Briefing Paper outlines the work undertaken by the NI Strategic Steering Group for Trauma Informed Practice (formally the Regional Adverse Childhood Experiences Reference Group).

The report covers the period up to August 2020.

The NI Strategic Steering Group for Trauma Informed Practice came together in March 2018 following the adoption of trauma informed practice/adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) awareness as a strategic priority by both the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership (CYPSP) and Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland (SBNI).

Key priorities for the NI Strategic Steering Group for Trauma Informed Practice have been to:

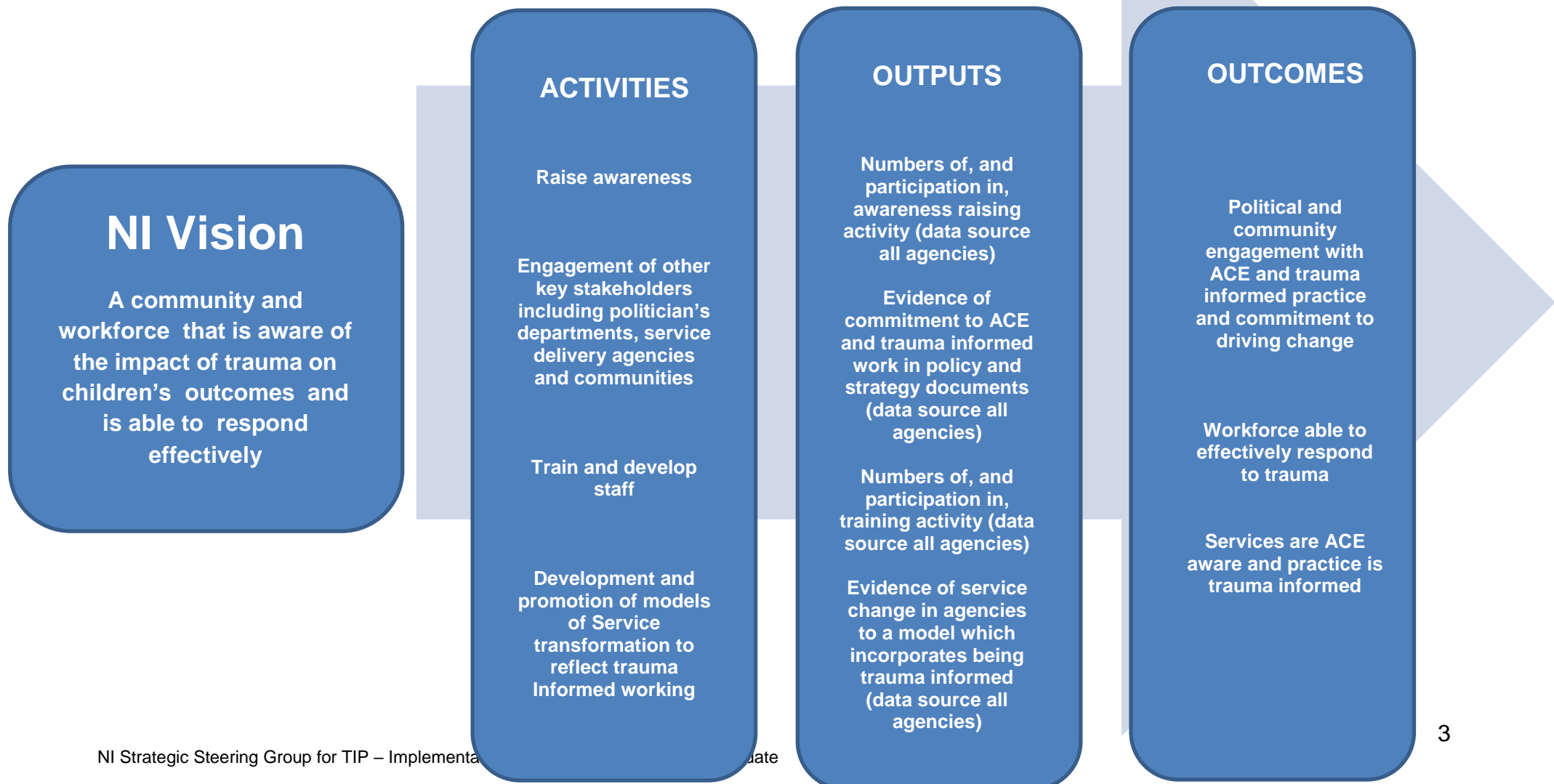
- a. actively encourage and enable collaboration and sharing of good practice on Trauma Informed approaches and
- b. share information about the implementation of trauma informed, ACEs aware initiatives across government departments and agencies.

This report sets out how awareness of ACEs/trauma informed practice has impacted on Agencies and how they have supported ACEs/trauma informed practice implementation to date.

This report is part of a regular update that will be shared by the NI Strategic Steering Group for Trauma Informed Practice as part of its commitment to sharing practice with other organisations.

The overarching Logic Model for the NI Strategic Steering Group for Trauma Informed Practice is set out below.

# Logic Model for Trauma Informed Practice in Northern Ireland



# Reports from Organisations

## Department of Health (DoH)

NI Strategic Steering Group for Trauma Informed Practice has expanded its membership to include representation from the Chief Medical Officer's and Chief Nursing Officer's Teams.

This will assist in ensuring that:-

- there is strategic oversight and direction in promoting knowledge in relation to ACEs and trauma informed practice within DoH and on a cross-Departmental basis;
- an appropriate information exchange and cross-jurisdictional learning can continue between the 4 Nations of the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland;
- knowledge in relation to ACEs and trauma informed practice can be integrated into future Policy development;
- knowledge in relation to ACEs and trauma informed practice can be integrated into qualification and post qualification training within all professionals and disciplines and on an inter-agency and multi-disciplinary basis within DoH and its Arms-Length Bodies.

## Public Health Agency (PHA)

ACEs/trauma informed practice has increasingly informed the consideration of the commissioning implications on a variety of key Public Health themes and topics including obesity prevention, smoking cessation, drugs and alcohol, early years, mental health promotion and suicide prevention. Through commissioning and partnership working the PHA will actively support investment in prevention of ACEs where possible; early intervention with children and families experiencing trauma and adversity and related recovery support and options.

The PHA has organised an ACEs/trauma informed seminar for PHA staff; ensured two staff have received Level 1 T4 Training, shared various reports and evidence papers and presented to the PHA/Local Commissioning Group and Trust Forum. In addition ACEs/trauma informed inputs will be organised across relevant key Commissioning and Procurement Teams such as that for Drugs and Alcohol and Suicide Prevention.

## **Health & Social Care Board (HSCB)**

- Resilience Documentary

Since January 2018, Locality Planning Groups have been rolling out the Resilience Documentary as a first step to raising awareness about ACEs, Trauma, Toxic Stress and Resilience.

- Between January 2018 and July 2019 the documentary was screened to 2,832 people at 58 events.
  - Range of attendees including – community, voluntary service providers, Teachers, Principals, school support staff, Social Workers & SW Students, Sure Start staff, community reps, PSNI, political reps, Drug & Alcohol Service providers, Mental Health Service providers, Behavioural Specialist & Education Psychologists, AHPs, Primary Care Teams, Midwives, FE College staff, Prison staff, CAMHS Teams, Youth Workers, Young Carers Team, parents, Locality Planning Group and Family Support Hub members and more.
  - 52 of the screenings had a discussion panel as part of the screening.
- Childcare Care Partnership developments – ACEs/trauma informed practice embedded within social and emotional development programmes and safeguarding training.
  - A small working group was established between ACEs-trauma informed practice/Signs of Safety/Building Better Futures/Think Family to begin to develop the Integrating Family Approaches Booklet bringing each of the agendas together into a practice model.
  - Be the Change Programme - some organisations have been continuing their live work since the programme in terms of policy development, HR/Governance or service/quality improvement.

## **Health & Social Care Trusts**

### **Northern HSC Trust (NHSCT)**

NHSCT have been jointly working with their HR and Psychology colleagues to ensure a consistent approach in respect of staff training and support throughout the organisation. A tiered approach in respect of training is being developed which will be rolled out throughout the organisation.

Trauma informed practice will be central to all HR policy and guidance. The aim is for the NHSCT's commitment to trauma informed practice to be central to all we do

with staff and users. A communication strategy is being developed to support this roll out.

### **South Eastern HSC Trust (SEHSCT)**

- In 2019 three staff were trained to deliver trauma informed practice, the Keeping Safe Trainer and two trainers within the Learning and Improvement Team.
- Publication of Trust training directory, guiding staff to resources to develop knowledge:
  1. NI Social Care Council learning pages, which has direct resources and then links back into the SBNI website for documents etc.  
<https://learningzone.niscc.info/learning-resources/101/adverse-childhood-experiences-and-trauma-informed-practice-across-the-lifespan>
  2. Within these pages are the links to the eLearning modules at [www.hsclearning.com](http://www.hsclearning.com)
    - 'Adverse Childhood Experiences' (Level 1) and
    - 'Developing Trauma-sensitive Practice' (Level 2) are both short learning modules
  3. Level 3 – In service 3 hour session will be delivered by CS trainers three times across the year.
- SEHSCT's Keeping Safe Trainer will incorporate the trauma informed approach into keeping safe training.

### **South Eastern HSC Trust experience: Feedback from one of the trainers**

Training that was provided to skill up our trainers was very helpful and the resources/materials have aided dissemination of learning to staff quite easily. Training is very important for promoting evidence informed practice.

The integration of the ACEs and trauma informed practice training together provides staff with an understanding of the 'whole picture' for that child and what that might mean for the child in the future.

Trainer is a strong advocate of ACEs/trauma informed practice as she has seen the benefit having this knowledge has for outcomes for young people and supporting staff.

## Suggestions:

- Benefit on focusing on supporting staff to integrate the learning from the training into practice. For example, practice sessions or workshops where staff can be supported to apply the ACEs/trauma informed practice knowledge and approach to how they understand and work with a young person;
- Integrating the ACEs/trauma informed practice approach into other training such as; pre-birth assessments, is also really beneficial.

## **Southern HSC Trust (SHSCT)**

The SHSCT has been committed to implementing a trauma informed organisation and is led by the Director of CYPS who has established a Steering Group consisting of social work, psychology, governance and training. There have been a number of initiatives across the Directorate to date:

- A comprehensive multi-disciplinary training package;
- A trauma informed Yoga programme has been rolled out across Autism services for over 12s and under 12s;
- Specialist three day training package for 20 staff consisting of 10 14+ social workers and 10 multi-disciplinary staff from Bluebell residential home for children with complex needs. This was facilitated by Jan Howarth, expert on trauma and was highly evaluated. The participants were then provided with team coaching to implement their learning into practice;
- Project Maple was established to significantly enhance the physical environment for family contact for Looked After Children. This project has been co-produced by children and young people, parents, carers, social worker and Estates. A new play area designed by the children has been created enabling much more enjoyable experience of contact families;
- A multi-disciplinary audit for all staff in Children's Services is been created to establish a baseline of staff's understanding of a trauma informed organisation and to assist in identifying those areas to target intervention/awareness raising;
- Direct work with Tom Teggart, DoH to implement the Regional Trauma Informed Framework in Children's Services.

## **Western HSC Trust (WHST)**

- DSV online training delivered to 60 practitioners.
- Overarching inclusion of the ACEs agenda in FODC Community Plan.

- Continued links with MACE Project who continued to hold Zoom meetings until very recently and their actions are still live and they are working closely with Family Support Hubs.
- Resilient communities continues to be a standing item on the Best Start in Life Steering Group - Resilient documentary as well as the training organised and delivered by Karen Triesman throughout the West.
- Establishment of ACEs/Trauma Sub Group within the Trust - looking at where the Trust are and what needs to be done in relation to training and staff awareness/care.
- Considerable work with North West Regional College on modules for their qualifications in Early Years. This has now been adopted and practised within the College, as well as the development of the Colleges own Level 4 Resilience/Trauma Aware Training for staff.
- Recommendations were made to the Chief Executive and the CMT in relation to progressing trauma awareness within the Trust.

## **Department of Education (DE)**

A legislative requirement of the Children's Services Co-operation Act is the development of the Children and Young People's Strategy (CYPS). The CYPS has been developed as the strategic framework around which all departments can deliver on the draft Programme for Government, in particular Outcome 12 'We give our children and young people the best start in life'. The potential impact of trauma and adverse childhood experiences is referenced under the 'Safety and Stability' outcome within the CYPS which was published on the 16 December 2019.

The Department of Education senior management agreed in September 2019 that the Department should seek to raise awareness among staff on both the impact of trauma and adverse childhood experiences within policy development (relevant evidence) and delivery and also within the area of staff management. Helen McKenzie and Joanna Brown from the EITP 'Be the Change' TIP/ACE Project met with the Permanent Secretary in November 2019 to outline the progress on the EITP Project with the Education Authority, CCMS across the education sector and Further Education colleges. A briefing session on trauma informed practice/ACEs was delivered to DE senior management in December 2019. Building on this it was agreed that the EITP TIP/ACE Project staff should provide an awareness raising session for DE staff in January 2020.

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) also undertook bespoke Tier 1-2 training for the Inspection staff as part of the TIP/ACE Project. This training is now



part of the safeguarding induction training for all new ETI inspectors. It is planned that ETI inspectors will undertake the on-line training as refresher training.

Three staff from DE and ETI took part in the EITP 'Be the Change' Leadership Programme. As part of this programme there are a number of 'Live Work' projects one of which is to raise awareness in all departments about trauma informed practice/ACEs with policy teams when reviewing current policy and the development of new policies, programmes and services and have an awareness of trauma informed practice/ACEs appropriately included within staff policy development training. It is also proposed that the need for an improved and effective knowledge of the impact of trauma and ACEs should be appropriately included within procurement criteria when advertising procurement contracts for relevant programmes and services from external organisations. This work is at a very early stage.

The ETI Live Work is a planned evaluation of effective trauma informed practice across all phases of education from pre-school to further education and training. Ahead of the evaluation taking place, it is planned that a small number of settings, where trauma informed practice is well established, will be invited to present to the ETI inspectors at a corporate staff development event. Further engagement with SBNI considering sustainability and implementation of trauma informed practice within schools scheduled for September 2020, with reflection of Continuity of Learning Webinars made available to schools during lockdown.

## **Education Authority (EA)**

The Children and Young People's Services Directorate established a working group which has taken forward the following actions to support trauma sensitive practice:

1. Co-design of a training package for use with EA services initially and over time, with schools;
2. Pilot of the training material in one primary school;
3. Nomination of approximately 35-40 staff to attend Training for Trainers events to upskill staff and to familiarise them with the co-designed training materials;
4. Delivery of training to the following EA CYPS regional services:
  - a. Education Welfare Service
  - b. Child Protection Support Service
  - c. Post Primary Behaviour Support and EOTAS Senior Teachers and Advisory staff
  - d. Primary Behaviour Support and EOTAS Advisory Staff
  - e. Exceptional Teaching Arrangements - to be co-facilitated (march 2020)
5. EA representative attending the 'Be the Change' leadership course
6. EA Health & Wellbeing Strategy launched – 29.1.20
7. SBNI meeting with EA Education Directorate re trauma sensitive practice

8. SBNI/EA webinar support through continuity of learning project considering application of trauma informed practice through a multi-agency approach in partnership with EA CSSC, ETI, CCMS, NICIE specifically aimed at link officer role supporting schools across primary, post primary and special education.
9. SBNI/EA Delivery of trauma informed webinars encouraging preschools, primary and special schools to consider sustainable approach to trauma informed practice using application of SIM USD through SAMSHA's 6 key Principles, considering re-entry back into school for staff, students and families through 3 key phases, pre transition, transition and post transition. These webinars are now part of teaching and professional learning.
10. Pilot of trauma informed practice in one post primary school to commence in partnership with SBNI and CSSC.

## **Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI)**

In early 2019, Police in Derry City and Strabane District ran a pilot training package for frontline officers around ACEs and trauma informed practice. This was developed in partnership with SBNI. Police Officers were evaluated immediately prior to receiving the training, straight after and then again towards the end of 2019. The results of this proved very positive and evidenced an increased awareness in respect of ACEs and trauma informed practice. As a result of this, our Senior Executive Team agreed to roll out ACE and trauma informed training across the organisation.

District Trainers attended a number of 'Train the Trainer' events at the Police College in Garnerville and from that, training delivery was commenced across the organisation to frontline Police Officers and staff in late 2019. At present, it is hoped that by February/March 2020, all of our frontline officers and staff will have received Level 1 Training. In addition, the training in respect of ACEs and trauma informed practice has now been adopted into Foundation Training for all our new Student Officers, with the first delivery of this due in and around March 2020. ACE and trauma informed practice is also influencing our own internal practice around officer and staff wellbeing and welfare provision.

In addition, we are working to include ACEs and trauma informed practice into future design considerations for our Custody Suites. Finally, our trainers are looking at developing an enhanced Level 2 training package for Police Officers and staff in more specialist roles, such as those working in the Custody environment, Youth Diversion, Public Protection Branch and others.

## **Youth Justice Agency (YJA)**

All YJA staff across all grades have attended screenings of the resilience documentary. This served as the catalyst to engage staff in the formal development of a trauma informed practice approach across the agency. To date all staff have attended the Tier 1 SBNI Trauma Awareness Training with a focus on ACEs. This has helped shape and inform the discussion around how YJA develop trauma informed practice within the agency as well as enabling staff to reconnect with trauma informed approaches using the LENS framework.

Woodlands Juvenile Justice Centre has also taken practical steps to soften both the entrance into the centre and the family meetings rooms, by incorporating a trauma informed approach into the design considerations.

YJA has also set up an internal Trauma Informed Practice/ACE Reference Group that involves both senior management and representatives from Forensic CAMHS. This group is leading on a three year action plan to ensure YJA is a trauma informed organisation.

As part of this action plan Tier 2 training to be offered to all front line staff, incorporating and extending beyond that offered by SBNI's Tier 2 package. A small task and finish group is currently developing this.

YJA are also in the process of developing a trauma informed supervision model which will be piloted within this business year.

Two YJA staff have also completed the Tier 3 SBNI leadership programme.

Part of our ongoing commitment to trauma informed practice also includes the roll out of Tier 1 training to our reparation providers and volunteers. It is expected that once embedded this will become standard practice.

YJA is also represented on the Justice Sub-Group to co-ordinate with our partners in criminal justice in developing a seamless approach to trauma informed practice; it is anticipated that where appropriate, training will be delivered across the justice sector. An out working of this group has been the development of a trauma informed practice screening tool to be used for practice and policy documents.

## **Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS)**

NIPS has made a commitment to become a trauma informed organisation. All levels of the organisation have embarked on training and awareness raising in relation to trauma informed practice/ACEs. In addition to training for new recruits, staff who spend considerable periods of time with people in our care, many of whom have complex needs and a significant number of ACEs, have been prioritised for SBNI

Tier 1 training with some staff offered Tier 2 training. Four senior Governors undertook the “Be the Change” leadership programme in 2019/20 and presented to the SBNI Regional Conference in March based on the four pillars of the Prisons 2020 Continuous Improvement document, i.e. People, Services, Infrastructure, and Partnerships.

NIPS has ensured that new strategies and policies are viewed through a trauma informed lens. In November 2019, NIPS launched its new Strengthening Family Links strategy with a specific focus on trauma informed practice which was well received by service users, partner agencies and academics. NIPS has also worked with PBNI and PSNI to develop a joint ‘Trauma Screening Policy Tool’; this was developed in March/April 2020 but has not been presented to the Criminal Justice Steering Group due to the pandemic.

## **Probation Board for Northern Ireland (PBNI)**

All PBNI staff have had the opportunity to complete introductory trauma awareness training which included a focus on ACEs. Training all staff enables PBNI to have a common language on which all training and development can be based.

All new PBNI staff are required to complete the SBNI eLearning course, within which ACE awareness is central, as part of their initial induction programme.

In order to progress this agenda, the PBNI’s internal Trauma-Informed Practice Working Group, which meets regularly, is currently designing the next stage of training delivery. The focus of this training will be practical in terms of skill development and reflection on practice, for practitioners working directly with service users subject to statutory supervision. This will be a two day training package tailored specifically for Probation Officers. It anticipated that this will be rolled out in 2021. PBNI continue to work with our criminal justice partners to develop practice and share learning and research plans across the services.

Two PBNI managers have completed the SBNI Tier 3 leadership programme management training course and they continue to play a key role in the development of the organisations position on trauma informed practice as part of PBNI’s internal working group.

PBNI staff continue to be involved in research collaborations with a number of universities (including Queens’ University Belfast, the University of Ulster and the University of Southern Denmark) in efforts to increase the empirical evidence-base, incorporating trauma informed practice into the Criminal Justice System. For example, a recent piece published in the Journal of Interpersonal Violence (June 2020) found that exposure to multiple traumas was associated with increased likelihood of perpetrating injurious and sexual violence when other covariates were

controlled for. Another publication found that having experienced troubles related trauma was linked to both general and violent reoffending. These findings will continue to inform practice throughout PBNI and the wider Criminal Justice System.

This work will continue to be progressed through the NI Strategic Steering Group for Trauma Informed Practice and PBNI's internal working group.

## **Local Government (SOLACE)**

Since 2017, the SBNI has engaged with Local Government across Northern Ireland to raise awareness of ACEs, create momentum of trauma informed practice through consistency of language and approach and more recently through the EITP Trauma Informed Practice Project to support local authorities who have expressed an interest in developing their own local council implementation plan.

Below is a short overview of the progress and activity that has been implemented through Local Government and primarily across Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council, Belfast City Council and Newry, Mourne and Down District Council since April 2018:

### **1. Political Briefing Sessions across Northern Ireland (September/October 2018)**

During the infancy of the Strategic Steering Group for Trauma Informed Practice five political briefing sessions were hosted by the Steering Group across each of the five HSC Trust geographical areas of which included; Belfast City Council, Lisburn and Castlereagh Council, Newry, Mourne and Down District Council, Derry City and Strabane District Council and Mid East Antrim Council. Collectively 49 local councillors and 12 MLAs attended these sessions. These sessions provided an opportunity to build momentum of the ACE agenda through influencing the strategic direction within local government. It also provided a space to share the potential impacts of childhood adversity and how we can address trauma that individuals maybe experiencing through our understanding of what has happened to them.

### **2. All Party Children and Young People's Group Briefing Sessions (October 2018 and October 2019)**

The Strategic Steering Group for Trauma Informed Practice hosted an information session with the All Party Children and Young People's Group in Stormont in October 2018. The event was chaired by the All Party Children and Young People's Group's Co-Chairs Steven Agnew and Claire Hanna. The briefing session enabled representatives of the NI Strategic Steering Group for Trauma Informed Practice to share the evidence that informs ACEs and trauma informed practice, the strategic context for embedding trauma informed practice

in Northern Ireland and an overview of the most substantial programmes leading the delivery of the ACE agenda regionally; EITP Trauma Informed Practice Project and the CAWT Cross Border MACE Project.

A second briefing session was hosted by the EITP Trauma Informed Practice Project on behalf of the NI Strategic Steering Group for Trauma Informed Practice took place in the Long Gallery in Stormont on 1 October 2019 and was sponsored by the Chair of the All Party Children and Young People's Group, Chris Lyttle. Local Councillors, MLAs and MPs joined this session to consider how their understanding of the ACE agenda could shape and influence the Programme for Government deliverables and strategy developments across each Department.

### **3. Presentation to the Heads of Community Planning Forum (November 2018)**

In November 2018, the EITP Trauma Informed Practice Project was invited to present at the regional Heads of Community Planning Forum that was hosted in NICVA, Belfast. Representatives from across each council area were present at this meeting and the project team shared opportunities to embed the ACEs/trauma informed practice agenda across local councils through their understanding of building resilient communities and the opportunities of implementation within community planning. Since this presentation a number of local councils approached the EITP Trauma Informed Practice Project with an interest in exploring the ACEs agenda and working with the project through pilot of the projects workforce development programmes of which included Belfast City Council, Newry, Mourne and Down District Council and Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council.

The EITP TIP Project has agreed that beyond ACEs/trauma informed practice training they will revisit creating trauma informed psychological safety through community planning and local government neighbourhood renewal. In addition the project will also explore how we apply our understanding of trauma associated with childhood adversity within commissioning and funding. A meeting will take place between the SBNI, Neighbourhood Services Managers of Belfast City Council and the Belfast commissioning lead in HSCB to begin this process.

### **4. Local Government Safeguarding Network (June 2019)**

It has been accepted that being ACEs aware and recognising and responding in a Trauma Informed way can ultimately strengthen our safeguarding processes across organisations. The EITP Trauma Informed Practice Project team have worked across a number of statutory and non-statutory organisations to embed key learning components of the Level 1 and Level 2 training programmes within safeguarding training for staff and volunteers.

In June 2019, the EITP Trauma Informed Practice Project attended the Regional Safeguarding Network meeting to enhance existing knowledge of ACEs and trauma informed practice through our understanding of local council safeguarding issues. Safeguarding leads and designated officers present at this meeting reflected on the relevance of the material shared during the presentations and the fitting nature of the training content with existing local council safeguarding training. The current local council safeguarding training is mandated through Volunteer Now's licenced Keeping Children/Adults Safe Programme. In order to embed the ACEs/trauma informed practice learning components within this programme has required liaising with Volunteer Now to update the licensed Keeping Safe Programmes and associated training materials.

In February 2019, the EITP Trauma Informed Practice Project hosted a workshop with the Volunteer Now training coordinators and a number of Keeping Safe Training Coordinators from across the HSC Trusts, local councils and community/voluntary sector. The content of the Keeping Safe Programme is currently under review to incorporate the ACEs/trauma informed practice learning components and the updated materials are likely to be disseminated to all Keeping Safe Trainers including local council safeguarding leads in late 2020.

From this, Newry, Mourne and Down District Council and Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council piloted the revised Keeping Children Safe training programme with elements of the Level 1 ACEs Awareness training included (NI ACE Animation and Trauma LENS). The feedback from these sessions was very positive and the content continues to be included in these council areas safeguarding training.

Belfast City Council's Safeguarding Compliance Manager recently developed a training programme for Belfast City Council to enable direct Level 1 and Level 2 training across the council service teams including; within safeguarding training, community planning and community development teams. Delivery of this programme will begin as services resume post COVID.

A short introduction to the ACEs and trauma informed practice training was delivered by the EITP Project Team in November 2019 to the Ards and North Down Safeguarding Panel. This short introductory session encouraged attending staff to attend further training sessions to further their learning and implementation into practice.

## **Sustaining workforce development opportunities across Local Government**

### Trauma Informed Practice Train the Trainer Programme

Nine staff from across four local councils attended the projects 2-day Train the Trainer programme in March 2020 however due to COVID-19 planning and delivery of these programmes has been delayed. Each participant has committed with the support of their manager/organisation to deliver a minimum of three training sessions for staff.

The four council areas that have completed the Train the Trainer programme are; Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council, Belfast City Council and Newry, Mourne and Down District Council.

### E-learning Programmes

The EITP Trauma Informed Practice Project has developed an online Level 1 ACEs Awareness programme and a Level 2 Trauma Sensitive Approaches to Practice Training programme. These programmes have now been embedded within the NMDDC and ABC Councils intranet learning platforms and will go live in autumn 2020 for staff.

## **Strategic Implementation of Trauma Informed Practice**

Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council and Newry, Mourne and Down District Council attended the Trauma Informed Be the Change Leadership Programme on behalf of SOLACE. During this leadership programme the SOLACE representative had the opportunity to collaborate with other senior leaders from across health and social care, education, justice, the community and voluntary sector and housing. During the six month programme local government focused their organisational change live project work within human resources through strategic policy and planning and staff wellbeing this is now being expanded across the organisation's staff wellbeing support services as a model of practice.

Two significant developments which have been underway since Mr Scott's participation on the leadership programme which has enabled a trauma informed response to policy development and practice have included;

- **NMDDC and ABC Domestic and Sexual Abuse Workplace Policy** which provided a trauma informed response to support staff who may require special leave, wage advances or changes to their work practice. The policy also enabled human resources and occupational health staff to support staff going through traumatic experiences relating to abuse in the workplace.



- **Developing Compassionate Leadership through staff safety and wellbeing approaches to practice**

Through insight visits and collaboration workshops local government and education bodies (CCMS and CSSC) identified the need to enhance compassionate leadership and human resource provisions to improve the safety and wellbeing of their workforces. Similarly to CCMS and CSSC, the local government representative wished to develop a compassionate leadership model of practice that could be applied within the services within local government in ABC Council and NMDDC that will create a culture and climate of empathy for service users, ensure staff are safe and well and to develop a growth mind set across management structures that encourage trauma informed strategic policy development and planning. Through careful planning, staff engagement through focus groups with human resources, occupational health and union representatives and through the preparation of an online wellbeing survey for staff across all disciplines the council anticipate developing a better understanding of the experiences and needs of their workforce.

The outputs of this study will enable the councils to develop a longer term implementation plan that will;

- promote a greater self-awareness across the workforce;
- enhance the emotional intelligence of the senior management teams;
- creating a culture of care within HR and occupational health to support those experiencing vicarious trauma as a result of the adversity their service users are experiencing; and
- to explore the safety of staff within the workplace and service users entering council facilities through the understanding and application of trauma physical environments literature and guidance provided through the EITP TIP Project. This could be placed effectively within community planning teams.

## Considerations Going Forward

The NI Strategic Steering Group for Trauma Informed Practice will consider:

- Taking part in NICS Live to continue the awareness raising in this important issue.
- Distributing electronic copies of the promotion materials, infographics and any toolkits developed in order to support those organisations who are continuing to further the use of ACEs in their work.
- Sharing relevant information and data/research from the 5 Nations ACE Public Health Network to inform relevant learning.