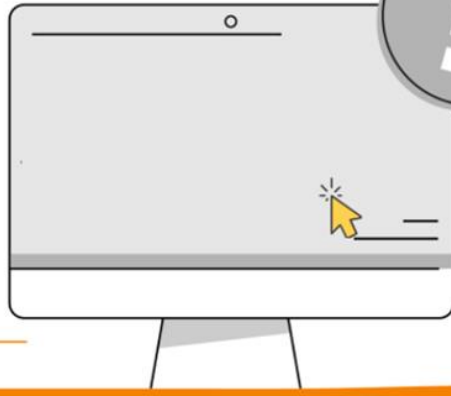


**Linking
Systems of Care**
for Children and Youth Project



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Linking Systems of Care Montana

Trauma-Informed Approaches

Participant Workbook

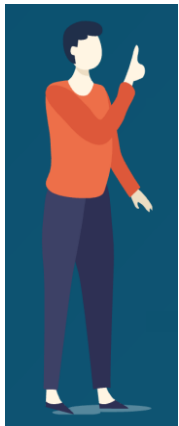
Module 3



Module 3

Trustworthiness and Transparency

Learning Objectives



- Explain how transparency and trustworthiness from systems are critical to support trauma victims' safe decision-making, empowerment, and healing.
- Identify and address barriers to trustworthiness in your agency/organization.
- Assess and improve existing policies and procedures to enhance transparency and trustworthiness both within organizations themselves and in working with youth victims and families.
- Develop strategies to provide, with transparency, the information youth victims and their families need, especially regarding confidentiality, mandated reporting, and referrals.

What do the terms mean to you?

Think for a few moments about what the terms transparency and trustworthiness mean to you. Jot down a few words or concepts that come to mind when you think about the terms.

Transparency

Trustworthiness

Key Definitions

For our purposes, we will be defining the terms transparency and trustworthiness as:

- ***Transparency:***
 - Clear, written, understandable information about expectations, policies, services, legal and ethical requirements/constraints
 - Has as a goal-informed decision-making by victims and families
 - Incorporates strategies to reach people who are in crisis, frightened, or overwhelmed and face difficulty in processing information
 - Explaining the “why”
 - Includes both internal transparency within an organization and external transparency in services, communication, and interaction with victims and families (the former supports the latter)

- ***Trustworthiness:***
 - Consistency in provision or services and other practices
 - Predictable expectations
 - Respectful, non-judgmental approach
 - Maintaining appropriate boundaries
 - Accessible grievance process and appropriate response
 - Effective referrals to outside providers, with support in making linkages

Research Findings

Why do transparency and trustworthiness matter?

Helpful Resources

- Judith L. Herman, Recovery from Psychological Trauma, Psychiatry and Clinical Neurosciences, Vol. 52, Issue S1 (September 1998)
- Lefevre, et al., “Building Trust with Children and Young People at Risk of Child Sexual Exploitation: The Professional Challenge,” The British Journal of Social Work, Vol. 47, Issue 8 (Dec. 2017)

What are some negative consequences for survivors and families when systems are not transparent and trustworthy?

How does this endanger victims, especially from marginalized and vulnerable communities?

Achieving Transparency: Effective Disclosure Statements

Child Thrive MT Disclosure Statement

Purpose:

You are being asked to allow your child to participate in therapeutic counseling with Child Thrive MT. We are committed to providing professional mental health counseling to children in compliance with all Federal and Montana regulations and guidelines. This INFORMED CONSENT is in accordance with those regulations and guidelines.

The following information is designed to help you in making thoughtful decisions regarding your child's therapy. Your signature affixed to this document constitutes a binding agreement.

Confidentiality:

Information will be held in confidence, and will not be released without your written consent, with the following exceptions:

Safety: If a client is in danger of harming self or others, disclosure will be made to the emergency contact on file, as well as necessary authorities.

Mandatory Reporting: If abuse or report of a crime committed against an elderly person or a minor is disclosed then it is required by law to report the information to the necessary authority.

Professional Consultation: A client case may be presented to other mental health counselors.

Legal Mandate: In select cases, counseling records may be subpoenaed.

Your rights:

Records: You have the right to know the content of your child's record and I have the right to provide you with the complete records or a summary of their content.

Release of Records: If requested, I can release any part of your child's records on file to any person you specify. I will tell you when you make your request whether or not I think releasing that information to that agency or person might be harmful.

Termination: You may terminate your child's therapy with me at any time. I have the right to terminate therapy as well.

Acknowledgment of Disclosure:

I have read a copy of this disclosure statement and understand the information and agree to the terms set forth in it.

Client Name (Print): _____

Client Signature: _____

Date: _____

Clinician: _____

Date: _____

What would youth/families find confusing? Troubling?

Can those elements be changed?

Can you explain them in a way to alleviate concerns?

Mandated Reporting

- Legally mandated reporting policies are written in clear and understandable language.
- Legally mandated reporting policies are reviewed with families at the beginning of service delivery.
- Staff receives training about legally mandated reporting policies upon hire and annually thereafter.

Disclosure Statements

- Explain how information may be used and shared without permission:
 - for referral to treatment and services
 - for abuse and neglect reports and investigations
 - to family or others involved in care
 - with other government programs
 - in court proceedings
 - to avoid harm to self or others

- Explain the youth's rights:
 - to review information maintained
 - to receive an accounting of disclosures of information
 - to file a complaint or report
 - Explain roles and responsibilities and process regarding:
 - various staff members' status as mandated reporters
 - the grounds for reporting
 - what will happen if a report is made
 - how to obtain information and get questions answered
 - Avoid:
 - discussing only what will be shared with others—should describe the type of information that would be kept confidential
 - relying on the disclosure statement as a one-and-done effort: verbally reinforce the information on a regular basis, as warranted
 - Examples:
 - “If you tell us how you feel about your family or friends, we will not share that with your parents or other.”
 - “But there is always a risk that other group members may repeat what you say in a group meeting.”
 - “If you tell us or we learn that you are in immediate danger of hurting yourself or another, we are obligated to inform someone who can help you.”
-
-
-

Achieving Transparency: Strategies to Consider

Confidentiality

- Confidentiality policies are written in clear and understandable language.
- Confidentiality policies are reviewed with families at the beginning of service delivery and each time a request to share confidential information is requested.
- Staff receives training about confidentiality policies upon hire and annually thereafter.

Building trust: Identifying Challenges, Exploring Solutions

What aspects of your work with victims and families present the greatest challenge to building trust?

In what areas are their expectations most challenging for your program/agency to meet?

Achieving Trustworthiness: Strategies to Consider –

Clear Communication

- Staff uses a standard script or approach to explain program services, expectations, and limitations.
- Written materials about program services are accessible for all youth and families regardless of literacy level or language.
- Informed consent is reviewed and obtained prior to the initiation of services.

Boundary Violations

- The organization has a clear policy related to boundary violations that is provided to all staff, as defined by the organization or the discipline’s ethical code or licensure requirement.
- Family and youth are readily provided information about boundary violation policies and procedures. This may be disseminated to youth and families through a “Consumer Bill of Rights,” which details procedures for filing a grievance.

Helpful Resources

- Focus on Ethics. Professional Boundaries in Early Childhood Education – <https://www.naeyc.org/resources/pubs/yc/dec2020/professiona-l-boundaries>
- Client Relationships and Ethical Boundaries for Social Workers in Child Welfare – https://www.socialworker.com/feature-articles/ethics-articles/Client_Relationships_and_Ethical_Boundaries_for_Social_Workers_in_Child_Welfare/

Provision of Services

- Appointment times are honored and necessary changes and exceptions are readily communicated.
- Service hours and locations are developed to meet the needs of the families and youth served.
- Staff is reliable in following up with additional information, referrals and other services.

LSOC Montana Organizational Trauma-Readiness Self-Assessment

If your organization does a good job in this category, please provide an example of the mechanism used to accomplish this principle.

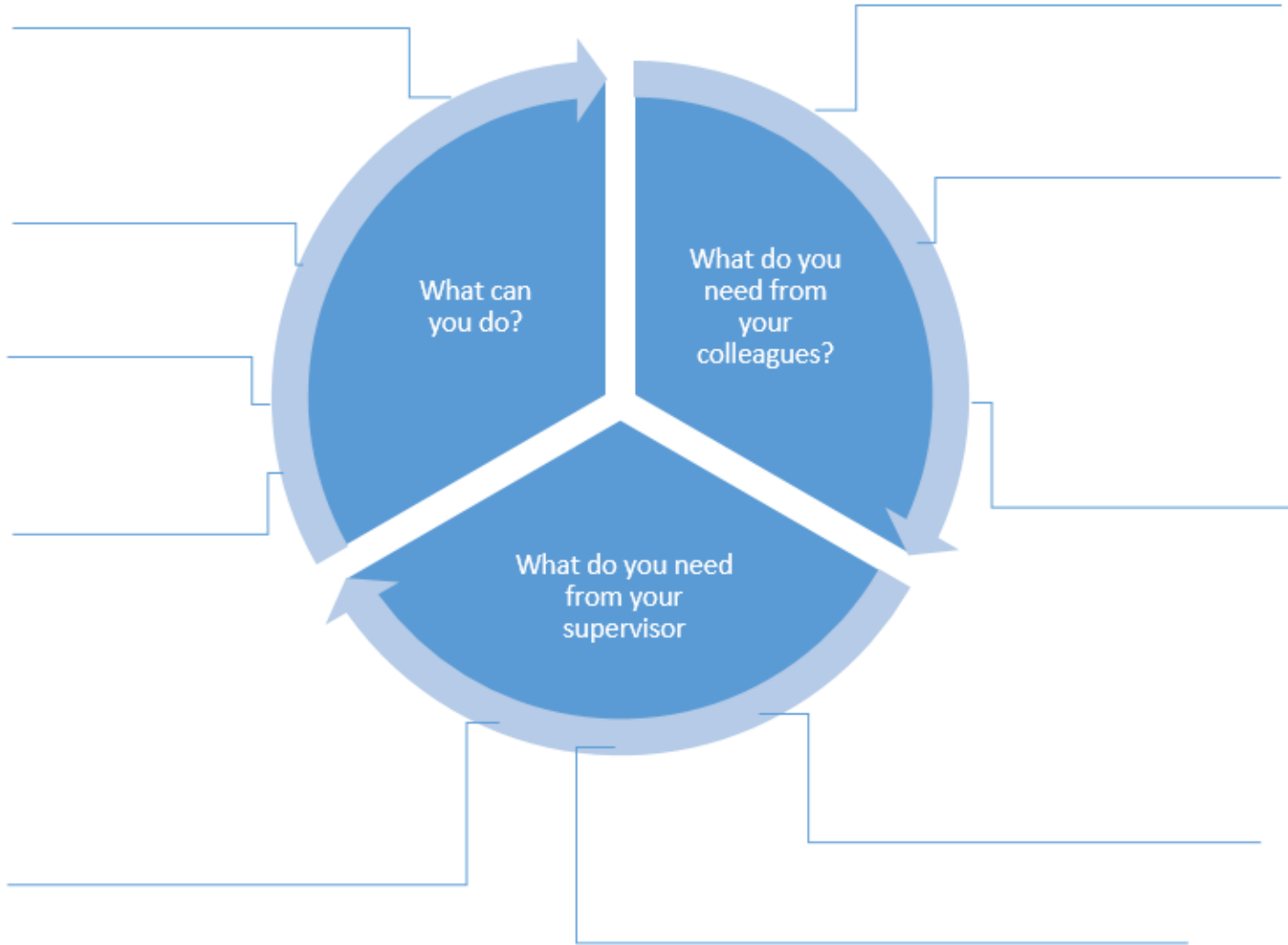
What could be different in your organization for a ranking one number higher?

What is the next step to increase rankings in this category?

Document the next steps your organization will take.

Individual Action Planning

Zone of Control



Test your knowledge



Question 1

One element found in our definition of transparency is clear, written, understandable information about expectations, policies, services, legal and ethical requirements/constraints.

True

False

Question 2

Some elements of trustworthiness include:

- A. Consistency in provision of services and other practices
- B. Predictable expectations
- C. Letting youth know that everything they tell you is confidential and you'll never share it with anyone else
- D. All of the above
- E. A and B

Question 3

Disclosure statements generally do not have unintended consequences because they are signed by the client.

True

False