

Support for Trauma-Informed Schools Summit Worksheet

This worksheet accompanies the REL Appalachia Cross-State Collaborative to Support Schools in the Opioid Crisis (CCSSOC) *Action Agenda to Support Students and Educators Experiencing Trauma*. The Action Agenda includes four overarching strategies; within each strategy the Action Agenda identifies high-priority needs and provides specific and meaningful actions that researchers, educators and mental health service providers, and family and community stakeholders can take to address community concerns, accelerate support, and focus resources equitably on combatting the consequences of trauma in school settings, ultimately improving the behavioral, social-emotional, and academic outcomes of all students.

You can use this worksheet to identify high-priority needs in your context and plan next steps to address those needs, including identifying strengths you already have and challenges you may face. The exhibits on pages 4–13 present high-priority needs that can be addressed by the strategies in the Action Agenda. After reviewing those needs, please follow the steps below:

Step 1: Planning

- Identify the highest-priority need in your context. List this need at the top of table 1.
- Complete table 1 by identifying the strengths you bring and challenges you may face in addressing this need, as well as the stakeholders you will need to partner with to address the need.

Step 2: Implementation

- Within the identified high-priority need, review the action steps under the role most aligned with your position.
- Select one action step and list it at the top of table 2. Complete table 2 to create an individualized action plan to guide your implementation of the specific action.

Table 1: Identify high-priority need

Need: _____

| Planning <i>How ready am I to address this need?</i> | |
|---|--|
| Strengths: What and who do I already have in place to address this need? | |
| Challenges: What are potential challenges to addressing this need? What structural and historical factors might be barriers to overcome when addressing this need? | |
| Key players to involve: Who will I collaborate with to address this need? Are there certain voices missing from the planning process? | |

Table 2: Identify an action step

Action: _____

| Implementation | | |
|---|---|--|
| <i>What are the steps I need to take to complete this action?</i> | | |
| Next steps | Immediate (within the next month) | |
| | Medium-term (by the end of the school year) | |
| | Long-term (in the next three years) | |

Exhibit A. High-priority needs and corresponding actions for strategy 1: Implement practices and programs that address student and educator trauma, and evaluate implementation and outcomes

| High-Priority Need: School-based practices and programs that are effective in addressing the social, emotional, and behavioral consequences of trauma for students and educators. | | | | |
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| Importance | Researcher Actions | Educator and Mental Health Service Provider Actions | Family and Community Stakeholder Actions | Equity Considerations |
| Due to limited resources, it is important for schools to help identify and invest in strategies with evidence of effectiveness that will benefit students and educators from their communities. | Evaluate school-based trauma-informed practices and programs for students and educators at each tier of MTSS using rigorous and credible scientific methods to build out the menu of evidence-based practices and programs accessible to school staff. | Partner with researchers to identify promising practices at each tier of MTSS, shape research questions, and frame the data collection, analysis, and findings with attention to diverse populations and contexts. | Ask for practical information about the evidence base for school practices and programs and whether the programs have evidence of effectiveness for different student and educator populations. Participate in evaluation studies of practices and programs. | Design evaluation activities to identify systemic, sociocultural, and political inequities in access to and benefits from the practices and programs. For example, some groups may have biased influences over decisions made by political bodies, such as school boards. Incorporate community and family voice and input into research and evaluation planning. Include minoritized groups or those who are not typically represented (e.g., students who identify with multiple cultures) in data collection, interpretation, and dissemination. |

High-Priority Need: Practical information on how to implement evidence-based practices that address trauma to maximize the benefits to students and educators.

| Importance | Researcher Actions | Education and Mental Health Service Provider Actions | Family and Community Stakeholder Actions | Equity Considerations |
|--|--|---|---|---|
| <p>Evidence needs to be informed by practice and translated to actionable steps for practitioners, including information about cost and implementation, and presented in ways that professionals and family and community members with diverse backgrounds and expertise can understand and use.</p> | <p>Examine fidelity of implementation, dosage, cost, and sustainability of evidence-based practices to assess their viability and associated benefits.</p> <p>Translate research findings for diverse audiences and contexts for practical application.</p> <p>Create tools (for example, rubrics) to document the core components, conditions, and practices that support fidelity of implementation and positive student and educator outcomes, as well as those factors that create barriers or biases in accessing programs and practices at the school and classroom levels.</p> <p>Partner with practitioners to provide technical</p> | <p>Partner with researchers to implement evidence-based practices and programs in practicable and sustainable ways for your school community.</p> <p>Help to translate evaluation results and implications to actionable and feasible solutions for your local contexts.</p> <p>Document implementation of practices to promote sustainability.</p> | <p>Ask for information about the practicality of implementing evidence-based practices and programs in your local context. For example, inquire about time and effort required of caregivers/families.</p> <p>Advocate for effective and culturally inclusive approaches to address trauma that meet the needs of and produce meaningful outcomes for all students and educators.</p> | <p>Include minoritized groups in the design and development of technical support products and dissemination.</p> <p>Consider how different communities will access research and evidence, and tailor outreach and support.</p> <p>Consider your school and/or client populations and engage different groups in conversations (e.g., focus groups, PTA meetings) about their perspectives, needs, and experiences with relevant programs and practices.</p> |

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| | support and disseminate resources that build understanding of how to assess evidence and evidence-based practices. | | | |
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Exhibit B. High-priority needs and corresponding actions for strategy 2: Create well-coordinated and data-informed systems of supports for students and educators experiencing trauma

| High-Priority Need: Data-informed approaches to identify and monitor student and educator needs and disparities in access and support. | | | | |
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| Importance | Researcher Actions | Education and Mental Health Service Provider Actions | Family and Community Stakeholder Actions | Equity Considerations |
| <p>The systematic collection and use of data on student and educator well-being and traumatic stress can support early detection and intervention for trauma and uncover disparities in access to support and services.</p> | <p>Help school communities document and monitor program implementation as well as characteristics and outcomes of students and educators experiencing trauma with appropriate and accurate methods and easy-to-use tools, including valid and reliable assessments to identify traumatic stress for both students and educators.</p> | <p>Implement schoolwide approaches for the use of implementation and outcomes data. Identify appropriate tools to routinely collect and analyze data on student and educator needs as well as services and interventions provided. Provide professional development to build staff capacity to use data and evidence to inform practice as well as apply practices that maintain individual privacy and rights to informed consent.</p> | <p>Understand and ask questions about the types of data collected in schools and how they are used, and participate in regular data collection activities, such as parent surveys of school climate and culture.</p> <p>Learn about rights relevant to data collection and procedures used to maintain student and family privacy. Insist on transparency, including access to summary results over time, to support community trend-monitoring.</p> | <p>Use data collection, analysis, and reporting methods that minimize racial and cultural bias and are adequate in identifying the strengths and needs of students and educators from diverse backgrounds and cultures.</p> <p>Disaggregate data by student subgroup to identify potential disparities in instructional, disciplinary, and other behavioral practices and access to services.</p> <p>Consider the need for changes in practices and policies, in addition to individual student and educator interventions.</p> |

High-Priority Need: Support for schools in selecting trauma-informed practices and programs that meet student and educator needs, account for contextual factors, and adhere to school resource and capacity constraints.

| Importance | Researcher Actions | Education and Mental Health Service Provider Actions | Family and Community Stakeholder Actions | Equity Considerations |
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| <p>To address individual and schoolwide student needs, schools need to select programs most likely to maximize benefits while leveraging their resources, matching their context, and meeting student and educator needs identified from valid, reliable, and unbiased data.</p> | <p>Assist practitioners in selecting trauma-informed practices and programs by considering the characteristics of student and educator subgroups within practitioners' communities, internal and external mental health resources, costs, and the cultural inclusivity and sensitivity of approaches.</p> | <p>In selecting trauma-informed practices and programs, assess current needs, efforts, and resources, and select practices and programs that best fit local needs and context and have the strongest level of evidence.</p> | <p>Support schools in gaining a deeper understanding of the strengths and needs of students and educators, to help identify what practices and programs best match your school community.</p> | <p>Consider the varying challenges that different and multiple populations within school communities face. For example, while many students might experience trauma related to the opioid epidemic, minoritized students might also experience trauma related to racism and/or other forms of discrimination.</p> <p>For children living in poverty, certain programs or practices may not be suitable or appropriate, even if they are evidence-based, and collaborations with family and community stakeholders to identify other approaches may be needed.</p> |

| High-Priority Need: Clear roles and responsibilities, and coordination mechanisms for school staff responding to trauma. | | | | |
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| Importance | Researcher Actions | Education and Mental Health Service Provider Actions | Family and Community Stakeholder Actions | Equity Considerations |
| A coordinated system of supports—one that connects various school-based services, staff, and intervention tiers—requires a clear understanding of roles, responsibilities, and decision points, as well as strong communication. | Examine the implementation and impact of referral, coordination, and communication systems that support comprehensive and cohesive systems of trauma-informed support. | Create communication, coordination, and referral protocols that ensure seamless and comprehensive supports at all levels of intervention intensity for students and educators experiencing trauma. | Confirm roles in the delivery of trauma-informed practices and programs and ask how to access information, stay involved, and get help when needed. | Consider the strengths that different members of the school community bring, and assign roles that empower staff, families, and community members—especially those from minoritized backgrounds. Use efficient, effective, and inclusive strategies to communicate with and involve all communities, such as through parent liaisons, elders, faith-based partners, and other cultural/community ambassadors. |

Exhibit C. High-priority needs and corresponding actions for strategy 3: Build the capacity of school staff to implement trauma-informed practices and programs

| High-Priority Need: Training and coaching for all school staff in implementing trauma-informed practices and programs. | | | | |
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| Importance | Researcher Actions | Education and Mental Health Service Provider Actions | Family and Community Stakeholder Actions | Equity Considerations |
| The knowledge, capacity, and buy-in of all school staff is essential for implementing trauma-informed practices and programs. | Partner with institutions of higher education, professional associations, and teacher mentorship programs to develop, implement, and evaluate training and professional development programs to support the adoption of trauma-informed practices and policies. | Ensure all school staff (including administrators, school counselors, teachers, resource specialists, nurses, bus drivers, cafeteria staff, janitorial staff, aides, and other support staff) participate in routine and ongoing professional development for implementing trauma-informed practices and policies; provide tools and coaching supports for continued learning, practice, and improvement outside of formal training. Regularly review and update training and support to maximize relevance to the school community (i.e., consistent with the needs, culture, and existing school initiatives and practices). | Identify and share how schools can leverage the strengths, resources, and assets of your diverse community to prepare and support educators and educators-in-training. | As part of training, explicitly address the role of implicit bias in influencing perceptions and decisionmaking around the identification of trauma needs and the implementation of trauma-informed practices and programs. |

High-Priority Need: Practices and programs to support educator self-care and well-being, and mitigate secondary traumatic stress (STS).

| Importance | Researcher Actions | Education and Mental Health Service Provider Actions | Family and Community Stakeholder Actions | Equity Considerations |
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| <p>To engage and involve educators in supporting students experiencing trauma, school leaders must support educators' well-being and address their STS.</p> | <p>Assist practitioners in selecting well-being practices and STS interventions that are evidence-based and culturally inclusive.</p> <p>Evaluate the implementation of practices and programs provided to educators and the associated benefits to educator health and well-being.</p> | <p>Provide structured support and protected time for educators and other school staff who address student trauma to engage in self-care and building their professional network, such as by establishing a wellness program, providing professional development on self-care and well-being practices, and helping staff monitor possible STS symptoms.</p> <p>Review data on educator retention, turnover, attendance, and burnout to identify potential patterns and disparities in educator wellness; use the data to inform educator support activities.</p> <p>Identify community partners to whom you can refer educators for targeted or intensive support.</p> | <p>Suggest culturally responsive and inclusive ways to support educators' well-being.</p> <p>Spend time in classrooms, with educators, and encourage schools to implement educator wellness initiatives.</p> <p>Support educators in connecting with community providers to promote their health and well-being and address potential STS.</p> | <p>As requested or as appropriate, create inclusive and safe spaces for educators to share their experiences of trauma and find support in each other, while reducing the risk of retraumatization.</p> <p>Ensure that teachers from minoritized backgrounds feel safe and supported within the school community.</p> <p>Support an environment that destigmatizes educators who seek support for their own well-being and mental health.</p> |

Exhibit D. High-priority needs and corresponding actions for strategy 4: Engage partners in addressing student and educator trauma

| High-Priority Need: Partnerships to bring trauma expertise and services into schools. | | | | |
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| Importance | Researcher Actions | Education and Mental Health Service Provider Actions | Family and Community Stakeholder Actions | Equity Considerations |
| <p>By collaborating with other sectors in the community, school staff can increase their capacity and resources and contribute to positive impacts on a range of student and educator outcomes.</p> | <p>Support practitioners in assessing needs and mapping resources to identify partners and engagement strategies that are necessary and appropriate for meeting the needs of students, educators, and families.</p> <p>Examine factors that support successful collaboration and sustainable partnerships to provide trauma-informed supports for students and educators.</p> | <p>Form effective school-community partnerships to support the delivery of services to students and educators, especially services that require specialized knowledge, such as cognitive behavioral therapy.</p> <p>Clarify roles and responsibilities with identified partners and develop a partnership agreement that includes plans for communication, coordination, and data sharing.</p> <p>Develop an efficient and effective referral system so that community partners can offer complementary expertise and services that are vital to trauma-informed support, such as substance misuse and physical health interventions.</p> | <p>Collaborate with schools to identify potential partnerships, such as with local employers or social services, that can enhance services and outcomes for educators and students.</p> | <p>Establish clear expectations between partners about the use of culturally inclusive practices.</p> <p>Identify partners that represent and have experience working with your school populations.</p> |

| High-Priority Need: Empowerment of families to share their voices and engage in trauma-informed practices and programs. | | | | |
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| Importance | Researcher Actions | Education and Mental Health Service Provider Actions | Family and Community Stakeholder Actions | Equity Considerations |
| Families provide important cultural and contextual information to shape the delivery of trauma-informed services, and family engagement extends trauma support from school to home. | Identify promising and evidence-based family engagement strategies, and support schools in applying those strategies to trauma-informed practices and programs. | Invest in understanding the assets of families and your community and the vital role they can play in supporting students and the school. Engage families in developing shared understanding, language, and goals to support trauma-informed practices. Connect families experiencing trauma with community service providers to extend support beyond the school. | Engage in planning for trauma-informed practices and policies for the whole school and for individual children. Provide advice about powerful and culturally meaningful approaches to strengthen children’s coping skills and resilience. | Develop a strengths-based approach to addressing trauma, with an emphasis on understanding the assets of families and communities—particularly those from minoritized backgrounds—and the vital role they can play in supporting students and the school. Conduct targeted outreach to invite and facilitate all families’ engagement. |