

NC Department of Health and Human Services
DPH Women, Infant and Community Wellness Section

Trauma-Informed Practices: Enhancing Your Clinic's Physical Environment

Jessica Johnson, MPH Reproductive Justice Coordinator
Naisha Coley, MPH Reproductive Health Program Consultant

June 27, 2024



What is your "go to" magazine in a waiting room?

Some of our old school favorites include Southern Living, Ebony, Real Simple, O Magazine, Seventeen, and Red Book. And who could forget Highlights?

Place your answer in the chat along with your name and agency.

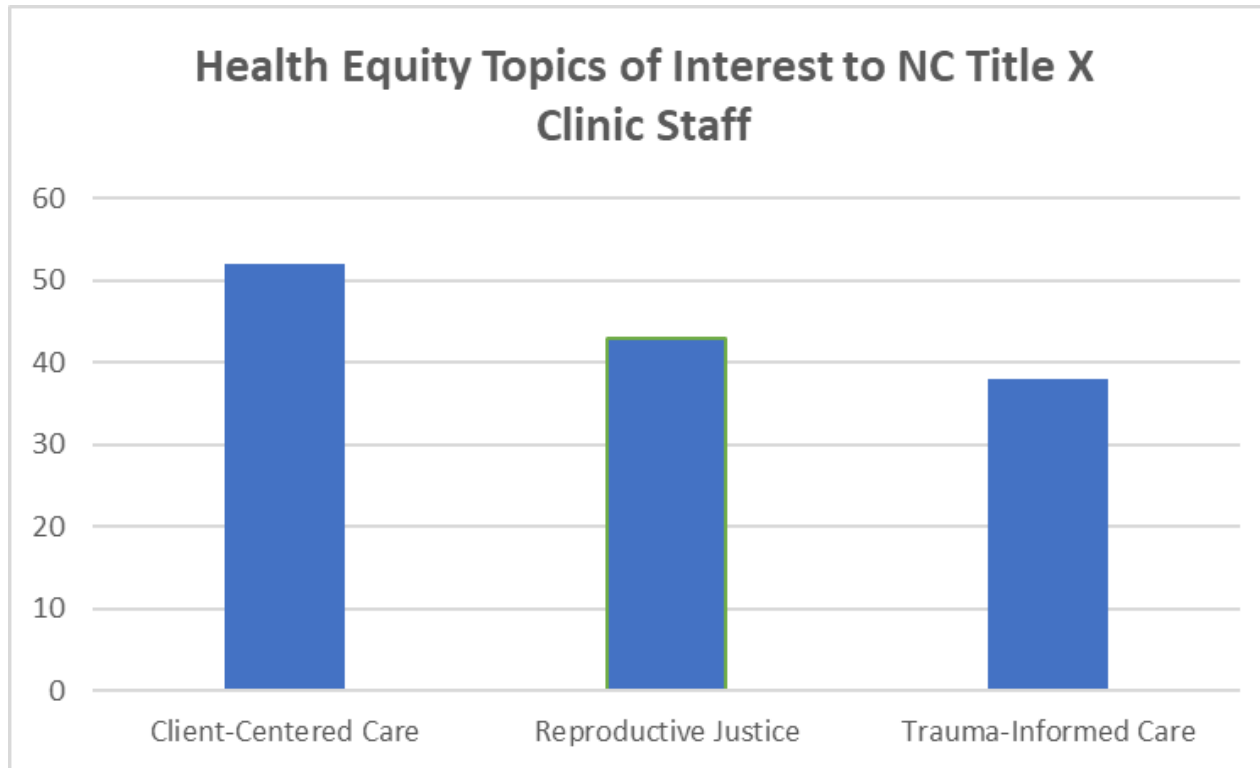
Trauma-Informed Care (TIC)

- Seeks to realize the widespread impact of trauma and understand the paths for recovery.
- 70% of adults in the United States have experienced some type of traumatic event at least once in their lives.
- For some marginalized groups, this percentage is higher.
- Important to implement universal precautions in health care settings to avoid re-traumatization.



To do: Take a look how the [Family Tree Clinic of Minneapolis](#) incorporates trauma-informed design in their clinic, connecting patients to art and nature.

Clinic Assessment Survey Results



Trauma-Informed Agencies:

- Understand the wide-spread impact of trauma and potential paths for healing
- Recognize signs and symptoms of trauma in staff, clients, family, and others involved with the system of care
- Respond by integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, and practices
- Actively resists re-traumatization

A trauma-informed organization addresses trauma not only for clients, but also for staff

Reproductive Health National Training Center's (RHNTC) Trauma-Informed Toolkit

- **Organizational Assessment:** Assess organizational trauma-informed approaches
- **Governance and Leadership:** Create an organizational culture that supports trauma-informed and equitable care
- **Policy:** Develop policies and procedures that support an organization-wide trauma-informed approach
- ➡ • **Physical Environment:** Create a responsive environment
- **Engagement and Involvement:** Engage and involve people receiving services and people with lived experience
- **Cross-Sector Collaboration:** Collaborate with community organizations and referral partners that provide client-centered services
- **Screening, Assessment, and Treatment Services:** Ensure that counseling and clinical services are trauma-informed
- **Training and Workforce Development:** Provide ongoing training and comprehensive support for all staff to provide trauma-informed services
- ➡ • **Progress Monitoring and Quality Improvement; and Evaluation:** Monitor and evaluate progress and conduct quality improvement processes focused on trauma-informed care (Note: This section aligns with two SAMHSA domains)
- **Financing:** Ensure that efforts to implement principles of a trauma-informed approach are adequately financed

Why a trauma-informed physical environment?

- Every environment we enter has a profound impact on our state of well-being, happiness, and mental health.
- Use elements of trauma-informed design to promote a sense of well-being and trust that opens the door to mutually beneficial outcomes and healthy client and provider relationships.
- With small tweaks, we can create welcoming spaces that emphasize safety and privacy.



To do: Check out the way the [Family Tree Clinic](#) creatively uses space, artwork, and layout to provide additional privacy.

Important Elements of Trauma-Informed Design

Color

- Choose cool colors that have a calming effect

Layout

- Accessible to all
- Preserve line of sight

Plants

- Connect people to the natural world, which can reduce stress and pain and improve mood

Lighting

- Natural light can make rooms appear less crowded
- Lower levels of illumination can reduce stress

Furniture

- Durable, easy to clean
- Arrangement should promote safety and privacy

Artwork

- Create visual interest with detail
- Less is more

Check In Desk and Waiting Room

Small, manageable steps to help improve patient experience

- **Post Confidentiality Information in Waiting Rooms**
- **Electronic HIPPA/Consent Forms/Surveys**
- **Various Seating Options**

Exam Room

Small, manageable steps to help improve patient experience

- Sound machines can help ensure patient/staff interactions are confidential
- Ensure staff wear clearly displayed, bright name tags with preferred pronouns
- Inclusive Language Display/Media Materials
- Foreign language/ASL interpretation services

What would you change?

Example of a "non trauma-informed" space from
Your Experiences Matter.

What feels more trauma-informed?

Example of a trauma-informed
clinic space from *Your Experiences
Matter*.

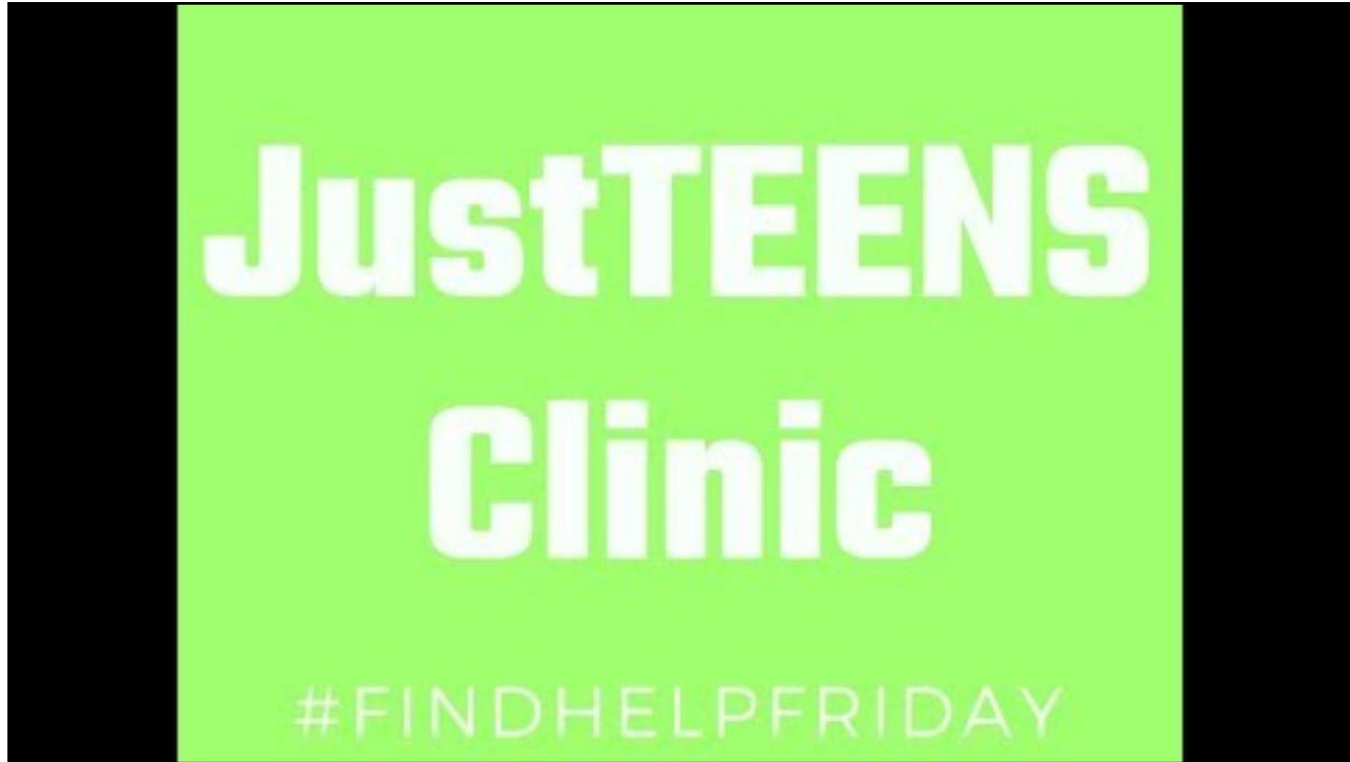
Benefits of Meaningful, Trauma-Informed Practice Special Populations

Implementing trauma-informed activities provide opportunities for agencies to:

- Engage individuals from **underrepresented groups (people of color, youth) special populations** (LGBTQIA+, I/DD (intellectually/developmentally disabled)) that experience disparities
- Individuals from these groups can **improve** their ability to communicate about the delivery of family planning services



Agency Highlight: Guilford County Division of Public Health



**Welcome Jala Foster, Ashley Gunnell, and
Jennifer King-Fairley**

Quality Improvement

How to integrate this work into your Community Education/Engagement/Quality Improvement Plan (CEQ)

Strategy/Goal	Implementation Activities	Person Responsible/ Tools
To increase patient satisfaction of clinic environment and Family Planning (FP) services to 85% or above for Fiscal Year 24-25 .	<p>Plan: Improve Clinic Environment, implement Trauma Informed strategies</p> <p>Do: Administer patient satisfaction survey quarterly to gauge patients' comfortability, views on clinic environment & FP services</p> <p>Study: Review survey results (or previous year) to determine areas of improvement in clinic.</p> <p>Act: Implement physical changes; Trauma Informed practices such as sound machines;</p>	<p>FP Nurse, Community Health Team</p> <p>Patient Satisfaction Survey</p> <p>RHNTC Clinic Environment Assessment</p> <p>RHNTC TIC Assessment Tool (Physical Environment Domain)</p>

Quality Improvement

How to integrate this work into your Community Education/Engagement/Quality Improvement Plan (CEQ)

Strategy/Goal	Implementation Activities	Person Responsible/ Tools
To increase patient satisfaction of clinic environment and Family Planning (FP) services to 85% or above for Fiscal Year 24-25 .	<p>Plan: Improve Clinic Environment, implement Trauma Informed strategies</p> <p>Do: Administer patient satisfaction survey quarterly to gauge patients' comfortability, views on clinic environment & FP services</p> <p>Study: Review survey results (or previous year) to determine areas of improvement in clinic.</p> <p>Act: Implement physical changes; Trauma Informed practices such as sound machines;</p>	<p>FP Nurse, Community Health Team</p> <p>Patient Satisfaction Survey</p> <p>RHNTC Clinic Environment Assessment</p> <p>RHNTC TIC Assessment Tool (Physical Environment Domain)</p>

Evaluation Information



<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/X5K567P>

Resources



Trauma Informed Toolkit

Trauma Informed Assessment Tool for Title X Agencies

Clinic Environment Assessment Tool

Tips for Maintaining Patient Privacy and Confidentiality

Reproductive Health Branch Resources

Trauma-Informed Reproductive Health Care -- Practical Pearls and Pitfalls [Slides](#) [Webinar Recording](#)

Family Planning Patient Satisfaction Survey