

# TRAUMA-AND-VIOLENCE-INFORMED APPROACHES TO EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS TRAINING WITH YOUTH

Social Research and Demonstration Corporation

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## Trauma-and-Violence-Informed approaches to employment and skills training with youth

Trauma- and violence-informed (TVI) approaches aim to reduce the harmful effects of trauma and create environments that promote growth and development. Youth who have experienced trauma face many persistent barriers to employment. Systems and services that are not trauma-informed can exacerbate its effects and prevent youth from seeking out, participating in, or benefiting from employment and skills training programs, resulting in further marginalization and poorer outcomes generally.

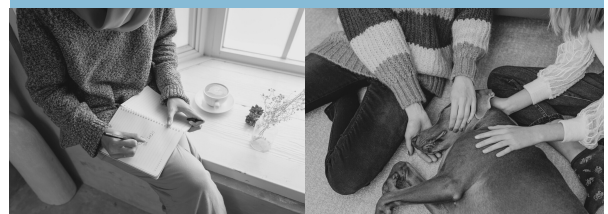
Employment and other services need to understand the foundational principles of a TVI approach to create environments that minimize the potential for re-traumatization and maximize potential for empowerment and skill building. In this way, TVI approaches have potential to benefit everyone, especially marginalized populations.

### What is trauma?

Trauma is both the experience of, and a response to, an overwhelmingly negative event or series of events that impede an individual's ability to cope. Traumatic events can involve a single experience, or enduring repeated or multiple experiences. Regardless of the type, traumatic events generally have three characteristics :

- It was unexpected
- The person was unprepared
- There was nothing the person could do to stop it from happening

Experiences of trauma and violence are pervasive in society. Trauma can affect anyone.





## Core principles of TVI

The four key TVI principles can be implemented at different levels of service delivery:

1. Understand trauma and violence, and their impacts on peoples' lives and behaviours
2. Create emotionally and physically safe environments
3. Foster opportunities for choice, collaboration, and connection
4. Provide a strengths-based and capacity-building approach to support client coping and resilience

## Embedding TVI approaches to youth employment and skills training

Implementing TVI principles in youth employment services means embedding them structurally across organizations, throughout services and programs, and in individual providers' practice. TVI approaches can vary depending on the context and setting of program delivery as well as the needs of participating youth. The core principles of a TVI approach can be applied by service providers across a range of sectors and client groups, whether or not they have experienced trauma. TVI services create enabling conditions to help individuals build resilience and enhance skills, promoting better outcomes for all who participate.



## Service delivery model for a TVI approach for employment and skills development with youth

The following service model provides a set of principles, strategies, and guidelines for programs in developing and implementing their services. The model articulates the foundational TVI principles for designing employment and skills training programs for youth, and depicts a proposed TVI approach across program elements. Recognizing the wide diversity within employment and skills development programs across Canada, the model is not meant to be prescriptive or linear, but iterative – while providing some universal elements to embedding TVI principles within programs.

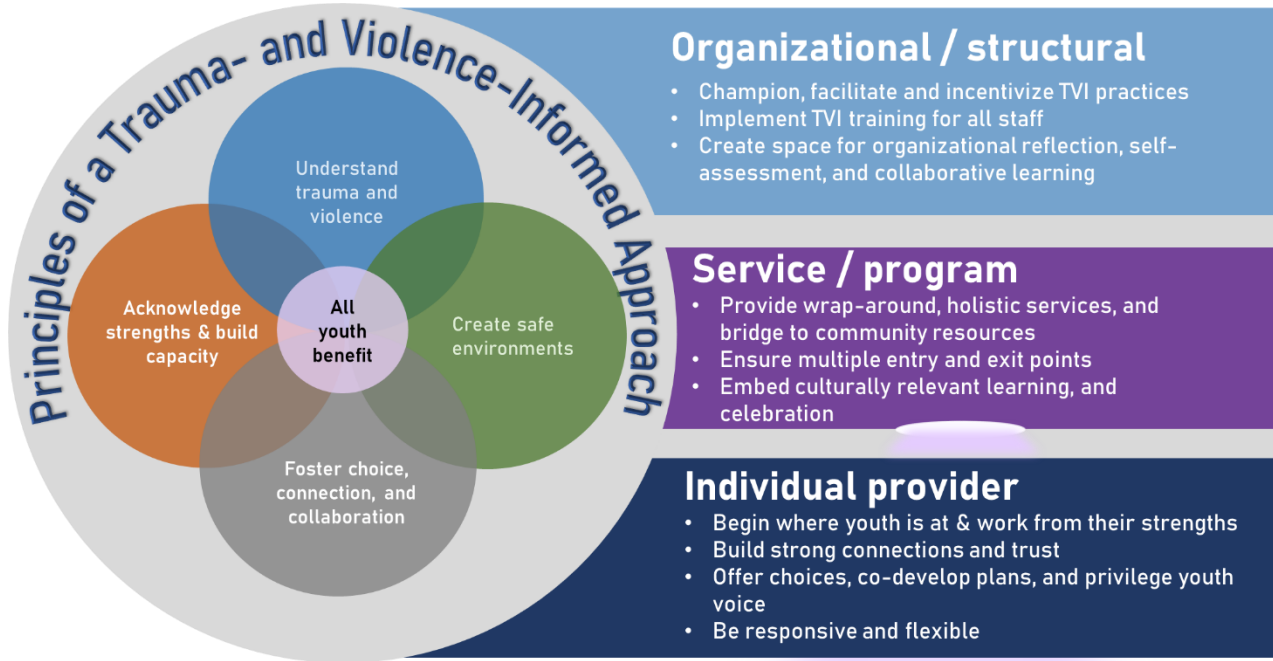
### References

[Trauma-informed: The trauma toolkit](#) – Klinik Community Health Centre

[Trauma and violence-informed approaches to policy and practice](#) – Government of Canada

[Trauma-and violence-informed care: A tool for health and social service organizations and providers](#) – EQUIP Health Care

# TVI SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL FOR EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT WITH YOUTH

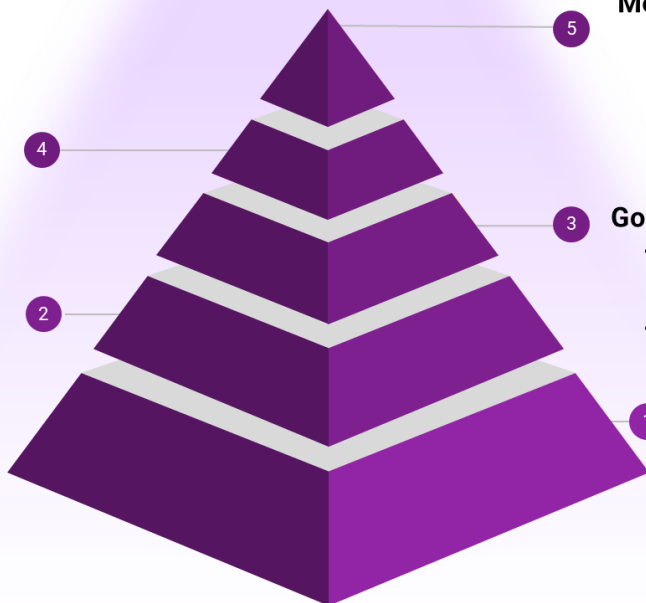


## Skills and employment support programming

- Facilitate applied and culturally relevant learning opportunities in emotionally and physically safe environments
- Integrate core program elements with modifiable components to meet specific individual and group needs

## Assessment and intake

- Listen actively to privilege youth voice in expressing their needs, challenges, and priorities
- Begin with a light assessments focused on building rapport and trust, and to gauge strengths and readiness



## Measuring and celebrating success

- Measure and track progress towards youth's own goals throughout program, as well as other holistic, learner centered outcomes
- Celebrate youth skills, strengths, and successes, incorporating families and communities, and cultural celebrations where possible

## Goal setting

- Foster youth empowerment by providing opportunities for choice and self-determination of youth's own priorities, goals, and interests
- Allow flexibility and adaptability as youth learn more about themselves to support growth in personal accountability, self-awareness, and self-confidence

## Building community and industry partnerships

- Build collaborative community partnerships to meet youth's basic needs and to ensure availability of holistic, wrap-around supports
- Engage with employers and industry partners open to working with youth, building their understanding of trauma and offering strategies