

MÉTIS TRAUMA INFORMED TOOLKIT



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WHO ARE LES FEMMES MICHIF OTIPEMISIWAK

Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak is the recognized voice of Métis Women across the homeland. Operating in a democratic, transparent and fiscally accountable manner, we influence public policy and decision-making related to the concerns and aspirations of Métis women at all levels of Indigenous and Canadian government. A secretariat of the Métis National Council since 1999, LFMO was incorporated in 2010.

The mission of Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak is to ensure that Métis women from across the homeland are safe, connected, empowered and have the capacity to work with other Canadian and Métis organizations to help create the conditions for healthy, vibrant and productive communities throughout the Métis Nation.

We are guided by six strategic goals:

1. Build a strong, successful and responsible organization whose voice is heard throughout the Métis Nation;
2. Be caretakers of traditional knowledge and the unified voice of Métis women;
3. Ensure that the perspectives of Métis women are included in community economic development;
4. Foster culturally appropriate learning environments and life-long learning to improve the educational outcomes for women and all Métis learners;
5. Help Métis people lead healthier lives and help create the conditions for healthy and vibrant communities and
6. Advocate on behalf of Métis women.

Under the guidance of LFMO's National President, we conduct regular meetings for the Board of Directors, hold general meetings and provide a communication mechanism between and among Métis Women and the Government of Canada.

Métis women are the heart of the Métis Nation, and they were equal partners in the development and life of Métis communities. They were fully engaged in the political, social, and

The Women of the Métis Nation / Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak want to promote spaces in community that set us up for success. Help us to create safety, understand the impacts of trauma and intergenerational trauma, and help us to communicate, share and heal in the most effective ways possible.

Being trauma informed also supports a movement of Lateral Kindness, an antidote to Lateral Violence. Being trauma informed encourages us to access our compassion, empathy and kindness in the work we do with each other.

Being strength-based means looking through a lens that focuses on our resilience, the ways that we are positively contributing, our strengths, our skills, the good things about ourselves and others.

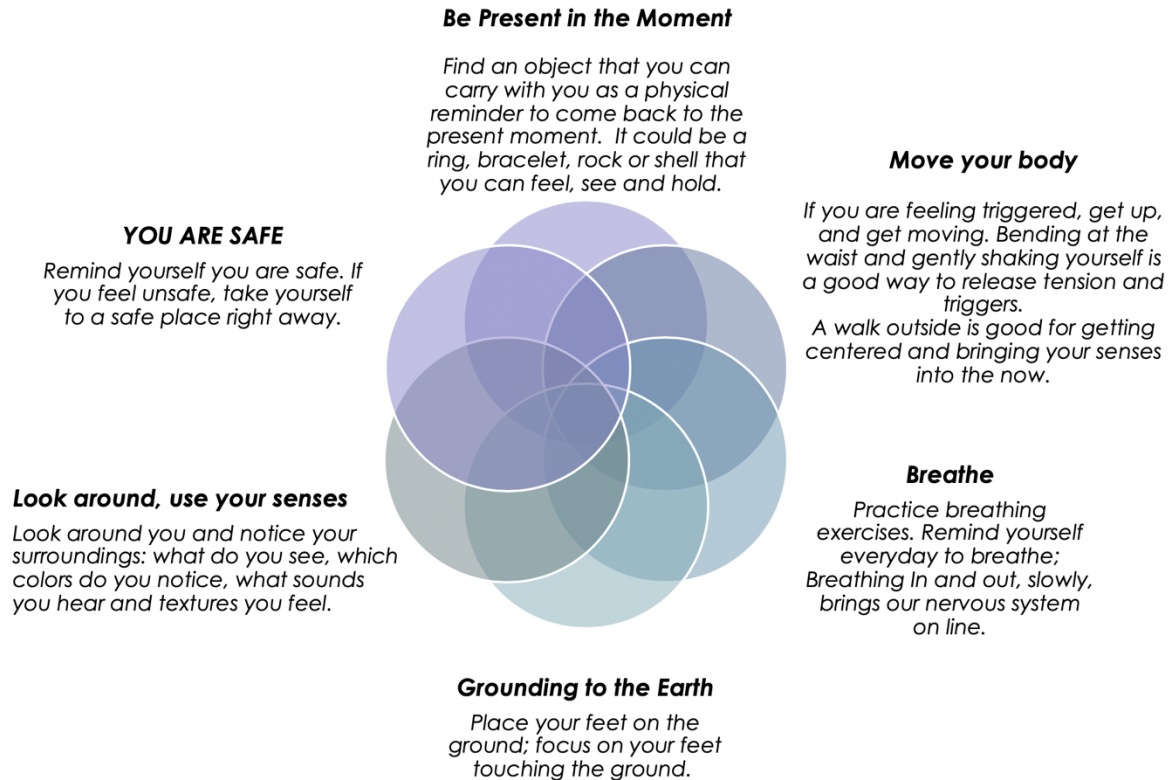


TRAUMA INFORMED APPROACH: MANAGING TRIGGERS, STAYING GROUNDED, AND BEING IN THE PRESENT MOMENT

Some of the information in this toolkit may be triggering in nature, or bring up uncomfortable feelings or thoughts. We would like to ensure that you have some tools for grounding, getting centered in case you become triggered reviewing some of this material. Part of our responsibility in being trauma informed in the work of LFMO, is to make sure that we avoid as much as possible re-traumatizing people who have experienced violence. We want to ensure that people impacted by trauma reviewing this toolkit are encouraged to have tools for grounding, emotional safety, and to have internal supports in mind.

WHAT DO YOU PRACTICE TO SHAKE OFF UNCOMFORTABLE FEELINGS, AND FEEL CENTERED AND CALM?

Here are some ideas for grounding in the moment, should you experience triggers.



SELF-SOOTHING

Grounding using Self-Soothing can be utilized to get our rational mind and our nervous system “back on line”. When we are triggered into a trauma response, our biological response is focused on safety and preserving life. When we are aware of what is happening, we can choose to implement self-soothing and grounding tools to calm our nervous systems, and move through the trigger or trauma response. When we are activated into an intense emotional response, we tend to think less rationally. Believing our thoughts at this point can escalate emotions and create reactions that we may later regret.

You may ask yourself, why am I so reactive?

Remember:

You are not crazy, stupid, worthless or incapable. You have survived terrifying, overwhelming, irrational, denigrating, neglectful, dangerous circumstances. You are brave, resilient, smart, worthy, capable, strong, skilled, talented and beautiful.

An easy and accessible way to self-soothe is to repeat a calming and affirming statement. Here are some choices of calming, affirming statements:

- *I know this feeling is painful but it will pass.*
- *I know the intensity will pass if I care for myself right now*
- *Breathing in, I am calm*
- *Breathing out, I am strong enough to care for this feeling*
- *I have the strength and resources to handle this situation*
- *I have a team of support around me*
- *Examining the facts right now, of this present moment, I am safe.*

What are some affirming statements that you can use to ground when your nervous system is activated, or you are triggered?

TRAUMA INFORMED PRINCIPLES

This toolkit aims to provide basic trauma informed principles and knowledge for Michif women and their families in our communities. Michif / Métis people have intergenerational, family, and individual experiences of trauma. Being trauma informed can improve relationships, community, service delivery, governance, and help us collectively behave and lead in ways that support resilience, wellness, and strength.

“Traumatic events happen to all people at all ages and across all socio-economic strata in our society. These events cause terror, intense fear, horror, helplessness, and physical stress reactions. The impact of these events does not simply go away when they are over. Instead, traumatic events are profound experiences that change the way children, adolescents and adults see themselves and their world.

From the time the trauma occurred, people with post-traumatic stress experience it in all stages of their life and in their day-to-day activities – parenting, working, socializing, attending appointments, and interpersonal relationships.

Trauma survivors are at risk of being re-traumatized in every social service and health care setting. This is due to a lack of knowledge about the effects of traumatic events and a limited understanding of how to work effectively with survivors. When re-traumatization happens, the system has failed survivors and leaves trauma survivors feeling misunderstood and unsupported, which perpetuates a damaging cycle that prevents healing and growth. This can be prevented with basic knowledge and by considering trauma-informed language and practices.” (Klinik Community Health Centre, Winnipeg, Manitoba, 2013)

Since 2018, LFMO has engaged with Métis Women, youth, Elders, and community members in engagements that helped us to explore the foundations important in a Métis specific Trauma Informed approach.

Foundations of a Métis-specific Trauma-Informed Approach Were Identified As:

- Understanding of Métis diversity, culture, history and impacts of colonization
- Understanding the unique historical and contemporary impacts of colonization on the Métis
- Understanding the basics of trauma and its effects
- Being Non-Judgmental of others
- Honoring self-determination, choice, and difference
- Community and Relational Connection

- Being Strength-Based and seeing the good in others
- Compassion for self and others
- Mindfulness and self-awareness
- Social Justice and Ethics

When working with Métis survivors of trauma, violence, abuse and neglect, the infusion of cultural teachings, values and the promotion of connection to one's cultural strengths greatly enhance healing. This approach utilizes a Métis specific, strength-based perspective, highlighting the need to promote trauma-informed approaches in our communities to build and promote resilience.

This toolkit embraces these principles of being trauma informed:

- Promoting understanding about Trauma and its impact
 - Enhancing Métis Specific Cultural Competence
- Healing Happens in Family, Relationships and Community
 - Believing that Healing and Recovery is Possible

UNDERSTANDING TRAUMA AND ITS IMPACT

It is important to provide some basic information about what trauma is, and how our bodies, nervous systems and minds are hard-wired to respond. Sometimes people feel regret or confusion about their behavior in a traumatic situation. It is very crucial that we understand that when we are threatened or in danger, our bodies and nervous system are acting to protect us, and that the mind or decision making in those moments is impossible. As human beings, we evolved with a very strong survival override response to keep us safe and alive.

LFMO's Trauma informed approaches recognize that all forms of violence, including lateral violence, impacts of colonization, and intergenerational trauma have lasting effects.

WHAT IS TRAUMA?

A simple definition of trauma is:

A real or perceived threat to life, limb, or dignity.

More specifically, Trauma refers to an event that is "extremely upsetting, at least temporarily overwhelms the individual's internal resources, and produces lasting psychological symptoms (Briere & Scott, 2015)

It can be a Moose charging at you through the bush, it could be an abusive person whispering a threat in your ear, it can be the sight of someone who harmed you in the past. Any of those situations can cause the body to trigger into survival mode. Real or perceived is important here, our mind and survival instincts are very powerful, and real or imagined threats can trigger a trauma response.

“Trauma refers to experiences or events that by definition are out of the ordinary in terms of their overwhelming nature. They are more than merely stressful – they are also shocking, terrifying, and devastating to the victim, resulting in profoundly upsetting feelings of terror, shame, helplessness, and powerlessness.” (Courtois, 1999)

Trauma can result from a recent incident of gender-based, sexual, or other violence, harassment or bullying (Lateral Violence) but also from previous experiences of violence, harassment or bullying, and or experiences of marginalization and oppression (including intergenerational trauma). Trauma can also happen when involved in an accident, natural disaster, or when experiencing a painful loss.

Regardless of its source, trauma contains common elements, including there was nothing the person could do to stop it from happening, and hardwired trauma responses will be mobilized by the body and brain as an automatic response to danger. Simply put, traumatic events are beyond a person’s control. It is not the event that determines whether something is traumatic to someone, but the individual’s experience of the event. In turn, trauma responses including fight, flight, and freeze are enacted by the nervous system and the person experiencing the trauma may have little to no control or choice in those responses.

Those who have good coping skills, who feel supported after the event, and who had a chance to talk about and process the traumatic event, often go on to integrate the experience into their lives, like any other experience. Survivors who do not have this experience and do not express the associated feelings are not able to integrate the traumatic event, and its impacts linger. It is at this point that negative coping behaviors start and may continue until a survivor decides to face the difficult emotions that surround the traumatic experience.

The impact of these events does not simply go away when they are over. Instead, traumatic events are profound experiences that shape the way a person sees themselves, others, and the world.

- Individuals of all ages, walks of life, sexual orientations, gender identities and ethnicities can be profoundly affected.
- Families can be traumatized by an event happening to one or more of its members. Even people who did not directly experience the trauma can be impacted by it, especially if they have a close relationship to the trauma survivor.
- Communities can be traumatized when events affect any of its members.
- Cultures can be traumatized when repeated denigration, attempts at assimilation, and genocide occur.
- Family Members, Caregivers, and Front-line service providers can be traumatized after hearing the stories and witnessing the suffering of trauma survivors. This is called “vicarious trauma” and happens when the helper is regularly confronted with traumatic content.

TRAUMA RESPONSES AND IMPACTS ON THE BODY

The effects of trauma can be overwhelming. Whether you experience the trauma directly or witness it, the physical and psychological effects trigger the body’s survival response. This survival response engages our oldest structure of the brain, the Reptilian brain, which governs basic survival functions such as breathing, heart rate, vision, hearing, eye movement and body movement. It interacts with the Limbic System, our emotional centre and second oldest structure of the brain. When we are in real or perceived danger,

together they activate the fight-flight or freeze response. They communicate with our sympathetic nervous system preparing our body to fight danger, run away from danger or freeze (hide from danger).

In response to a perceived threat the body, via the sympathetic nervous system, channels resources for speed and strength:

- Brain: Stress protectively dulls the body's sense of pain.
- Eyes: pupils dilate for better vision.
- Lungs: take in more oxygen
- Liver: Sugar stored as glycogen is converted to glucose
- Heart: The bloodstream brings extra oxygen and glucose – fuel – for power. Heart rate and blood pressure rise.
- Adrenal glands: The medulla secretes the fight or flight hormone epinephrine (adrenaline).
- Spleen: Extra red blood cells flow out, allowing the blood to carry more oxygen to muscles.
- Intestines: Digestion halts, allowing the body to dedicate energy to the muscles.
- Hair: Body hairs become erect – puffed up hair makes animals look bigger and more dangerous.

After the fight, flight, freeze response has been activated the body makes other changes to stabilize:

- Brain: the hippocampus, a centre of memory and learning gets activated to process the stress
- Immune system: Infection fighting is diminished, perhaps increasing available energy
- Liver Fat: Stored energy is converted into usable fuel
- Adrenal glands: The cortex secretes cortisol, which regulates metabolism and immunity. Over time though it can be toxic

Ongoing Trauma Responses can wear down our bodies and nervous systems over time:

If this process is activated too often the traumatic stress reaction may harm the immune system, brain and heart. It is like having your foot on the gas of your car; operating on high revs, the system wears down.

- Brain: Cortisol becomes toxic to brain cells, potentially damaging cognitive ability. Fatigue, anger and depression increase.
- Immune system: Repeated suppression of disease fighting cells ultimately weakens resistance to infection.
- Intestines: Decreases in blood flow leave mucous lining vulnerable to ulcers.
- Circulatory system: Elevated blood pressure and heart rate damage elasticity of blood vessels.

Living in a traumatic environment means living in survival mode, and our bodies habituate to being under constant threat. A large part of recovery is learning how to create safety in the present, recognize triggers from the past, and learn skills for calming and soothing.

It is important to distinguish a real threat to our survival versus a perceived threat; to create safety and make decisions to increase safety every day; practice creating grounding, soothing, relaxation every day. This means a profound change from the environment of trauma to the everyday practice of safety, community building and self-love/nurturance.

HARDWIRED TRAUMA RESPONSES: FIGHT, FLIGHT, FREEZE

The most common trauma responses that we understand are fight, flight or freeze. These survival

responses have been hardwired into human beings in order to help us to survive danger. We have very little control when we are activated into a trauma response, and our nervous system takes over.

FIGHT:

Fight response may look like or feel like:

- Crying
- Hands in fists, desire to punch, rip
- Flexed/tight jaw, grinding teeth, snarl
- Fight in eyes, glaring, fight in voice
- Desire to stomp, kick, smash with legs, feet
- Feelings of anger/rage
- Homicidal/suicidal feelings
- Knotted stomach/nausea, burning stomach
- Metaphors like bombs, volcanoes erupting

A person in fight trauma response may sound aggressive or argumentative in speaking, picks fights, takes/gives offence in even the smallest of conversations. Words and body language may be extreme. Sometimes people in fight response may be perceived as “too aggressive”, but it may be that the person is in full the fight response and the behavior is hiding hurt and pain.

FLIGHT:

Flight response may look like or feel like:

- Restless legs, feet /numbness in legs
- Anxiety/shallow breathing
- Big/darting eyes
- Leg/foot movement
- Reported or observed fidgety-ness, restlessness, feeling trapped, tense
- Sense of running in life- one activity-next
- Excessive exercise

People in flight trauma response may be observed and leaving gatherings or meetings early, and also may have a hard time speaking up, staying in the room or maintaining eye contact. You might conclude that the person is not interested or does not want to participate, but they may be in full flight response.

FREEZE:

Freeze response may look like or feel like:

- Feeling stuck in some part of body
- Feeling cold/frozen, numb, pale skin

- Sense of stiffness, heaviness
- Holding breath/restricted breathing
- Sense of dread, heart pounding
- Decreased heart rate (can sometimes increase)
- Dissociation

A person in freeze trauma response may seem forgetful, unable to meet commitments, sometimes neglectful of self or others. A person in freeze response may have a hard time leaving their house. A person in freeze may sometimes seem to not paying attention and this behavior may be interpreted as unmotivated or lacking interest. The person may be experiencing the trauma response freeze.

IMPACTS OF TRAUMA

The effects of being traumatized are very individual, and survivors are impacted physically, emotionally, behaviorally, cognitively and spiritually. Trauma impacts that we may experience or see in survivors of trauma, violence, or abuse include:

Physical Impacts

- eating disturbances (more or less than usual)
- sleep disturbances (more or less than usual)
- pain in areas on the body that may have been involved in the traumatic experience
- low energy
- chronic unexplained pain
- headaches
- anxiety/panic

Emotional Impacts

- depression, spontaneous crying, despair and hopelessness
- anxiety
- extreme vulnerability
- panic attacks
- fearfulness
- compulsive and obsessive behaviors
- feeling out of control
- irritability, anger and resentment
- emotional numbness
- frightening thoughts
- difficulties in relationships

Behavioral Impacts

- self-harm such as cutting

- substance abuse
- alcohol abuse
- gambling
- self-destructive behaviors
- isolation
- choosing friends that may be unhealthy
- suicide attempts

Cognitive Impacts

- memory lapses, especially about the trauma
- loss of time
- being flooded and overwhelmed with recollections of the trauma
- difficulty making decisions
- decreased ability to concentrate
- feeling distracted
- withdrawal from normal routine
- thoughts of suicide

Spiritual Impacts

- guilt
- shame
- self-blame and/or self-hatred
- feeling damaged
- feeling like a “bad” person
- questioning the presence of God
- questioning one’s purpose
- sense of foreshortened future
- thoughts of being evil
- turning away from faith/religion or obsessively attending gatherings of faith/religious services and praying

(Metis Women British Columbia, 2009)

MÉTIS CULTURAL COMPETENCE: OVERVIEW OF MÉTIS EXPERIENCES OF HISTORICAL AND INTERGENERATIONAL TRAUMA

In order to serve Métis women and their families in a culturally safe and trauma-informed way, we believe it is essential to understand the unique Métis experiences of historic and contemporary trauma and loss. Effectively, the unique impacts of colonization on Métis people. In order to safely and effectively support our Métis Women and families who are healing from and overcoming violence, abuse or neglect, we want to balance our knowledge of the Métis historic and contemporary traumas and losses with recognition of strength and resilience. Our vision is to empower Métis communities, leaders, facilitators, and elders to name and share our unique experience of colonization, trauma, and loss as well as focusing on our inherent resilience in a strength-based approach.

“In order to understand the current situation of Métis women and girls it is important to review the historical treatment of Métis people and how historical discrimination, rooted in colonization, continues to adversely affect the safety and well-being of Métis people, especially Métis women. Métis people have suffered abuses in ways that are unique from the abuses suffered by other Indigenous people; however, outcomes such as poor health, poverty, a lack of educational, unemployment and the breakdown of family and community were the same.”
(LFMO MMIWG Report, p.11)

Métis people have experienced multiple historical impacts of colonization, and carry intergenerational trauma. Our experience of trauma has similarities to other Indigenous peoples of Canada, but is also unique. Our intention with this toolkit is to explore and highlight our unique Métis Experiences of Colonization, Intergenerational Trauma and also our Resilience, World view and Strengths.

The Métis Nation has diversity in their experiences of colonization. Métis people have struggled to maintain traditional worldviews and have experienced the loss of culture, language and understanding from a traditional perspective. Through the exploration of Métis experiences and stories through a lens of strength, resilience and resistance, we can re-engage with traditional values and Métis world views.

Some of the Historical Traumas and Losses experienced by Métis and Michif people include:

- ∞ Emergence of Colonialism Impacts
- ∞ Loss of land “Road Allowance People”
- ∞ Loss of language and identity
- ∞ Loss of resources, livelihood and income with the fading of the NWC and Hudson’s Bay empires, end of the buffalo hunt
- ∞ Loss of Safety and Independence
- ∞ Marginalization; political, rights, economics, employment
- ∞ Persecution
- ∞ Poverty and Starvation
- ∞ Racism, colorism, and related violence and exclusion
- ∞ Residential Schools, Boarding Schools, and Day Schools attendance and traumatization
- ∞ Respect and Power decline as Colonization occurred
- ∞ Suppression of identity and ethnicity related to fear
- ∞ Violence, Death
- ∞ Warfare in the fight for our existence, our rights, and our place in Canada

MÉTIS INTERGENERATIONAL IMPACTS OF TRAUMA

“I grew up as a happy, carefree child until I was seven and the RCMP took me and my sisters to a residential school where, for the first time, I felt fear that I carried with me for many years; I turned into someone who had no voice and suffered from depression; it took 40 years for me to overcome

it through the teachings and working of the Elders. The trauma of residential schools still lingers in our communities with no help available; we are just coming out of the silence and telling the truth about what happened; there is still so much denial.”

~ Métis Elder, Survivor of Residential School

“Thank you for helping me understand the trauma that I experienced; two-spirited people have experienced significant trauma and are committing suicide; they feel invisible. In the mission school, you were not acknowledged, not permitted to speak the Michif language, subject to sexual abuse and homophobia; you were invisible. Thank you to all for not making judgements or assumptions; two-spirited people are good people. As a two-spirited person, I was the first to be targeted through religious beliefs but is now safe to pick up the teachings and reclaim who we are. In the Indigenous language, there is no word for gender; it was based on the word for “alive”; we need to celebrate that.”

~Métis Elder, Survivor of Mission School

“My father fought in the war in England; he refused to come back to Canada as he was treated better in England; when we did move back to Canada, we celebrated our Métis culture, but we no longer qualified for benefits; we had to hide. We are dealing with trauma – I cannot tell my grandchildren that their great grandfather was a war hero.”

~ Métis Elder, reflecting on intergenerational impacts

“Métis women are beginning to reclaim their womanhood and role that was lost; intergenerational effects have brought them to a place where they struggle to honour their sacredness, strength, and pride in who they are as resilient, strong women who came from resilient and strong grandmothers. An important part of empowering women is to change the stereotypes they have absorbed in their daily roles as young women and teach them who they are as sacred beings on Mother Earth. We are forced to walk in both worlds but are not accepted by either; we are used/forced/encouraged to take a position on either side; I see both sides and try to embrace both.”

~ Métis elder, on intergenerational trauma effects

The impacts of traumas related to colonization and oppression are intergenerational – passed on from generation to generation. The effects of trauma tend to ripple outward from the victims to those who surround them, and for Métis who experienced oppressive, violent, and traumatic life events, the consequences continue to be felt in each subsequent generation. The impacts are felt at individual, family and community levels:

Individual Impacts may include:

- ∞ isolation/alienation
- ∞ shame
- ∞ anger
- ∞ self-hatred
- ∞ internalized racism
- ∞ low self-esteem

- ∞ self-destructive behaviors (substance abuse, gambling, alcoholism)
- ∞ acting aggressively

Family Impacts may include:

- ∞ unresolved grief
- ∞ difficulty with parenting effectively
- ∞ family violence
- ∞ loss of language, stories/oral traditions
- ∞ loss of culture and traditional practices
- ∞ loss of identity

Community and Nation Impacts may include:

- ∞ loss of connectedness with Michif / Métis languages and traditions
- ∞ loss of community and family togetherness and collective support
- ∞ loss of support from Métis elders or knowledge holders
- ∞ increased suicide rate
- ∞ lack of family and community support in the raising of children
- ∞ community and lateral violence

Because the impacts of trauma are intergenerational, many Métis people have been born into families and communities that had been struggling with the effects of trauma for many years. These are reinforced by ongoing impacts of colonization, including racism, violence toward Métis women, and marginalization that puts Métis people at risk.

MÉTIS CULTURAL COMPETENCE: OVERVIEW OF MÉTIS EXPERIENCES OF CONTEMPORARY TRAUMAS AND LOSSES

We worked with a wide cross section of Métis people, mental health professionals, Indigenous trauma treatment practitioners, elders, and Métis clients in Métis-specific trauma informed programs to create this toolkit. Métis-specific impacts of trauma and colonization, and create strength-based trauma informed communities of care to support recovery and reduce violence against Métis women. The intent is to educate, and inspire discussion in our communities, but also in the systems of law enforcement, justice system, medical, mental health services, and child and family services. By creating awareness and building trauma-informed services, Métis women impacted by trauma, violence, abuse or neglect can be better served, supported and understood. With Métis specific cultural safety training, we believe that Métis women and families should be able to have access to better advocacy, to improved services, and should receive safe and effective support. (Women of the Metis Nation Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak, 2019)

Métis experiences of trauma and loss

In the work leading to the creation of this toolkit, we interviewed, worked with and consulted with Métis Women and their family members. Many of the people we spoke to have experienced disrupted attachments with family of origin either due to their parents' own struggles with mental health and

addiction as well as a system that they identify as being unsupportive of their families remaining intact due to systemic colonial, racist ideologies.

Métis Women we worked with in researching this toolkit articulated these losses or traumas in their lives:

- ∞ Accidents
- ∞ Being a victim of crime
- ∞ Childhood abuse: sexual, physical, neglect, witnessing domestic violence
- ∞ Domestic abuse: physical, sexual, financial, spiritual, cultural, psychological
- ∞ Elder abuse: physical, sexual, financial, spiritual, cultural, psychological
- ∞ Fear of being killed, witnessing death
- ∞ Historical trauma: and the residential school experience of forcible removal from the family home, destruction of culture and language
- ∞ Human Trafficking survivor
- ∞ Living in extreme poverty
- ∞ Loss due to homicide
- ∞ Loss of a loved one to homicide
- ∞ Natural disasters
- ∞ Sexual assault: any unwanted sexual contact
- ∞ Sudden and unexpected loss: of a job, housing, relationship
- ∞ Sudden death of a loved one
- ∞ Suicidal loss of a loved one

Some systemic and widespread contemporary experiences of Trauma and Loss experienced by Métis and Michif people include:

- ∞ CFS involvement
- ∞ Child Apprehension
- ∞ Continued experience of marginalization (political, manifestation of rights, recognition of our historical sacrifices and exclusions by Canada)
- ∞ Diverse continuum of Métis and Indigenous Métis lived experience, that sometimes marginalizes grassroots Métis
- ∞ Impact of 60's scoop
- ∞ Impacted economic participation
- ∞ Impacted health
- ∞ Impacted Identity
- ∞ Intergenerational impacts of poverty
- ∞ Isolation, Neglect, Abuse or Violence
- ∞ Lack of access to Indigenous rights-based food security or access to resources
- ∞ Lack of access to land
- ∞ Loss of language and identity
- ∞ Multigenerational impacts of Residential School, Boarding School and Day School Traumas
- ∞ Multigenerational impacts of trauma
- ∞ Reduced resilience as a result of CFS interventions and lack of family and nation connection

- ∞ Sometimes limited knowledge or access to culturally grounded healing and safety strategies
- ∞ Traumatic exclusions from the TRC and IRSSA agreements
- ∞ Unique experiences of traumatic events related to racism, poverty, violence, or other colonization related barriers

MÉTIS VOICES: AWARENESS AND NAMING OF MÉTIS RESILIENCE AND VALUES

“When we talk about these things, e.g. caring for the young to the old, children and Elders belong to all of us; we have a connection to the land; we belong to the land; we have a relationship to the old ways and history and traditions like making tourtiere for New Year’s Eve or providing a cup of tea when you have guests to show that you are glad they came; we take what we need and works for us; it is what works for me and makes me resilient.”

~ Métis Elder, on traditions and resilience

“What makes me resilient is my creativity that the Métis are well known for; I learned to bead when I was seven and as I got older, I found out what it means to be Métis; I now teach culture, which is so rewarding to see the children participating; it is important to keep cultural traditions alive; I am constantly learning to pass along information.”

~ Métis elder on resilience and cultural practices

“Resiliency in my family equals stubbornness; all the struggles that we have dealt with in the past provide a good understanding of where things were and to be proud of where we are today to have this conversation. Our children will not have to face the same dilemma.”

~ Métis Elder on resilience

(Women of the Metis Nation Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak, 2019)

Throughout our work with Michif and Métis Communities these historical elements of resilience emerged:

- ∞ Humor, Celebration and positivity through adversity
- ∞ Love, Care, Compassion and Empathy
- ∞ Physical Stamina and Strength
- ∞ Powerful Men and Women leading our families and communities to safety and survival
- ∞ Skills, Knowledge and awareness from multiple lenses and worldviews
- ∞ Strong Matriarchs in Métis Families and Communities played a role in Leadership, maintaining safety, and preserving traditional knowledge
- ∞ Strong Métis/Michif understanding of roles and purpose in the collective, strong cultural values and kinship bonds and connections
- ∞ Traditional Values and Beliefs; best of two worlds

Some Métis and Michif people have struggled to maintain traditional worldviews and have experienced the loss of culture, language and understanding from a traditional perspective. Through the exploration of Métis experiences and stories through a lens of strength, resilience and resistance, we can re-engage with traditional values and Métis world views. In listening to our grandmothers, elders, and knowledge

keepers, we have found that through storytelling, cultural activities, and healing ceremonies, Métis resilience and values can be explored, felt, recognized and shared.

In our conversation with Métis across Canada, here are the resilience and values that our people identified as still strong in ourselves, our families and communities:



- | | |
|---|--|
| ∞ Adaptable to change | ∞ Persevering |
| ∞ Being together | ∞ Positive |
| ∞ Care for our young and old, and caring for each other | ∞ Pride in our Heritage |
| ∞ Child-rearing | ∞ Protecting each other |
| ∞ Come together and help, especially in crisis | ∞ Recognition of our Indigenous ancestry, and our emergence as a mixed-race people |
| ∞ Connected to all life and the land | ∞ Relationships are of prime importance; building and maintaining are essential to survive, and to prosper, and to be well |
| ∞ Contributing to Community and Family; | ∞ Resilience |
| ∞ Culture as a way of life, “Do no harm” to each other | ∞ Resourceful |
| ∞ Equality and Fairness | ∞ Respect for all life and land, water |
| ∞ Faith and Spirituality | ∞ Respect for Elders, Seniors, Traditions and Teachers |
| ∞ Family ties ~ Kinship | ∞ Respect, love and acceptance of LGBTQ2S+ or Two-spirited Métis |
| ∞ Forgiving | ∞ Sacrifice – Altruism |
| ∞ Generous | ∞ Seeing the silver lining |
| ∞ Hardworking | ∞ Self-sustaining |
| ∞ Hopeful | ∞ Spiritual impact of choices |
| ∞ Humble | ∞ Teaching Life Skills and Traditions to Children and Youth; |
| ∞ Humor | ∞ Thrifty |
| ∞ Independence | ∞ Traditional Values |
| ∞ Interconnection | ∞ Wahkotowin – interconnection to each other, all living things, earth, spiritual world |
| ∞ Justice | |
| ∞ Kindness to one another | |

TRADITIONAL ACTIVITIES – SUPPORTING WELLNESS AND HEALING FROM TRAUMA

“What makes me resilient is my creativity that the Métis are well known for; I learned to bead when I was seven and as I got older, I found out what it means to be Métis; I now teach culture, which is so rewarding to see the children participating; it is important to keep cultural traditions alive; I am constantly learning to pass along information.”

~ Métis Elder, on Resilience and creativity

Traditional activities of all kinds support our wellness, healing from trauma, and help the nervous system and the mind to be well.

Physical activities Physical activity like jigging or dancing is an excellent way to engage in movement and have fun through social connection and healthy touch. Physical work, sports, running, walking, canoeing – anything that engages our physical bodies enhances our wellness and improves our health, contributing to helping to overcome the effects of trauma,

Being on the land; hunting, fishing, harvesting berries and gathering herbs and medicines are also excellent activities for helping us to overcome trauma. Being on the land is a natural regulation for our nervous system, and can help the body to regulate to the rhythm of the earth in a matter of days. Being outside, on the land, and being mindful as we harvest food or medicine is healing for our nervous system, mind, spirit and body. Spending time out in nature and on the land. Walking, camping, hiking, gathering berries or medicines, fishing, being outside by a fire, are all activities that will support your nervous system in regulating and healing.

Preparing and sharing traditional foods, to nourish ourselves and people that we care about is a positive form of resilience with many benefits as well; physical, social, emotional, spiritual. Connecting with people is part of our healing and reclaiming process, and gathering to eat a meal is a traditional way of gathering and reinforcing our connection.

Traditional artistic practices like beading, leatherwork, weaving, sewing, help us to engage our creativity and create a state of mind that is similar to meditation. The focus, rhythm and repetition when we are practicing traditional arts helps us to be in a state of nervous system regulation, calm, and mindfulness. Sometimes when people are in acute states of activated trauma, it can be hard for them to settle themselves to focus on these activities. Being patient, supporting and helping people who have been through trauma to be able learn and practice traditional art is an act of healing.

Spiritual or Religious Practices can be a very important part of healing from trauma and loss. When we experience suffering and loss, we can experience a lack of hope, and deep existential or spiritual pain. For some, a reconnection with faith, religious or spiritual practice is a very important part of restoring hope, gaining a sense of peace, protection and coming to terms with the trauma that they have experienced.

REFLECTION:

What traditional activities are a part of your life? Have you experienced or witnessed how traditional activities help people to heal?

What are your spiritual or religious practices? How do they support your resilience, sense of peace, hope, and healing?

TAKING CARE OF OUR BODIES WITH WATER, REST, AND FOOD

Trauma is very hard on the nervous system, because of the stress that it exposes us to. Our bodies under stress produce hormones, including cortisol and adrenalin. Our bodies responses to threats or stress introduce these hormones into our bodies. One simple thing that we can do to assist our bodies in flushing stress hormones is to drink water, carry a water bottle with you, and feel good knowing that when you drink water you are helping your body to heal.

Sleep; Many people impacted by trauma have sleep disorders as a result of traumatic stress. Nightmares, insomnia, even over-sleeping are all experiences that people may have. Seeing your doctor or health professional and talking about what is happening is important. Beyond your doctor or health professional, there are many approaches that you can take. Progressive relaxation, using an app on your smart phone to listen to a sleep meditation or sleep themed piece of music, aromatherapy, prayer before bed, the availability of non-medication sleep supports is plentiful. Some people need to walk and exercise during the day in order to sleep well at night.

Food; You may have heard the expression “HALT” ...am I Hungry, Angry, Lonely or Tired? Hungry is the first on the list for good reason. Ensuring that you eat food is very important for your nervous system, your emotions, and of course, your body. Healthy food helps us to stay physically and emotionally grounded. When people experience trauma, their stress response may include avoiding food or over-indulging in food as a form of comfort. Having a wholistic approach to healing from Trauma is important, either over or under eating can cause new health challenges when we are trying to heal.

Exercise and Movement; People impacted by trauma can benefit greatly from exercise and movement. It helps people to ground their nervous systems, increase feel good body responses like endorphins, and activities like taking a walk outside in nature, are tremendously beneficial. Whether you are an athlete, or a gentle walker, movement and exercise will support your healing from trauma and improve your resilience.

Healthy Touch; People impacted by trauma can benefit from safe touch. Having a friend, your spouse or a family member hug you for 30 seconds or more helps our bodies and nervous system to regulate and heal. Playing with and holding a pet also helps our nervous systems, and is a way of having healthy connection to ease our nervous systems.

REFLECTION:

What actions or choices do you make in your life that support wellness, physical health, healing from trauma, or being grounded?

MENTAL HEALTH CARE AND PROGRAMMING SUPPORTS

In addition to exploring traditional and personal wellness, there are opportunities for Métis to explore Mental Health treatment, Mental Health programs, and Medically supported trauma treatment. Counselling with a professional trauma informed counsellor, supports from a social worker or advocate skilled in trauma, safe circle participation with an elder or counsellor, or mental health and wellness programming. Be sure to ask about the principles of trauma informed practice that the counsellor, social worker, or mental health program employs:

- Skills and understanding about Trauma, its impact, and expertise in Trauma Treatment
 - Métis Specific Cultural Competence and Safety
- Understanding that Healing Happens in Family, Relationships and Community
 - Promoting that Healing and Trauma Recovery is Possible

Canadian Métis Health Department Information and Links:

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Métis Crisis Line 1-833-638-4722. For general health inquiries please email health@mnbc.ca

Métis Nation Alberta, Health Services Information line: 1-800-252-7553

Website: www.albertaMétis.com

Métis Nation Saskatchewan Health Web Link: <https://Métisnationsk.com/health/>

Telephone: (306)-343-8285 or (toll free) 1-833-343-8285

Manitoba Métis Federation Weblink to Health and Wellness Department:

http://www.mmf.mb.ca/departments_portfolios_and_affiliates_details.php?id=11&type=home

Manitoba Métis Child and Family Services Web Listing of resources: <https://www.Métiscfs.mb.ca/links.php>

Manitoba Emergency Health Contact - All Nations Coordinated Response Network

Telephone: 204-944-4200

Toll Free: 1-866-345-9241

Métis Nation Ontario Healing and Wellness Branch: 1-800-263-4889.

Website: www.Métisnation.org

RESOURCES FOR FUTURE LEARNING AND SUPPORT

Women of the Métis Nation / Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak Publications

WMN/LFMO has published several relevant reports and resources which are available for download at:

<https://en2.Métiswomen.org/researchandtoolkits/>

- ∞ WOMEN OF THE MÉTIS NATION PERSPECTIVES: The 5th National Indigenous Women's Summit Empowering Indigenous Women Now and Into the Future
- ∞ MÉTIS PERSPECTIVES OF MISSING AND MURDERED INDIGENOUS WOMEN, GIRLS AND LGBTQ2S+ PEOPLE: A report addressing the landscape of missing and murdered Métis women, girls (MMIWG) and gender diverse people in Canada.
- ∞ MÉTIS-SPECIFIC GENDER-BASED ANALYSIS (GBA+) TOOL: Gender-Based Analysis is an analytical, systematic process used to review the impacts and experiences of a program, policy or initiative for a wide variety of people. This GBA+ Toolkit is built upon the Government of Canada's GBA process to include a Métis-specific approach.
- ∞ RECOGNITION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF RIGHTS FRAMEWORK: The purpose of this paper is to provide the views of the Women of the Métis Nation in response to Canada's Recognition and Implementation of Rights Framework. It is a policy document which can inform current and future processes that would promote the empowerment of Métis women.
- ∞ ANTI-RACISM POLICY PAPER: Despite progress and the many contributions of Métis women, Métis women, girls and gender-diverse people continue to experience a unique form of racism due to their distinct historical contexts and the ongoing systemic discrimination perpetuated by Canadian governmental policies and practices.
- ∞ FORCED AND COERCED STERILIZATION POLICY PAPER: A policy paper examining instances of forced sterilization of Métis women across the Homeland.
- ∞ EDUCATION POLICY PAPER: According to 2001 Aboriginal People's Survey, 48% of Aboriginal people aged 20 to 24 not living on reserve and not completed their secondary school education. Less than half (43.9%) of Métis youth between 15 and 24 years of age completed high school or education at a higher level.
- ∞ VIOLENCE AGAINST MÉTIS WOMEN POLICY PAPER: Métis women experience gender-based violence, something that a great number of Métis women experience repeatedly throughout their lives. Métis women experience many forms of violence but the result remains the same – Métis women often are unable to address the social issues that create the causes of their victimization.
- ∞ HEALTH POLICY PAPER: The Women of the Métis Nation have hosted a variety of regional meetings across the homeland and several national gatherings. One thing is clear: Métis women identify health as a key priority.
- ∞ TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE POLICY PAPER: Métis women have always played important roles in society. In the largely egalitarian community, women were for the most part equal partners in the development of their communities politically, socially and economically.
- ∞ WHAT WE HEARD: A report of the Métis Nation's engagement with Métis Sixties Scoop Survivors.
- ∞ STRENGTHENING MÉTIS WOMEN'S ENTREPRENEURSHIP: This study brings together five pieces of research that together provide the most complete picture currently available of the business environment for Métis women entrepreneurs (MWEs in the five westernmost provinces of Canada).
- ∞ LES FEMMES MICHIF OTIPEMISIWAK - WOMEN OF THE MÉTIS NATION - STRATEGY 2013: The Métis are one of three distinct Aboriginal peoples in Canada recognized under the 1982 constitution. The Métis National Council [MNC] was developed in 1983 to be a representative voice of the interests of Métis people in Canada and abroad.

Learning about Trauma and Healing approaches – Some Recommended Reading

The Body Keeps the Score by Bessel van der Kolk MD

If you want to have a good understanding of what trauma is and the solutions that are available to help you cope and heal from trauma, this is the book for you. In the book, the author explores several methods for healing trauma including yoga, EDMR (Eye movement desensitization and reprocessing), and neurofeedback.

Waking the Tiger by Peter Levine

The premise of this book is that trauma is physiological. Talk therapies can help you understand your trauma but it doesn't necessarily help you heal your symptoms of trauma or PTSD. Written by the creator of Somatic Experiencing, this book addresses the essential role that our body plays in trauma. By working with your body

and self-regulating your bodily sensations, you bypass your thoughts and emotions process. It helps you to work around details of the past that you rather not repeat or talk about. The author uses analogies from myths and draws references from animals to help you understand your body's capabilities to heal itself.

Trauma and Recovery by Judith Herman

Traumatic experiences can permanently scar you. It can destroy your sense of self and affect your ability to respond to threats and feel your emotions. This book explores the various types of trauma from child abuse to rape, domestic violence to war, in great details. It also explores the effects on trauma survivors and explains the three stages of recovery — safety, remembrance and mourning, and reconnection.

Healing from Trauma by Jasmin Lee Cori

Hearing and reading about other people's trauma might be unsettling and triggering for you. If this is so, this book is suitable for you. This book is neither too technical nor contains too many anecdotes. The author writes in a way that you will find it easy to understand. There is also no detailed account of traumatic events in this book that will trigger your own trauma and memories. This book gives you a wide perspective and tools so that you can choose the best approach for yourself. For example, it discusses how to choose the right therapist or helper for you. It also includes spiritual challenges and opportunities that come with trauma.

Trauma Stewardship by Laura van Dernoot Lipsky and Connie Burk

Are you working as a helping profession such as a social worker, a nurse, or a counselor? Or do you have to care for an elderly parent or a young child? If so, this book is for you. This book is about secondary trauma, also known as compassion fatigue. A constant exposure to other people's trauma can overwhelm and cause you to experience the same symptoms as the traumatized survivors. In this book, the authors explore how the stress of dealing with trauma can cause "helpers" to feel hopelessness, burnout, chronic exhaustion, and how to care for yourself.

It Didn't Start with You by Mark Wolynn

What if your trauma isn't caused by your life experiences? What if it's inherited?

If you couldn't find the cause of your suffering, perhaps you want to examine your family history. Traumatic experiences can be passed down through generations. The author suggests that some of us might have inherited our trauma from our parents. Children can be born with fear and feelings that don't always belong to them. The author wrote this book so that we can break the cycle and not pass our trauma to our descendants.

SUPPORTS FOR FRONT LINE SERVICES AND PROGRAMMING

Freedom from Violence: Tools for working with Trauma, Mental Health and Substance Use

Developed by the Ending Violence Association of BC, this comprehensive toolkit offers specific, practical trauma-informed strategies for working with women who have substance use and mental health concerns. Strategies for discussing substance use, mental health concerns and for safety planning are included.

www.endingviolence.org/node/459

Handbook on Sensitive Practice for Health Care Practitioner: Lessons from Adult Survivors of Childhood Sexual Abuse

Published by the Public Health Agency of Canada, the handbook presents information designed to help health care practitioners' practice in a way that is sensitive to the needs of adult survivors of childhood sexual abuse

and other types of interpersonal violence.

www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/ncfv-cnivf/pdfs/nfntsx-handbook_e.pdf

Trauma Matters

Guidelines developed by the Jean Tweed Centre, in consultation with service providers, experts, and women with lived experience from across Ontario, to support organizations that provide substance use treatment services for women. Designed to aid in understanding the interconnections of trauma and substance use, and provide better care for substance-involved women who have experienced trauma.

<http://traumaandsubstanceabuse.files.wordpress.com>

Beyond trauma: A healing journey for women (2006)

Manualized curriculum for women's services. Developed by Stephanie Covington for use in substance treatment centres, criminal justice system, mental health settings and domestic violence shelters. Additional curricula have been developed for girls and men.

Source: Stephanie Covington, PhD, LCSW Available for a fee at www.stephaniecovington.com/beyond-trauma-a-healing-journey-for-women1.php

Trauma Recovery and Empowerment Model (TREM)

Offered by Community Connections in Washington DC, the TREM curriculum consists of 29 sessions focusing on empowerment, education about trauma, and building coping skills. There are versions for working with women, men, and youth.

www.communityconnectionsdc.org/web/page/657/interior.html

You are not alone: Violence, Substance Use and Mental Health— A peer approach to increasing your safety

Created by the Ending Violence Association of BC, this resource is for peer helpers and service providers to assist in discussions about relationship violence and sexual assault among women who may also have MHSU issues.

www.endingviolence.org/files/uploads/PAVEWorkbook.pdf

Women and Substance Use: Trauma-informed Online Tool (2011)

Virtual toolkit. Provides overview of key issues, themes in practice and policy, promising practices, and tensions. Provides links to recommended readings, curricula and training resources, and web resources for working with women and for understanding connections between substance use, mental health and trauma. Also includes strategies for developing trauma-informed practices and services.

Source: BC Centre for Excellence on Women's Health

Available at www.coalescing-vc.org/virtualllearning/documents/trauma-informed-online-tool.pdf

Bridging responses: A front-line worker's guide to supporting women who have post-traumatic stress (2001)

Written for frontline workers working with women in a variety of service settings (e.g., police, shelters, health care). Provides information about responses women can have to trauma and how to recognize them.

Includes guidelines on asking about trauma issues. Source: Centre for Addiction and Mental Health

Available at www.camhx.ca/Publications/Resources_for_Professionals/Bridging_responses/bridging_responses.pdf

Helping Children and Youth Who Have Experienced Traumatic Events (2011)

Provides information on how systems of care and trauma-informed services can improve the lives of children and youth who have experienced traumatic events. Includes findings from a national evaluation of such programs and describes common treatment approaches.

Source: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (United States)
Available at store.samhsa.gov/product/Helping-Children-and-Youth-Who-Have-Experienced-Traumatic-Events/SMA11-4642

What do we mean by trauma informed practice and why is it important? (2014)

PowerPoint slides about women-centred trauma-informed support in substance use and mental health services. Topics include defining trauma, key concepts, principles and practices related to trauma- and violence-informed approaches.

Source: BC Centre for Excellence on Women's Health

Available at bccewh.bc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/NS-TIP-webcast-1.Dec_.16.14-slides-Final.pdf

Trauma-informed Organizational Toolkit for Homeless Services (2009)

Provides practical ways for becoming trauma-informed. Includes organizational self-assessment and a manual for creating organizational change.

Source: National Centre on Family Homelessness (United States)

Available at www.nada.org.au/media/14607/tictoolkitforhomelesservicesusa.pdf

Handbook on sensitive practice for health care practitioners: Lessons from adult survivors of childhood sexual abuse (2009)

Discusses childhood sexual abuse in the context of health care encounters. Identifies principles of trauma-informed practice and provides guidelines for health care services for trauma survivors. Based on extensive interviews with survivors and practitioners. Source: National Clearinghouse on Family Violence (Public Health Agency of Canada) Available at publications.gc.ca/site/eng/329301/publication.html

Trauma-informed Approaches in Addictions Treatment (2009)

A discussion guide to gendering the *National Framework for Action to Reduce the Harms Associated with Alcohol and Other Drugs and Substances in Canada*. Identifies Canadian examples of promising practices in action. Lists discussion questions on providing integrated approaches.

Source: BC Centre for Excellence on Women's Health

Available at bccewh.bc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/2010_GenderingNatFrameworkTraumaInformed.pdf

The Trauma Toolkit: A resource for service organizations and providers to deliver services that are trauma-informed (2nd Edition, 2013)

Provides recommended practices to assist service providers/organizations to increase their capacity to deliver trauma-informed services. Describes the benefits of trauma-informed services. Source: Klinik Community Health Centre (Manitoba)

Available at trauma-informed.ca/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/Trauma-informed_Toolkit.pdf

Understanding Links Between Adolescent Trauma and Substance Abuse: A Toolkit for Providers (2007)

Designed for both service providers and consumers. Discusses trauma and substance abuse, traumatic stress in adolescents, understanding substance abuse in adolescents, and engaging adolescents in treatment.

Source: National Child Traumatic Stress Network (United States) Available at

www.nctsn.org/nctsn_assets/pdfs/Linking_Trauma_and_Substance_Abuse_Complete_4-18-07.pdf

Responding to childhood trauma: the promise and practice of trauma informed care (2006) Describes differential responses to trauma depending on the age of the child; risk and protective factors related to child maltreatment, magnitude of the problem; and subtle psychological effects of trauma on children. Also discusses key components of trauma-informed care, strengths-based approaches and resiliency, and

programmatic approaches to trauma-informed care.

Source: National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors (United States)

Available at www.childrescuebill.org/VictimsOfAbuse/RespondingHodas.pdf

Seeking Safety: A Treatment Manual for PTSD and Substance Abuse (2002)

Website offers the book *Seeking Safety* as well as a wide variety of articles about treatment and implementation (primarily photocopies of journal articles). DVDs are also available for a fee. Source: Seeking Safety (Lisa Najavits and Associates)

Available for a fee at www.chapters.indigo.ca/en-ca/books/seeking-safety-a-treatment-manual/9781572306394-item.html

WEBSITE RESOURCES - CANADA

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Métis Nation Ontario Healing and Wellness Branch: 1-800-263-4889.

Website: www.Métisnation.org

Aboriginal Healing Foundation

An organization dedicated to encouraging and supporting, community-based Aboriginal directed healing initiatives which address the legacy of physical and sexual abuse suffered in Canada's Indian Residential School System, including inter-generational impacts.

<http://www.ahf.ca/>

British Columbia Centre of Excellence for Women's Health (BCCEWH)

The BCCEWH offers a range of information and resources on women's health issues, including substance use, mental health, and trauma-informed approaches through the Coalescing on Women and Substance Use website.

www.coalescing-vc.org

Building Bridges

A cross-sectoral initiative to support women experiencing violence, MHSU issues, led by the Woman Abuse

Response Program at BC Women's Hospital and Health Centre Vancouver, BC.
www.bcwomens.ca/Services/HealthServices/WomanAbuseResponse/Building+Bridges.htm

CAST Canada

CAST Canada helps professionals and corporations better understand the role of trauma and unresolved grief in addictions, homelessness, chronic unemployment, and other concerns through workshops, trainings and keynote speaking throughout Ontario and across Canada.
www.cast-canada.ca/

Centre for Addictions and Mental Health (CAMH)

This knowledge exchange section on the CAMH website offers information for MHSU specialists. There are numerous links to trauma-related issues, as well as culturally sensitive approaches.
knowledgex.camh.net/amhspecialists/specialized_treatment/trauma_treatment/first_stage_trauma/Pages/default.aspx

Homeless Hub of Canada

A site with extensive links to articles and resources related to connections between trauma, substance use, mental health and homelessness.
www.homelesshub.ca/

Info-Trauma

A website with information for practitioners, as well as those who have experienced various forms trauma. There are a range of case studies including a motor vehicle accident, workplace injury, and terrorism, as well as other learning resources.
www.info-trauma.org/

Kelty Mental Health Resource Centre

A child and youth focused resource for practitioners, parents, and caregivers and school-based professionals on MHSU related topics, including links to trauma specific information.
www.keltymentalhealth.ca

kidsLINK

kidsLINK provides a broad range of programs and services to help children, youth, and their families facing or at risk of social, emotional, and mental health challenges. kidsLINK also provides consultation and training for professionals who work with children and youth. Consistent with its commitment to help children and youth achieve their potential, kidsLINK specializes in enabling wellness, building resiliency, and reducing the impact of emotional trauma.
<http://kidslinkcares.com>

Ontario Women Abuse Screening Project

This website offers in-depth information, tools, and training guides to incorporate trauma-informed approaches into MHSU programs and transitional houses. Resources include violence/trauma screening assessments and a number of informational videos and presentations on the connections between violence/trauma, mental health, substance use, and housing.
<http://womanabusescreening.ca>

Community Connections

A treatment and training agency focusing on trauma-informed and trauma-specific approaches for working with those seeking MHSU services.

www.communityconnectionsdc.org/

National Centre on Family Homelessness

This site offers a number of articles and toolkits to help organizations become trauma-informed.

www.familyhomelessness.org/

SAMHSA's National Center for Trauma-Informed Care

A comprehensive website that provides information on trauma-informed practices and implementation.

www.samhsa.gov/ntic/

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Women of the Métis Nation Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak. (2019). MÉTIS PERSPECTIVES OF MISSING AND MURDERED INDIGENOUS WOMEN, GIRLS AND LGBTQ2S+ PEOPLE A report addressing the landscape of missing and murdered Métis women, girls (MMIWG) and gender diverse people in Canada. Ottawa, ON: WMN/LFMO.