Guide to Creating Trauma and Adverse Childhood Experiences (TrACE) Success Indicators

About this Guide

This guide was collaboratively produced with Further Education (FE) staff across Wales to support the sector and wider organisations to develop success indicators when embedding trauma and ACE (TrACE) informed practice by using the TrACE Informed Organisations Toolkit (TrACE Toolkit)[1] and associated resources. Paperboat Consultants supported with the development of this guide by facilitating workshops with the sector and collating the findings. Using the TrACE Toolkit to implement a trauma-informed approach provides a significant opportunity for cross-sectoral impact and should complement other work within health and wellbeing such as tackling COVID recovery, anti-racism plans, equality and diversity impact assessments and peer-on-peer harassment.

The purpose of this guide is to support organisations in the process of defining and tracking progress against self-identified success indicators related to their TrACE journey. This guide could be used at the outset of the TrACE process in order to reflect upon where organisations are, in their organisational TrACE informed journey, and will complement the *TrACE Informed Organisations Toolkit and Implementation Readiness Checklist* in understanding organisational readiness, progress and achievements.

The TrACE Toolkit supports organisations to self-assess their current TrACE practice and set an action plan to track progress towards further embedding a TrACE informed approach. This guide forms part of the TrACE Toolkit and aims to support organisations to:

- deepen their understanding of what success looks like for their specific TrACE journey,
- enable staff to understand the impact their work is having,
- track their success against the intended impact measures they put in place.

This guide will help organisations reflect upon the impact of their TrACE informed approaches in terms of everyone who engages with the organisation, shifts in organisational culture and how effectively trauma-informed approaches are embedded.

Success indicators are a key part of the TrACE Toolkit, in particular, when considering Domain 6 of the self-assessment - Monitoring and Evaluation. This is an opportunity to consider what existing monitoring is in place to attribute to this work but also to consider how better to strengthen the monitoring with additional or different indicators. The development of new indicators and Monitoring and Evaluation plans can be captured in the Action Planning phase of the TrACE Journey. It will be possible to identify some indicators at early stages of the journey, but over time, with a more in-depth understanding of the TrACE journey, it may become easier to identify meaningful ways of measuring change and understanding the organisation's learning needs. Therefore, a flexible approach to monitoring success, with a regular review process

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1   https://acehubwales.com/resources/trace-toolkit/

in place e.g. annual review, it is a good starting point. As with the ethos of the TrACE Toolkit, collaboration with everyone who experiences an organisation is at the heart of this process, therefore it is important that the success indicators are developed and shared with the whole organisation. In this way, any intended impact will be embedded, which will result in lasting impact, institutionalisation, or potential to scale up when possible.

Who this Guide is for

This guide is to help those responsible for developing and monitoring success indicators for the TrACE approach however to ensure maximum impact, engagement with a diverse range of stakeholders is integral in the development of the success indicators.

Guiding Principles

To bring about meaningful **culture change and transformation**, the process of developing and implementing success indicators will help organisations to learn from successes and embed their commitment to trauma-informed delivery. In developing success indicators, the following guiding principles are important:

- This is not a tick-box exercise, but rather an **appreciative evaluative process** that promotes a culture of learning and reflection on the strengths and qualities of your organization as well as any improvements required. Tools and language should be inclusive and supportive rather than judgmental and respect all those experiencing the organisation as equal partners in this learning process.

- Data collection for success indicators will **embed trauma-informed approaches**, ensuring not to cause harm or distress in monitoring or reporting. In planning monitoring through a trauma-informed lens, consideration will need to be paid to potential risks and ways to mitigate those risks.

- Provide a **feedback loop** stimulating **reflection** upon the process. This will support the strengthening and adaptation of TrACE informed approaches within your organisation. The aim is to create a culture of ongoing reflection and assessment, a continual process of long-term transformation and improvement.

- Organisations should not feel that they need to **reinvent the wheel**, and where possible identify current sources of data gathering that can evidence success.

- Long-term institutional **cultural change** will take time, and success indicators need to be able to demonstrate incremental achievements towards a long-term goal.

As with all elements of the TrACE Toolkit, the work involved in collecting data and evaluation follows the Trauma Informed Wales Principles as shown in Appendix 1

Appendix 1

THE 5 PRACTICE PRINCIPLES

A universal approach that does no harm, proactively supports and encompasses community-led approaches, prevention initiatives and specialist therapies to enable transformation within systems.

Person centred: the person is always at the centre of a trauma-informed approach. It takes a co-productive, collaborative cross-sector approach to identifying, understanding and supporting the person's needs. It promotes psychological and physical safety by promoting choice, collaboration and transparency.

Relationship-focused: safe, supportive, empathic, compassionate and trusting relationships are central to a trauma-informed approach.

Resilience and strengths-focused: a trauma-informed approach builds on the natural resilience of individuals, families and communities.

Inclusive: a trauma-informed approach recognises the impact of diversity, discrimination and racism. It understands the impact of cultural, historic and gender inequalities and is inclusive of everyone in society.

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Measuring Success

What is a success indicator?

A success indicator is a measurable value that represents progress towards a desired impact. These are signs by which your implementation is monitored, and achievements are evaluated. Success indicators let you know that something has changed or is changing.

Indicators may be quantitative or qualitative.

Quantitative change indicators can be shown through numbers, for example, the number of students attending support services or the number of staff that have been trained. Quantitative indicators are measurements of quantities or amounts so can relate to the number of services that your offer or numbers of people engaged in certain activities. They can be written as absolute numbers or can also be a written as a percentage.

An example of a quantitative indicator might be:
'50% increase in the number of staff who enrol on TrACE training workshops each year' or *'At the end of the year, 20 senior managers have taken a TrACE informed approach to leadership'*.

In contrast, ***Qualitative change indicators*** can be shown through description. Qualitative indicators are people's judgments or perceptions about a subject.

An example would be:
'Staff report feeling safe in their working environment.' Another example might be, *'Service beneficiaries feel valued and respected in the support they receive'*. Another *'Staff understand the principles of trauma-informed practice and the value it adds to their role'*.

To note: It is important to recognise that some qualitative indicators contain a number or numeric components, so you need to look beyond numbers to what change is actually being measured. Check to see if the change relates to some sort of opinion, belief, or way of thinking. If not, it is most likely a quantitative indicator. If it describes the implementation of an activity or a one-off event, it is almost certainly a quantitative indicator.

The following section will set out the approach and the key elements to consider when developing success indicators for your organisation.

Review current Monitoring and Evaluation

Before developing success indicators, it may be helpful to reflect upon how success is currently being measured at your organisation and how this process can improve data collection. If you have already completed the TrACE toolkit this could be a useful starting point for reflection.

Points to consider: How does your organisation currently measure success? What information is currently being captured in relation to TrACE approaches? Is this sufficient to capture what you want to know and learn about? What are the current gaps in your data collection? What else do you want to know? What is it that your organisation wants to learn more about?

Steps to creating indicators

It can be challenging, initially, to find indicators that prove that there is a change which can be attributed to your activities but with thought and analysis it should be possible to identify indicators which can act as useful evidence for the success of the work. Your success indicator could relate to TrACE impacts that create a positive change for individuals who experience the organisation, they could relate to changes in organisational culture or physical environment. This can include behaviour change and/or improvements in organisational performance. In thinking about change in your organisation, you should consider the desired impacts you want to affect across all domain areas.

> **As with all aspects of the TrACE Toolkit, collaborative leadership will work best for this task and so working with a cross section of people in the organisation will be helpful.**

Start by exploring ideas to determine the desired impact for the TrACE work.

Be selective, start by thinking about the domains and create a list of possible indicators, then narrow it down to a few key indicators.

Identify an appropriate number of key indicators that you feel you can manage as an organisation and that will provide information needed to inform your TrACE organisational development. This may cover all domains; be shaped by key focus areas you wish to further develop as an organisation; or you may choose to focus your success indicators on a specific domain initially. Again, think about the gaps in your current monitoring and what you want to find out about.

Points to consider when defining your success indicators:

- Think about what is going to be measured, what is going to change and who is involved in the change.

- Make sure that you include a range of qualitative and quantitative indicators.

- Consider the timeframe and when change will happen both in short, medium and long-term goals/objectives.

- Determine what type of data is measured and the sources of data collection. This should aim to utilise existing monitoring data where possible and not add another layer of assessment unnecessarily or need integration.

SMART Indicators

One way to develop good indicators is to use the **SMART** criteria, as explained below. Consider each of these points when developing new indicators or revising old ones.

- **Specific**: The indicator should accurately describe what is intended to be measured and should not include multiple measurements in one indicator.

- **Measurable**: Regardless of who uses the indicator, consistent results should be obtained and tracked under the same conditions.

- **Attainable**: Collecting data for the indicator should be simple, straightforward, and cost-effective.

- **Relevant**: The indicator should be closely connected with each respective input, output or outcome.

- **Time-bound**: The indicator should include a specific time frame

Examples of Success Indicators

The tables below provide some examples of success indicators to give you a starting point for establishing your own measures for change.

Behaviour change indicators

Behaviour change measures improved knowledge, attitudes or actions. Think about the behaviour change you hope to see through your interventions, whose behaviour is expected to change and in what ways? This could relate to changes in positive interaction with service users, reductions in anti-social behaviour, changes to wellbeing or could also relate to increased staff competencies. This could be quantitative relating to how many service users have been reached, how many training events held and staff trained; or qualitative indicators which will focus more on how individual staff/service users knowledge, ways of thinking or practices have changed. See Appendix 2 for examples of qualitative case studies showing the domain areas that can be measured using this method.

Methods: management information systems, surveys, attendance sheets, observation, policy reviews etc.

Example Behaviour Change indicators
Quantitative indicators could be:
# of staff attending TrACE training workshops this year
# of staff/service users accessing a trusted adult to report a wellbeing concern over the past year
# of staff/service users referred to support and wellbeing services over the implementation period
% decrease in sanctions being issued for service users related to behaviour/non-compliance over the past year
Qualitative indicators could be:
Case studies which evidence staff who have implemented changes in their work following access to TrACE training
/ increase in staff participating in reflective practice sessions
Examples of increased positive perception of staff around wellbeing, self-care and safe working practices

Institutional performance indicators

Institutional performance change relates to how processes and systems work within your organisation and may relate to wider organisational change. This might include considering how communication and management systems are working, change in the organisation's culture and the ways in which staff and service users experience your organisation. This could measure economic, social or environmental performance changes. Quantitative changes may relate to the number and range of services and performance rates. Qualitative changes might examine improved communication and information sharing.

Data Collection Methods: surveys, staff appraisal process and supervision records audits, service user forums, management information system etc.

Example Institutional Performance Indicators
Quantitative indicators could be:
Increased # of wellbeing and green spaces provided over next five years
% Increase in staff retention rates at your organisation over next three years
20 % increase in retention of looked after children and young people over next five years
30 % decrease in staff sickness relating to work related stress
Increased # of people reporting feeling psychologically safe in organisations spaces over the past year
Qualitative indicators could be:
Examples that evidence improved collaboration between departments to track and respond to the needs of service users
Case studies that evidence increased information sharing between different agencies when supporting an individual
Case studies that evidence increased recognition of signs and symptoms of burnout when managers are communicating with staff within the management and appraisal system

How to Develop a Success Indicator Action Plan

The following section provides a template to develop your own Success Indicator Action Plan. This process will allow you to map the changes you wish to track across institution.

- **Success Indicators:** Capture the key success indicators you wish to measure/ report against. Remember these are indicators that will evidence the expected change you want to see across your institution. Ideally, these should capture both quantitative and qualitative changes.

- **Data Collection:** How will you measure or monitor changes? What specific tools or methods will be used to collect them? This should aim to utilise existing monitoring and data collection where possible. This might include: Service user/staff surveys, MIS, collaborative events/activities, reviewing policies and planning, community forums, tracking and progression systems

- **To be collected by whom:** Who is the target group that the indicator relates to e.g. Senior Leadership, staff, service users, wider community etc.

- **Evidence of Change:** This is to capture any key progress or changes that have been captured in data collection.

- **Date to be reviewed:** Consider how frequently this should be reviewed. Some indicators make need more time to deliver.

For Example:

Domain Areas	Thematic Areas	Success Indicators	Data Collection (incl. current data sources)	To be collected by whom?	Evidence of change at time of review	Date to be reviewed
Governance, Leadership and Organisational Culture	Support to staff	20% uptake of EAP (Employment Assistance Programme) by staff	EAP access records, staff appraisal records	HR Department	Staff appraisals show increased work satisfaction.	Annually - Dec 2023
Policies and procedures	Staff disciplinary	Reduction of Staff Disciplinaries	Disciplinary records	HR Department	Managers considered staff's personal situations and leading to them accessing further support.	Annually - Dec 2023
Workforce Training and Support	Staff training	10 staff members trained in Trauma & ACE (TrACE) Informed Practice	Training records, Staff wellbeing surveys	HR Department	Staff being better able to explain and deliver TrACE informed approaches after receiving training. Increased positive perception of staff around wellbeing, self-care and safe working practices.	Annually - Dec 2023
Physical Environment	Safe Spaces	# of staff & service beneficiaries reporting feeling safe in the service and the space provided	Staff & Service Beneficiaries surveys	HR Department	Staff and Service user feedback is used to inform, develop and review safe spaces and is reviewed in a meaningful ways	Annually - Dec 2023
Service Design and Delivery	Induction	50% of service beneficiaries report feeling well supported in the induction phase of the service	Service Beneficiaries survey feedback	Communications & Marketing / Service Manager	Surveys report service beneficiaries felt supported during the induction phase	Annually - Dec 2023

Success Indicator Action plan

Domain Areas	Thematic Areas	Success Indicators	Data Collection (incl. current data sources)	To be collected by whom?	Evidence of change at time of review	Date to be reviewed
Governance, Leadership and Organisational Culture						
Policies and procedures						
Workforce Training and Support						
Physical Environment						
Service Design and Delivery						

APPENDIX 2: Qualitative case study examples with domain area(s):

Situation before the Trauma Lens approach:

Tutor was having challenges in getting the cohort of learners to engage following the weekend. This often had an impact on the rest of the week. From an organisational perspective this resulted in figures on achievement being affected for the whole week and as a consequence the tutor was being asked to bring their attendance and engagement figures to align with the overall targets of the department.

The tutor tried many different approaches to support the class in getting more engaged and each time there would be other issues that surfaced. All appeared to be a result of weekend social and personal issues which had residual effect for the tutor and the learners in that cohort. This would often result in sessions being interrupted and not being able to stay on task for the session plan. This would also mean reports to wellbeing department and other student support services

Situation with Trauma lens approach:

The tutor who had recently completed TrACEs training with the college understood the wider context of the TrACE approach, and used that confidence to made decisions to be creative by deciding to change the timetable at the beginning of the week. Recognising that there was similar issues almost weekly with the class being unsettled, displaying and expressing behaviours which became disruptive throughout the week, the tutor took action...

The tutor arranged for Monday morning session to encompass a post weekend briefing. She discussed and agreed this with the learners. This included some morning refreshments and the group had a catch up and reflected on the weekend. This gave learners the opportunity to de-compress and to park any issues. It also allowed the tutor to get an understanding of what may be happening for those learners that week. This took approx. 1 hour of the learning week which is approx. 16 hours teaching.

As a result of this change, by a trauma lens and recognising that there were issues from the weekend that were affecting the classes performance, the tutor took 1 hour and changed the structure. This change was recognised and evidence was reflective of the targets expected in student attendance, engagement, and learning.

Other tutors have seen this approach and have also started to implement small changes using a trauma lens and looking beyond the behaviour and symptom and instead trying to focus on the root of reasons why the class may have been responding the way they were based on their individual weekend experiences and used collaboration with the learners to help make a plan on how to manage the classroom.

Domain Area:

Workforce Development	Service Design & Delivery	Physical Environment

Situation before the Trauma Lens approach:

External visitor arrived at training room to support in the delivery of training – initial observations from the external visitor was the training room was very cluttered, old papers, stacked cardboard boxes, unemptied tea and coffee urns from a previous training, unemptied bins. Despite the room being very spacious the chairs, clutter and general mess made the feel very chaotic and not conducive to a positive learning experience. The room had great natural lighting, however in the afternoon when the sun was beaming through the windows there was nothing on the windows to prevent the glare from disrupting the PowerPoint visual on-screen leaving trainer feeling frustrated as the audience were unable to see sidle show content including any videos that supported the learning experience. External trainer was able to discuss this constructively with the other trainer and it was something that would be fed back to internal steering group around TrACE. It was agreed that this room would only be used as a last resort until some basic practical measure were put in place to create a physical space that was safe and nurturing and provided an environment to promote learning.

Situation with Trauma Lens approach:

The training team were given the green light to start a deep clean of this space getting rid of any unnecessary clutter and unused items that had been left in this space but not specific to training. The room was decorated, new seating and blinds installed that would mean minimal disruption to the learning experience. This transformation was welcomed by the training team as it created an environment that was safe and nurturing and one that staff would feel comfortable in to explore new ideas and learning.

Domain Area:

Service Design & Delivery

Physical Environment

Situation before Trauma Lens:

Senior Manager at Director level involved in high level decision making with regards to someone accessing their service based on recent behaviours and non compliance. They took part in co-produced training on TrACE as a whole organisational approach, during which the individual perceived they were using a trauma aware approach in everything they were doing in their role.

Situation with Trauma Lens:

Following the TrACE training the Senior Manager shared that, what they perceived as being already 'trauma aware', was on reflection not adhering to all the principles as detailed in the Framework (see Appendix 1). They felt they needed to be more mindful of the language, tone of voice and even ensuring that were considering the space in which they were carrying out these high-level decision-making meetings. As a result of this change, they have noticed that interactions and outcomes of these meetings are more aligned with the practice principles. This has also prompted a review of current policies and processes and responses to operation team members including managers.

Domain Area:

Leadership & Governance	Workforce Development	Policies and Procedures
Service Design & Delivery	Physical Environment	