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6 Ways to Put TIC Principles into Practice



WHAT 100 YEARS OF TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE HAS TAUGHT WOODCRAFT RANGERS

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Woodcraft Rangers has over a century of service to youth in under-resourced communities, having welcomed all genders and youth of color long before many institutions. Therefore, the agency has deep experience with the impacts of generational trauma. Woodcraft's current trauma-informed care (TIC) practices, honed over decades of experience, offer many model and practical examples.

Today, the organization focuses on the six TIC principles – **safety, trust and transparency, peer support, collaboration, empowerment, and cultural, historical, and gender awareness** – for youth and the staff that guide them.

Physical and Psychological Safety

For youth, Woodcraft's Behavior Engagement Model (BEM) emphasizes prevention and when necessary, intervention strategies rooted in restorative practices: centering relationships and repairing harm in its many forms. Woodcraft's TIC associate also creates safety for staff by providing one-on-one check-ins, restorative circles, professional and personal development, and internal/external resources in mental-health first aid and crisis intervention.

Trust and Transparency

Trust and transparency are essential at all levels of any organization, and even more so when working with individuals who experience trauma. At school sites, staff and youth align on program agreements to establish clarity and expectations, fostering healthy relationships. At monthly staff meetings, departments share organizational updates and discuss goals. Agency leadership invites open communication, discloses decision-making processes on important matters like compensation, and intentionally allots time for community-building. Woodcraft understands the harm of broken commitments, especially for those healing from trauma, and therefore emphasizes following through and building trust.

Positive Peer-Interactions

Woodcraft promotes positive-peer interactions by developing curricula that embed social emotional learning – self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making – into all programmatic elements, which models how to trust and rely on each other. This sense of belonging, with others who faced similar challenges, is instrumental in their healing journey.



Julee Brooks, Chief Executive Officer of Woodcraft Rangers, is a visionary and strategic nonprofit leader with nearly 20 years' experience delivering excellence in programming and guiding youth-focused nonprofit agencies through dynamic organizational growth and building coalitions for maximized social impact.

Cassandra Arechiga is a Trauma-Informed Care Associate at Woodcraft Rangers. Cassandra Arechiga is a dedicated and passionate advocate for trauma-informed care, relationship-centered engagement, and the promotion of positive psychological practices. With a deep commitment to making a positive impact, her core philosophies of holistic healing, advocacy and service elevates the work of Woodcraft Rangers.



Empowerment

One of Woodcraft's core tenets is that every youth "deserves to be an active participant in defining their own paths," empowering youth to take ownership of their growth and development where participants (re)discover their voice, autonomy and self-realization.

Woodcraft scaffolds youth agency through a youth-choice, youth-led, and youth-driven model in **collaboration** with elementary, middle, and high school programs to empower and/or rebuild a sense of control that may have been lost due to trauma. For staff, many also from under-resourced communities, Woodcraft's Lifecraft: College and Career Accelerator provides parallel supports to forward lifetime college and career achievement and income potential.

Cultural, Historical and Gender Awareness

Committed to representing, respecting and meeting the needs of the different communities we serve, Woodcraft seeks and listens deeply to community feedback, provides culturally relevant programming, practices hyperlocal staffing, encourages parent engagement and promotes gender equity. Furthermore, this year, Woodcraft launched a large-scale inclusion initiative with the formation of an inclusion department to serve youth with intellectual/developmental differences specifically from multilingual families.

Woodcraft's dedication to TIC provides a strong model for organizations seeking to make similar positive impacts, especially in this post-COVID era. Through unwavering commitment, Woodcraft Rangers is not only changing the lives of the youth they serve, they are building a brighter and more compassionate future for us all.