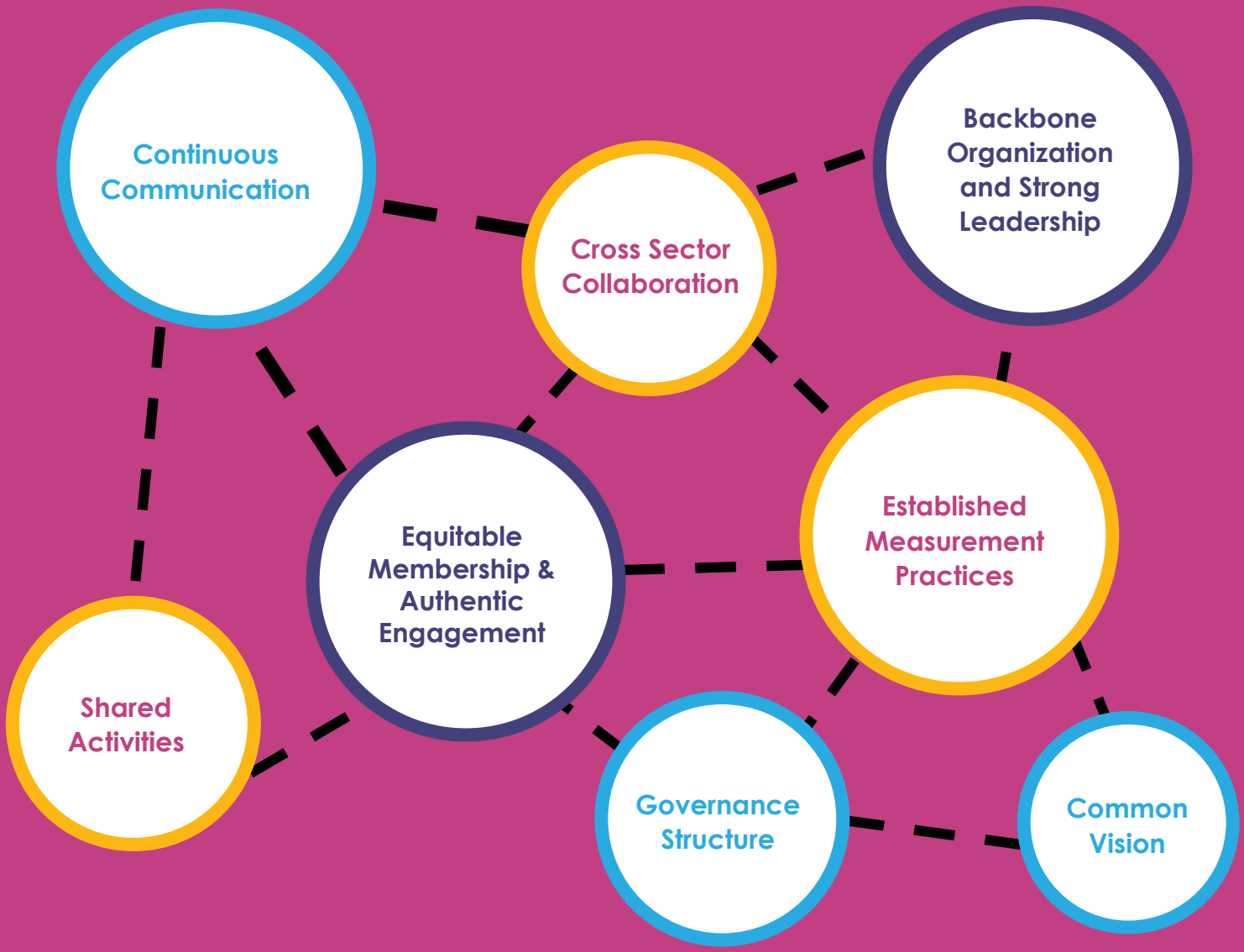
FACT's Framework for
Building and Maintaining a Trauma-Informed Community Network



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Introduction

Throughout Virginia, there are more than twenty communities coming together across sectors to address health, safety, and equity. Many of these efforts are organizing as trauma-informed community networks (TICNs) – defined by Mobilizing Action for Resilient Communities as a "group of residents and organizations or entities representing diverse perspectives across neighborhoods and sectors in a geographically-defined community that are leveraging the science of adverse childhood experiences and trauma to build relationships, convene regularly, and advance a common agenda around resilience." This document outlines key elements to guide cross-sector coordination and collaboration to build and maintain TICNs. This framework will inform future grant funding decisions and technical assistance provided by FACT, but is also intended to serve as a suggested model for emerging and existing TICNs as this movement evolves across the Commonwealth.

Framework for Building and Maintaining a Trauma-Informed Community Network
Cross Sector Collaboration
Backbone Organization and Strong Leadership
Common Vision
Equitable Membership and Authentic Engagement
Governance Structure
Shared Activities
Established Measurement Practices
Continuous Communication

[1]Mobilizing Action for Resilient Communities. (2019). Mobilizing Action for Resilient Communities through policy and advocacy: A toolkit for trauma-informed, cross-sector networks. Philadelphia, PA: Health Federation of Philadelphia.

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Cross Sector Collaboration:

Trauma and adverse experiences are complex issues, oftentimes inextricably linked to larger social conditions, that require multi-faceted strategies from a comprehensive network of stakeholders. Everyone has a role to play. Every sector must be involved. Engage traditional and non-traditional partners in your TICN to leverage diverse expertise and perspectives and to develop new and innovative ways to serve your community. While the composition of your TICN should not be prescribed, consider engaging partners from the listing of sectors provided in ***Table A*** below based on your specific community needs and strengths.

Backbone Organization and Strong Leadership:

An organizational champion convenes partners, fosters connections, and drives change in order to push and sustain large-scale collaborative efforts. A backbone organization provides an infrastructure through dedicated staff and ongoing facilitation of TICN partners to ensure that everyone remains connected to an overarching purpose, efforts are maximized, work and accomplishments are shared, and duplication of effort is avoided.

Common Vision:

Any multi-sector collaboration must be grounded in clarity of purpose. Your TICN should develop a shared vision for change that ensures a unified approach to building healthier and more resilient communities.

Equitable Membership and Authentic Engagement:

Consider how issues concerning race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality and economics impact the distribution of power and the management of conflict across TICNs. Give thought to diversity, equity and inclusion when engaging multiple partners. Consider ways to involve partners with lived experience in primary and secondary trauma and engage them as equal partners.

Governance Structure:

Many collaborative efforts excel at unifying around a common vision, but fail in execution. Determine a governance structure that supports cross-agency and cross-sector decision-making to ensure forward progress. Included in the design should be a strategy to collaborate and coordinate with statewide trauma-informed activities.

Shared Activities:

Defining shared activities, in line with best practices, will enable your TICN to move beyond a common vision and test your ability to create and sustain change. Consider organizing collaborative activities that raise awareness and promote education through presentations and training, evaluate and address specific community needs, examine and align organizational and community policies and practices, transform service delivery to clients, and/or change physical environments to be trauma-informed. Activities should leverage the expertise and skills of partners, while mutually reinforcing your TICN's overall vision.

Established Measurement Practices:

TICNs must outline clear measures of success in order to move beyond just good ideas and achieve outcomes that result in measurable change. Consider clear goals, measurable objectives and defined performance milestones that enables you to document your progress and celebrate your accomplishments. As your TICN evolves, collecting data and measuring results consistently will ensure efforts remain aligned.

Continuous Communication:

Communication can be one of the most challenging tasks during any transformational process. It is also one of the most critically-important. Communicate consistently, frequently, and authentically and allow opportunities for feedback and questions about your process among participating TICN partners and the broader community.

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Appendices

***Table A*- Collaboration may include representatives from the following sectors:**		
Healthcare	Domestic Violence	Community Services
Social Services	Senior Organizations	Business
Early Childhood Education	Disability Organizations	Military
Justice System	Faith Based Organizations	Media
Housing & Homelessness	Emergency Responders	Policy & Advocacy
Education	Philanthropy	Political Organizations
Youth Organizations	Civic Engagement	Community Initiatives
Recreational Clubs & Organizations		Mental Health Providers

Download an electronic version of this Framework and find accompanying resources at www.fact.virginia.gov/fact-framework/