

Dauphin County Trauma-Informed Collaborative

Declaration of Unity & Cultural Competency

The Dauphin County Trauma-Informed Collaborative Community aims to raise trauma-informed awareness as it relates to increasing the presence of cultural humility and cultural competency in the County and State. We propose a set of recommendations to business and government institutions, community organizations, and individuals to achieve this goal.

Business and Government Institutions

We ask all institutional boards in the county to create an action plan to promote cultural humility and competency. Implementing cultural competency training is necessary for people to raise their awareness and truly have an open mind. Each institution can bring real progress by providing incentives for taking trainings; because each individual's process in developing true cultural competency is an evolutionary process, this training needs to occur on a frequent and regular basis, not just intermittently. A foundational principle is that the initial interaction with people from different cultures is always more productive and satisfying when it is respectful and acknowledging of each person's inalienable dignity and value. Any engagement with clients, including human service and even probation and parole work, can be viewed as customer service. Teamwork and language matters; for example, using terms like "working with" instead of "working for," actually forwards the goal of *inclusion*. Similarly, because resilience and daily practice of awareness are necessary to help each of us deal with our own personal "triggers" in non-harmful ways, we also recommend teaching and coaching resilience.

Community Organizations

We ask that all community organizations oppose all forms of prejudice and oppression by establishing a summary of action. We need a shared vision that is consistent and includes healing, accountability, and empathy. We currently have an unprecedented opportunity to reconstruct the narrative of racism in order to transform and empower the community by creating safe spaces and allowing people to feel uncomfortable while offering the opportunity for people to engage. Words are important, so we recommend using strengths-based language. It starts with each of us; if we are to get to the root of the problem, careful and respectful listening is the critical starting point to creating dialogue. In order to accomplish this, we need regular, consistently held events, including summits of community organization leaders, aimed at establishing a united community determined to uproot old, harmful ideas.

Individuals

We suggest that everyone begin by learning and employing self-care techniques such as meditation or simply taking a pause. In the context of inner peace and calm, we can seek out and explore within ourselves the internalized racist attitudes that are the unsought legacy of the world in which we were born and raised. With that self-knowledge as a foundation, we recommend techniques focused on individual healing, listening to the perspective of others and incorporating personal history to help us relate to others. We must build capacity, competence, and confidence in individuals to be trauma-informed and culturally aware. This will enable us to more effectively develop and implement transformative strategies in all community settings, especially our schools.

Conclusion

If you are reading this, you are likely among the broader community seeking to change the historical legacy of community trauma and systemic racism, to a legacy of equity and inclusion. You are needed.

Welcome to the Dauphin County Trauma-Informed Collaborative Community!

Values

We suggest the following one-word values for this action plan, and we invite you to add your own:

- vision
- consistency
- focus
- healing
- opportunity
- listen
- engage
- unity
- accountability
- reconstruct
- connect
- transform
- tutoring
- determination
- empathy
- empower
- transparency