

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**  
**Between Tarpon Springs Community Trauma Informed Community Initiative**  
**And Community Partners/Members**

**PREAMBLE:**

**VISION:** Tarpon Springs is a community where children and families are safe, healthy, cared for and educated.

**MISSION:** Tarpon Springs Trauma Informed Community Initiative's mission is to provide everyone in our community with information on the causes and consequences of trauma, public and provider education, resource assistance and advocacy for appropriate *prevention and intervention services*. To effect long-term community improvement we work to increase awareness of issues facing members of our community who have been traumatized to promote healing.

**DEFINITIONS:**

**TRAUMA:** Trauma is the negative impact of experiences of events that happen to children, adults and communities as a result of physical, economic, psychological or environmental assault. Trauma may include physical, emotional and/or sexual abuse. Trauma may be caused by domestic violence, community violence, war, loss, natural disaster, long-term exposure to maltreatment and other conditions. Developmental trauma may begin before birth and continue across the lifespan. Trauma may be predictable or unforeseen.

The results of trauma may include severe injury, feelings of helplessness, inability to cope, stress, relationship difficulties, health problems, mental health issues and many others.

**TRAUMA INFORMED COMMUNITY:** Trauma Informed community refers to an awareness and comprehension of the root causes of trauma in the community. It expresses a commitment to understand, educate and provide resources to foster a safe and healthy environment where children and families can grow and develop. Identifying a network of schools, social service agencies, businesses, clergy, health care providers, safety and governmental offices and others who are committed to assist in the healing of trauma is essential in the formation of a trauma informed community. Through these entities the education, intervention and treatment of the effects of trauma will be accomplished. Using a strengths-based approach, individuals and groups will be assisted in defining their own capacities to contribute to developing a healthy community.

**THIS MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**

This Memorandum of Understanding (or "MOU") is entered into this 11<sup>th</sup> day of February 2011, by and between the designated Community Partner/Member and the Tarpon Springs Trauma Informed Community Initiative (TSTICI);

**WHEREAS**, there is a definite correlation between the experience of trauma and resulting behavioral and health problems when the effects of trauma are unrecognized and unaddressed;

**WHEREAS**, the community recognizes that the cumulative effects of trauma over the lifespan are detrimental to individuals and society, and the consequences of ignoring trauma exist for the individual (depression, addiction, suicide, trouble concentrating and succeeding) as well as society (poverty, homelessness, domestic violence, child abuse/neglect and incarceration);

**WHEREAS**, Tarpon Springs has made a commitment to address the causes and consequences of trauma through a coordinated comprehensive community effort; and

**WHEREAS**, the parties involved desire Tarpon Springs to be a trauma informed community that cares for its citizens by providing trauma information, education, prevention, resources and assistance.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, the parties agree as follows:

**Steering Committee:** The parties will convene a community Steering Committee chaired by a Tarpon Springs Official or designated representative, which will meet on a monthly basis or other agreed upon schedule, to design and oversee the community response to trauma. Steering Committee members will serve as a liaison between their organization and the Initiative. The Steering Committee will have an overarching role, guiding the Children’s Initiative and other interrelated efforts in the community. Each community partner/member will also serve on at least one of the related action Committees or will assign a designee, in order to implement the work plan:

1. **Social Marketing Committee** whose purpose is to develop a social messaging campaign to educate the public at large about the causes and consequences of trauma and how ordinary citizens can play a role in reducing trauma in their own families, neighborhoods, faith organizations, social groups, and workplaces.
2. **Provider Education Committee’s** focus is to offer support, clarify and identify talent, assess trainer qualifications, work with community agencies in articulating their training needs, coordinate training opportunities for both professionals and community members within Tarpon Springs.
3. **Resource Development Committee** whose purpose is assess the current state of available services and resources (both professional and informal) to treat and support victims of trauma as well as recommend strategies to address identified resource gaps.
4. **Community Action Committee** will support any community initiatives that dovetail with the mission of this effort, including (but not limited to) the Children’s Initiative, which will select a population of children, wrapping them with services to help them deal with trauma and move forward. Will help identify prevention and intervention services available and ensure that this information is used as part of a coordinated, cohesive plan.

**Duration; Termination:** This MOU will remain in effect for an indeterminate period. Either party may terminate this MOU upon written notice to the other party.

**SIGNATURES OF COMMITMENT:**

**Tarpon Springs Trauma Informed Community Initiative:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**(Please write in the name of Community Partner Organization and/or Individual Member)**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**