



## What is trauma?

Trauma is the emotional, psychological and physiological residue left over from heightened stress that accompanies experiences of threat, violence, and life-challenging events. Traumatic experiences overwhelm our capacity to cope. Even after the stressful or traumatic situation has passed, our brains and bodies continue to react as if the stress is still occurring.

## Trauma-informed care

Trauma-informed care is an approach that recognises that trauma is common and that people accessing services and people delivering services may be affected by trauma. Trauma-informed care is holistic, empowering, strengths-focused, collaborative and reflective. It promotes physical, emotional, spiritual and cultural safety.

## Our approach

At Family Support Network we recognise that trauma can affect people in many ways, including physical, emotional, psychological, behavioural, social and interpersonal impacts. We work to ensure that our service will not cause further trauma, harm or distress.

We do this by including principles and values that support wellbeing and applying them in dynamic and reflective ways across our service environment, workforce, culture, policy and practice. We seek to provide relationships and environments in which participants can feel safe to disclose and discuss trauma.



# 7 Domains of Trauma-Informed Care

**Knowledge and Understanding**—Having the knowledge, skills and confidence to respond to the needs of people who have experienced, or are experiencing, trauma in a way that promotes safety, healing, and recovery.

**Safety**—A sense of safety is vital to recovery from trauma and experiencing of wellbeing. This includes all types of safety; physical, emotional, psychological, spiritual, and cultural.

**Relationship-based and collaborative**—Relationships are the basis of an effective service response. For people to receive a safe and helpful service, our practitioners must be authentic, attuned, empathic, trustworthy, and non-judgemental.

**Participant voice**— Participant involvement is made up of five key principles

1. The participant voice is essential for quality and safety.
2. Participants have expertise.
3. Ensuring the participant's voice is heard is a shared responsibility.
4. There are many client voices.
5. The client voice leads to action.

**Holistic approach**— Every person is a complex mix of different qualities, aspirations and identities. Taking a holistic view means we understand and flexibly respond to a person's culture, identity and context. This includes understanding a person's unique lived experience and identifying a person's strengths and resources for their recovery.

**Focus on wellbeing**—Wellbeing is a complex mix of a person's physical, mental, emotional and social health factors. Wellbeing is strongly linked to happiness and life satisfaction. A focus on wellbeing means we value and work towards the wellbeing of the people who work with us, as well as focusing on the wellbeing, healing and recovery of people using our services.

**Reflection**—Reflective practice makes meaning from experience and transforms insights into practical strategies for learning, growth and impact. It involves making sense of complex needs, situations and behaviours. Our practitioners challenge their own beliefs and assumptions, develop insights into their own triggers and sensitivities, and recognise and address power imbalances in relationships, particularly between people using our services and those providing services.