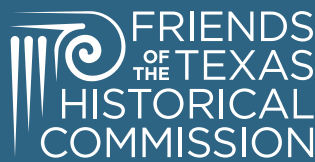


# CRISIS AND TRAUMA RESPONSE TOOLKIT FOR CULTURAL WORKERS 2023



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## INSTRUCTIONS

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This toolkit is designed to be used as a whole or in-part. It contains stand-alone chapters, which can be used on an as-needed basis. The organization of the toolkit proceeds from larger topics to more specific topics.

### TIPS FOR USAGE:

1. Watch the video(s) for the toolkit chapter(s)
2. Review the toolkit chapter in its entirety.
3. Use the discussion prompts to facilitate discussion with staff, community members, or others.
4. Engage in the recommended trainings or programming as desired.

Please note that this toolkit includes content that will continue to be updated.

This project was made possible in part by the Institute of Museum and Library Services, Grant #CAGML-247929-OMLS-20 ([www.ims.gov](http://www.ims.gov)).

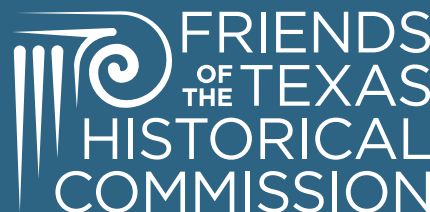
The views, findings, conclusions or recommendations expressed in this "Crisis and Trauma Response Toolkit" do not necessarily represent those of the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

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As stated in the introduction, this toolkit is offered as "permanently incomplete" product and will be continually updated as new information and resources become available. The views, findings, conclusions, or recommendations shared in the video presentations are those of the presenting experts and do not necessarily represent the opinions of the Friends of the Texas Historical Commission.

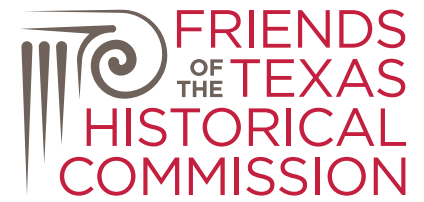
While some of the video presentations are provided by licensed therapists, the training and programming recommendations, which came out of the "lab" sessions, are presented as suggested practices to be used by cultural workers at their discretion and NOT as therapy.

FRONT COVER: Images of Caddo Mounds State Historic Site, Fulton Mansion State Historic Site, and Maggoffin Home State Historic Site.



# ADDRESSING TRAUMA WITH CHILDREN AND YOUTH

*Responding to children and youth impacted by trauma*



When the most precious members of our communities, children and youth, are impacted by traumatic events, they need special tending. Unlike adults who can verbalize emotions, needs, and struggles, children are only just developing the ability to understand and communicate their thoughts and feelings. For them, the experience of trauma is one of powerlessness, and they may struggle to express how impacted they have been by an event. Children and youth need caring adults who can recognize the signs of trauma and work quickly to establish a sense of safety. Knowing a few key skills can help make sure an organization is prepared to respond to the unique needs of this special population.

In their presentation “Addressing Trauma with Children and Youths,” Little M. Vila-Barrett focuses on how to address trauma with children and youth. They emphasize that trauma informed care when helping young people starts with listening to them, being open to meet them where they are, sitting with your own discomfort, and most importantly - believing them. Though responses to trauma vary from child to child, Vila-Barrett teaches viewers how to identify some of the more common symptoms of trauma, noting that when a child experiences symptoms, the community around them is also impacted. Therefore, paying attention to our emotional and physical states, how we feel in our own

bodies as we begin to respond to the child, is critical so that we can respond in ways that benefit them rather than adding to their distress. Vila-Barrett explains how to assist children impacted by trauma by using the S.A.F.E.T.Y. model:

- **S**afety first
- **A**llowing expression of feelings
- **F**ollowing your child to lead
- **E**nable your child to tell their story (before and after)
- **T**ies: Reconnect with community (support of people, culture, and rituals)
- **Y**our child needs you

As this model illustrates, a key element in responding to children is being present and listening, without judgment, without telling them what to do, without putting your own stresses onto them but actively, honestly listening.

## LITTLE VILA BARRETT

Little M Vila-Barrett (they/them), LMFT, is a transracial adoptee from Bogota, Colombia, a BIPOC/QBIPOC activist and mental health advocate. Little is an Expressive Arts Therapist, Certified Professional Coach, and member of AAMFT and QAAMFT. Their work focuses on developing and enhancing individuals' internal strengths, cultural identity, empowerment, and internal decolonization. Little helps people develop their own narrative, explore their unique cultural identities and engage in the lifelong work of adoption healing to facilitate finding an authentic voice and honoring their personal truth. Little was placed into a closed adoption at two years old, and continues to do trauma-healing work and “blood family-blood country” connecting work to unite with the land of their ancestors and their Indigenous culture. Little hopes to provide others with allyship and connection to their roots.



Children engaging in a group arts and craft activity, Fulton Mansion State Historic Site in Rockport, Texas.



# DISCUSSION GUIDE

*Talk with others within your organization about helping children and youth impacted by trauma.*

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Using the facilitation tips below, set aside time to engage members of your organization in discussion.

## FACILITATION TIPS

*Create a safe space for productive group discussions.*

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- Create a set of agreed-upon guidelines for group discussions.
- Clearly articulate the goal(s) of the discussion.
- Listen respectfully, without interrupting.
- Listen actively and with an ear to understanding others' views. (Don't just think about what you are going to say while someone else is talking.)
- Avoid criticizing. We all can learn something from each other, even if your views do not necessarily align.
- Avoid blame, speculation, and inflammatory language.
- Allow everyone the chance to speak.
- Avoid assumptions about any member of the class or generalizations about social groups. Do not ask individuals to speak for their (perceived) social group.
- A brief check-in and check-out is often helpful to include everyone—even a one-three word description of how they are doing as they come in and their impressions at the end can be good.
- We are accountable for our words and their impact.
- Personal information that comes up in the conversation should be kept confidential.

\*Facilitation tips based upon information from MIT's Discussion Guidelines webpage.

## PROMPT

What ways do you feel nurtured, cared for, loved?

What ways do the young people in your life feel, nurtured, cared for, loved?

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In the past, how have you responded to trauma or an emotionally life-altering event?

How will you respond differently now after learning with this toolkit session and learning from other toolkit sessions about how to respond to trauma?

What help, resources, ways of feeling supported do you need to help yourself and others?

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Have you ever had an experience where you felt helpless, afraid?

Who helped you through the experience of feeling afraid. What did others do to support you?

What would you have liked for someone to have done to support you?

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If empowerment helps in coping with trauma, what programs could cultural organizations develop that might help give students and youth a sense of power in various traumatic situations?

How might cultural organizations consider their stakeholder communities and the possible traumas they have experienced to incorporate S.A.F.E.T.Y. concepts when designing events and programs?

# TIPS FOR PROVIDING SUPPORT

*Training and programming to enable organizations to provide support.*

## TRAINING

Training for staff can ensure they are ready to respond to the community as well as care for their own well-being in the face of a traumatic event.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Provide staff, especially managers, training on becoming trauma informed as it pertains to working with children and youth.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Provide a listing of mental health resources available to staff through their health insurance policies.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Prepare employees for trauma in the workplace by giving them adequate tools to respond in the moment and access to necessary coping strategies after the incident. Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) real life testing and drills give employees the tools to make decisions and later provide after action exercises on how to provide more proficiently.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Discuss potential traumatic events relevant to the workplace and build policies and procedures to help prevent these situations.

## PROGRAMMING

Creating opportunities for communities and staff to engage in programming can take many forms. Here are a few ideas for implementing programming within your organization.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Prepare and keep on hand a trauma toolbox especially for children. It should contain items a child would find soothing—a blanket, snacks, water, etc. The trauma toolbox should also contain a written safety plan.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Create safety programming to ensure children feel secure in their environment.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Create a school-based partnership that includes teacher participation. Provide curriculum that delivers emotional support to children that includes trauma-informed approaches.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Prepare school-based approaches that incorporate activities, conversations and educational strategies in coping with trauma.

Grand reopening, Fulton Mansion State Historic Site in Rockport, Texas.

# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

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## BOOKS:

Berrick, Ken and John S. Sprinson. (2022) *Unconditional Care in Context: Engaging with Ecological Adversity and Unconditional Care*.

Boss, Pauline. (1999) *Ambiguous Loss*.

## ONLINE RESOURCES:

Child Mind Institute.

<https://childmind.org/topics-a-z/>

Hand in Hand Parenting.

<https://www.handinhandparenting.org/professionals/>

The Imagine Project.

<https://theimagineproject.org/work/>

Learning for Justice.

<https://www.learningforjustice.org/classroom-resources/film-kits>

The National Child Traumatic Stress Network.

<https://www.nctsn.org/>

Nature-Informed Approach to Trauma Recovery for Children.

[https://health.maryland.gov/bha/suicideprevention/Documents/Session%201B%20-%20The%20Body%20Remembers-%20Nature-Informed%20Approach%20to%20Trauma%20Recovery%20for%20Children%20\[Autosaved\].pdf](https://health.maryland.gov/bha/suicideprevention/Documents/Session%201B%20-%20The%20Body%20Remembers-%20Nature-Informed%20Approach%20to%20Trauma%20Recovery%20for%20Children%20[Autosaved].pdf)

Raising Children.

<https://raisingchildren.net.au/preschoolers/connecting-communicating/coping-with-trauma/trauma-support-for-children>

Resources to Recover.

[www.rtor.org](http://www.rtor.org)

Samhsa.

<https://www.samhsa.gov/child-trauma/recognizing-and-treating-child-traumatic-stress>

