

Holding Space Toolkit

What is Trauma Informed Awareness Week?

The Columbus CARE Coalition hosts Trauma Informed Awareness Week each year with activities to increase knowledge and awareness of the impact of trauma and to uplift community resiliency within not only Columbus but also around Ohio,

How Can You Get Involved?

Host a Holding Space Session! Holding Space is a virtual or in-person format that is meant to build and maintain relationships, provide collective support and validation, and create non-judgmental spaces to discuss one of three topic areas: self-care, exploring the challenges of living in a pandemic, or processing through racialized trauma.

Steps to Host a Holding Space Session:

1. Review the Holding Space slides to become more familiar with the aspects of the format. Slides can be found at <https://www.columbus.gov/publichealth/programs/Neighborhood-Services/Resources/>
2. Determine who will participate. Consider if this will be a group at a work or other setting.
 - a. Obtain the needed approvals. It does help to have leadership buy-in as this can be held during work hours.
 - b. In some cases having a sign up method can help to plan for who will be present. (Ex. Google forms).
3. Determine the format that best fits your setting. Formats include self-care, racialized trauma, and pandemic living.
 - a. Racial Trauma formats can be used to hold space after an acute instance of racism.
 - b. Determine if group break out are need. Racial Trauma formats might include self- identified groups by race.
4. Modify slides as needed. Also note that slides can be used as a guide for the facilitator and not shown to participants.
5. Prepare for the session. Consider seating in a circle to create a welcoming environment for sharing. Depending on the group handouts can help emphasis material- ex. Handouts on self-care or dealing with racial trauma. If resources are available, provide sensory items (ex: small hand fidgets).
6. During the session the goal is to be present with participants and gently encourage their participation and sharing. Aim to have everyone speak and emphasize group agreements. Facilitator should be skilled in listening with compassion and empathy and validating and reflecting what is shared.
7. At the conclusion of the Holding Space group determine if the group will meet again and at what frequency.