



Tools & Strategies

to support staff and
organizational wellness

2026





We believe that trauma exposure has **a profound impact** on the well-being of people, teams, & organizations.

What is a trauma-exposed workplace?

“A trauma-exposed environment means staff come into regular contact, either directly or indirectly, with patients and families and colleagues who are struggling, traumatized, suffering, dying, and/or grieving.”

(Frolic, Tikasz & Krull, 2024)

See the full list of references and research cited in this document:



www.tendtoolkit.com/program-references

Levels of workplace stress have been increasing over the past decade and are expected to continue to escalate, along with the negative effects.

Without proper support, high-stress, trauma-exposed work may result in:



Absenteeism and turnover

Staff are twice as likely to leave an organization



Increased costs and resources

Turnover costs of \$5,000–\$10,000 per physician per year



Increased medical errors

Twice the increased risk of medical errors



Increased risk of malpractice claims and future litigation



Reduced quality of patient care

Within the complex environment of trauma-exposed work, the intersection of **systemic stressors** (such as job stress, burnout, and harassment) with **traumatic stress** creates an amplified environment that requires a targeted approach (Fisher, 2016).

This is often why some wellness initiatives fall short: they fail to address the full range of stressors facing staff today.

In 2024, we conducted a survey of 761 helping professionals to better understand people's perceptions of employee wellness. Research suggests that perceptions about responsibility for wellness can significantly influence outcomes of wellness initiatives (Passey et al., 2018; Hoert et al., 2018).



A systematic review of the burnout and secondary traumatic stress literature demonstrates that workplaces should prioritize organizational and system-wide interventions rather than concentrating exclusively on front-line workers' self-care and stress reduction tools.

We believe that organizations can best support their people through two essential actions:

Understand the current strengths and challenges of your workplace.



Developing a clear understanding of your staff's experiences with burnout, secondary traumatic stress, and turnover intention, along with the unique challenges they face, offers a data-driven foundation for creating a roadmap to better support your people.

Build capacity within your teams to ensure sustainable and cost effective options for skill development.



To effectively address the complex nature of high-stress, trauma-exposed work, organizations should consider building capacity in three key areas: understanding and managing the harmful aspects of trauma exposure; developing an organizational plan to support people through trauma exposure; and embedding trauma-informed practices at every level.

This booklet has been designed to help leaders reflect on the most pressing issues facing your people, organization, and communities. It addresses common concerns we frequently hear from organizations like yours, and offers resources, tools, and training options that have proven effective for our clients.

Working Well, Together




A guided organizational health program for complex workplaces

Are your staff struggling despite your best efforts?

We know that leaders and HR professionals care deeply about creating a healthier workplace. But in high-stress workplaces like healthcare, the causes of burnout, secondary traumatic stress, and turnover are complex. At the same time, leaders and HR professionals are being asked to do more with less.

Our program helps leadership teams understand what's impacting the well-being of their teams, and what to do about it.

We give your team the support they need to build a culture in which:

-  Teams adapt quickly, without breaking trust or burning out.
-  Staff have the tools they need to manage secondary traumatic stress, moral distress, and empathic strain.
-  People stay. Not because they have to, but because they believe in the mission of your organization.

The goal of the Working Well, Together program is to develop a focused, practical plan that helps leaders invest their time and resources where they matter most.

Every step of the program is customized to your unique workplace. Elements might include:

- **Leadership Survey** to help us customize our delivery
ONLINE | <10 MINS TO COMPLETE
- **Tailored Training Sessions** for your leadership team
LIVE VIRTUAL | 90 MINS
- **Guided Consultation & Listening Sessions** with key staff members
LIVE VIRTUAL | 60 MINS
- **Customized Curriculum & Recommendations Package**
PDF WORKBOOK
- **Implementation Support** for your leadership team
LIVE VIRTUAL | 60 MINS
- **One-Year Access to the TEND Toolkit** for all staff
ONLINE SUBSCRIPTION

Do you have the necessary capacity to help staff **understand and manage the negative impacts of high-stress, trauma-exposed work?**

Consider which of the following apply to your organization:

- We need more people to champion our wellness initiatives.
- We need a higher level of staff literacy regarding burnout, secondary traumatic strain, empathic strain, and moral distress.
- We need to increase our capacity to train new staff in managing the challenges of this work.

What the research says...

Research indicates that secondary traumatic stress (STS), empathic strain, and burnout are well-established occupational hazards for those working with trauma-exposed populations. These impacts can lead to serious consequences for providers, including functional impairment and poor physical health. When widespread within an organization, STS, empathic

strain, and burnout can negatively impact workplace culture, lower morale, and reduce the quality and effectiveness of services. A recent expert panel emphasized that preventing and addressing these occupational stressors requires strategies that target both individual well-being and organizational practices.



Train the Trainer

CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAM

A comprehensive curriculum for navigating high-stress, trauma-exposed workplaces

Designed for both leaders aiming to drive systemic change and trainers looking to develop the skills to offer workshops in-house, this program prepares staff with best practices to navigate secondary traumatic stress (STS), burnout, moral distress, and other factors in the workplace

Understand the “costs of caring”

- Identify key differences between secondary traumatic stress (STS), burnout, and more.
- Learn how personal, workplace, and systemic factors can contribute to these challenges.
- Understand the impact on overall organizational health.

Gain confidence in teaching and/or leading others

This program prepares you to lead engaging, accessible conversations about secondary traumatic stress and related topics. You will learn how to deliver training sessions as well as embed practices that promote individual and organizational health.

Build your action plan

This program helps you move beyond understanding to putting strategies into practice. You will leave with ideas, tools, strategies, and resources to reduce secondary traumatic stress in your workplace.

Next session begins

July 9, 2026

https://tendacademy.ca/training/capacity-building_programs/ttt/

“

You will have a deeper understanding of yourself and how to help others by taking this program. This is essential learning for managers to effectively support staff.”

Pamela Robichaud
Zonal Manager Cancer Care
Nova Scotia Health

“

It was one of the most informative and rewarding trainings I've ever been a part of.

The training not only allowed me to look at my own signs and symptoms but recognize it in my peers as well. I would recommend this course to anyone in a caring profession.”

Sergeant Mike Bolme
Investigations Section
Bismarck Police Department

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How do you support your staff during **critical incidents and with day-to-day trauma exposure?**

Consider which of the following apply to your organization:

- We need more guidance on effectively managing critical incidents.
- We need to increase the level of psychological safety and trust within our teams and across departments.
- We need a debriefing process but our implementation team feels overwhelmed about where and how to start.
- We want to develop better ongoing peer and mutual support initiatives but are unsure which strategies are sustainable.

What the research says...

Providing timely debriefing and ongoing support is essential for maintaining a healthy and productive workplace. Research indicates that some traditional debriefing methods, if not implemented carefully, can do more harm than good. Mandatory or poorly facilitated debriefings may pressure individuals to share before they are ready, increasing distress or retraumatization. One-size-fits-all approaches often overlook individual coping styles and fail to create a

psychologically safe work environment. By integrating support into daily routines—not just after critical incidents—organizations can foster stronger team connections, encourage open communication, and build a culture of shared responsibility for well-being. Ongoing mutual support helps reduce burnout, lower turnover, and improve service quality, leading to a more resilient, engaged, and effective workforce.



Debriefing & Mutual Support

CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAM

Create and implement an organizational strategy to **support your team through trauma exposure**

The Debriefing & Mutual Support program is a professional development program that helps you design and implement a tailored, organization-wide support plan. This means that your people will know **when, why, and how** to best support one another through the unique challenges of your workplace. By taking this program, you will:

Understand the full spectrum of support required for optimal staff well-being

- Learn why some practices may be more harmful than helpful.
- Triage the potentially traumatic events (PTEs) that may happen in your workplace.
- Understand the neurophysiology of stress and trauma.

Identify which practices you will use to:

- Respond during or in the aftermath of a critical incident.
- Follow-up after an event is over.
- Buffer against the day-to-day stressors of trauma-exposed work.

Decide where to begin and plan your next steps

- Workshop common challenges and barriers
- Apply case examples to your unique workplace
- Build your action plan

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I would highly recommend this education for any environments where trauma may be experienced. I think the training will definitely support staff with psychological health and safety in the workplace.

Participant, Winter 2025

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The style in which TEND presenters show up and share is engaging, digestible, and well-researched. I feel confident in bringing back this information to my organization as we continue to create a culture of support.”

Kim McCarrol, Public Health

Next session begins
July 21, 2026

<https://tendacademy.ca/training/capacity-building-programs/dms/>

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Does your organization have the support and resources required **to be trauma-informed?**

Consider which of the following apply to your organization:

- The complexity of cases is increasing and our staff need more support.
- We are overwhelmed with mandates to become trauma-informed.
- We have concerns about the quality of our services and overall satisfaction levels.

What the research says...

Trauma-informed practice (TIP) recognizes the widespread impact of trauma and emphasizes safety, trust, and empowerment in how services are delivered. Professionals report that a greater awareness of trauma helps shift their perceptions and understanding of service user behaviours, as well as of their colleagues (Chandler, 2008; Regan, 2010; Goddard, 2021). By fostering supportive environments, TIP helps prevent retraumatization and encourages healing and

resilience for all. Research shows that companies which adopt mental health and trauma-informed programs see turnover reductions of 20-30%, with employees more likely to stay due to enhanced job satisfaction (APA, 2020). Additionally, implementing trauma-informed practices has shown to have a positive impact on the workforce, leading to improved organizational outcomes including increased workplace satisfaction (Hales et al., 2018).



The Trauma-Informed Organization

CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAM

Implement trauma-informed practices **within your unique workplace**

What does it mean to be a trauma-informed workplace? Simply put, it means understanding how stress and adversity affect people, and then using that understanding to create workplaces where staff can do their best work. The Trauma-Informed Organization Program is a professional development program that helps you put this understanding into action.

Understand trauma and trauma-informed practice as it applies to your unique workplace

- Assess where your workplace currently stands in implementing trauma-informed practices.
- Identify barriers (both external and internal to your workplace).
- Work through case studies to apply your ideas to real world scenarios.

Move from abstract concepts to actionable steps

You will learn practices that can be applied on multiple levels:

- Individual practices that support trauma awareness and compassion.
- Leadership strategies that foster safety, trust, and clarity.
- Organizational approaches that align culture, policy, and systems with trauma-informed values.

Overcome barriers and roadblocks to making change

Implementation is at the heart of this program. Our goal is for you to leave not only with new insight, but with a clear, grounded plan for change



TEND's resources helped Peel employees develop the knowledge, skills, and resilience to continue to meet the needs of our community. TEND provided the tools and resources our employees needed to care for themselves—in order to best serve others.”

Karen Rockwell
Manager, Organizational
Development & Learning
Peel Region



Lots of theory and practical information offered. So well organized and professional. Protect some time in your work week to read, review learning and complete exercises. A great balance between theory and group discussion.”

- MP Deveau, Senior Program
Advisor, 2025

Next session begins
September 15, 2026

<https://tendacademy.ca/training/capacity-building-programs/tio/>

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or book a time to meet with Lisa Doulas, our VP of Operations:



<https://calendly.com/lisa-tend/a-chat-with-tend>

