

Shelters / Housing Assistance

Description of Shelters / Housing Assistance

Shelters provide people in crisis with food, shelter, and clothing. Many agencies that serve individuals and families experiencing homelessness, or potential homelessness, will provide case management to address present challenges and assist clients with making long term changes to address a multitude of issues that have led to homelessness.

Agencies and organizations that would fit in the shelter/ housing assistance category include:

- Family Shelters
- Domestic Violence Shelters
- Children's Shelters
- Halfway or Transitional Housing
- Supportive Housing
- Low-Income Housing

Screeener vs. Assessment

Screeener

- Widely administered
- Brief
- Easy to complete
- Gives yes or no information
- Focused on a specific topic

Assessment

- Targeted administration
- In-depth
- Requires training to administer
- Gives unique client picture
- Informs treatment
- Completed over 1-3 visits

Recommendation

Universal trauma screening, or screening all clients that are served in a shelter setting, is recommended because a high number of youth and families that are homeless have been exposed to trauma and many have experienced multiple traumas in their lives. Past trauma is often a precursor to homelessness. Youth and families that screen positive for trauma should be provided a more in-depth trauma assessment by a mental health professional.

Potential Trauma Screening Tools (indicates availability of tool in other languages)*

- [*UCLA PTSD-Reaction Index for Children/Adolescents-DSM-5](#) – contact preston@reactionindex.com
- [Life Events Checklist \(LEC\)](#) from SAMHSA - <http://www.integration.samhsa.gov/clinical-practice/life-event-checklist-lec.pdf>

- [PTSD Checklist – Civilian version \(PCL-C\)](http://www.oregon.gov/OHA/amh/Pages/trauma.aspx) from <http://www.oregon.gov/OHA/amh/Pages/trauma.aspx>
- [Los Angeles Symptom Checklist](http://www.oregon.gov/OHA/amh/Pages/trauma.aspx) from <http://www.oregon.gov/OHA/amh/Pages/trauma.aspx>

Resources

- Clervil, R., Guarino, K., DeCandia, C.J., & Beach, C.A. (2013). Trauma-Informed Care for Displaced Populations: A Guide for Community-Based Service Providers. Waltham, MA: The National Center on Family Homelessness, a practice area of American Institutes for Research Health and Social Development Program.
<http://www.air.org/sites/default/files/downloads/report/Trauma-informed-care-for-displaced-populations.pdf>
- Hopper, E. K., Bassuk, E. L., & Olivet, J. (2010). Shelter from the Storm: Trauma-Informed Care in Homelessness Services Settings. The Open Health Service and Policy Journal, 3, 80-100. <http://homeless.samhsa.gov/ResourceFiles/cenfdthy.pdf>
- National Child Traumatic Stress Network. (2014). Complex trauma: Facts for shelter workers working with homeless children and families. Los Angeles, CA, & Durham, NC: National Center for Child Traumatic Stress.
<http://www.nctsn.org/sites/default/files/assets/pdfs/complex trauma facts homeless shelter staff final.pdf>

Questions to Consider Before Implementation

- Who is responsible for distributing the trauma screener?
- Who is alerted if there is a positive screening?
- How will you use the data and information collected to guide service delivery?
- Will you track number screened versus the number who screen positive for trauma?