BACKGROUND
The Family Justice Center of Boston (FJC), a program of the Boston Public Health Commission’s Division of Violence Prevention, is a community of co-located agencies providing services to individuals and families impacted by domestic violence, sexual assault, child abuse and/or human trafficking.

In 2015, a training needs assessment was conducted among on-site partners, with the topic of equitably serving victims and survivors across cultural backgrounds identified as a top priority. Despite Boston being a relatively resource-rich city, racial, ethnic and gender inequities in exposure to violence and trauma demonstrate that significant barriers in access to safety and healing resources exist for many of our communities.

Through a two year process, which included focus groups with staff, reviewing literature on best practices, and the ongoing support and guidance of a committee of partner agency representatives and colleagues from BPHC’s Office of Health Equity, the first FJC Training Institute pilot was launched in April of 2017.

AUDIENCE
This training is designed for any provider working with those impacted by trauma and violence in their homes, schools and communities.

CONTACT
For more information about this training, contact Bronwen White at bwhite@bphc.org

GUIDING VALUES
- People learn best in trauma-informed environments that recognize that we each bring our own identities, history, and experiences
- Health is influenced by a person’s social, economic and environmental conditions, and by exposure to violence and trauma
- Racism and other forms of oppression (such as sexism, homophobia, transphobia, and poverty) impact the health, safety and healing of individuals and communities in Boston
- Learning is an ongoing process that takes place both within ourselves and in connection to others

DAY 1
- Introductions & group agreements: creating a brave space
- Developing shared definitions and considering implications for our work: culture, race, racism, implicit bias, privilege, oppression, and intersectionality
- Exploring local and global history & legacy today

DAY 2
- Examining health inequities in Boston and their root causes, and applying a health equity framework to our work
- Understanding identity development, unpacking our own identities and implications for our work

DAY 3
- Practicing trauma-informed conversations to promote equity
- Strategies for equitable programs: assessing our programs and developing action plans
OUTCOMES & EVALUATION FINDINGS

The first pilot Training Institute was held in April 2017, the second pilot in September 2017, and the third pilot in March-April 2018. Approximately 51 individuals representing 30 agencies (FJC on-site and community partners) took part in the three pilots. Participants were diverse in terms of role (direct service, management, law enforcement), race/ethnicity, age and population served.

Daily evaluations were conducted to gather participant feedback on specific activities, and pre- and post-survey questionnaires based on the learning objectives were also administered. Overall, surveys found a positive change in knowledge, skills and participant preparedness following the training. Although these are preliminary findings, they suggest this training is a promising approach to promoting equity in the anti-violence field.

These questions measured percentage of training participants who felt “very well prepared” or “pretty well prepared” to utilize strategies that promote equity pre/post training.

These questions measured changes in participant knowledge of key topics covered in the training.

Overall, the percentage of participants who “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that identity is a source of healing, that it is important to reflect on their own identities, and that they could define both implicit bias and health equity increased following the training.