

Education through A Trauma Informed Lens

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REACH for Tomorrow



Objectives of today's training:

- Understand the impact of adverse childhood experiences.
- Identify at least 4 strategies to making their school and classroom trauma informed.
- Differentiate between time in and time out intervention approaches.
- Describe at least 3 ways school professionals can better connect with students.

USA Statistics Children of Trauma

- 1 out of 4 students have experienced a traumatic event
- 11% of all girls ages 14-17 have experienced sexual assault
- 33% of students have been bullied
- 60% of students 17 years or younger have been exposed to crime, violence, and abuse
- 30% of students in inner city school have witnessed a stabbing or shooting
- 16 million children in the United States live at or below the poverty level (6 million are under the age of 6)

Highland County Statistics Children of Trauma

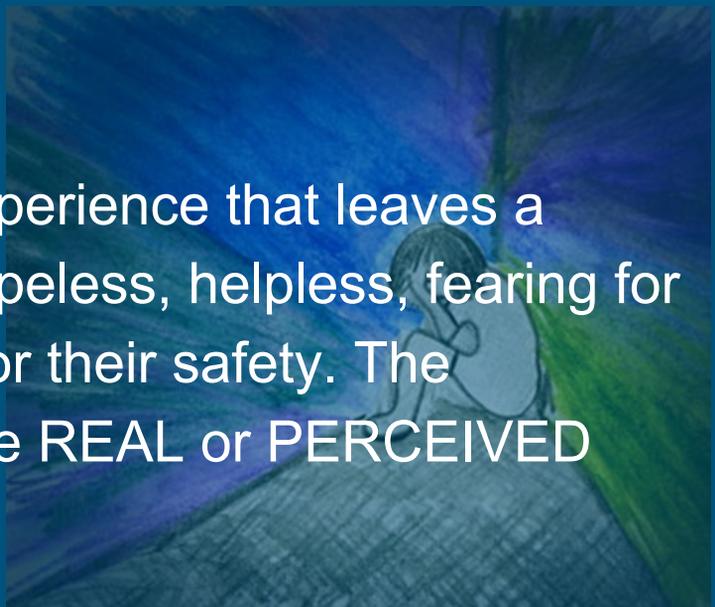
- 25% thought no one in their family loved them or thought they were important or special
- 11% have experienced sexual assault
- 30% of students have a caregiver who uses illegal substances
- 30% of students have caregivers who swear at them, insult them, put them down or humiliate them.
- 30% of students have been hit, slapped, kicked or beaten up.
- 34% have a family member who have depression, mentally ill or attempted suicide

Why should schools be Trauma Informed?

- Improved academic achievement and test scores
- Improved school climate
- Improved teacher sense of satisfaction and retention
- Reduced frequency of behavioral outbursts and referrals
- Reduced stress experienced by staff and students
- Reduced absences, use of detention, and suspensions
- Reduced bullying, harassment, and fights
- Reduced burden on special education services
- Improved graduation rates

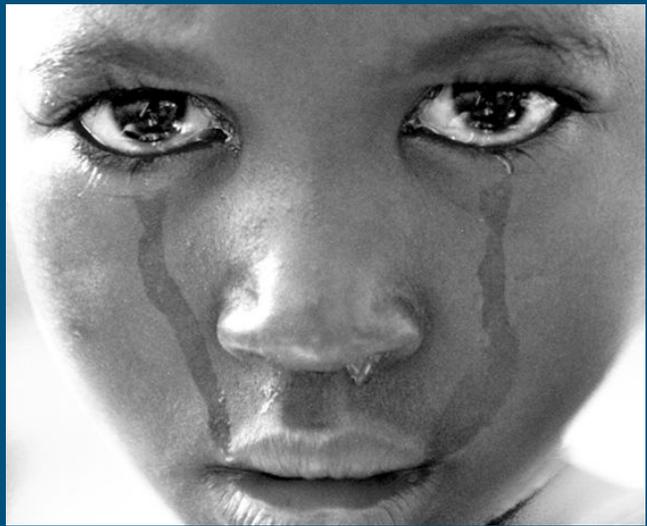
What is Trauma?

Trauma is any experience that leaves a person feeling hopeless, helpless, fearing for their life/survival or their safety. The experience can be **REAL** or **PERCEIVED**





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What has
happened or
is happening?



ACUTE

NORMAL response/reaction to stress or even trauma lasting 4-6 weeks

POST-TRAUMATIC

Exaggerated and prolonged stress response lasting beyond 4-6 weeks, even years later



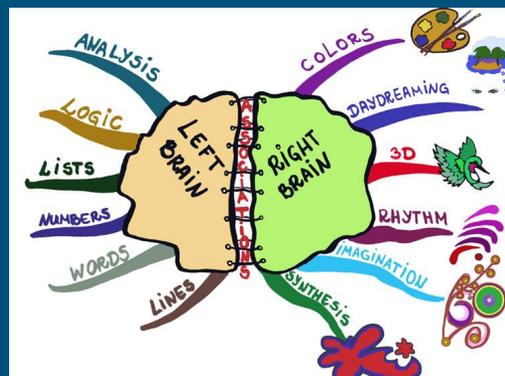
HEMISPHERES OF THE BRAIN

LEFT BRAIN (THINKING)

Language
Reasoning
Understanding
Processing

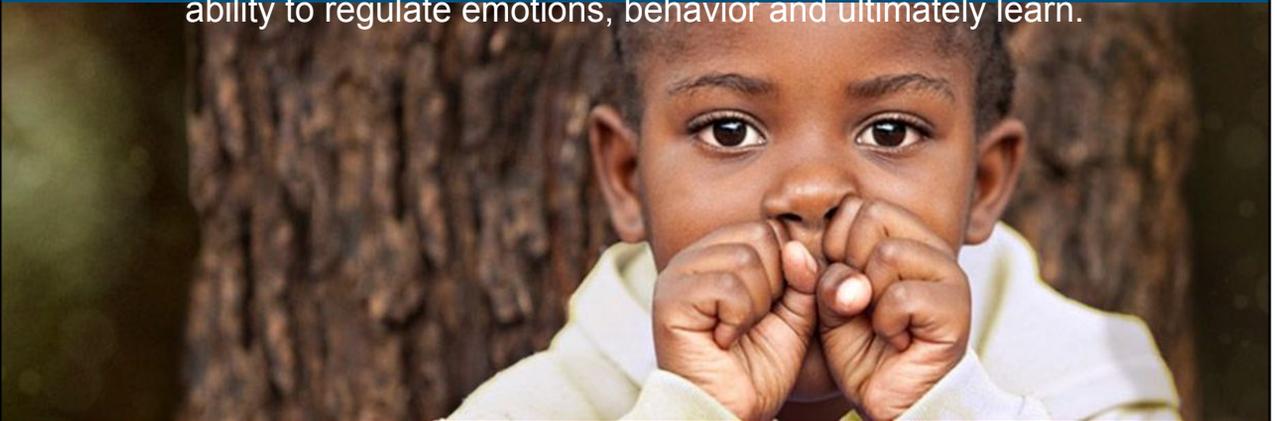
RIGHT BRAIN (THINKING)

Emotional Regulation
Memory
Affect
Senses



Trauma Informed Educating

Understand the impact stress and trauma have on children's bodies and their ability to regulate emotions, behavior and ultimately learn.



Trauma is a Sensory Body Experience



“Trauma resides not in the event itself; but rather in a person’s nervous system.”

– Peter Levine

Re-experiencing (INTRUSION)	Avoidance (NUMBING)	Negative Cognitions and Mood	Arousal
Flashbacks	Detachment	Distorted sense of self	Aggression
Intrusive thoughts -images	Numbing	Estrangement to others	Reckless behavior
Traumatic dreams	OCD like behavior Phobic like behavior	Markedly diminished interest	Self-destructive and Rule-breaking behaviors
Sleep problems	Self Harm	Depression	Hypervigilance
Physical complaints	Substance Abuse	Blames self or others	Irritability
	Eating Disorders		Inattention
	Not wanting to talk about it		Cognitive/Learning problems

Symptom Overlap (Weinstein et al., 2000)	ADHD	PTSD
Hypervigilance	X	X
Inattention	X	X
Detachment	X	X
Irritability	X	X
Anger Outbursts	X	X
Distracted	X	X
Restless	X	X
Impatient	X	X
Impulsive	X	X
Limited sense of future	X	X
Difficulty Concentrating	X	X



ABUSE



Physical



Emotional



Sexual

NEGLECT



Physical



Emotional

HOUSEHOLD DYSFUNCTION



Mental Illness



Incarcerated Relative



Mother treated violently



Substance Abuse



Divorce



- While we can't take away what has happened and we might not be able to change what is happening, we **CAN** help foster characteristics of resilience!

— RETHINKING DISCIPLINE



Behavior is the beginning, not the end

Behavior is a **CLUE** as it is a traumatized child's way of communicating

It is highly unlikely that they will talk, reason, or use logic

Behavior can also be a **SYMBOL** for what the child has experienced or is experiencing (i.e. terror, lack of safety, worry, insecurity, anger, fear, guilt, shame, low self-worth, etc.)

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- Avoid consequences such as time-outs and suspensions
 - USE interactions and opportunities like comfort corners and time-ins
 - Understand that exclusionary practices encourage the child to withdraw and reinforce the message that he/she is “bad” (and it’s really hard getting them back!)

Recognize Triggers

Conflict
Being provoked
Pressure
Frustration
Yelling/Noise
Power struggle

Prevention

Remove from trigger
Redirect
Anticipate and intervene before behavior escalates
Notice signs of distress
Connect with student
Pre-arranged signal between staff/student

Time Out is

Kids act out because they WANT attention

Time apart

Withdraw attention/disconnect

Very little opportunity to learn

Child is left to regain regulated state on their own

Punitive, shame, rejection

Ineffective

TIME IN IS

Kids act out because they NEED attention

Time together

Give attention/connect

Learning opportunity

Adult is present to help child regain regulated state

Growth, empowerment, acceptance

Effective

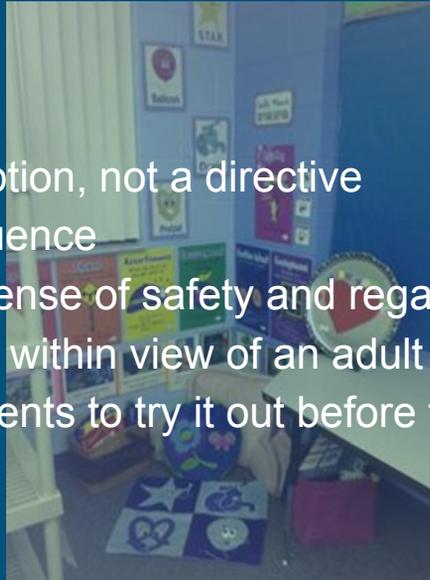


Time In Strategies

- Invite child to sit with you, go for a walk with you, go run an errand with you, etc. (if child is highly aggravated do not touch)
- Make eye contact (if possible, do not force)
- Remain calm
- Be firm but kind (these are not mutually exclusive)
- Tell the student you would like to help
- Acknowledge/validate the child's feelings; tell them it is okay to be angry, upset, etc. but it is not okay to hurt themselves, hurt others, disrupt the learning environment, etc.
- Address misbehavior only after the student is calm but refrain from lecturing
- Assist the student in identifying one or two strategies and move on
- Revisit and practice strategies

Calm Down Corners

- Use as an opportunity/option, not a directive
- Do not use as a consequence
- A place to find comfort/sense of safety and regain control
- Offers some privacy, still within view of an adult
- Introduce and allow students to try it out before they become upset



Suggestions for Cool Down Corners

- Pillows and cushions
- Exercise balls
- Weighted blankets
- Stuffed animals
- Bubble machines
- Sound machines
- Lava lamps
- Bean bags
- Fidget toys
- Ear "mufflers"
- Beads and string
- Headphones with music
- Play-doh or modeling clay
- Sunglasses and hats
- Fish tank
- Sand tray
- Mini-trampoline
- Swings
- Rocking chair
- Art and coloring supplies
- Word searches
- Activity sheets

“It is not a punishment room; it is not a time-out room—it is a room where you feel better going out than when you went in.”

—Principal, El Dorado Elementary School, San Francisco, CA

- Living in survival mode makes emotional regulation very difficult for children.
- They need help from caring adults.
- Practice coping strategies (even when not overwhelmed)
- Understand that any decrease in frequency, duration, or intensity of unwanted behaviors is PROGRESS! Celebrate!

10 tips for Educating Children of Trauma

1



10 tips for Educating Children of Trauma

2 Kids who have been through trauma worry about what’s going to happen next.

10 tips for Educating Children of Trauma

- 3 **Even if the situation doesn't seem that bad to you, it's how the child feels that matters**

10 tips for Educating Children of Trauma

4



"ALL KIDS, ESPECIALLY IN THIS DAY AND AGE, EXPERIENCE EXTREME STRESS FROM TIME TO TIME."

—Caelan Kuban Soma, clinical director,
National Institute for Trauma
and Loss in Children

10 tips for Educating Children of Trauma

- 5 You don't need to know exactly what caused the trauma to be able to help.**

10 tips for Educating Children of Trauma

- 6 Kids who experience trauma need to feel they're good at something and can influence the world.**

10 tips for Educating Children of Trauma

7



10 tips for Educating Children of Trauma

- 8 **Self-regulation can be a major challenge for students suffering from trauma.**



10 tips for Educating Children of Trauma

- 9 **It's OK to ask kids point-blank what you can do to help them make it through the day.**

10 tips for Educating Children of Trauma

10 You can support kids with trauma even when they're outside your classroom.

Essentials to being Trauma Informed

- Connect – Focus on Relationships
- Protect – Promote Safety and Trustworthiness
- Respect – Engage in Choice and Collaboration
- Redirect (Teach and Reinforce) – Encourage Skill-Building and Competence

The Best Intervention

"There is no more effective neurobiological intervention than a safe relationship"

-- Bruce Perry, PhD, MD, researcher & child psychiatrist

- The relationship works to bring the brain back into regulation
- Safe, predictable, consistent relationships

Behavioral Strategies for Trauma Impacted Students

- Practice active listening with students and demonstrate empathy
- Use of specific praise like -- "You did a great job paying attention in class today" vs "Good job today."
- 10:1 (Ratio of positive to negative statements for traumatized children/adolescents)
- Active ignoring of negative behavior
- Consistent expectations and behavior plans that are based on rewards systems, not punishment.
- Do collaborative problem-solving with students

Trauma Informed Interventions

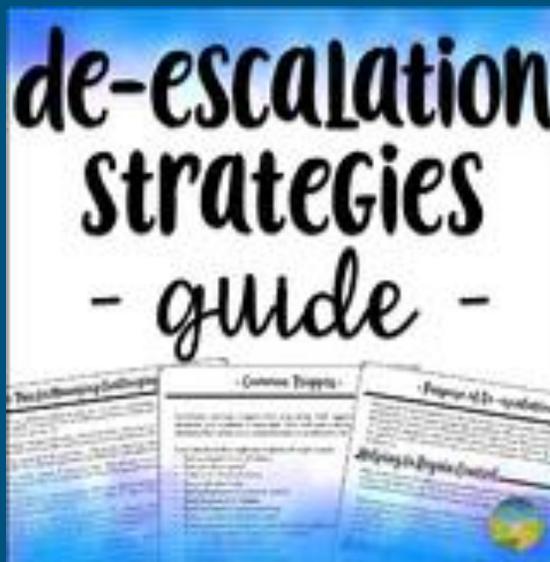
- Teach Feelings Expression and Coping--
 - Identify and label emotions and feelings.
 - Use of scales and “thermometer” to rate emotion intensity.
 - Identify coping skills to help decrease emotional intensity. Help youth find positive ways to cope.
- Connect students to friends, peers, or supportive adults.
- Give ideas about participating in creative and positive social activities.
- Think of ways to reach out to parents/caregivers that involves them in the educational process.
- Deepen your understanding about the community the student lives in and available resources for the student and family



WALK IN THEIR SHOES



Kristina Scully's



<http://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Store/Pathway-2-Success>



REFERENCES

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Trauma Informed Approaches to Classroom Management - Brenda Ingram, EdD, LCSW
Director of Clinical Services, Peace Over Violence