Presenters

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33 years working in public education as
• General education and special education teacher
• Special education program support
• Special education and student support district administrator

Trauma Informed Care Counseling Certificate, UW Milwaukee

Trauma Sensitive Education, LLC
Educational Consultant
Overview

• Impact of trauma on learning in the school setting
• Why the urgency to respond?
• National Council’s 7 Domains of Trauma-Sensitive Schools
Polling Question #1

What is your role with your local school system?

a) Employee(s) of a school district

b) Employee(s) of an agency that provides services inside the school building

c) Employee(s) of an agency that provides services to students in the schools

d) Other stakeholder (community partner, school board member)
Polling Question #2

Please pick the best end to this sentence:

Our local schools ....

a) Are actively working to create trauma-sensitive schools

b) Just started exploring the need to address trauma in the schools

c) Are not talking about addressing trauma in the schools
Polling Question #3

How interested is your organization in playing a role in creating trauma-sensitive schools in your community?

a) Very interested
b) Somewhat interested
c) Open to contributing but don’t know what our role would be
d) Not interested at this time
Why the Urgency to Build Trauma-Sensitive Schools?

• Students spend 7 ½ hours a day in the school setting
• Once a child enters kindergarten, the child is required to be in school
• The school is one of the very few settings a child cannot be removed from
• Failure in school has significant impact over the life span
Prevalence of Mental Illness in Students

- Approximately 20% of youth ages 13 to 18 experience severe mental disorders in a given year
- For ages 8 to 15, the estimate is 13%
- Over 50% of students with a mental health condition age 14 and older who are served by special education drop out
- Special education has the highest dropout rate of any disability group

*National Alliance on Mental Illness – Mental Illness Facts and Numbers*
Prevalence of Trauma in Students

13 of every 30 students in a classroom will have toxic stress from 3 or more Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

Source: Washington State Family Policy Council
Survival Mode Response

= Inability to
  • Respond
  • Learn
  • Process
Trauma and Academics
Playing Chess in a Hurricane

- Hypervigilance
- Hyperactivity and impulsivity
- Difficulty regulating emotions
- Difficulty paying attention
- Defiance
- Aggression
- Withdrawal
- Perfectionism

The Heart of Teaching and Learning

http://k12.wa.us/CompassionateSchools/pubdocs/TheHeartofLearningandTeaching.pdf
ACEs and its Effects on Students

Compared with children with no adverse childhood experiences, children with three or more ACEs were

- 3 times more likely to fail
- 5 times more likely to have severe attendance problems
- 6 times more likely to have severe behavior problems
- 4 times more likely to have self-reports of poor health

*Dr. Chris Blodgett, Washington State University’s Area Health Education Center*
School to Prison Pipeline

1\textsuperscript{st} grader with unruly behavior

5\textsuperscript{th} grade with multiple suspensions

Eighth grader who self medicates

High school dropout

17 year old convict
Compton Lawsuit

• Plaintiffs – students, parents and teachers – filed lawsuit out of frustration and anger

• Common mainstream responses to the lawsuit:
  – Teachers are not trained mental health providers
  – How can teachers teach and be trauma counselors?
  – Psychologists and school counselors, not teachers, should deal with trauma
  – Schools cannot be social service agencies, mental health providers, and 24/7 parental surrogates
  – What about the parents?
  – School is not chartered to address homelessness
Use Existing Frameworks

Using the PBIS Framework to Support the Learning of Students Affected by Trauma

Tier 1 – Universal strategies & instruction for all students
Tier 2 – Additional supports for students with milder symptoms of trauma or in high-risk groups
Tier 3 – Intensive & ongoing interventions for students deeply impacted by trauma

* TIC Values & Key Areas apply across all 3 tiers of the PBIS Framework.

Tier 1: Safety, Empowerment, Collaboration, Trust, Choice
Tier 2: Trauma-Informed Care (TIC) Values *
Tier 3: Key Areas *

* TIC Values & Key Areas apply across all 3 tiers of the PBIS Framework.

TIC Values are from Fallot & Harris, Community Connections, www.ccdc1.org

http://sspw.dpi.wi.gov/sspw_mhtrauma
Working Within the Schools

• Address triggers
• Create a safe environment
• Change our interactions and relationships
• Address the stress response system
• Teach skills
• Rethink discipline

Advance trauma-informed approaches!
A Trauma-Informed Educational Organization Includes:

- Safe, calm and secure environment with supports for students and staff
- System wide understanding of trauma prevalence, impact and trauma informed environments, policies, procedures and practices
- Cultural Competence and cultural humility
- Student and family voice, choice and self-advocacy
- Student-driven and trauma specific supports and services
- Healing, hopeful, honest and trusting relationships
Trauma-Sensitive Schools Focus On Building Relationships
Domain 1
Student Assessment

School has a multi-tiered process of evaluation and assessment

- Focuses on strengths and challenges
- Collaborative
- Culturally relevant
- Explores all domains
- Identifies interventions and supports
- Addresses needs related to trauma
Use Existing Frameworks

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Triggers

External/Internal reminders of traumatic event
- Smell
- Sound
- Sight
- Emotions
- Thoughts

Are you a trigger?
- Tone of Voice
- Perfume
- Interaction Style
- Gender
- Race

Partner with children and families to identify triggers, plan for ways to remove triggers when possible, and build skills and resilience to diminish trauma reactions.
Domain 2
Student and Family Involvement

• Ensure meaningful family and community partner involvement
• Gather student and family feedback
• Use feedback to make changes
• Educate about rights and trauma
• Eliminate coercive or punishing responses to family and student choices
Domain 3

Trauma Sensitive Educated and Responsive District and School Staff

- Increase awareness, knowledge and skills of the entire workforce
- Implement P & Ps that build and sustain a trauma-informed workforce

Create a trauma-sensitive school
Domain 4
Trauma-Informed, Evidence Based and Emerging Best Practices

Increase awareness, knowledge and skills of the *social workers, psychologists, counselors, teachers and other support network members* to deliver research informed interventions and supports that address effects associated with trauma and **honor** the core principles of trauma-informed approaches.

NME CBITS
CPS PBIS
Restorative Justice
Mindfulness
Emotional regulation

Shared decision making
Collaboration
Student & family voice & choice
Focus on safety and wellness
Understand and address trauma’s impact on the brain

• Assess for trauma
• Build in interventions to help heal the brain
  – Rhythmic
  – Repetitive
  – Relational
  – Respectful
  – Rewarding
  – Relevant
• Create consistency between behavioral health and school interventions

Reference – Dr. Bruce Perry, Child Trauma Academy
Get Kids Moving - Brain Gain

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Rivxc5-2C0

Dr. John Ratey
Emotional Regulation
Skills and Supports
Domain 5
Safe and Secure Environments

Create environments and processes that

- Avoid re-traumatization
- Embrace all forms of school safety
Safety in Schools

• **Academic safety** – learning and success
• **Emotional safety** – personal and character development
Safety in Schools

• Social safety – belonging and interpersonal competence
• Behavioral safety – discipline and cooperation
• Physical safety – the student body

### Structure and Routines

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expectations</th>
<th>Entering the Classroom</th>
<th>Teacher Instruction</th>
<th>Independent Work</th>
<th>Group Work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Respect</strong></td>
<td>• Enter Quietly</td>
<td>• Use proper signal for public/private questions</td>
<td>• Work quietly</td>
<td>• Take turns talking and listening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Responsibility</strong></td>
<td>• Put all items in proper location • Have all materials</td>
<td>• Take notes • Follow directions first time</td>
<td>• Place completed work in proper place</td>
<td>• Do your part of the assignment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Safety</strong></td>
<td>• Walk • Keep hands/feet to self</td>
<td>• Stay in designated area</td>
<td>• Use indoor voice • Settle disagreements peacefully</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### The Edison Way of Keeping Quiet Hallways

- **C**onversation: Level 0, No Voices when students are learning - or Level 1, Whisper Voices between lunch/recess
- **H**elp: Ask an adult for help or go to the nearest classroom in case of emergency
- **A**ctivity: Walk through the hallway without disturbing other classes and students
- **M**ovement: - Walk silently - Face forward - Keep hands and feet to self - NOT ok to go to bathroom or water fountain without permission - Go directly to destination - Hold on to materials - Carry a pass if not with class or teacher
- **P**articipation: Arrive at destination on time and with all materials needed
Compassionate Approach

• Look for the cause of the behavior
• Identify what it is
• Show compassion for the student’s experience
• Acknowledge student’s stress
Compassionate Approach

• Seek solutions for accountability that support the youth
• Teach youth about
  – toxic stress
  – impact of trauma on the brain
  – ways to self-regulate
• Let go of belief that you have to give a negative consequence
Rethink Discipline

BF Skinner - human behavior is determined by consequences and bad behavior must be punished

2011-12 school year, the US Department of Education reported among 49 million K-12 students:

• 130,000 expulsions

• 7 million suspensions

Most recent estimates suggest:

Quarter million instances of corporal punishment in US schools every year

*What If Everything You Knew About Disciplining Kids Was Wrong?* Katherine Reynolds Lewis, Mother Jones, July/August 2015
Considerations related to the Physical Environment
Stocker Elementary School
Kenosha Unified School District
Domain 6
Community Outreach and Partnership Building
Assume a leadership role in educating and connecting partners

Child care
Early childhood programs
Community centers
Public health
Child welfare
Home visiting programs
Parenting programs
Treatment services
Day treatment providers
Domestic violence services

Consumer run services
Food pantries
Housing services
Faith based organizations
Veterans organizations
Senior services
Corrections
Courts
And many more....
Effective work with schools

- Ensure clear communication between school and organization
- Address confidentiality
- Create plans that everyone agrees on
- Speak language everyone can understand
- Listen to and empower children and caregivers
- Ensure all conversations are child and family focused
- Remember TIC principles in all interactions
Community Collaboration

• Shared training
• Shared funding streams
• Include all community organizations
  – Court/police
  – School
  – Behavioral health/child welfare
  – Community organizations
Domain 7
Ongoing Performance Improvement

Data related to each domain is *tracked, analyzed* and *used* to address challenges and/or reinforce progress.
Trauma Sensitive Schools

- Dramatic reduction in expulsions, suspensions, referrals to the office
- Lincoln High School in Walla Walla, WA

*Paper Tigers*
Data Collection for Credits Earned in Trauma Sensitive Environment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Credits Earned</th>
<th>Analysis</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013-14</td>
<td>2014-15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Qtr 1: 4</td>
<td>Qtr 1: 13</td>
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<td>Qtr 2: 11</td>
<td>Qtr 2: 21</td>
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<td>Qtr 3: 12</td>
<td>Qtr 3: 26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qtr 4: 10</td>
<td>Qtr 4: 28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“IF NOT US, WHO?
IF NOT NOW, WHEN?”
- JOHN F. KENNEDY
Resources

• The Heart of Teaching and Learning
  http://k12.wa.us/CompassionateSchools/pubdocs/TheHeartofLearningandTeaching.pdf


• Restorative Justice
  http://www.restorativejustice.org/

• Wisconsin DPI website
  http://sspw.dpi.wi.gov/sspw_mhtrauma

Bruce Perry - CTA
Credits

• Stocker Elementary School, KUSD
  April Nelson, Principal
  Work Phone: (262)359-2003
  Cell Phone: (262) 623- 1313

• Tremper High School
  Special Education Case Manager
  Email: flan8kate@gmail.com