Creating Trauma-Sensitive Schools

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Office of Social & Emotional Learning
1) Pleasure one derives from being able to do his or her work effectively (Stamm, 2005)

2) Pleasure and satisfaction derived from working in helping, care-giving systems
One-Minute Greeting

Stand, mingle, and SHARE your FIRST EXPERIENCE OF WORKING WITH A TRAUMATIZED STUDENT WITH ONE PERSON FOR ONE MINUTE

*Share your name and role/position
Body Poll

How would you describe your level of understanding of trauma and its impact on your students and fellow staff?

- High level of understanding
- Moderate level of understanding
- Very little understanding
Today’s Objectives

1. **List at least 5 ways** in which children and adolescents are impacted by trauma.

2. **Recognize the ways** in which the effects of trauma manifest in school and classroom settings.

3. **Develop a self-care plan** that addresses all domains of life.

4. **Apply the use of at least 3** school-wide or classroom-based strategies that promote trauma-sensitive schools.
Norms

● Be responsible for your own comfort!

● Take responsibility for your own learning!

● Share and become involved!
Introduction to Trauma
Definition of Trauma

❖ An emotionally painful or distressful event.
❖ Based on our experience of the event.
❖ The event and experience of the event results in lasting physical & mental effects.
❖ Causes intense reactions that include fear, helplessness, and loss of control.
❖ Overwhelms ability to cope.
❖ Alters how we view ourselves, others, and the world around us.
Prevalence of Trauma

▪ More than 2/3 of children experience a traumatic event by age 16

▪ 49% of youth experienced two or more types of victimization

▪ More than 1 in 10 youth report 5 or more direct exposures to violence
Types of Traumatic Events

- Acute Trauma: Event that occurs at a particular time and place and is usually short-lived.

- Chronic Trauma: Experiences that occur repeatedly over long periods of time.

- Complex Trauma: Often occurs within a child’s family where their primary caretaker is either a source of threat or unable to support, nurture, or protect a child from threat.
Historical/Intergenerational Trauma

**Historical Trauma:** The shared trauma experienced by a particular group across generations still suffering the effects.

**Intergenerational Trauma:** The passing of a trauma from one generation to another due to failure to resolve in previous generation.
Trauma and the Brain

3 Year Old Children

Normal

Extreme Neglect
Trauma and the Brain

- Prolonged activation of stress response system
- Thinking brain frequently off-line
- Emotional brain remains in survival mode
Impact of Complex Trauma

- Difficulty identifying, expressing, and managing feelings
- Extreme responses ranging from anxiety and anger to appearing numb and disconnected
- Increased behavioral issues and risk-taking behaviors such as self-harm and substance abuse.
- Difficulty trusting others and forming healthy relationships
- Focus on surviving at the expense of future thinking
- Increased risk for other system involvement
- Increased risk for mental health issues
How do you see trauma affecting your students, parents, yourself and staff?
How do you see trauma affecting your students?
Classroom Manifestations

- Fatigue/Sleepiness
- Trouble Concentrating
- Tearfulness
- Creating distractions
- Resistance to talking about the incident
- Easily startled (Hyperarousal)

- Absenteeism
- Somatic complaints (headaches, stomachaches)
- Social withdrawal
- Moodiness and irritability
- Look emotionless or numb
- Negative about self or future (Negative mood or cognitions)
How do you see trauma affecting parents and guardians of students in your school?
Impact of Trauma on Parents and Guardians

- Similar difficulties to youth
- Difficulty trusting and building relationships with school staff
- Increased risk for a number of challenges
- Trouble managing stress related to their child’s difficult behaviors
- Feelings of embarrassment, shame, fear, or guilt about their child’s behaviors or needs
How might trauma be affecting you and your school’s staff?
Impact on Staff

The experience of being physically, mentally, or emotionally worn out, or feeling as if you are carrying students’ traumas “too much alone.”

(Term coined by Charles Figley)
Impact of Trauma on School Staff

- **Direct Exposure to Trauma**: School staff may bring their own histories of trauma to their work or experience trauma on the job.

- **Compassion Fatigue** (Secondary Traumatic Stress): Teachers who work with highly traumatized students are at risk of being indirectly traumatized as a result of hearing about their students’ trauma and witnessing its negative effects.

- **Vicarious Trauma**: Changes in an educator’s inner experience over time as a result of responsibility for an empathic engagement with traumatized students.
Self-Care Strategies

• Physical
  o Get 8 hours of sleep (Go to bed by 10 pm), Eat a healthy diet of fruits and vegetables and avoid sugar, Exercise on Tuesday and Thursdays at 6 pm, Go to Yoga on Wednesdays at 7 pm

• Emotional
  o See friends once a week, Cry, Laugh, Praise Yourself, Use humor in frustrating situations

• Personal/Spiritual
  o Read for pleasure 15 minutes every night, Practice saying “no,” Take time alone once a day for 10 minutes, Practice prayer, Meditate for 10 minutes before bedtime

• Workplace
  o Take two 15 minute breaks throughout the day, Set Limits, Reach out to peers for support, Ask for supervision, Use vacations
Self-Care Plan

IGNACIO's Self Care Plan!

**Mind**
- Meditate
- Take lots of breaks
- Life-long learning
- Music
- Fun!

**Body**
- Tea
- Nourishing food
- Exercise
- Everything in moderation
- Sleep eight hours

**Spirit**
- Meditate
- Human connections
- Self-reflection
- Fulfillment though using my awesome skills

Supportive People In My Life:
- Gretchen
- Mom
- Mi Viejo
- Alberto
- Lynne
- Caroline
- Reed
- Deborah

I want to accomplish:
- Peace
- Serenity
- Control
- Happiness
- Good work
- Be a good person
Employee Assistance Program and Behavioral Health

Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

- Helps you and your household members with a wide range of issues affecting your overall quality of life.
  - All employees are automatically enrolled in the EAP,
  - Phone, 24/7/365 for a consultation,
  - Link to a counselor or crisis intervention at 800-424-4776 (800-4CHIPSO) or online at www.magellanhealth.com/member.

Behavioral Health

- Counseling and substance abuse recovery services to help you effectively deal with stressful and challenging situations:
  - If you are enrolled in the PPO or PPO with HSA, contact BCBSIL at (800) 851-7498 to access services. If you are in the Advantage HMO plan, contact 800-851-7498 to access BCBS HMO mental health services.
Meet your Match
^ teacher
CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Why are schools addressing trauma?
Definition

“A trauma-sensitive school is one in which all students feel safe, welcomed, and supported, and where addressing trauma’s impact on learning on a school-wide basis is at the center of its educational mission.”
The Trauma-Informed Perspective:
What do you have to give up?
What do you have to adopt?

**Traditional**

1. Student’s challenging behaviors are the result of individual deficits (e.g. what’s wrong with you?)
2. Understands difficult student behaviors as purposeful and personal
3. Focuses on changing the individual to “fix” the problem
4. Adults need to uphold authority and control with students and families
5. Punitive discipline works
6. Support for students exposed to trauma is provided by counseling professionals

**Trauma-Informed**

1. Student’s challenging behaviors may be ways of coping with traumatic experiences (e.g. what’s happened to you?)
2. Understands difficult student behaviors may be automatic responses to stress
3. Focuses on changing the environment
4. Adults need to offer flexibility and choice to students and families
5. Positive reinforcement works
6. Support for students exposed to trauma is the shared responsibility of all staff

American Institutes for Research, 2016
Promoting Resiliency

❖ The capacity to spring back, rebound, successfully adapt in the face of adversity. The ability to develop social, academic, and vocational competence despite exposure to severe stress or simply the stress that is inherent in today’s world. (Nan Henderson)
Protective Factors that Buffer the Impact of Stress

Learning environments that are safe, engaging, and supportive

Healthy, supportive relationships with caring adults

Strong social and emotional skills such as problem-solving, self-awareness, self-regulation, and relationship skills
| Call to Action |

**Trauma-Informed Classroom Practices**

**Strategy Development**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategies that &quot;square&quot; with my thinking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strategies that are still &quot;circling&quot; in my mind</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Three important points I want to remember</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One new &quot;direction&quot; I will go in (or action I will take)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Emotional Safety

- Ensure that each child is safe.
- Begin each day with a safe, enjoyable, non-threatening interaction before beginning the learning process.
- Allow students choice and control throughout the school day.
- Keep routines, schedules, and rules predictable within the classroom and other areas of the school.

- Offer to listen to traumatized students, but be mindful of intimacy barriers students may have.
- Ask students “With whom do you feel safe?” and “What do you need right now?”
- Offer traumatized students multiple opportunities to experience success.
- Create a safe space for when students are upset (“chill out” area).
- Avoid traumatic reminders/triggers.
Emotional Safety (cont’d)

Triggers

- Sensory experiences
  - Smells, tastes
  - Touch
  - Loud noises
  - Voices
- Relationship dynamics
- Loss of control
- Anniversaries

Triggers (cont’d)

- Unpredictable routines
- Inconsistent care
- Hunger/sleepy
- CHANGE
- Loss of caregivers
- Overstimulation
“Relationships are the interventions.”

Gharabaghi (2008)
Healthy, Caring Relationships

- Greet students in the morning
- Hold **check-ins** for individual students as well as the classroom as a whole.
- **Take inventory** of who has established relationships with students (e.g., Student Roster Check Activity).
- **Listen** to students without an agenda. Simply listen.
- Ask yourself **“What is driving this student’s behavior?”**
- **Watch and listen** for any students who show signs of distress or changes in behavior and refer to appropriate school-based professionals.

“All children need at least one caring adult who is irrationally crazy about them!”

*Bronfenbrenner (2005)*
Greet students in the morning
Relationship Mapping

Hold an all staff meeting

List EVERY student in the school on a wall or spreadsheet

Ask each staff to place a yellow dot next to students with whom they have a positive, trusting relationship

Place a red dot next to any student who may be at risk for academic, personal, or other reasons

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive Relationship?</th>
<th>Student Name</th>
<th>At risk?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Michelle B.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mike S.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jake Z.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
IN2Out Questions

● Voice
  ○ When was the last time you felt like someone was really listening to you?
  ○ When was the last time you really listened to someone who had a different opinion than you?
  ○ How can we hear more from our least represented voices?

● Race
  ○ What was the first experience you remember about race?
  ○ What has your schooling experience taught you about race?
  ○ What can our students teach our schools about race?
Promoting Emotional Regulation

- Read books related to children stress and/or traumatic events
- Ask students to **share their current emotional status** (i.e., through a morning check-in)
- **Normalize** student’s feelings and **allow several modalities** for them to express their feelings
- Allow students opportunities to **move** throughout the school day
- Play **music** in the classroom and school
- Engage students in **art-making activities**; these are self-soothing and self-regulating
- Consider the inclusion of **mindfulness/breathing activities** in the classroom and school (e.g. Calm Classroom)
- Offer a host of **after-school activities** that teach or reinforce self-regulation skills
THE ZONES of REGULATION

BLUE ZONE
- Bored
- Hurt
- Exhausted
- Sick
- Tired

GREEN ZONE
- Calm
- Good
- Proud
- Okay
- Centring
- Ready to Learn

YELLOW ZONE
- Anxious/Worried
- Exited
- Frustrated
- Silly
- Scared
- Overwhelmed

RED ZONE
- Aggressive
- Mean
- Terrified
- Mad
- Angry
- Yelling
The Zones of Regulation

**Blue Zone**
- sad
- tired
- sick
- moving
- slowly

**Green Zone**
- happy
- calm
- feeling ok
- focused
- ready to learn

**Yellow Zone**
- frustrated
- worried
- silly/wiggly
- excited
- loss of some control

**Red Zone**
- mad/angry
- terrified
- yelling/hitting
- elated
- out of control
How do you become a trauma-sensitive school?
Chalk Talk

- What policies and/or practices do we need to review, revise or develop?
- What classroom strategies support implementation?
- What collaborations and linkages does the school have and/or need with mental health providers?
- What do we need to do to ensure that families are active partners with implementation?
- What community linkages does the school have?
CALL TO ACTION
REVIEW
Mindfulness
Activity
When the music starts to play, walk around the room. Keep moving until the music stops.

When the music stops, place yourself adjacent to the yoga card on the floor that is closest to you.

Replicate the yoga pose that is on the card you are standing near. Hold the pose for 10 seconds.

When the music starts again, repeat the above steps.
Please complete our evaluation before leaving today. Your feedback is greatly appreciated.

tinyurl.com/traumaschoolsfeedback
Resources and Contact Information
Office of Social and Emotional Learning

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tinyurl.com/traumaschoolsfeedback

Knowledge Center: cps.edu/sel
References


References


