



Creating Trauma Sensitive Schools

Presented by:
Erin Browder
Brock Cohen
Lara Kain

Join us at:



LAEP PD
LAEPpd





Our Mission

- Los Angeles Education Partnership is an education nonprofit that works as a collaborative partner in high-poverty communities to foster great schools that support the personal and academic success of children and youth from birth through high school.
- Each year, we serve more than 1,000 educators and 39,000 students plus their families in communities across Los Angeles County.



Our Work

LAUSD Public Schools

- 11 High Schools
- 3 Middle Schools
- 3 Elementary Schools
 - ≥88% Free and Reduced Lunch
 - 91% Latino
 - 9% African-American and Other
 - 21% English Learners
 - 11% Special Education



At the signal...

- Stand and locate an eye contact partner and say,

*“Hello, I am so happy that
you are here today!”*



What?

Like Me!

Why?

How?





Like Me!

What?

- ✓ Opener, energizer
- ✓ Inclusion activity

Why?

How?





Like Me!

What?

- ✓ Opener, energizer
- ✓ Inclusion activity

Why?

- ✓ Builds community
- ✓ Learn about colleagues
- ✓ Brings oxygen to the brain

How?





Like Me!

What?

- ✓ Opener, energizer
- ✓ Inclusion activity

Why?

- ✓ Builds community
- ✓ Learn about colleagues
- ✓ Brings oxygen to the brain

How?

Each time you hear a statement that pertains to you:

- ✓ Stand up!
- ✓ Look around, make a connection



Eye Contact Partner

- Find an eye contact partner. Walk over and introduce yourself.
- PROMPT:
 - What do you envision a Trauma-Sensitive School to...
 - look like?
 - sound like?
 - feel like?

Thank your partner and return to your seat.

Triple Track Agenda

- 1.** Strategies and moves to support your learning here in this room.
- 2.** Applications for these strategies and moves with adult groups and tips for respectfully sharing them with others.
- 3.** Applications of these strategies and moves in classrooms.

National Data

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) Study

Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC)

Household dysfunction

- Substance abuse 27%
- Parental separation/divorce 23%
- Mental illness 19%
- Battered mother 13%
- Incarcerated household member 5%

Abuse

- Psychological 11%
- Physical 28%
- Sexual 21%

Neglect

- Emotional 15%
- Physical 10%



National Child Trauma Data

- More than 25% of American youth experience a serious traumatic event by their 16th birthday, and many children suffer multiple and repeated traumas.
- After a crisis or traumatic event, a child is at risk of developing traumatic stress. About 25% of victims and witnesses of violence develop PTSD, depression or anxiety disorders.
- **Four of every 10** children in American say they experienced a physical assault during the past year, with one in 10 receiving an assault-related injury.

NCTSN, 2



Los Angeles County Trauma Data

- The Central Index recorded 3,335 child abuse reports from Los Angeles County in 2012. This represents approximately 40% of the state's total reports.
- Hispanic children continue to be largest of all ethnic groups among Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS). Their population accounts for 58.7% of total caseload. African-American children continue to be disproportionately represented.
- In 2012, African-Americans children ages 1 to 17 had the highest death rate among the major race/ethnic groups represented, a consistent disparity.
- Children age 13 years and under account for 74.5% of the total DCFS caseload. 31.5% of the total DCFS child caseload were children under five years of age.



South LA PTSD and Trauma Data

- LAUSD commissioned Rand to do a study on PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder) with 4,000 children in Hawthorne.* They found 90 percent of the children had been victims of serious battery and felony or had been witness to a murder, a gang rape, or some other traumatizing level of exposure to violence
- Of those 90%:
 - o 33% had PTSD levels that are equivalent to our troops coming home from combat in Faluja, Iraq
 - o 33% had PTSD levels that were at the level of Mosul, Iraq's children at the end of the 2006 civil war

2007, Advancement Project "A Call to Action: A Case for a Comprehensive Solution to L.A.'s Gang Violence Epidemic"



ACES ACROSS CALIFORNIA

ACEs are an unfortunate reality for the majority of Californians - **61.7%** of adults have experienced at least one ACE, and **one in six**, or **16.7%**, California adults have experienced four or more ACEs. The number of Californians who have experienced four or more ACEs is considerably higher than the finding from the original Kaiser study in which 12.5%, or one in eight, of the study participants experienced four or more ACEs.

The most common ACE experienced by California adults is "emotional (or verbal) abuse" with almost 35% of adults indicating that a parent or adult swore, insulted, or put them down during their childhood. The next most prevalent ACEs are "parental separation or divorce", reported by 26.7% of adults, and "substance abuse by a household member", reported by 26.1% of adults.

Center for Youth Wellness. *Findings on Adverse Childhood Experiences in California*. 2013. Print.

<https://acestoohigh.files.wordpress.com/2014/11/hiddencrisis_report_1014.pdf>.

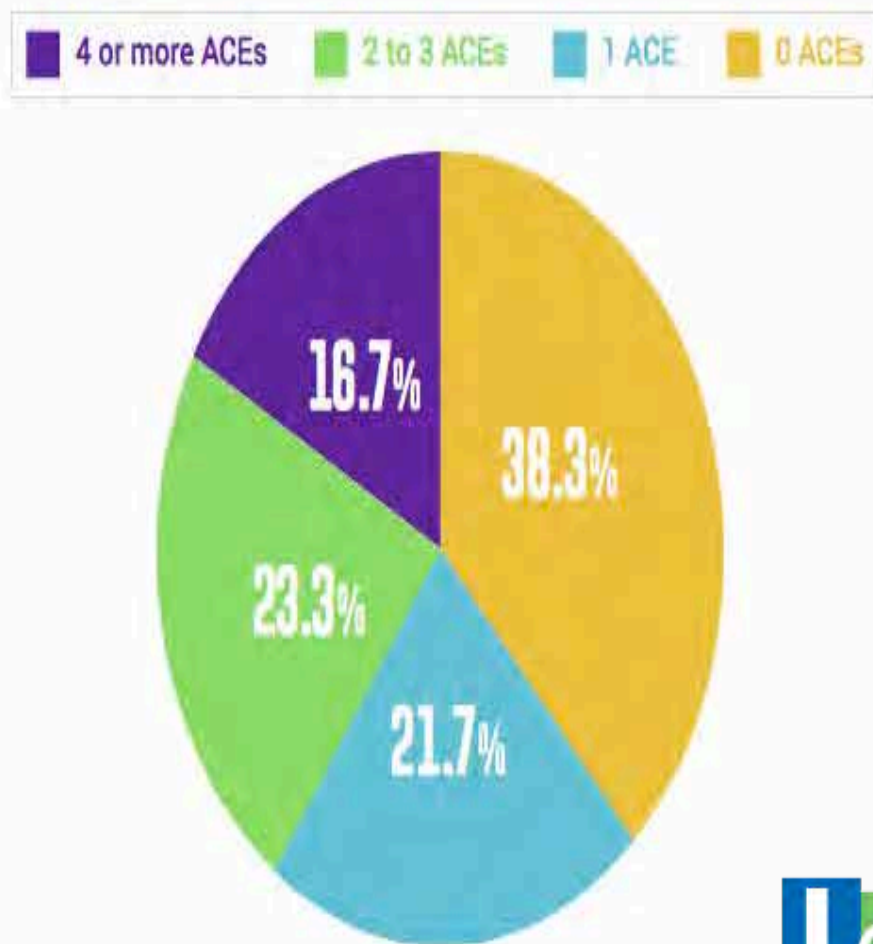


Figure 3: Prevalence of number of ACEs among California adults



ACES AND CHILD WELFARE

High numbers of ACEs, unsurprisingly, have strong correlations with involvement in the child welfare system. In California, a person with four or more ACEs is **12.96 times** as likely to have been removed from her home as a child as compared to a person with no ACEs. In 2012, over 350,000 California children received a Child Protective Services response for an allegation of child maltreatment.¹³ Of the 76,026 children who were found to be victims of maltreatment in 2012, 86.7% were found to have suffered from neglect and 18.3% were found to have suffered from emotional abuse.¹⁴

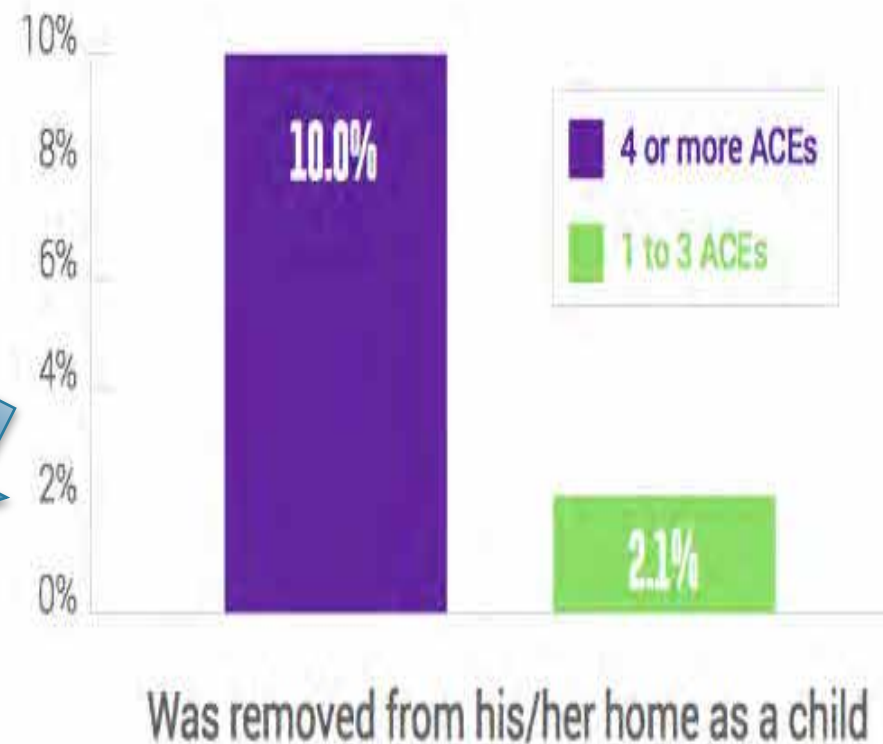


Figure 16: Relationship between ACE score and removal from home during childhood

A background image showing a pair of hands gently holding a small green seedling with soil. The image is slightly blurred, focusing on the hands and the plant.

Intended Outcomes

- ✓ Increase awareness of Trauma Sensitive Schools approach
- ✓ Increase knowledge of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), their symptoms and supportive responses at school sites
- ✓ Outline a framework for Trauma Sensitive Schools personalized for your school site(s) and needs of student population(s)

Agenda

- **Defining Trauma Sensitive Schools**
- **Trauma in our Community**
- **Our Students, Our Schools**
- **Trauma Sensitive Schools Framework**
- **Self-care for School Personnel**
- **Next Steps**



Trauma

Trauma is an umbrella term used to describe the inability of an individual or community to respond in a healthy way (physically, emotionally and mentally) to acute or chronic stress.

*Washington State Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
(OSPI) Compassionate Schools, (2009)*

<http://www.k12.wa.us/CompassionateSchools/Resources.aspx>



Trauma Sensitive Schools

Trauma sensitive schools acknowledge the prevalence of traumatic occurrence in students' lives & create a flexible framework that provides universal supports, is sensitive to unique needs of students, & is mindful of avoiding re-traumatization.

Trauma-Specific Therapy vs. Trauma Sensitive School

Therapy

- Licensed clinical mental health professionals
- Intervention occurs in therapist's office in 1:1 or small group sessions
- Focus is on addressing trauma reactions & reducing symptoms

School

- Licensed educators & pupil services professionals with varied mental health training
- Sensitivity, compassion & accommodations occur throughout the school
- Focus is on students' educational success through emotional & physical safety, empowerment, trust, choice, & collaboration



A hand-drawn map of Los Angeles neighborhoods in yellow ink on a light background. The map includes labels for various areas such as West Adams, Jefferson Park, Adams Northside, University City, Downtown, The Eastside, South Central, Baldwin Hills, Windsor Hills, Hyde Park, Lennox, Hawthorne, West Compton, Compton, South Gate, Watts, Willow Brook, Rancho Dominguez, and The Harbor. A compass rose is visible in the bottom left corner.

Trauma in our Neighborhoods: Our Schools, Our Students

- Do we have students who
 - witness domestic violence?
 - are physically, emotionally or sexually abused?
 - are neglected?
 - are homeless?
 - have family members in the military who are fighting overseas?
 - have experienced a natural disaster (e.g., tornado, house fire)?

The San Fernando Valley

Trauma in our Neighborhoods: Our Schools, Our students

- Do we have students who
 - have been in a serious accident (e.g., car accident)?
 - have been a victim of physical or sexual assault?
 - have lost a loved one?
 - live in homes with family members who abuse alcohol or other drugs?
 - live in homes with family members with untreated mental illness?



Stop. Jot. Share!

On your program, write a short description of a student that you've worked with.

- 1. What were some of the trauma symptoms they showed?**
- 2. How did that student perform or interact with others in school?**
- 3. On a school level, how could compassion and/or sensitivity support their recovery and future success?**
- 4. Share your elbow partner.**



Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) Study

- **Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are:**
 - **very common, and**
 - **strong predictors of health risks & disease from adolescence to adulthood**
- **This combination of findings makes ACEs one of the leading, if not the leading determinant of the health & social well-being of our nation**
- National study – <http://www.cdc.gov/ace/index.htm>
- California study –
https://acestoohigh.files.wordpress.com/2014/11/hiddenorigins_report_1014.pdf



Let's Watch One of our Students

TERRENCE VIDEO:

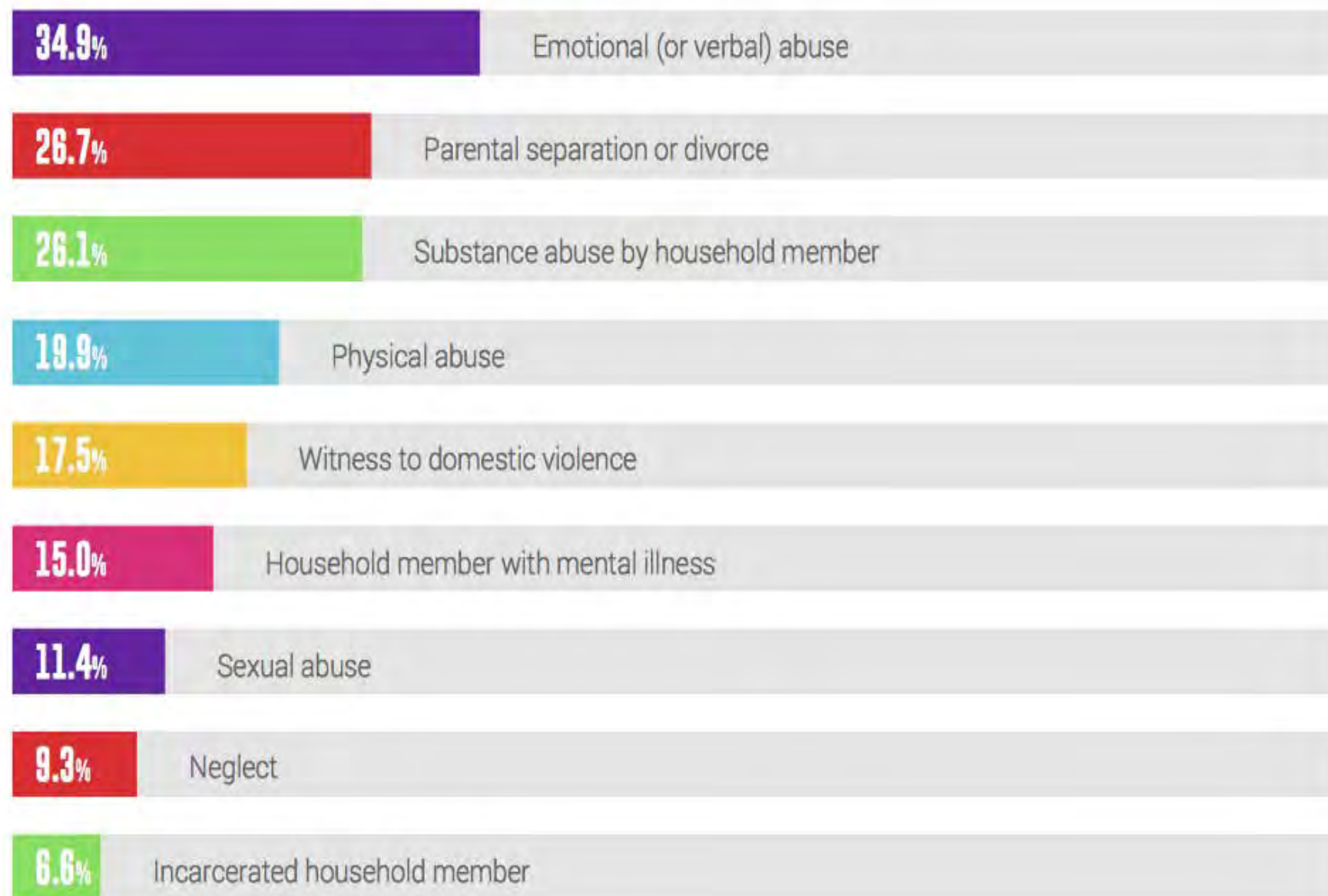
<http://www.jorisdebeij.com/work/#/still-1/>

Using your survey, how many ACEs does Terrence have?
How many ACEs do the students you described have?





Most Common ACEs Among California Adults



THE FACE OF ACEs IN CALIFORNIA

ACEs impact Californians from all walks of life regardless of geography, race, income, or education. Although the prevalence of ACEs is generally consistent across race and ethnicity, high numbers of ACEs correlate with a person's poverty, education, and employment.¹⁰

A PERSON WITH 4 OR MORE ACEs IS:

- 21% more likely to be below 250 percent of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL)
- 27% more likely to have less than a college degree
- 39% more likely to be unemployed

A NOTE ABOUT THE "NEGLECT" QUESTION:

To maintain consistency with CDC guidelines on data analysis of the BRFSS ACE module, the neglect question created by Public Health Institute researchers and included in the 2008, 2009 and 2013 ACEs modules has been omitted from the ACE score calculations, which were used to determine the following prevalence and prevalence ratios.

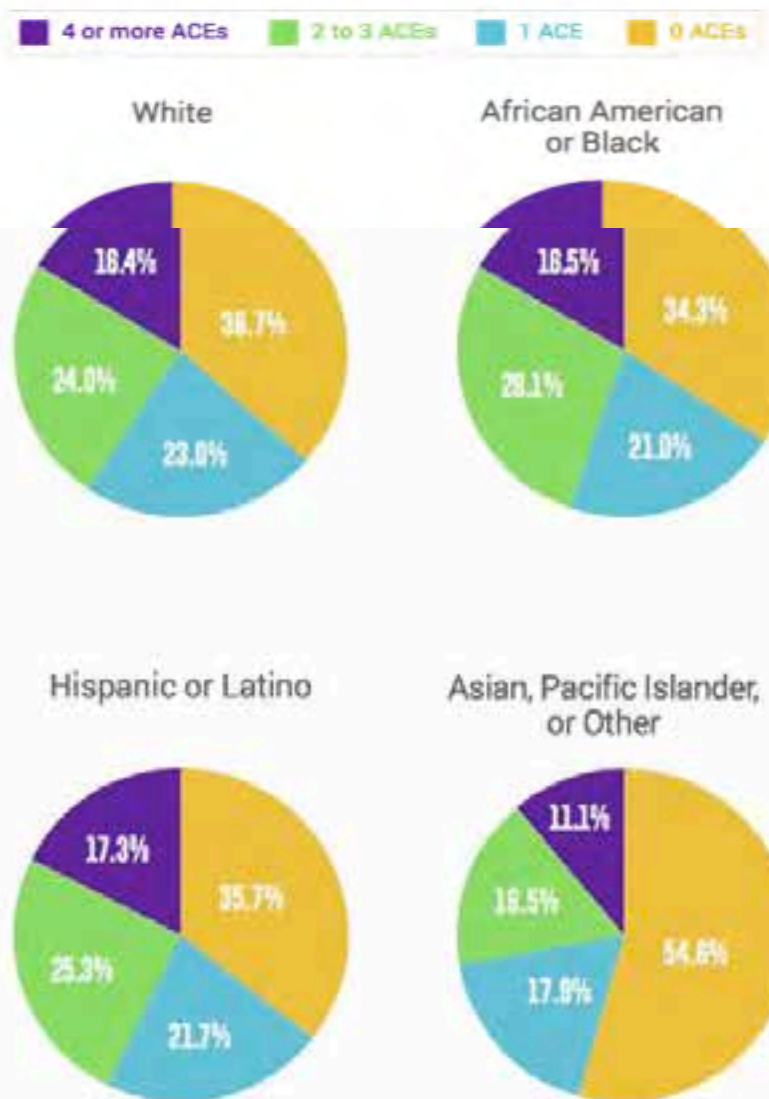


Figure 5: Prevalence of ACEs within racial/ethnic groups in California



ACE Symptoms and Outcomes

Symptoms

- School Absenteeism — tardies & truancy
- Dysregulated eating (under & overeating)
- Smoking
- Suicide attempts
- Illicit drug use & substance abuse
- Multiple sexual partners
- Self-injurious behaviors (e.g., cutting)

Outcomes

- Autoimmune disorders
- Obesity & eating disorders
- Substance use disorders
- Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) Depression
- Fetal death
- Ischemic heart disease (IHD)
- Liver disease
- Risk for intimate partner violence
- Sexually transmitted infections (STIs)
- Unintended pregnancies





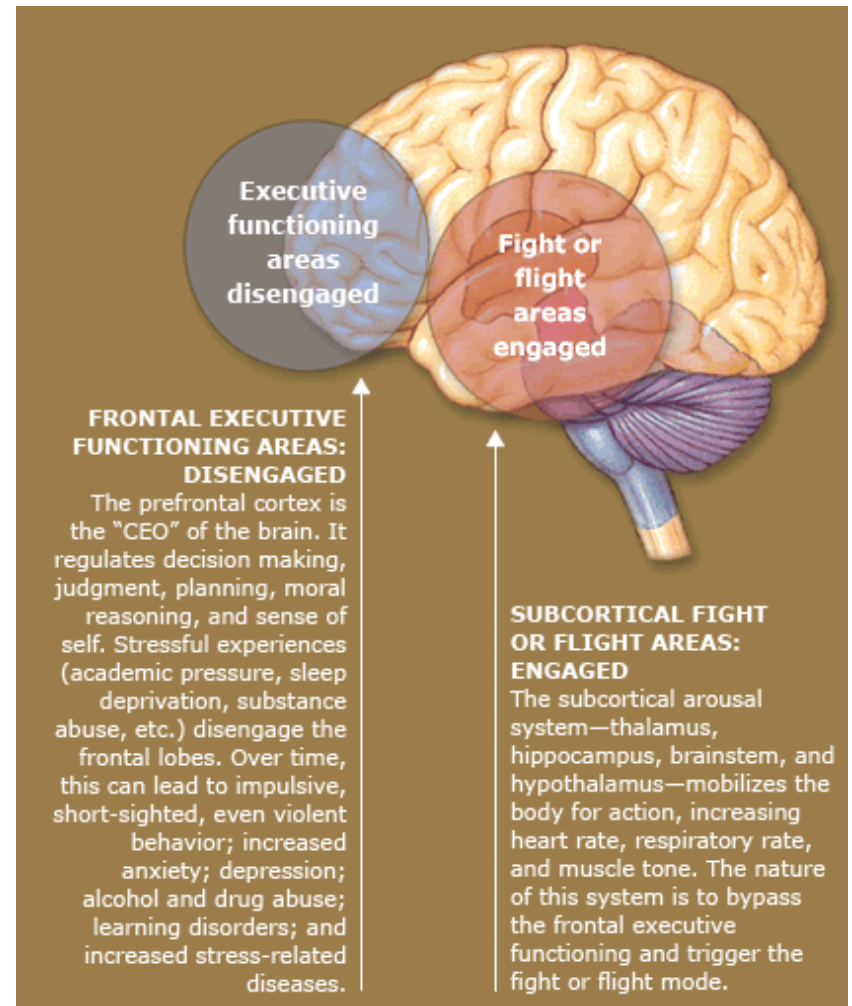
Terrence and School

What are some of the behaviors and/or possible outcomes Terrence experiences in school?



Impact on the Brain

- If there is danger, the “thinking” brain shuts down, allowing the “doing” brain to act
- Traumatized children experience changes in brain structures, neuro-chemistry & genetic expression



Dr. Nadine Burke Harris

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ak7o9nxpWD4>

ACEs & School Performance

Children who experience trauma:

- 2.5x more likely to fail a grade in school
- Score lower on standardized achievement tests
- More likely to have struggles in receptive & expressive language
- Suspended & expelled more often
- More frequently placed in special education





TRAUMA at Our Schools

An Exploration

Relationships

IS IT L

Worldview

Classroom
Behavior

Learning



Find the Best Fit

1. Each participant will receive a slip containing a symptom of trauma that surfaces at a school
2. Find the chart that has the topic that best fits your slip.
3. Once you are next to your chart, speak with your colleagues to confirm the fit—place it on the chart
4. After all slips are placed on chart, respond to this question:

****HOW DOES THIS RESONATE WITH AN EXPERIENCE YOU'VE HAD WITH YOUR STUDENTS? ****



Find the Best Fit, cont'd

- Next to the chart, is an answer guide. Please unfold and cross reference.
- GALLERY WALK: In groups of 3-4, walk around the room and read the completed charts.
- Once you are finished, return to your chart, and respond to:
 - Do you find any of the information surprising or missing?
 - Appoint a group member to report out a summary of your conversations.





Impact on Relationships

- Relationships are developed through the emotional bond between the child & primary caregiver. It is through this relationship we learn to:
 - Regulate emotions - “self soothe”
 - Develop trust in others
 - Freely explore our environment
 - Understand ourselves & others
 - Understand that we can impact the world around us





Impact on Worldview

Typical Development vs. Developmental Trauma

- Nurturing & stable attachments with adults
- Belief in a predictable & benevolent world/ generally good things will happen to me
- Feeling of positive self-worth/others will see my strengths
- Optimism about the future
- Feeling that I can have a positive impact on the world
- Basic mistrust of adults/inability to depend on others
- Belief that the world is an unsafe place/bad things will happen & they are usually my fault
- Assumption that others will not like me
- Fear & pessimism about future
- Feelings of hopelessness & lack of control

A background image of a classroom scene. A teacher, a woman with blonde hair wearing a dark blue apron over a light-colored shirt, is leaning over a desk and pointing her right index finger towards a young boy. The boy is wearing a dark blue t-shirt and is looking towards the teacher. Other students are visible in the background, some looking towards the camera and others looking towards the teacher. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting a window in the background.

Impact on Classroom Behavior

- Reactivity & impulsivity
- Aggression
- Defiance
- Withdrawal
- Perfectionism
- Inability to work well with others
- Engaging in learning process

Impact on Learning

- Organizing narrative material, e.g. Cause & Effect
- Taking another's perspective
- Attentiveness
- Regulating emotions
- Executive functioning



Trauma-Sensitive Schools

While adverse childhood experiences can have lifelong consequences, research has shown that development of resiliency in children can mitigate the harmful effects to children's health and development associated with toxic stress.

Protective factors that foster resiliency can be cultivated at the school level.

1. (Clervil, Guarino, DeCandia, & Beach, 2013; Haskett, Nears, Ward, & McPherson, 2006; Roy, Carli, & Sarchiapone, 2011)
2. (Anderson, Christenson, Sinclair, & Lehr, 2004; Henry, Tolan, Gorman-Smith, & Schoeny, 2012; Miller, Fenty, Scott, Park, & Lee, 2011; Park & Lynch, 2014; Thurlow, Christenson, Sinclair, & Evelo, 1997).



Steps to Create a Trauma- Sensitive School

1. Engage leadership
2. Perform assessment
3. Review literature
4. Provide training
5. Implement classroom strategies





Step 1: Engage Leadership



Step 2: Assessment

Step 3: Review Literature & Explore Model Implementation

- Massachusetts Advocates of Children
<http://www.massadvocates.org/order-book.php>
- Washington State The Heart of Learning and Teaching
<http://www.k12.wa.us/CompassionateSchools/HeartofLearning.aspx>
- Creating Sanctuary in Schools by Sandra Bloom
http://www.sanctuaryweb.com/PDFs_new/Bloom%20Sanctuary%20in%20the%20Classroom.pdf
- Child Trauma Toolkit for Educators
http://rems.ed.gov/docs/NCTSN_ChildTraumaToolkitForEducators.pdf
- Calmer Classrooms: A Guide to Working with Traumatized Children
http://www.ccyp.vic.gov.au/childsafetycommissioner/downloads/calmer_classrooms.pdf
- Making SPACE for Learning: Trauma-Informed Practice in Schools
<http://www.childhood.org.au/~media/Files/Fundraising%20files/Fundraising%20resource%20files/Making%20space%20for%20learning%20ACF.ashx>
- Visit or consult with schools that are trauma-sensitive



Step 4: Provide Staff Training



Step 5: Classroom Strategies to establish...



SAFETY



TRUST

Step 5: Classroom Strategies to establish a sense of...

****EMPOWERMENT***



****CHOICE***

****COLLABORATION***





TSS AT WORK!!

- **ENGLISH 9—2ND PERIOD (BLOCK SCHEDULE FIRST OF THE DAY)**

WHAT STRATEGIES DO YOU SEE PRESENT?

- ☐ **EMPOWERMENT**
- ☐ **COLLABORATION**
- ☐ **SAFETY**
- ☐ **CHOICE**
- ☐ **TRUST**



Self Care as an Ethical Obligation

“You cannot give away that which you do not have.”

Juli Alvarado,
Coaching For Life



Progression of Burnout



Compassion



Empathy



Vicarious/Secondary Trauma



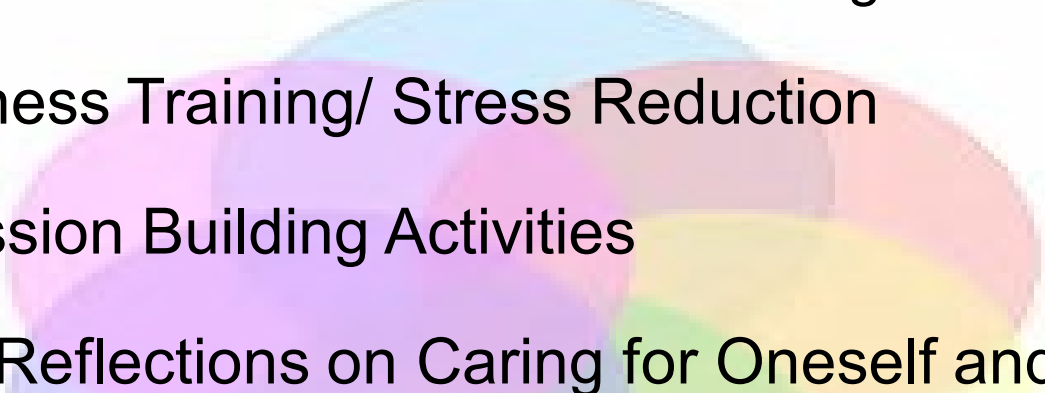
Compassion Fatigue



Burnout



Self-Care for Teachers and School-Based Personnel

- 
- Emotional Skills Instruction
 - e.g. How emotional skills affect teaching and learning
 - Mindfulness Training/ Stress Reduction
 - Compassion Building Activities
 - Guided Reflections on Caring for Oneself and Others

Jennings, P., Frank, J., Snowberg, K., Coccia, M., & Greenberg, M. (2013). Improving classroom learning environments by Cultivating Awareness and Resilience in Education (CARE): Results of a randomized controlled trial. *School Psychology Quarterly*, 28(4), 374-390.



CHECK BACK

Find your eye-contact partner from earlier and confirm your visions Trauma-Sensitive Schools.

Generate questions and/or summarize comments you'd like to make to whole group.





Next Steps...

- How can this framework be personalized for your school site to become Trauma Sensitive?
- Where are your first steps?



Questions and Comments

For more information on Creating Trauma Sensitive Schools

- Toolkit <http://www.dpi.wi.gov/sspw/mhtrauma.html>
- Treatment and Adaptation Services Center, Resiliency, Hope, and Wellness in Schools <http://traumaawareschools.org>
- Center for Youth Wellness <http://centerforyouthwellness.org>
- Contact
 - Lara Kain, Senior Director, Los Angeles Education Partnership, lkain@laep.org
 - Brock Cohen, Director of Transform Schools, Los Angeles Education Partnership, bcohen@laep.org
 - Erin Browder, Transformation Facilitator, Los Angeles Education Partnership, ebrowder@laep.org

Credits

- Child Trauma Academy (Dr. Bruce Perry) <http://childtrauma.org>
- National Child Traumatic Stress Network <http://www.nctsnet.org>
- National Center for Trauma Informed Care <http://mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/nctic/>
- *The Emotional Brain*, J LeDoux
- *Affective Neuroscience: The Foundation of Human and Animal Emotions*, J.P. Panksepp
- Bessel van der Kolk, <http://www.traumacenter.org>
- Juli Alvarado, <http://www.coaching-forlife.com/>
- Dr. Robert Anda, CDC (ACE Study)
- *Helping Traumatized Children Learn*, Massachusetts Advocates for Children 2005
- *Understanding Traumatic Stress in Children* Bassuk M.D., Ellen L.; Konnath LICSW, Kristina, Volk MA., Katherine T.
- *The Heart of Learning and Teaching Compassion, Resiliency & Academic Success* Wolpow, Ray; Johnson, Mona M.; Hertel, Ron; Kincaid, Susan O. 2009