

Paper Tigers

IEA/NEA

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Processing the Film

What stands out the most about each student or staff member?

- ▶ Principal Jim Sporleder
- ▶ Brooke
- ▶ Mr. Gordon
- ▶ Steven
- ▶ Dianna
- ▶ Aron
- ▶ Eternity
- ▶ Kelsey
- ▶ Gustavo

Facts about Trauma Informed Schools

- Reduction in student behaviors and referrals
- Improved academic success, school climate, teacher satisfaction and retention
- Reduced absences, detentions, suspensions, bullying, fights, and harassment
- Decreased need for special education services.
- Improved Graduation rates.

Trauma Informed Schools

- Schools that practice Trauma Informed Care view students from the perspective of what is happening to the child instead of labeling and diagnosing the student.
- Teachers, administrators and staff understand the impact stress and trauma have on a student's body, the brain and ability to learn, emotional regulation and behavior.

Understanding Trauma's Impact

Remember everyone in the classroom has a story that leads to misbehavior or defiance. 9 times out of 10, the story behind the misbehavior won't make you angry, it will break your heart.



How can school staff help?

- We must understand how students are experiencing what they have been exposed to.
- We cannot assume we know how they are experiencing the trauma.
- We need to understand how trauma affects the brain, learning and academic success.

The Top 10 Things About Childhood Trauma Every Teacher Needs to Know

- ▶ Trauma is a personal experience. Two people can have the same experience and one may be traumatized and the other is not.
- ▶ Students who have experienced trauma worry about their safety, and what is going to happen next.
- ▶ Even when the situation does not seem that bad to adults, it's how the child feels that matters.
- ▶ Trauma is not always associated with violence.
- ▶ You do not need to know exactly what caused the trauma to be able to help the student.

Top 10 Things about Trauma Continued

- ▶ Students who experience trauma need to believe they have strengths and can influence others.
- ▶ There is a direct negative correlation between trauma/stress and learning.
- ▶ Self regulation can be a major challenge for students suffering from trauma. They are not trying to push your buttons.
- ▶ It is OK to ask the students what can I do to help you make it through the day/class?
- ▶ You can support students who have experienced trauma even when they're outside your classroom.

What Teachers Might Observe in Elementary Students

- ▶ Increased anxiety, fear, concerned for safety, clingy with teacher/parent
- ▶ Increased distress, whiny, moody
- ▶ Increase in activity levels
- ▶ Withdrawal
- ▶ Increased outbursts/aggression
- ▶ Absenteeism

Elementary Students Continued

- Increase in somatic complaints
- Changes in academic performance
- Worry about a recurrence of the traumatic event
- Statements about death and dying
- Difficulty with correction or redirection
- Avoidance
- Increase in Hyper-Hypo Arousal behaviors

What You Might Observe in Middle/High School Students

- ▶ Decreased attention/concentration
- ▶ Increase anxiety levels
- ▶ Change in academic performance
- ▶ Irritability with staff, friends and events
- ▶ Angry outbursts/aggression both physical/verbal
- ▶ Withdrawal from others/activities

Middle/High School Students Continued

- ▶ Absenteeism increases
- ▶ Increased somatic complaints
- ▶ Discomfort with feelings
- ▶ Over or under-reacting to bells, physical contact, sudden changes
- ▶ Avoidance behaviors
- ▶ Emotional numbness
- ▶ Hyper or Hypo Arousal Behaviors

Middle/High School Students Continued

- ▶ Increase is in impulsivity, risk-taking behaviors, and substance abuse
- ▶ Experience trouble with trust and perceptions of others
- ▶ Heightened difficulty with authority, redirection, or criticism
- ▶ Repetitive thoughts or comments about death and dying
- ▶ Scanning the classroom for threats

Steps to Creating a Trauma Informed School/District

- ▶ Provide school-wide Trauma Informed Awareness
- ▶ Understand the impact of trauma
- ▶ View trauma as an experience
- ▶ Establish safety
- ▶ Create connections with students
- ▶ Promote play and movement in the classroom
- ▶ Prioritize social-emotional skills
- ▶ Collaborate with families and community
- ▶ Support staff



“ We have no control over how students enter our schools, but we can greatly affect how they leave them.”

Nicholas A. Ferroni

Resources

- ▶ Chestnut Health Systems
- ▶ Help for Billy, Author Heather T. Forbes
- ▶ National Child Traumatic and Stress Network
- ▶ National Institute of Trauma and Loss in Children, www.starr.org or Google National Institute of Trauma and Loss in Children.
- ▶ Special Education Staff in your building.
- ▶ Social Workers/Agency Staff
- ▶ Massachusetts Advocate for Children
- ▶ <http://ieanea.org/resources/partnership-for-resiliency>