

**EducationWeek**® WEBINAR

# Weathering the Storm

A Trauma-Informed  
Approach to the  
Return to School

Content provided by





# DR. WILL HENSON

# IN THIS WEBINAR

**What to Expect this Fall and Why**

**4 Pillars of a Trauma-Informed Approach to Back to School 2020**



# WHAT TO EXPECT THIS FALL...AND WHY

# ACES PRIMER

> Adverse Childhood Experiences stem from 10 different kinds of adversity

## HOUSEHOLD DYSFUNCTION



- > Incarceration of a Family Member
- > Witnessing Domestic Violence
- > Substance Abuse by Family Member
- > Family Mental Illness
- > Divorce or Separation

## ABUSE



- > Physical
- > Emotional
- > Sexual

## NEGLECT



- > Physical
- > Emotional

A TYPICAL CLASSROOM OF 30 STUDENTS



> 6 students with no ACE

> 5 students with 1 ACE

> 6 students with 2 ACEs

*And importantly -*

> 3 students with 3 ACEs

> 7 students with 4-5 ACEs

> 3 students with 6+ ACEs

# ACES HAVE AN ENORMOUS IMPACT ON SCHOOL AGE STUDENTS':

- Neurological development
- Decreased resilience
- Mental illness (increased rates)
- Academic difficulties
- Problems with Concentration and attention
- Difficulty trusting others
- Higher suicide rates (especially for interpersonal and sexual trauma)
- Long-term health problems and early morbidity
- Low self-worth & self concept, sense of agency
- High risk behaviors (substance abuse, domestic violence, etc)
- **Increased stress response (fight or flight)**
- **Hyper-vigilance**
- **Social misattributions (hostile bias)**
- **Low emotional regulation**

# ACES IMPACTS

- **Students at risk:** Compared to someone with no ACEs students with ACEs are:
  - 3 times more likely to experience academic failure
  - 4 times more likely to have reported poor health
  - 5 times more likely to have severe attendance problems
  - **6 times more likely to evidence school behavior problems**
- **Impacts Vary by:**
  - Point in time trauma occurs
  - Nature of adverse experience
  - Relational environment & supports present
  - Students' resilience

# REGULATION



Thinking



Emotional  
Responses



Attention



Physical  
Reactions





# HUGE WAVE OF STRESS AND TRAUMA = INCREASED DYSREGULATION

- The COVID-19 pandemic
- The loss of predictability, routine, student skills
- The current socio-political climate

# POLL QUESTION 1

- How prepared do you feel to address the coming wave of stress and trauma?
  - Totally Prepared
  - Somewhat Prepared
  - Fairly Unprepared
  - Totally Unprepared
  - N/A

# STRESSFUL CONDITIONS IN SOCIETY

Associated with:

- Increased rates of mental health conditions like anxiety and depression
- Increased substance use
- Higher domestic violence and child abuse rates

# COVID-19 STRESS

- Fear of getting sick
- Concern for family and friends at risk
- Social isolation
- Disruption of extended family network
- Loss of work and financial difficulties
- Stressful togetherness, including having to work and manage school for children



# PEOPLE AT GREATER RISK FOR STRESS:

- Children and teens
- People with underlying health conditions
- People with existing mental health conditions
- People with substance abuse disorders
- Essential workers
- People experiencing poverty
- Racial and ethnic minorities
- People experiencing homelessness
- People who cannot access information about COVID in their primary language

# THE EFFECTS OF THE LAST SIX MONTHS:

- Children have lost the routine of being in school. This includes:
  - Sleep/wake cycle
  - Having expectations to complete work and engage in non-preferred activities
  - Following a set routine or schedule
  - Following rules and being asked to do things in specific ways
  - Interacting cooperatively with others

# THE EFFECTS OF THE LAST SIX MONTHS:

- More time spent online and with electronics
  - Increased screen time is associated with lower psychological well-being (depression and anxiety)
  - Lower curiosity
  - Decreased self-control
  - Lower emotional stability
  - Increased distractibility and task completion
  - Difficulty making friends and social connections



# U.S. SOCIAL & POLITICAL CLIMATE

- Social and political tensions around the virus, mask-wearing, and the appropriateness of social distancing.
- The killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis on May 25, 2020 has led to nation-wide protest and racial and political tensions.
- There is an upcoming election cycle in November 2020 that is bound to be contentious.



# RETURNING TO SCHOOL

# 4 KEY PILLARS OF A TRAUMA-INFORMED APPROACH

1. Personal Wellness
2. Creating Relationship & a Sense of Safety
3. Creating Predictability
4. Helping Students Regulate

**1.**

**PERSONAL  
WELLNESS**



# POLL QUESTION 2

How would you rate your stress level as it relates to back-to-school 2020?

5 – Totally stressed

4

3

2

1- Not at all stressed

N/A

# 3 KEY AREAS

**Self-Awareness**

**Self-Regulation**

**Resiliency**

# SELF-AWARENESS

Understanding of:

- Your thoughts
- Your feelings
- Your body's reaction
- Your habits
- Your biases in interpreting information



# SELF-AWARENESS

- *If you are having a thought or feeling, and you don't know you are having that thought or feeling, you **become** that thought or feeling.”*  
– Sam Harris







# SELF-REGULATION

## REGULATION



Thinking



Emotional  
Responses



Attention



Physical  
Reactions

# THINKING OR SELF-TALK

Are you:

- Encouraging yourself or putting yourself down?
- Focusing more on the problem or on possible solutions?
- Making cognitive errors in examining a problem, especially ones that make the problem seem worse, or your options seem limited?

# RESILIENCY

Internal strength is not...

- The absence of or denial of feelings
- Being so tough you don't need any help or any comfort

# RESILIENCY

- Learned behavior and way of thinking
- Develops through practice
- Built through relationships with other people
- Quality of connection
- Fluid and dependent on your physical and emotional state
- Adaptive response in the face of adversity

# RESEARCH SHOWS

Resilient people do 3 things:

1. Calmly accept the reality of their circumstances
2. Make meaning of their situation
3. Flexibly adapt to their circumstances

# THINGS TO DO:

- Monitor your own regulation
- Be aware of your own stress/trauma and the impact working with students with trauma has on you
- Make sure to start and end the day in a regulated state (develop and use regulation routines!)
- Practice Self-Talk

**2 .  
C R E A T I N G  
R E L A T I O N S H I P S  
( A N D A S E N S E  
O F S A F E T Y )**





# CREATING RELATIONSHIPS

The key elements of forming relationships are:

- Presence
- Power
- Warmth

# POLL QUESTION 3

- How prepared do you feel to build and maintain relationships virtually?
  - Totally Prepared
  - Somewhat Prepared
  - Fairly Unprepared
  - Totally Unprepared
  - N/A

# THINGS TO DO:

- Show interest in your students
- Model positive relationships
- Focus on trust and safety

## Distance Learning:

- Check your students' social emotional vital signs before starting a lesson
- Exaggerate your non-verbals (being online dampens non-verbal signals)
- Create space in your routine to check in regarding students' interests and activities

**3 .  
C R E A T I N G  
P R E D I C T A B I L I T Y**



# CREATING PREDICTABILITY

Predictability is hallmark of trauma-informed environments

- Kids don't respond well to surprises and can't think flexibly
- They need to know what is going to happen, why, when, and how
- Predictability is also a staff trait - students can predict how you will respond.

# THINGS TO DO:

- Post and follow a regular schedule
- Update the schedule daily to reflect changes
- Use visual supports to help students learn and remember routines, schedules and expectations
- Communicate regularly with students and caregivers
- Ensure a predictable and safe response from adults
- Continually clarify expectations for success
- Establish and follow routines that support your schedule

# WHY CREATE ROUTINES?

Routines:

- Help kids learn what to do through repetition and help automate a student's behavior
- Reduce arousal and dysregulation
- Allow structured and predictable interaction with a calm adult

# TYPES OF ROUTINES

- Transition routines manage transitions between activities
- Attention Routines help students re-focus – (example: “choral response”)
- Re-focus and re-centering routines help bring a class back being off track or having too high energy (example: deep breathing)



# PRE-TEACHING

- Communicate and reiterate expectations before each activity.
- Discuss how you would like students to respond to certain issues.
- Make sure students know how to get materials, start and end class and get attention.
- Frame successful behaviors in a way that makes students want to do them.

**4.**  
**HELPING**  
**STUDENTS**  
**REGULATE**



# CO-REGULATION

A woman is sitting on the left side of a seesaw, and a young boy is sitting on the right side. The seesaw is balanced on a central pivot. The background is a dark teal color.

Only a well-regulated adult can help a student regulate

**3 2 1 insight**  
ESSENTIAL TRAINING

As you go, so goes the student.

# REGULATION IS A SHARED PROCESS

Regulation is not something you do to someone, it's something you do with them.

# WHAT DOES CO-REGULATION DO FOR YOU?

- Students do better when they are regulated
- They are attentive, calm, more cognitively flexible and available
- Co-regulation is an efficient process to address regulation

# THINGS TO DO:

- Teach new coping skills for managing stress and uncertainty
- Schedule and provide opportunities to regulate
- Create safe, calming spaces

## Distance Learning:

- Use specific words or phrases along with your routines
- Use these same words and skills at the beginning of an instructional task to allow for practice
- Intersperse regulation breaks within instruction

# REGULATION BREAKS

- Build times and activities into your day to help students regulate - quick breaks, check ins, movement etc..
- Structure your day so students don't get overwhelmed
- Have a process for students when they need a break
- Make social & emotional skills part of your curriculum

# POLL QUESTION 4

- Does your school or district have a training plan in place to address the dysregulation we will face this fall?
  - Yes
  - No
  - I don't know
  - N/A



# FINAL THOUGHTS

- Be intentional and really plan out your return - online or in person
- Start with welcoming energy
- Go over the top with predictability, routine, structure
- Have a plan for when things go wrong

# THANK YOU





A L I A   J A C K S O N  
3 2 1   I N S I G H T

# ONLINE TOOLKIT FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ON TRAUMA-INFORMED SCHOOLS

- For ALL staff
- Brief videos with discussion guides and job specific tools
- Designed to fit all PD models
- Addresses the impact of COVID-19
- Focused on Self-Care, Relationships, Resiliency, SEL



A video thumbnail featuring a green background with a hand holding several playing cards. The cards are labeled 'Neurological Development', 'Behavior', and 'Thinking'. A play button icon is overlaid on the cards. Below the cards, the text reads 'VIDEO > BUILDING RESILIENCY' and '7:12'.

Neurological Development  
Behavior  
Thinking

VIDEO >  
BUILDING RESILIENCY

7:12



A tool guide titled 'TRAUMA INFORMED FOR EDUCATORS' with the subtitle 'SELF CARE & WELLNESS FOR EDUCATORS'. It features a 'WHAT YOU NEED' section with a list of items: 'A safe space for professional development and a break-time of resources, professional events that have been done online or in-person', 'A safe space for professional development and a break-time of resources, professional events that have been done online or in-person', 'A safe space for professional development and a break-time of resources, professional events that have been done online or in-person', and 'A safe space for professional development and a break-time of resources, professional events that have been done online or in-person'. Below this is a 'TRAUMA EFFECTS AND SELF-CARE' section with a list of items: 'Having a safe space for professional development and a break-time of resources, professional events that have been done online or in-person', 'Having a safe space for professional development and a break-time of resources, professional events that have been done online or in-person', 'Having a safe space for professional development and a break-time of resources, professional events that have been done online or in-person', and 'Having a safe space for professional development and a break-time of resources, professional events that have been done online or in-person'. The guide also includes a small photo of a man in a suit.

TRAUMA INFORMED FOR EDUCATORS  
SELF CARE & WELLNESS FOR EDUCATORS

WHAT YOU NEED

- A safe space for professional development and a break-time of resources, professional events that have been done online or in-person
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TRAUMA EFFECTS AND SELF-CARE

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A tool guide titled 'TRAUMA INFORMED FOR PARAEducATORS' with the subtitle 'Trauma-Informed'. It features a photo of a diverse group of children and adults smiling. Below the photo, the text reads 'TOOL > GUIDE FOR PARAEducATORS' and 'PDF'.

TRAUMA INFORMED FOR PARAEducATORS  
Trauma-Informed

TOOL >  
GUIDE FOR PARAEducATORS

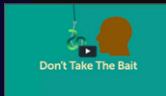
PDF

# ONLINE TRAINING FOR PARAPROFESSIONALS

Ready to use online training

3 to 13 minute videos, discussion guides, quizzes

Online tracking



**Don't Take The Bait**

VIDEO >  
PICK YOUR BATTLES

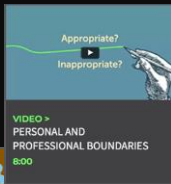
6:51



**PROFESSIONALS**

**VIDEO >**  
INTRODUCTION TO  
SPECIAL EDUCATION

11:37



Appropriate?  
Inappropriate?

**VIDEO >**  
PERSONAL AND  
PROFESSIONAL BOUNDARIES

8:00



prepare the student for learning a skill

**VIDEO >**  
TEACHING A SKILL

9:39



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# Q AND A

# THANK YOU



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