Promoting a Paradigm Shift in Metro Nashville Public Schools: Our Process Towards Becoming Trauma-Sensitive

Mary Crnobori, PhD, BCBA
Coordinator of Trauma-Informed Schools
Agenda

• Introduction
• Impacts of Adversity on School Outcomes
• Practical Application of Trauma-Informed School Culture and Practices
• Trauma-Informed Practices in Metro Nashville Public Schools
“If 20 million people were infected by a virus that caused anxiety, impulsivity, aggression, sleep problems, depression, respiratory and heart problems, vulnerability to substance abuse, antisocial and criminal behavior, retardation and school failure, we would consider it an urgent public health crisis. Yet, in the United States alone, there are more than 20 million abused, neglected and traumatized children vulnerable to these problems. Our society has yet to recognize this epidemic, let alone develop an immunization strategy.”

(Bruce Perry, childtrauma.org; ACEstudy.org)
What is Trauma?

More emotion than the brain can deal with

• Exposure to **extreme stress** (including chronic/toxic stress over time)

• Not the event itself, but rather a **response** to one or more overwhelmingly stressful events where one’s ability to cope is dramatically undermined

• A natural biological response to unnatural events
PTSD

• Originally developed for adults who have experienced a single traumatic event
• Diagnosis approved in 1980
  • Still a diagnosis with recognized limitations

• Current research emphasizes the MORE SIGNIFICANT and COMPLEX IMPACT of trauma or toxic stress that occurs during childhood
Like A Footprint in Wet Cement
Childhood Trauma Terminology

• Trauma that occurs during childhood
  • Developmental Trauma Disorder

• Sustained, pervasive trauma over a long period of time:
  • Complex PTSD
  • Continuous Traumatic Stress Syndrome

(Office of the Attorney General’s National Task Force on Children Exposed to Violence, 2012; Herman, Harvard University; van Der Kolk, 2003; Eagle & Kaminer, 2013)
Adverse Childhood Experiences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ABUSE</th>
<th>NEGLECT</th>
<th>HOUSEHOLD DYSFUNCTION</th>
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<td>Substance Abuse</td>
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<td>Divorce</td>
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(Felitti, Anda, Nordenberg, Williamson, Spitz, Edwards, et al., 1998)
More Adverse Childhood Experiences

- Social effects of poverty
- Homelessness
- Community violence
- Drug culture
- Unstable or chaotic home life
- Refugee experiences
- Human Trafficking
- Racism/ Discrimination
- Bullying
- Illness of a loved one or friend

- Inconsistent presence of 1 or more parent
- Frequent changes in placements/ schools
- Gentrification
- Gang culture
- Chronic exposure to violence/horror movies/pornography
- Natural Disasters
- Intrusive medical treatments
- Serious accidents
Trauma and Toxic Stress on the Developing Brain

A hostile takeover of the conscious mind by powerful negative emotions

Amygdala

- Enlarged and sensitized
- Alarm systems in the traumatized brain become terribly distorted.
- Perceives danger everywhere—in dangerous situation, neutral situations, and good situations
- A vicious cycle—more vulnerable to future stressors
Trauma and Toxic Stress on the Developing Brain

- Hippocampus (major for memory and mood)
  - Helps us to see things in perspective so we don’t get overstressed
  - Inhibits/ calms down the amygdala
  - Tells the hypothalamus to quit flooding the brain with stress hormones
  - Capacity is diminished

- Neurotransmitters
  - Altered or a roller coaster of rapidly fluctuations such as:
    - < Serotonin
    - < Dopamine
    - < Oxytocin
    - < Norepinephrine
    - > Adrenaline
    - > Cortisol
Flipping Your Lid

FEAR as a way of life

- Traumatized brain stays in a state of hyperarousal at baseline (or is always primed for hyperarousal), when typical brains are calm
  - Relies consistently on basic automatic survival responses (fight, flight, freeze, faint)
  - The primitive brain **hijacks** and overpowers the cortex and executive functioning
  - **Traumatized brain cannot reliably access and use the thinking brain to make good decisions**
Experience Alters Brain Development
Normal vs. Neglected Brain

Healthy Brain
This PET scan of the brain of a normal child shows regions of high (red) and low (blue and black) activity. At birth, only primitive structures such as the brain stem (center) are fully functional; in regions like the temporal lobes (top), early childhood experiences wire the circuits.

An Abused Brain
This PET scan of the brain of a Romanian Orphan, who was institutionalized shortly after birth, shows the effect of extreme deprivation in infancy. The temporal lobes (top), which regulate emotions and receive input from the senses, are nearly quiescent. Such children suffer emotional and cognitive problems.
A Note on Neuroplasticity

**neuroplasticity**

*noun*

the ability of the brain to **form and reorganize synaptic connections**, especially in response to learning or experience or following injury.
Neuroplasticity

The brain changes in a variety of ways as a result of our experiences, for the better or worse.

- The brain learns through experience and repetition
- The brain is flexible or “plastic”
  - Most flexible early in life
- **Nurture shapes nature**
  - Positive experiences build healthy, adaptive brains
  - Negative experiences can negatively impact brain development
- School experiences—beyond just academics--matter

(Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University; Hansen, 2013; Sapolsky, 2004)
ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES IN TENNESSEE

FACT NOT FATE

Like a house's foundation, brain architecture is built over time and from the bottom up. Positive experiences in infancy and early childhood can build a strong and solid foundation. Negative experiences weaken the foundation which can lead to life-long problems.
The Good News: SSNREs

Recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control

Safe
Stable
Nurturing
ACEs in the School Setting

“The neural pathways in the brain that deal with stress are the same ones that are used for learning. We, as a country, want our kids to achieve more academically, but we can’t do this if our kids aren’t emotionally healthy.”

--Mark Brackett, director of Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence
The Need for Trauma-Sensitive Schools

- ACEs can have a profound impact on school success
  - Difficulties with self regulating, academic performance, behavior, emotions, and relationships
- Therapy is important, but not enough
  - ACEs are an educational problem, not just a mental health problem
- All kids need access to a safe and positive relational milieu of supportive relationships in the settings where they spend most of their time
  - Schools are in a powerful position to mitigate the impacts of ACEs and promote resilience
Why are ACEs an Educational Problem?

- ACEs are prevalent in American classrooms
  - Poverty and adult ACEs scores in the community are the best known predictor of ACEs (Blodgett, 2013)
- Educators have tremendous power to
  - Perpetuate ACEs, further distress, or even re-traumatize
  - or
  - Buffer or mitigate the impacts of trauma
Prevalence Estimates of ACEs in American Schools

- In a typical American public elementary school classroom:
  - 45% of students are likely to have at least one ACE
  - 22% are likely to have multiple ACEs
  - >6% are likely to have 4+
  - By high school, 13 of 30 students have likely experienced 3 or more ACEs

- 1 in 3 urban youth experience mild to severe symptoms of Complex PTSD

- MNPS Behavior Support Team – 91%

(Anda & Brown, 2010; Blodgett et al., 2012; Leahy, 2015)
An INVISIBLE (and clearly underestimated) Epidemic

• You don’t always know (and don’t have to know) the adversity your students have/ are facing
• Traumatized kids often do not act in ways that make sense to adults
  • Counter-intuitive symptoms
• Trauma is difficult to diagnose, and typically undiagnosed.
Original ACE Study (and follow-up research):

Dose --> Response Relationship
Higher ACE Score = Higher Risk

ACEs →
- Physical Health Problems and Disease
- Health-risk behaviors
- Mental health problems
- Diminished quality of life and well being (e.g., job problems, social problems)

(Felitti et al., 1998; Anda & Brown, 2010; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)
ACEs and School Outcomes:

Dose --> Response Relationship
Higher ACE Score = Higher Risk

- Lower academic performance
- Language difficulties
- Lower standardized achievement test scores
- Behavior and discipline problems
- Social-emotional problems
- Attendance problems

(Bethell, Newacheck, Hawes, & Halfon, 2014; DeLaney-Black et al., 2002; Grevstaad, 2007; The Heart of Learning and Teaching, 2007; Jimenez, Wade, Lin, Morrow, & Reichman, 2016; Sanger et al., 2000; Shonk & Cicchetti, 2001)
Odds for Academic and School-Related Problems with Increasing ACEs

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<th>Academic Failure</th>
<th>Severe Attendance Problems</th>
<th>Severe School Behavior Concerns</th>
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<td>2 ACEs (n=213)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 ACE (n=476)</td>
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<td>2</td>
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(Blodgett, 2012)
ACEs and Impaired Learning and Academic Performance

Difficulties with:

• Learning
• Memory and Recall
• Focusing attention in academics
• Language and communication skills
• Literacy skills
• Problem solving and analysis
• Mental or general flexibility
• Sequencing events
• Goal setting
• General engagement in the curriculum

(Helping Traumatized Children Learn, 2005)
ACEs and Impaired Self-Regulation: Behavioral and Social Emotional

**Behavior**
- Symptoms that look like ADHD, ODD, conduct disorder, anxiety, depression
- Impulsivity
- Aggression
- Noncompliance and Defiance
- Withdrawal
- Perfectionism
- Over-compliance

**Social/ Emotional**
- Emotional Regulation
- Relationships
  - Teachers and school staff
  - Authority figures
  - Peers
- Taking another’s perspective
- Reactivity

(Helping Traumatized Children Learn, 2005)
Pathway linking ACEs to School Problems and Poor Well-Being into Adulthood

ACEs

Academic and behavior problems in early school years

Achievement gaps in later schooling

Health and quality of life disparities in adulthood

(Fizella & Kitzman, 2009; Jimenenz, Wade, Lin, Morrow, & Reichman, 2016)
We can't afford to save this one, but don't worry, someone will catch him.
The Cycle of Adversity and School Behavior

Trauma

Physical/Emotional/Psychological Damage

Behavior Problems

Punishment
Responding to Challenging Behavior: A Shift in Thinking

• Problem behavior is viewed as:
  • A sign of stress
  • A form of communication (I’m stressed or angry or something else)
  • A teaching opportunity (e.g., stress reduction, self-regulation)

• Challenging behavior is often not choice behavior
  • Support and empower students to self-regulate
## Signs of Stress in Children

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<th>FIGHT</th>
<th>FREEZE</th>
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<td>Withdrawal</td>
<td>Acting out</td>
<td>Numbness</td>
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<td>Running out of the classroom</td>
<td>Aggression</td>
<td>Refusal to answer</td>
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<td>Daydreaming</td>
<td>Refusal and defiance</td>
<td>Refusal to get needs met</td>
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<td>Appearance of sleeping</td>
<td>Silliness</td>
<td>Giving a blank look</td>
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<td>Avoidance of others</td>
<td>Hyperactivity</td>
<td>Inability to move or act</td>
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<td>Hiding or wandering</td>
<td>Argumentative</td>
<td>Answering “I don’t know”</td>
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(From Kristin Souers and Pete Hall, “Address Trauma With Calm, Consistent Care)
The New Norm: Trauma-Sensitive Schools

“What’s wrong with you?”

to

“What happened to you?”

and

“What do you need to succeed?”

(Child Trauma Toolkit for Educators, 2008; traumasensitivesschools.org, 2015)
What is a Trauma-Sensitive School?

**Compassion and Support + High Standards/Expectations = SUCCESS**

- **Compassion** is a feeling of empathy for another who is suffering or struggling -- paired with the desire to do something about it
  - *Compassion is a necessity for healthy development to occur - not a luxury*
  - Safe, stable, nurturing relationships and environments

(The Heart of Learning and Teaching, 2011; The 14th Dalai Lama)
What is a Trauma-Sensitive School?

A **process** that is individualized for each school to support student success

- All adults in the building are trained to see and respond to children through a trauma-informed lens
  - Shared awareness and understanding of key principles
  - Validate and support children’s life experiences in non-judgmental ways

- Positive school culture and climate
  - Welcoming and affirming school community
  - Safe, stable, nurturing relationships and environments
  - Promotes resilience and empowers all students to succeed
  - Restorative, empathetic, empowering approaches to individual needs such as truancy and discipline

(Child Trauma Toolkit for Educators, 2008; traumasensitiveschools.org, 2015)
What is a Trauma-Sensitive School?

• Best educational practices implemented with a trauma-sensitive lens
  • Trauma-informed pedagogy
    • Differentiated instruction
    • Dialogic learning strategies
    • Rhythm and repetition
  • Multi-Tiered Systems of Support with an emphasis on tier 1/ universal implementation of:
    • Social Emotional Learning
    • Restorative Practices
    • Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports
    • Low stress school and classroom environments
  • Methods for **identification and intervention** for students who need more (including mental health interventions)

(Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, 2015; Craig, 2016; Cole, O’Brien, Gadd, Ristuccia, Wallace, & Gregory, 2005; Wolpow, Johnson, Hertel, & Kincaid, 2009 )
Trauma-Sensitive Schools: Conditions for Healthy Executive Functioning are a Priority

Feeling Safe
Getting Regulated
Being Connected
Learning

(Attachment and Trauma Network)
Overcoming Myths: What are NOT Characteristics of a Trauma-Sensitive School?

- Not a program or a specific curriculum
- Not “Coddling” or lowered academic or behavioral expectations
  - Allowing or excusing poor behavior or underperformance out of sympathy
  - Attributing ALL academic or behavioral struggles to ACEs
  - ‘Pushing students through’ despite unsatisfactory performance
- Not calling on teachers to be therapists or mental health providers
- Not about taking a Deficit mindset
- Not only about mental health or tier 3 intervention
Video
The Importance of Relationships: A High School Student's Perspective
We are not thinking beings that feel. We are feeling beings that think. Emotions are the fast lane to the brain.

• The emotional state of a student controls:
  • Learning
  • Motivation
  • Engagement
  • Memory
All Learning Takes Place in the Context of Relationship: Serve & Return Interactions Build Brains and Skills

- Children naturally reach out for interaction, and adults respond in kind.
- These "serve and return" interactions are essential for the development of healthy brain circuits.
- Systems that support the quality of relationships in educational settings, communities, and homes also support the development of sturdy brain architecture.
The hardest thing to teach a teacher is relationships
--Dr. Pedro Noguera

• Context is key
• In education we don’t get to see the fruits of our labor right away….maybe not even that year
What do you see in this picture?

a) A compliant/ noncompliant student who does/ doesn’t do what adults say

b) An academic achievement machine (or not)

c) A son, brother, friend, student, cousin

d) An individual with a host of unique experiences, emotions, and learning needs

e) All of the above
Caring Relationships and Positive Social Interactions

The primary motivator of whether kids in poverty will learn is whether they like the teacher. It’s the relationship that is the key.

(Payne, 2003)

Kids don’t learn from people they don’t like.

(Rita Pierson, 2013)

• Greet every student by name when they walk in your door
  • Say things like “I’m so glad you’re here today,” or “I know we’re going to have a great day today!”
  • Know about your students as individuals (not just scholars)
• Maintain students’ dignity at all times
• Model Empathy
The Biochemical Cascade Beneath Negative Social Interactions

Feel-Good Hormones
- Seratonin
- Dopamine
- Oxytocin

Stress Hormones
- Cortisol
- Adrenaline
- Norepinephrine

Learning
Memory
Motivation
Self-Regulation (Behavior, Emotions, Attention)
The Biochemical Cascade Beneath Positive Social Interactions

Feel-Good Hormones
- Serotonin
- Dopamine
- Oxytocin

Stress Hormones
- Cortisol
- Adrenaline
- Norepinephrine

Learning
Memory
Motivation
Self-Regulation (Behavior, Emotions, Attention)
Humans have an astounding capacity to use challenging life experiences to create richer and more meaningful ways of living.
When positive experiences outweigh negative experiences, a child’s “scale” tips toward positive outcomes.
Resilience

• **Resilience**
  • The ability of an individual or community to withstand or rebound in the face of adversity
    • Influenced by stress
  • A process that **can be learned** and supported
    • Highly dependent on **context**
  • Cultivated and enhanced by caring, consistent, positive, empathic adults

(The Heart of Learning and Teaching, 2011; Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University)
The 3 R’s Are Not Enough
Neural Integration

- Social/ emotional and cognitive capacities are inextricably intertwined
  - We’ve got to take the WHOLE brain into consideration in the ways we educate our students.
How Can We Cultivate Resilience in the School Setting?

Compassion is a prerequisite for fostering resilience.

• 3 R’s for fostering resilience in the classroom
  • **Relationship**
    • Connection that conveys caring, cooperation, and hope
  • **Respect**
    • Mutual, unconditional respect for each individual and their boundaries and challenges, through appropriate expectations, consequences, activities, and materials
  • **Reasonable expectations**
    • Teacher accommodations for student needs that are reasonable given the challenges of most school environments and the realities of ACEs of many students

(Source: The Heart of Learning and Teaching, 2011)
Trauma-Sensitive Practices in Metro Nashville Public Schools
The Power of Collective Impact: A Cornerstone of Our Work

Building Strong Brains
Tennessee’s ACEs Initiative
Mission Statement

We work to change the culture of Tennessee so that the state’s overarching early childhood philosophy, policies, programs and practices utilize the latest brain science to prevent and mitigate the impact of adverse childhood experiences.
### ACE Nashville

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trauma Informed Care</th>
<th>Parent &amp; Community Education</th>
<th>Continuous Quality Improvement</th>
<th>Advocate for Policy Change</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Goal:</strong> Promote trauma-informed responses to those impacted by ACEs and prevent generational transmission.</td>
<td><strong>Goal:</strong> Empower and educate parents and families on the reduction of ACEs and the importance of prevention.</td>
<td><strong>Goal:</strong> Engage providers and practitioners to consistently collect and share data.</td>
<td><strong>Goal:</strong> Impact organization, local and state public policy to promote resilience and reduce ACEs.</td>
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<td><strong>Action Steps:</strong></td>
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<td>- Identify cross sector ‘ambassadors’ for public education about trauma informed systems and communities</td>
<td>- Promote public understanding of ACEs</td>
<td>- Research successful ACE application models and develop best practices</td>
<td>- Conduct environmental scan, research ACE initiatives and other policies</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Establish member learning collaboratives to implement strategies for success</td>
<td>- Educate parents /caregivers on ACEs &amp; factors that promote resiliency</td>
<td>- Foster consistent data collection amongst members</td>
<td>- Consult experts and recommend policy proposals and identify decision makers</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Develop a common language and create cross sector 'buy in’</td>
<td>- Foster sustainable connections to increase safe, stable &amp; nurturing relationships &amp; environments</td>
<td>- Foster comprehensive evaluation of current practices</td>
<td>- Engage and identify funders, collect data, and identify high risk groups for intervention</td>
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**Leadership Team**
Metro Nashville Public Schools

• Second largest urban school district in TN
• Approximately 168 schools and 88,000 students
  • 76% are classified as economically disadvantaged
• Current district emphases on school culture, social-emotional learning (SEL), and literacy
• Three-tiered models of prevention with systematic ways of identifying and delivering increasingly targeted supports to students who need it
  • Academics
  • Behavior and Social Emotional Learning
Department of Student Support Services

• Under the leadership of Dr. Tony R. Majors
• Approximately 600 staff
• Comprised of:
  • Behavior Support Team
  • Community Achieves
  • Coordinated School Health
  • Discipline Services
  • Extended Learning
  • Restorative Practices
  • School Counseling
  • School Social Work
  • Social Emotional Learning
  • STARS
  • Trauma Informed Schools
  • Truancy Intervention Specialists
What is a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS)?

A coherent continuum of system-wide, evidence-based practices to support a rapid response to academic and behavioral needs, using data-based decision making to empower each MNPS student to exceed great expectations.
Priority for Year 1:
Ensure that all schools identify and implement a school-wide proactive approach.
## MTSS in MNPS

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<th>Restorative Practices</th>
<th>SEL Foundations</th>
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<td>High</td>
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In addition to the Tier 1 model that each school will begin implementing in the fall of 2017, each Principal identified 2-4 supplemental trainings based on the needs of their students and community.
The Importance of Trauma-Informed Schools

“Culture Eats Strategy for Breakfast.”

(Drucker)

• The best educational practices will not yield optimal results without a positive and welcoming school culture and climate.

• Even the best educational approaches are not inherently trauma-informed – we have to intentionally implement them in a trauma-informed way.
Trauma-Informed Practices in Metro Nashville Public Schools: Building Strong Brains Innovation Project

• Project Overview
  • Promoting widespread awareness through readily available training for all schools
    • The Role of Life Experiences in Shaping Brain Development (Part 1)
    • Mitigating ACEs: Trauma-Informed School Culture and Practices (Part 2)
  • Promoting trauma-informed school culture and practices
    • Knowledge drives practice:
      • When school professionals are equipped with this information, wise action will follow
  • 10 Focus Schools
  • 1 Pilot School
Promoting Widespread Awareness

- Team of >50 MNPS ACEs Trainers
  - Trained via a train-the-trainer model in collaboration with Building Strong Brains
  - To date, we’ve trained >7500 MNPS educators and community stakeholders
    - >80 whole school faculties
    - >22 MNPS departments (e.g., school principals, school counselors, psychologist, social workers, coaches/specialists, administrators, security officers, extended learning contractors, etc.)
    - Many MNPS affiliates (parents, after-school care providers, mental health providers, conference participants)

- Trauma-Informed Schools Committee
Handle With Care

Goal: Improved awareness and communication and collaboration between law enforcement, schools and mental health providers, and connects families, schools and communities to mental health services.

• Handle with Care (partnership with Metro Nashville Police Department)
  • When a child is a victim of or witness to a potentially traumatic event that involved police, a law enforcement officer alerts the MNPS Trauma-Informed Schools Coordinator so the student may be ‘handled with care’
    • Trauma-Informed Schools Coordinator provides the school with a Handle With Care notice, or “heads up”
      o Student may have been directly or indirectly impacted
    • HWC notice includes suggested strategies for supporting student needs, and avoiding stigma
This school year to date >1300 school-aged children in our district have been reported as witnesses to or victims of a potentially traumatic event resulting in a police report.

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Our 10 Trauma-Informed Focus Schools

- 10 schools committed to:
  - Ongoing ACEs training throughout the school year (customized to the needs of the school)
  - School-wide implementation of two trauma-informed school practices:
    - Peace Corners
    - Twice-daily social-emotional learning activities (Move This World) focused on self-regulation and stress reduction
Peace Corner: Creating Safe Space for Reflection

Move This World: PreK and Middle

SEL at Meigs
Measures of Success

• Output and Outcome measures
  • Number of trainings/ individuals trained
  • Training evaluation surveys
  • Implementation fidelity data for Peace Corners and Move This World
  • School Climate Surveys (Panorama)
  • Academic data (ANet and MAP assessments, TCAP)
  • Behavioral data (suspensions, office discipline referrals)
  • Teacher-reported perceptions of emotional competence (Short Profile of Emotional Competence), efficacy of classroom management, and relationships
  • Organizational Health Inventory
  • Social validity data
Our Trauma-Informed Pilot School
Empowering 325 brilliant LEADERS in Prek-4th grade
Under the leadership of school principal Mathew Portell
Fall Hamilton Elementary: Pilot School

- Trauma-Informed Practices integrated into everything they do
  - Full-time trauma-informed practitioner
    - Bounce Back (Cognitive Behavior Interventions for Trauma in Schools)
    - Teacher coaching
    - Crisis Response
  - Ongoing ACEs PD (trauma-informed schools, adult wellness)
  - Leader in Me
  - Move This World
  - Peace corners in every classroom
  - Student Success Center
    - Service Projects/ Community Reparation
  - Peace Keepers: student leaders trained in conflict resolution and peer mediation
    - Peace Paths
  - Sharpen the Saw enrichment time (every Friday afternoon)
  - Restorative conferences following suspensions
  - Family collaboration
Fall Hamilton Elementary: Transitioning to Trauma-Informed Practices to Support Learning
Outcomes: Student Behavior

**Baseline 2015-16**
- **200** total office discipline referrals
  - 11.9% of students received a discipline referral
  - 13 students were suspended 30 days.

**Implementation Year 1 2016-17**
- 69.3% reduction from baseline
- **48** total office discipline referrals
  - 6.3% of students received discipline referrals
  - 6 students were suspended for 13 days

**Implementation Year 2 2017-18**
- 95.7% reduction from baseline (comparison to same period)
Outcomes: Teacher Surveys

Trauma-Informed School Practices Survey

- **80%** indicated significant **knowledge and daily implementation** of trauma-informed practices
- **88%** indicated trauma-informed practices were **appropriate and helpful**
- **72%** reported **improved relationships** with students

- Teachers also reported the following challenges:
  - Integrating trauma-informed practices in the classroom
  - Student discipline (e.g., alternatives to punitive discipline strategies)
  - Teacher/staff wellness and self efficacy
  - Access to support

Panorama School Culture and Climate Survey

- **Feedback and Coaching**
  - 70% favorable
  - Comparisons:
    - MNPS: 68%
    - Elementary Network: 43%
    - Elementary: 50%

- **Professional Learning**
  - 80% favorable
  - Comparisons:
    - MNPS: 53%
    - Elementary Network: 51%
    - Elementary: 56%

- **School Leadership**
  - 94% favorable
  - Comparisons:
    - MNPS: 54%
    - Elementary Network: 50%
    - Elementary: 57%

- **School Safety/Discipline**
  - 85% favorable
  - Comparisons:
    - MNPS: 61%
    - Elementary Network: 65%
    - Elementary: 66%

- **Staff-Leadership Relationships**
  - 94% favorable
  - Comparisons:
    - MNPS: 64%
    - Elementary Network: 60%
    - Elementary: 65%

- **Teaching Efficacy**
  - 81% favorable
  - Comparisons:
    - MNPS: 77%
    - Elementary Network: 82%
    - Elementary: 80%
Outcomes: Student Surveys

End of Year Student Social Emotional Survey

• There is an adult in the building who cares about me.
  • 86.4% answered yes
  • 11.8% answered sometimes
  • 1.8% answered never

• I feel like I belong in our school.
  • 79.6% answered yes
  • 14.9% answered sometimes
  • 5.5% answered never
Outcomes: Student Academics

• Preliminary evidence indicating academic gains according to ANET academic data
  • Criterion-based TN State Standards assessment that compares Fall Hamilton to a network of schools around the nation

• English/Language Arts (ELA)
  • Baseline year 2015-16, Fall Hamilton was 1% below network on the 3rd quarter
  • Implementation year 1 2016-17, Fall Hamilton was 11% points over the network on the 3rd (quarter 3) benchmark

• Implementation Year 2 2017-18, all grades out-performed the network on both English/Language Arts (ELA) and Math.
  • 2nd ELA: 8% above network
  • 3rd ELA: 7% above network
  • 4th ELA: 6% above network
  • 2nd Math: 13% above network
  • 3rd Math: 7% above network
  • 4th Math: 6% above network
Concluding Thoughts

Safe, stable, nurturing relationships and school environments buffer the impacts of ACEs and toxic stress

• Don’t forget the transformative neurobiological power of relationships
  • Show empathy and compassion to students, families, and each other
• Keep this conversation going in your school or organization
  • Build trauma-informed classrooms and communities

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QUESTIONS?