The Trauma Informed School...
Implementation Systems and Strategies

Jim Sporleder - National Trauma Informed School Trainer

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“To create the change we want to see in our students, staff and ourselves, we must approach the heart to reach the head”

Dr. Ken Ginsberg

Changing our “mindset”

“Personal growth comes through our willingness to be vulnerable”
Why our traditional approach is not working?

America’s Cradle to Prison Pipeline Report Children’s Defense Fund

Our traditional approach is grounded in fear and control causes a disconnection… “me against you”

We keep using the same approach…but we try harder.

Suspended Education
Southern Poverty Law Center, 2010
(APA, 2008, Skiba & Rausch)
Punishment is behavior focused and keeps both the adult and student in a struggle.

“me against you”

Caring Adult

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Why A Trauma-informed Approach?

A Trauma-informed Approach…

it’s grounded in EVIDENCE-BASED RESEARCH

the BRAIN SCIENCE is a powerful influence moving staff forward

teaches Hope, Healing, and Resilience

is best practice for how we approach ALL students

teaches dysregulated students how to SELF-REGULATION

students are held accountability with high expectations

it builds connection with students…. “me with you”
A Trauma Informed Approach...

Accountability opens the opportunity for a regulated relationship

“If you judge people, you have no time to love them.”
~ Mother Teresa

“me with you = connection”

BOUNDARIES

Caring Adult

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The “caregiver” is responsible for their child’s brain development

“Students who are loved at home, come to school to learn, and students who aren’t, come to school to be loved.”

Nicholas A. Ferroni
“Toxic Stress” and its Relationship to Learning
Students’ beliefs that inhibit academic performance...

- **Fight** Fear of Failure
- **Shame** Avoids embarrassment
- **Stupid** Self-talk...70,000 self thoughts each day
- **Defiance** Survival
- **Consequence** Accept...to avoid failing
- **Label** Judged

Heather T. Forbes “Helping Billy”
The Challenge We Face Today Is…

Dysregulated Adults working with Dysregulated Students
Adult Regulation

Identifying our “triggers” and understanding their impact on our students

consciousdiscipline.com, Dr. Becky Baily
Traditional Intervention
“After the Fact”

1. Disruptive Behavior
2. Intervention
3. Academic Success

Trauma-informed intervention
“Early Intervention”

1. Disruptive Behavior
2. Intervention
3. Academic Success

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The Five Critical Steps To Implement A Trauma-Informed School
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Mantra</th>
<th>Strategy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.</strong> The stress is coming from outside of the school</td>
<td><em>It's not about me.</em></td>
<td>Drop your personal mirror</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2.</strong> Allow the student to de-escalate and regulate before solving the issue at hand.</td>
<td>Problem solving and solutions can’t be worked through while “in the moment”</td>
<td>Designate a quiet place(s) where students can feel safe to de-escalate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3.</strong> It’s never about the issue at hand. It goes much deeper</td>
<td>What’s really driving this student’s behavior</td>
<td>Be the one who listens and values the student’s voice… ask how you can help. Explore the underlying issue behind the behavior</td>
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</table>
4. It’s a brain issue not a behavior issue
   
   **Mantra**: My job is to help this student regulate, not simply behave

   **Strategy**: Incorporate regulatory activities into the culture of the school that teach students the ability to learn how to self-regulate.

5. Discipline is to teach, not to punish.
   
   **Mantra**: Discipline should happen through the context of positive relationships

   **Strategy**: Use consequences that keep students in school and foster the building of trust and safety with caring adults.
A student’s healing will be found in the moments their voice is being heard and their feeling validated...

this begins the process to changing their negative belief system...

and this becomes the platform in which trust and relationship can begin.

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Drop your personal mirror

Allow time for self-regulation

Caring adult relationships = hope and healing

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Implement Options For Accountability

- Timeout
- In School Suspension
- Lunch Detention
- Illegal Charges/Arrest
- After-school Detention
- Hold Students Accountable
Creating an In School Suspension Room

Secondary Schools
High Accountability…In School Suspension

• Student responsible to attend school
• Student is responsible for keeping up on their school work.
• Students are supervised in a safe nurturing climate
• Able to process their behavior infraction and teach them other options of handling their stress.
Why a Calm Room?

- A safe place for dysregulated students to deescalate
- Students understand their emotional triggers
- Students learn calming and breathing strategies to regulate

IT KEEPS KIDS IN SCHOOL!

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Small Group Intervention/Prevention Teaching Area
Some days... not so calm

“We fail students if we don’t teach them boundaries and hold them accountable”

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Student of Concern Model
Creating a Relationship-Based Culture

High Adult Visibility... intentional positive student interactions

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STUDENT OF CONCERN FORM

NAME OF STUDENT: ____________________________
GRADE LEVEL: ________________________________
URGENCY: Low  Medium  High

REPORTING INFORMATION

Your Name: ____________________________________________
Your Position: ____________________________________________
Your Relationship to Student: ________________________________
Your Email Address: ________________________________________
Date: ____________________________________________________

ISSUES OF CONCERN FOR STUDENT (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Struggles</th>
<th>General Behavioral Issues</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol Use</td>
<td>Homelessness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anger Issues</td>
<td>Identity Issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anxiety (nervous, tearful, and/or tense)</td>
<td>Illness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendance</td>
<td>Injury</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abuse (current)</td>
<td>Isolating from Peers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abuse (past)</td>
<td>Low Frustration Tolerance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dating Issues</td>
<td>Lack of Participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Death of a Family Member</td>
<td>Mental Health Issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Death of a Friend (student)</td>
<td>Notable Change in Appearance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Death of a Friend (non-student)</td>
<td>Overreaction to Circumstances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depression or Extreme Sadness</td>
<td>Poor Decision-Making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Destruction of Property</td>
<td>Poor Hygiene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic Violence at Home</td>
<td>Self-Injurious Behaviors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drug Use</td>
<td>Student/Teacher Relationship Issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excessive Absences from Class</td>
<td>Threats to Others/Bullying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Issues</td>
<td>Too Many Tardies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendship Issues</td>
<td>Witness to an Incident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Identity Issues</td>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Student Referral for Interventions
Keeping our Students Safe

Name: ____________________________  Date: ____________________________
Teacher: ____________________________  Grade: ____________________________

Student Observation  Teacher Concern  Student Performance
☐ Difficulty staying on task  ☐ Disruptive behavior  ☐ Working below grade level
☐ Lacks social skills w/peers  ☐ Safety risk to others  ☐ Strong academic potential
☐ Often in Fight-Flight-Freeze  ☐ Unable to self-regulate  ☐ Poor attendance
☐ Seeks 'safety' under table  ☐ Refusal to follow directions  ☐ Not making academic progress
☐ Out of seat "roaming"  ☐ Academically struggling  ☐ MAP Reading -
☐ Lacks social skills w/adults  ☐ Mental health concern  ☐ MAP Math -

Trauma-informed Intervention Strategies used in the Classroom
☐ Feelings Scale  ☐ Respond - seeking the root of the problem
☐ Safe Pocket Strategy  ☐ Used your proximity
☐ Safe Zone  ☐ Called home to inform & involve parent
☐ Notice - Needs & Feelings of the student  ☐ Parent(s) cooperative & supportive
☐ Name - the need and feeling you observed  ☐ Have used Para educator to assist & monitor
☐ Validate - the voice & feeling/not the action  ☐ Consulted with intervention specialist

Reason for Referral:
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>GRADE</th>
<th>STAFF MEMBER REPORTING THE CONCERN</th>
<th>ISSUE OF CONCERN</th>
<th>ACTION PLAN</th>
<th>PERSON ASSIGNED TO ACTION PLAN</th>
<th>OUTCOME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jane</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Jane's falling behind due to her poor attendance, moms is calling in and excusing her absences</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jeremy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Jeremy is leaving school everyday at lunch time and is not returning for his afternoon classes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mary</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Concern that something significant is happening in Mary's life. She has become very quiet and isolated.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jose</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Concern that Jose is not eating breakfast or lunch, he qualifies for F/R but we don't have his form filled out</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Victoria promises to come in and do her detention, but she isn't showing up after three days of reminders.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Robert</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Something is going on with Robert and Victor in the hallway during passing. It seems like it may be gang related.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Billy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Billy has been blowing out of class after lunch recess for the past several days. He won't share anything about what may be going on at home.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sally</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sally has been under her desk screaming and very disruptive. This happens after she spends a weekend with dad.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jon</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Kids are sharing the Jon's homeless. I'm concerned for his safety and well being. He's wearing the same clothes every day...and they are really dirty.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
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**Student Scenarios**
Be That One Caring Adult…
that can influence a student’s life-path
The Trauma-Informed School: A Step-by-Step Implementation Guide for Administrators and Staff Personnel

Questions & Answers

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