Childhood Trauma Affects
(At Least 1 in 4 Students)
In Every Single Classroom... Every Day...

What Trauma is...
A psychologically distressing event outside the range of usual human experience. It involves a sense of intense fear, terror, and helplessness, and may lead to a variety of effects, depending on the child.

- Bruce Perry

Examples include child neglect, abuse, domestic violence, parental incarceration or abandonment, a family member's serious mental illness or substance abuse problem, highly conflicted divorce situations, as well as experiencing serious accidents, disasters, war, or acts of terrorism.

What Trauma Does to...*

The Body
- Fight/flight/freeze reactions
- Sensory/motor challenges
- Unusual pain responses
- Physical symptoms

Emotions
- Hypervigilance
- High distress
- Self-regulation problems
- Difficulty communicating feelings and needs
- Possible dissociation

Actions
- Poor impulsive control
- Aggression/dangerous actions
- Oppositional behavior
- Self harm
- Overly compliant
- Sleeping problems
- Eating problems
- Substance abuse

Thinking
- Lack of curiosity
- Learning/processing problems
- Language development problems
- Difficulty regulating attention
- Executive functioning problems
- Problems with planning and organization
- Difficulty understanding cause and effect

No Signs
Some traumatized youth show little to no signs at school but may have difficulty at home in relationships with primary caregivers.

Relationships
- General mistrust of others
- Clingy/overly dependent
- Withdrawn
- Problems with peers
- Overly helpful/solicitous of attention
- May lack empathy

Self Concept
- Low self-esteem
- Toxic shame and guilt
- Grandiose ideas/bragging
- May blame others or self
- Body image problems
- Self-sabotaging behaviors

What Trauma-Sensitive Schools Do...
Help Students
- Feel safe
- Be connected
- Get regulated
- Learn

They Benefit Everyone!

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* Source: National Child Traumatic Stress Network