Washington State Compassionate School Initiative
Presenters

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“The goal of Washington’s public education system is to prepare every student who walks through our school doors for post-secondary aspirations, careers, and life. To do so, we must embrace an approach to education that encompasses the whole child.”

Chris Reykdal, Superintendent of Public Instruction, Washington State
“School climate has been conceptualized to include the physical, academic, social, and disciplinary environment... A positive school climate creates the conditions for SEL; the social and emotional competence of each member of the school community, both individually and collectively, affects school climate.”

*School Climate and Social and Emotional Learning: The Integration of Two Approaches*, Pennsylvania State University, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, January 2018
Whole Child Education

Climate and Culture

Affirming

Academics

Engagement

Health

Relationships

Behavior

SEL

Trauma Informed Education

Ron Hertel, 2018
Whole Child Approach Extends Beyond the School
A Couple of Definitions

Compassion – embodies the equal blend of caring, rigor, and accountability.

Compassionate School – A school where staff and students learn to be aware of the challenges faced by others. They respond to the physical, emotional, and social challenges faced by students and families by offering support to remove barriers to learning. They do not judge the situations. They seek to understand and support.
Intended Initiative Outcomes

❤️ To encourage practical and applicable compassionate approaches for students impacted by trauma.

❤️ To promote “compassionate” lenses through which adults may better understand events and consequent behaviors that interfere with students’ educational goals.

❤️ To foster resilience and create supportive learning environments through a cadre of school and community-based resources.
Intended Initiative Outcomes (cont.)

❤️ To strengthen the voice of students and families in creating a supportive learning environment and actively recruit community partners – both public and private – who can play essential roles in actualizing this reality.

❤️ To provide training, tools, and resources to schools wishing to revise policies, procedures, curriculum, and instruction that will create/enhance compassionate learning environments.
The Heart of Learning and Teaching: Compassion, Resiliency, and Academic Success
Chapter Titles

Chapter 1: Trauma, Compassion, and Resiliency: Background and Definitions

Chapter 2: Self-Care: An Ethical Obligation for Those Who Care

Chapter 3: Instructional Principles, Curricular Domains and Specific Strategies for Compassionate Classrooms

Chapter 4: Building Compassionate School-Community Partnerships That Work

Chapter 5: Examples of Compassion, Resiliency, and Academic Success Direct From the Field

Chapter 6: Resources
Chapter 1

Trauma, Compassion, and Resiliency: Background and Definitions

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Just How Pervasive is the Problem?
ACEs and School Performance

The Nature of Trauma
Symptoms of Trauma: When the Solution Becomes the Problem
Trauma and the Brain: The Neurobiology of Trauma
How Trauma Affects Learning

Meeting the Challenge: Background Knowledge for Finding Solutions
The Nature of Resiliency
The Nature of Compassion
A Working Definition of Compassionate Schools
An Ecological View of Trauma and Resiliency
Healing from Trauma in Other Cultures
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How Trauma Can Affect Those Who Care: Vicarious (Secondary) Trauma
Summary
Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE’s)
Adverse Childhood Experiences

1. Child physical abuse
2. Child sexual abuse
3. Child emotional abuse
4. Emotional Neglect
5. Physical Neglect
6. Mentally ill, depressed or suicidal person in the home
7. Drug addicted or alcoholic family member
8. Witnessing domestic violence against the mother
9. Loss of a parent to death or abandonment, including divorce
10. Incarceration of any family member
The Pair of ACEs

**Adverse Childhood Experiences**

- Maternal Depression
- Physical & Emotional Neglect
- Emotional & Sexual Abuse
- Divorce
- Substance Abuse
- Mental Illness
- Domestic Violence
- Incarceration

**Adverse Community Environments**

- Poverty
- Violence
- Discrimination
- Poor Housing Quality & Affordability
- Community Disruption
- Lack of Opportunity, Economic Mobility & Social Capital

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Ellis W., Dietz W. BCR Framework *Academic Peds* (2017)
Trauma – Trauma is the unique individual experience of an event or enduring conditions in which the individual's ability to integrate his/her emotional experience is overwhelmed.

(Saakvitne, K. et al, 2000)
Trauma can lead to complex responses

Students who are impacted by trauma tend to...

- ...expect harm from the world and others.
- ...have difficulty forming relationships.
- ...have difficulty managing, understanding and regulating feelings & behaviors.
- ...have a damaged or fragmented sense of self.
- ...have difficulty responding appropriately to stress.
- ...have developmental challenges in the areas of problem solving and academic performance.
The Impact of Trauma

SOCIAL
• Aggression & violent outbursts
• Poor self-control of emotion
• Can’t modify behavior in response to social cues
• Social isolation—can’t navigate friendship

MENTAL HEALTH
• Poor social/emotional development
• Alcohol, tobacco & other drug abuse—vulnerable to early initiation
• Adolescent & adult mental health disorders—especially depression, suicide, dissociative disorder, borderline personality disorder, PTSD

COGNITIVE
• Slowed language development
• Attention problems (ADD/ADHD)
• Behavioral dysregulation
• Poor verbal memory/recall
• Physical loss of brain matter
ACEs in WASHINGTON SCHOOLS – SOPHOMORES AND SENIORS (2010)

Washington School Classroom (30 Students)
Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

- 6 students with no ACE
- 5 students with 1 ACE
- 6 students with 2 ACEs
- 3 students with 3 ACEs
- 7 students with 4 or 5 ACEs
- 3 students with 6 or more ACEs

- 58% (17) students with no exposure to physical abuse or adult to adult violence
- 29% (9) of students exposed to physical abuse or adult to adult violence
- 13% (4) of students exposed to physical abuse and adult to adult violence
Persistent trauma or adversity can cause the brain to be underdeveloped or damaged.

A damaged or undeveloped brain often causes a child to react differently to a stressful situation than a child without those constrictions.

Therefore, a child who is more reflexive than reflective may have a biological reason for behaving the way they did which is beyond their control.
If we knew what some of these kids go through before they get to school, we’d be just thankful they showed up.

ACEs are not Destiny
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The Language of This Chapter

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The Ripple Effect

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The Personal Impact of Vicarious Trauma
The Professional Impact of Vicarious Trauma
One Other Sign of Compassion Fatigue: The Silencing Response
Can’t Teach What You Don’t Know. Can’t Lead Where You Won’t Go

Prevention and Self-Care
How Are You Doing? The Professional Quality of Life Scale (ProQOL R-IV)
Check Your Batteries: A Self-Care Checklist With Suggestions

Building a Self-Care Action Plan
An Ethical Obligation for Those Who Care

Summary
Wellness – Self Care
The Ripple Effect

Traumatic events are like rocks thrown into our pond.

Each rock causes a series of ripples.
Important Definitions:

**Vicarious (Secondary) Trauma** – Post Traumatic Stress Disorder behaviors & emotions resulting from internalizing events experienced by another.

*Vicarious*: To feel through the experience of others; a *secondary* rather than primary experience with significant impact.
Important Definitions: (continued)

Compassion Fatigue – Fatigue, emotional distress, or apathy resulting from constant demands of caring for others. The weariness that comes from caring.

Burnout – Physical and emotional exhaustion that may include a negative self-concept and job attitudes, a loss of concern and feeling for others. High levels of compassion fatigue may lead to burnout.
Important Definitions: (continued)

**Empathy** – The intellectual identification with, or vicarious experiencing of, the feelings, thoughts, and attitudes of others. It involves deeply engaging our minds and our hearts.

**Compassion Satisfaction** – The positive feelings we get when we realize that the compassion we put into working with others is resulting in some relief, growth, or healing.
Chapter 3 - Instructional Principles, Curricular Domains and Specific Strategies for Compassionate Classrooms

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The Language of This Chapter

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Principle Two: Provide Unconditional Positive Regard
Principle Three: Maintain High Expectations
Principle Four: Check Assumptions, Observe and Question
Principle Five: Be a Relationship Coach
Principle Six: Provide Guided Opportunities for Helpful Participation

A Compassionate Curriculum
A Suggested Framework: Research-based and Modeled on Current Best Practice

(Contents continued on next page...)

The Heart of Learning and Teaching:
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Domain One: Safety, Connection and Assurance
- Domain Defined
- Goals for Instruction
- Recognizing the Need
- Applying the Six Principles
- Content and Strategies
  - Safety First
  - Monday Mornings, Daily Schedules and Class Meetings
  - Identifying and Dealing with Triggers
  - Transition and Safety Plans
  - Minimizing Triggers When Setting Limits
  - Calm Zones and Peace Corners
  - Removing Triggers in the Secondary Classroom
  - Testing as a Safety Issue
  - Fancy Fridays, Photo Scrapbooks

Domain Two: Emotional and Behavioral Self-Regulation
- Domain Defined
- Goals for Instruction
- Recognizing the Need
- Applying the Six Principles
- Content and Strategies
  - The Vocabulary of Feelings
  - Practice Using the Vocabulary of Feelings
  - Use Analogies to Describe Emotions and Triggers
  - Teaching Affect Modulation
  - Calming the Body and Mind with PMR and Yoga
  - Calming the Body and Mind: Games for Young Children
  - Empathy/Listening Skills
  - Listening With Empathy: An Exercise

Domain Three: Competencies of Personal Agency, Social Skills, and Academic Skills
- Domain Defined
- Goals for Instruction
- Recognizing the Need
- Applying the Six Principles
- Content and Strategies:
  - Assertiveness Skills
  - Giraffe Talk: Non-Violent Communication
  - DEAR MAN: Interpersonal Effectiveness
  - Fair Fighting
  - Power of Poetry (Cinquains, Biopoems and Diamante Poems)
  - Journal Writing (Personal, Worry Lock-Box, Dialogue and Double Entry)
  - Risky Writing
  - RAFT - Role, Audience, Form and Topic
  - Alphabet Books

Additional Curricular Resources
- Sheltered Instructional Observation Protocol
- Dealing with the Stress of Military Deployment

Summary
How We Teach
Compassionate Teaching and Discipline Principles

2. Provide unconditional positive regard.
3. Maintain high expectations.
5. Be a relationship coach.
6. Provide guided opportunities for helpful participation.

What We Teach
Compassionate Curriculum Strategies

Domain One
Safety, Connection, and Assurance of Well-Being

Domain Two
Emotional and Behavioral Self-Regulation

Domain Three
Competencies of Personal Agency, Social Skills and Academics

The Heart of Learning and Teaching:
Compassion, Resiliency, and Academic Success
Teachers can do a great deal to create a climate of safety for their students. They can respond to the emotions that underlie inappropriate behavior rather than simply react to the most disturbing symptoms.

**Important Elements**

1) consistency and integrity on the part of the teacher,
2) attunement on the part of the student so they can read teacher cues accurately, and
3) opportunities to respond appropriately.
DOMAIN ONE:
SAFETY CONNECTION AND ASSURANCE

Goals for Instruction

• Students will be provided with opportunities to feel safe and assured.

• Students will be able to identify triggers that set off “fight-flight-fright” behaviors that distract them from learning.

• With the help of their teachers, students will either remove trigger stimuli or respond to those stimuli differently.

• Students will improve their abilities to attune themselves to the cues of others.
Domain two addresses ways that students can recognize and name their feelings and bodily states: “the vocabulary of feelings.”

- Help students create links between external experiences, internal feelings, and triggered behaviors.

- Help students learn how to respond differently to their feelings: Affect modulation.
DOMAIN TWO:
IMPROVING EMOTIONAL AND
BEHAVIORAL SELF-REGULATION

Goals for Instruction

Students will be able to:

• better identify and differentiate among their feelings.
• better identify the emotional needs of others.
• better link their feelings with internal and external experiences.
• better identify resources to safely express their feelings.
• better use strategies to modulate their responses to emotions in ways that will support academic success.
• use what they have learned about modulating their feelings to behave in a manner appropriate to the classroom setting.
• return to a comfortable emotional state after arousal of their emotions.
Personal agency is the term used to describe the belief that one can make things happen.

Social skills are needed for students to interact with others in acceptable ways.

Executive functions are those skills that enable a person to behave in goal-directed ways.

Academic Skills: Children affected by traumatic events can have trouble analyzing ideas, organizing narrative material, or seeing cause-and-effect relationships.
DOMAIN THREE:
COMPETENCIES OF PERSONAL AGENCY, SOCIAL SKILLS AND ACADEMIC SKILLS

Goals for Instruction

• Students will be able to demonstrate the assertiveness skills needed to originate and direct their behavior towards goals they have chosen.
• Students will demonstrate improved abilities to interact with others in socially acceptable ways.
• Through the use of explicit learning strategies, students will demonstrate the ability to use cognitive skills to succeed in academic learning.
• Students will demonstrate the use of executive functions (e.g., anticipate consequences, make decisions and evaluate results) in daily classroom work.
The Language of This Chapter

Schools in Partnership

Connecting Education and Community-Based Resources
  Mental Wellness Coordination
  Diversity and Strengths-Based Problem Solving

Mental Health Terminology

School-Community Partnerships That Work
  Readiness to Learn
  Dropout Prevention/Reduction Program
  Even Start
  Before and After School Programs
  Prevention and Intervention Services Programs
  School Safety Center
  Coordinated School Health
  Homeless Education
  Institutional Education
  School Health Services and School Nurses
  Compassionate Schools Initiative

Forming a School-Community Partnership
  Strength-Based Problem Solving and Asset Maps
  The Case for Needs Assessment
  Strategic Planning
  Defining School and Community Roles
  Managing the Growth of Community Partnerships
  Quick Strategies for Building Collaborations

Summary
Focus Points for this Chapter

- Connections between education and community resources,
- School-community partnerships that work, and
- Ideas for forming school-community partnerships.
Benefits of Family Involvement

- Family support
- Family engagement
- Parent leadership opportunities
- Cultural enrichment
Strengths-Based Approach

A model that uses strengths to compensate for limitations. Strengths include assets, talents and resources. Limitations are needs. To be most successful, this type of problem solving requires a formal or informal assessment of both strengths and limitations.
Building School and Community Collaboration takes PATIENCE and WISDOM
Chapter 5
Examples of Compassion, Resiliency, and Academic Success Direct From the Field

Contents:
Introduction
Three Student Voices
All Youth Have Something an Adult will Never Have . . . At Least Not Again
A Safe Place to Learn
Two Case Studies
Zach Chucho

Six Vignettes From the Field
Andy, the Resilient Kid
Ric and Doug

"I Just Want to Give Him a Hug and Tell Him What a Wonderful Boy He Is"
That's My American Dream

Compassion Fatigue: Implications for School Nurses
Trauma-Sensitive Learning and Teaching at an Alternative High School

References From This Chapter
Chapter 6 – Resources

There are multitudes of resources available to those who wish to learn more about trauma, compassion, resiliency, and self-care, as well as strategies to improve instruction and build school-community partnerships. Resources used to write each section of the handbook are included at the end of each chapter. However, in this chapter we list several that are worthy of being repeated, and several others that have been brought to our attention by colleagues.

Chapter 6 is divided into four sections:

1. Printed Matter: Books and Journal Articles
2. Books and Journal Articles Online
3. Websites
4. OSPI Resources

Entries within each section are listed in alphabetical order. For each resource we provide a short description.

This chapter is not meant to provide readers with a comprehensive list of resources. Rather, it is meant to be a beginning.
Developing a Compassionate School Infrastructure

- Engaging school leadership.
- Assessment.
- Training School-Community.
- Review of similar models.
- Review of school policies and procedures.
- Partnerships.
- Logic model with short - and long-term goals.
- Built in CQI process.
Compassionate School Framework

Ready to Benefit
Vision and Values
Clear/Sustainable Plan
Readiness to Benefit – A process by which we ready ourselves to embrace potential change focusing on transitions and gaining new competencies.
Readiness to Benefit
Necessities and Strategies:

Necessities
✓  Commitment from administration.
✓  Readiness survey – Where is everyone in this journey?
✓  Intentional and specifically allocated time for discussion and developing consensus on vision, mission, and goals.
✓  Include all school disciplines.

Strategies
✓  Identify initial leaders (4-6) who hold the vision.
✓  Facilitate training, studies, and time for dialogue.
✓  Student and family voice/engagement.
✓  ID Resources and data collection points.
✓  Development of vision and overarching goals.
✓  Patience!
Ready to Benefit
Individual and School Wide

- Understanding and embracing whole child education.
- Understanding how Compassionate Schools supports Social and Emotional Learning.
- Understanding how this work fits into learning and teaching?
- Ask yourself, “Am I prepared to make myself vulnerable enough for the cause?”
- Developing strength/vision for the journey?
Vision and Values

- What are my personal values regarding teaching?
- Do I have a sense of how my school is doing, overall?
- Do we collectively see the current situation in a similar way?
- Where/what do we collectively want to go/become?
Clear and Sustainable Plan

✓ Who are our internal designated leaders?

✓ Who are our community partners/leaders?

✓ Do we have an ongoing plan to grow and sustain this work? (e.g., training, resources, access/voice/ownership for staff, students, and community)

✓ Development of a Logic Model – Short and long term goals
Knowledge, Skills, and Attitudes

✔ The impact of trauma and adversity on learning and life.
✔ Self Awareness/Self Care.
✔ Implementation; school wide and classroom specific.
✔ Community engagement/Student voice.
✔ Understanding and implementing culturally responsive and equitable practices.
✔ Selecting programming and strategies that supports collective goals.
Foundational Understandings

✓ Not a one size fits all approach.

✓ At its best, this will become a paradigm shift.

✓ Organic process – owned by the school/community.

✓ Driven by vision and values.

✓ It is designed to support existing curricula/programming.

✓ It is primarily a tier 1 approach: climate and culture.

✓ Adaptable to assets and needs based on available data and resources.
10 teaching practices that promote students’ social and emotional competencies

• Student-Centered Discipline
• Teacher Language
• Responsibility and Choice
• Warmth and Support
• Cooperative Learning
• Classroom Discussions
• Self-Reflection and Self-Assessment
• Balanced Instruction
• Academic Press and Expectations
• Competence Building— Modeling, Practicing, Feedback, Coaching

Thanks for all you do to support our students!