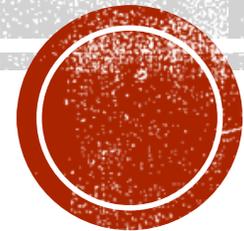


HOW TO RESPOND TO STUDENTS WITH TRAUMA



WHAT IS TRAUMA?

- Trauma is an emotional response to a terrible event like an accident, crime, or natural disaster



Types of Trauma

Emotional

- Mental response to a disturbing event or situation
- Acute: Response during and directly after an event
- Chronic: Long-term response from prolonged or repeated events
- Complex: Response to multiple events that may or may not be related

Physical

- Serious bodily harm or injury





**SITUATIONS THAT
COULD BE
TRAUMATIC**

Physical, sexual, and psychological abuse and neglect (this includes trafficking)

Natural disasters or terrorism

Family and community violence

Loss of a loved one

Life-threatening accident

Military related stressors (deployment)

VIDEO ON ACE'S

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yxmzjpp9AC0>



WHAT IS A TRAUMA TRIGGER?

- It is anything that triggers the feeling of trauma
- It is created during a traumatic event such as:
 - Abuse/neglect
 - War
 - Sexual, physical, or emotional abuse
 - Natural disasters
 - Grief and loss



SIGNS OF ABUSE

Withdrawal from friends or activities

Changes in behavior (aggressive)

Depression, anxiety, or fears that are unusual

Sleep problems (including nightmares)

Many absences from school

Self-harm

Rebellious behavior



TRIGGERS TO TRAUMA

- **Internal Triggers**
 - Feelings of anger and anxiety
 - Feeling lonely or vulnerable
 - Feeling sad or frustrated
 - Pain and muscle tension
- **External Triggers**
 - Anniversaries of trauma
 - Seeing a person connected with trauma
 - Smells or sounds
 - Watching a movie connected with trauma



RESPONSES TO TRAUMA TRIGGERS

- Panic attacks (anxiety)
- Flashbacks or traumatic events
- The child becomes violent or aggressive
- Use of substances to deal with the trauma
- Extreme sadness



HOW TO HANDLE TRAUMA TRIGGERS?

- Deep breathing
- Mindfulness
- Self-soothing
- Journaling
- Calm down corner or calm down space



IMPORTANT TO KNOW

- Some kids may not know their triggers because they have repressed memories
 - Repressed memories are memories that we unconsciously avoid thinking about, usually because of a traumatic experience. These memories are thought to be unconsciously blocked for several years and are recovered later, often from a trigger.



RESPONDING TO TRAUMA IN SCHOOL

- Have you dealt with any of these difficulties?
- Excessive anger
- Unusual startle reactions
- Loss of appetite
- Extreme fatigue
- Physical or verbal aggression
- Regular tardiness or absence from class
- Perfectionistic, controlling or anxious behavior



RESPONDING TO TRAUMA IN SCHOOL

- Difficulties cont.
- Low self-confidence
- Irritability
- Clinginess
- Trouble making friends
- Self-harm or suicidal ideation
- Hoarding
- Risky behaviors (including drug or alcohol abuse or sexual acting out)
- Panic attacks
- Extreme self-reliance
- Running away
- Defiance
- Alienation from peers





**TECHNIQUES TO
PUT IN PLACE**

- **Establishing social-emotional safety in your classroom**
 - Meet with school social workers, psychs, or family resources about additional strategies to put in place
- **Explicit anti-bullying or community-building curricula**
- **Timely interventions in conflicts and hurtful exchanges**
- **Teaching and modeling empathy and active listening skills**
- **Build positive relationships with all students**

DEVELOP A BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT PLAN THAT FOCUSES ON POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT

- **Strategies**

- Adopt “zero indifference” (NOT zero-tolerance) policies
- Explore stress-management strategies to diffuse tense situations and help students process feelings at the moment
- Give students opportunities to demonstrate their strengths
- Become trauma-informed

