


INTERNATIONAL BULLYING PREVENTION ASSOCIATION

Beyond ACEs:

Why Trauma-Informed Practices Are a Call to Action

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 Student Safety and Well-Being Consultant, Oakland Schools*





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Call to Action?




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From Trauma Informed to Advocacy and Action

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Basic Needs




- Safety
- Community



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Trauma Awareness



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What is trauma?

Any experience that leaves a person feeling hopeless, helpless, fearing for life/survival, or for safety.




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The experience is real or perceived.



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Exposure to trauma

- Direct
- Witnessing
- Relational
- Secondary, indirect, or vicarious



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Types

- **Type 1** – Single exposure
- **Type 2** – One type of exposure that is repeated **or** exposure to one or two different events
- **Type 3** – Complex Cumulative Trauma/Developmental Trauma Disorder



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Stress Response System

- Event happens
- Brain signals body
- SRS activates:
 - Vision and hearing affected
 - Heart rate accelerates
 - Digestion slows
 - Muscles tense
 - Adrenaline and cortisol surge
 - More



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Acute Stress vs Post-Traumatic Stress

<p>Acute Stress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Normal response to stress • Lasts approximately 4-6 weeks 	<p>Post-Traumatic Stress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exaggerated and prolonged stress response • Beyond 4-6 weeks and even years later • Impact <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dysregulation of stress chemistry • Increased activation of the Sympathetic Nervous System
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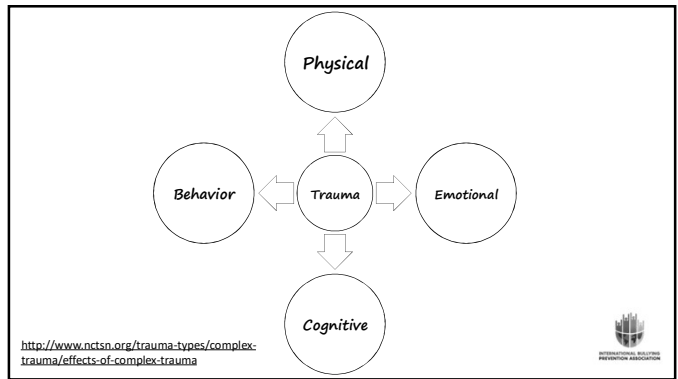


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Physical


- Unexplained sensations including pain
- Sleep and eating disturbances
- Low energy
- Increased arousal



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Emotional


- Depression and fear
- Anxiety and panic
- Numbness, irritability, anger
- Feeling out of control
- Avoidance



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- Distraction
- Decrease in concentration
- Memory lapse
- Difficulty with decisions


Cognitive



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- Compulsion
- Substance abuse
- Eating disorders
- Impulsive, self-destructive behavior
- Dissociation
- Changes in interpersonal relationships
- Isolation, avoidance, social withdrawal
- Feeling threatened, hostile, argumentative

Behavior

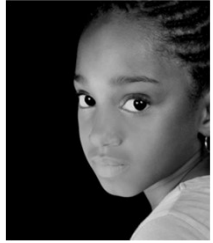


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Children's Mandate

The primary dictate of trauma-informed care is
"Do No Harm"

If you don't think what I think, feel what I feel, experience what I experience, and see what I see when I look at myself, others, and the world around me, how can you possibly know what is best for me?




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What matters most

- Trauma changes the way people view
 - Themselves
 - Others
 - Life following exposure
- We replace "What's wrong?" with "What happened?"



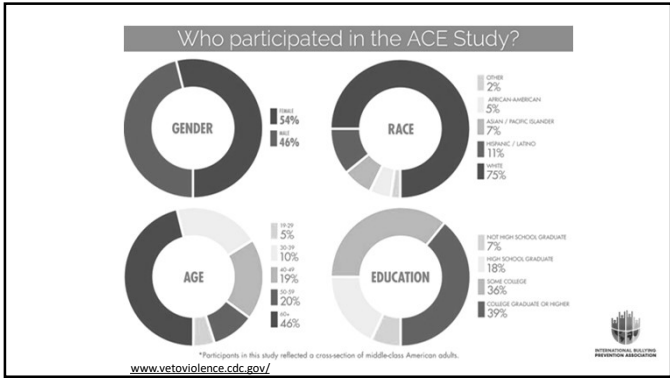
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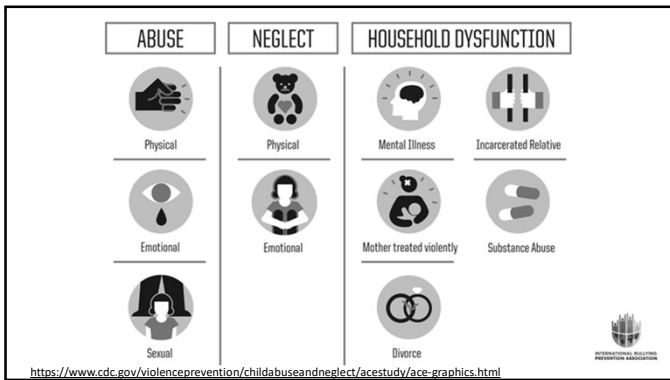
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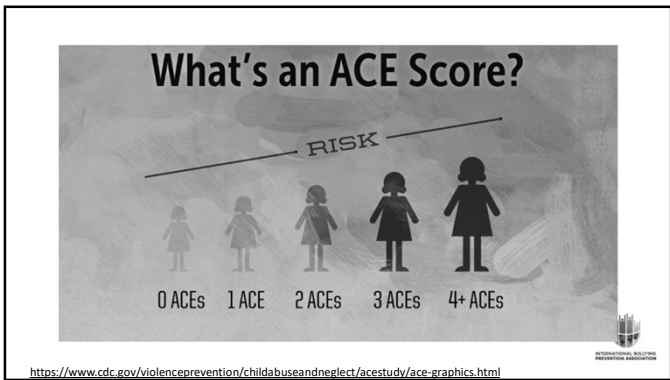
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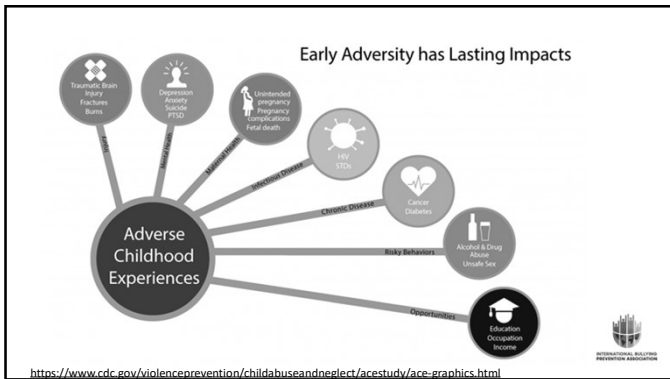
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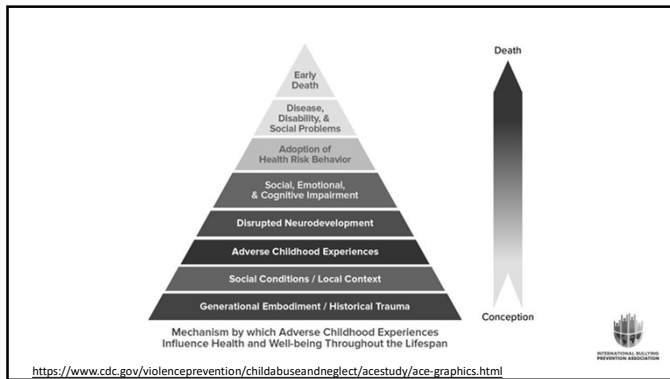
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Other types of trauma

- Historical trauma
- Racial trauma
- Institutional trauma
- Refugee trauma
- Organizational trauma
- Community trauma





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Historical trauma

Re-experiencing of traumatic events by an individual or community over multiple generations

- Cultural memories passed generation to generation
- Impact is altered every generation
- Research began by the study of the colonization, relocation, and assimilation of the Native Americans



Perzichilli, T. (2018, July 23). Broadening our understanding of trauma: why context matters <https://www.goodtherapy.org/blog/broadening-our-understanding-of-trauma-why-context-matters-0723184>




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Racial trauma

Race-based traumatic experiences

- Experiencing and/or witnessing racial harassment
- Ethnoviolence
- Microaggressions
- Constant threat of racial or ethnic discrimination
- Institutional racism



Williams, M.T. (2019). Uncovering the trauma of racism: new tools for clinicians. Retrieved from <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/culturally-speaking/201901/uncovering-the-trauma-racism-new-tools-clinicians>.



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Institutional trauma

Deliberate actions or acts of omission of institutions on individuals who rely on the institutions for support, protection, survival

- Treatment of asylum seekers
- Proposed policy on gender disclosure
- Treatment of sexual assault victims in colleges/universities, military




Smidt, A.M., & Freyd, J.J. (2018). Government-mandated institutional betrayal. *Journal of Trauma and Disassociation* 19(5): 491-499. Retrieved August 6, 2019 from <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/1529732.2018.1502029>.




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Refugee Trauma

- Traumatic stress
 - War and persecution
 - Flight and migration
- Resettlement stress
 - Inadequate housing
 - Family separation
- Acculturation stress
 - Cultural misunderstandings
 - Inability to connect
- Isolation stress
 - Bullying and harassment
 - Loss of social status



Perzichilli, T. (2018, July 23). Broadening our understanding of trauma: why context matters <https://www.goodtherapy.org/blog/broadening-our-understanding-of-trauma-why-context-matters-0723184>.




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Intergenerational trauma

Trauma impact present within generations of same family beyond the generation of the person who experiences the trauma

- May be immigration-related trauma
- May be transmitted through parents' unresolved trauma and inability to establish healthy relationships with children




Perzichilli, T. (2018, July 23). Broadening our understanding of trauma: why context matters <https://www.goodtherapy.org/blog/broadening-our-understanding-of-trauma-why-context-matters-0723184>




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Community Trauma

- High incidents of violence within
- Social, economic, and physical structures perpetuate inequity




Davis, Pinderhughes, & Williams, 2016. Adverse community experiences and resilience: a framework for addressing and preventing community trauma. Retrieved from <https://www.preventioninstitute.org/publications/adverse-community-experiences-and-resilience-framework-addressing-and-preventing>.



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Organizational Trauma

- Occurs due to events or from nature of work
- Cumulative trauma
 - Empathic work
 - Redemptive work



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Sage, M.D. (2010). Child welfare workforce turnover: Frontline workers' experience in organizational culture and climate, and implications for organizational practice. Retrieved from https://psycscholar.library.pdx.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=&httpsredir=1&article=1364&context=open_access_etds




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Trauma-sensitive schools/agencies provide

- Safety
- Trustworthiness and transparency
- Peer support/Mutual self-help
- Collaboration and mutuality
- Empowerment, voice, and choice
- Cultural, historical, and gender responsiveness



Adapted from www.samhsa.gov/ntic/trauma-interventions



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Heal the impact of trauma

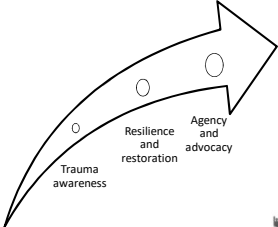



- Safety
- Community




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“It’s frightening to think how predestined our lives can be. It is also enlightening to think how easy it can be to ensure mental and physical health.”
(Michael Unger, 2018)

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Resilience and Restoration




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CDC Recommendations for Schools/Agencies:

- Trauma-Informed Practices
- Social-Emotional Learning
- Mindfulness
- Restorative Practices



<https://www.stopbullying.gov/sites/default/files/2017-10/bullying-as-an-ace-fact-sheet.pdf>





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Restorative practices

“People are happier and more likely to make positive changes when those in authority do things with them, rather than to them or for them.”
(Wachtel, 2015)

- Goal is strong, safe, and supportive communities
- Separate the deed from the doer




www.iirp.edu

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Resilience

- ...the ability to achieve positive outcomes – mentally, emotionally, socially, and spiritually – despite adversity.



(Starr Commonwealth, 2019)

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Cultivating resilience

- Single most common factor of children developing resilience is at least one stable and committed relationship with a supportive parent, caregiver, or other adult.
- Other factors
 - Self-efficacy and perceived control
 - Opportunities to strengthen adaptive skills
 - Mobilizing sources of faith, hope, and cultural traditions

<https://developingchild.harvard.edu/science/key-concepts/resilience/>

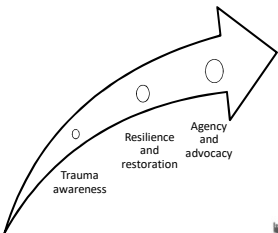

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Put theory into practice

“Without theory, the movable mountain of injustice and oppression seems too big and immobile, but theory helps us understand that our job is not to move mountains, but to out maneuver them.”

~Bettina Love

From *We Want to Do More Than Survive: Abolitionist Teaching and the Pursuit of Educational Freedom*, 2019

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What does **not** work:

1. Zero tolerance policies
2. Giving advice only
3. Student-only reform efforts
4. Piecemeal efforts
5. Peer-only conflict resolution

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK390408/>

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Agency and Advocacy

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The 1st considerations are always

- Safety
- Community

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Fixed MINDSET	Growth MINDSET	Benefit MINDSET
Everyday experts who seek perfection and to avoid failure	Everyday learners who seek growth and development	Everyday leaders who seek to 'be well' and 'do good'
Focus on reproducing what they know	Focus on improving how they do what they do	Focus purposefully on why they do what they do
Believes their strengths are innate gifts that can't be developed and focus on perfecting their abilities.	Believes their strengths can be developed with effort, reaching higher levels of achievement and ability.	Believes in developing their strengths and meaningfully contributes to a future of greater possibility.

<http://www.benefitmindset.com/about/>

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Benefit Mindset

"A purpose-driven mindset that is redefining success from being the best in the world, to being the best for the world."

~Ash Buchanan

<https://www.edutopia.org/article/exploring-benefit-mindset>

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Restorative Practices

<u>Traditional Questions</u>	<u>Affective Questions</u>
1. What rule has been broken?	1. What happened?
2. Who is to blame?	2. What were you thinking at the time?
3. What punishment do they deserve?	3. What have you thought of since?
	4. Who has been affected by what you've done? In what way?
	5. What do you think you need to do to make things right?


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Transformative practices

- What social circumstances promoted the harmful behavior?
- What structural similarities exist between this incident and others like it?
- What measures could prevent future occurrences?




<https://emu.edu/now/restorative-justice/2011/03/10/restorative-or-transformative-justice/>




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Factors That Exacerbate Susceptibility

- Limiting attitudes and worldview
- Unproductive relationships between organization and environment
- Organizational amnesia
- Unrecognized wounding from previous trauma




Vivian, P., & Hormann, S. (2013). Organizational trauma and healing. North Charleston, SC: CreateSpace.




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Protective Factors

- Strong core identity
- Organizational self-esteem and self-efficacy
- Facilitating structures and processes
- Hopeful and energetic leadership
- Positive connection to peer agencies




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Empathy without boundaries is self-destruction.

—SILVY KHOUCASIAN




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Double Jeopardy


- By the nature of work exercise significant power over people's lives
- Includes health-care professionals, police, clergy, residential agency staff, and educators
- Many enter these professions as service to community and children
- The nature of the work exposes them to violence and violation which are internalized and then manifested.

★	2
4	3




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Being trauma informed is not enough

	Aware	Unaware
Empowered		2
Disempowered	4	3


Weingarten (2003). *Common Shock: Witnessing Violence Every Day*. New York: Dutton.




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Witnessing Positions (Weingarten, 2003)

- Aware and Empowered: competent and effective
- Unaware and Empowered: misguided, malpractice possible
- Unaware and Disempowered: abandoning, malpractice possible
- Aware and Disempowered: ineffectual, stressed

	Aware	Unaware
Empowered		2
Disempowered	4	3



Weingarten (2003). *Common Shock: Witnessing Violence Every Day*. New York: Dutton.



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Rethinking policies, practices, protocols



- Prohibit in-school arrests
- Cease student participation in active shooter training
- Rethink school violence preparedness
- Hire additional staff
 - Fewer students assigned to special education teachers
 - Fewer students on caseloads for guidance counselors, social workers, and school psychologists.

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Rethinking policies, practices, protocols




- Embed restorative practices throughout trauma-sensitive schools
- Teach children and young people about the brain so they can teach their friends and family
- Ban suspension for elementary students
- Stop using standardized scores to evaluate teachers

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Preservice, in-service, and ongoing training for all school staff

- Trauma awareness
- Resilience building
- Restorative practices
- Transformative practices
- Benefit mindset



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This is our collective responsibility

Everything we do in schools must be rooted in and embrace that which “seems impossible: education for collective dignity and human power for justice.”

-Bettina Love-

(From *We Want to Do More Than Survive: Abolitionist Teaching and the Pursuit of Educational Freedom*, 2019)

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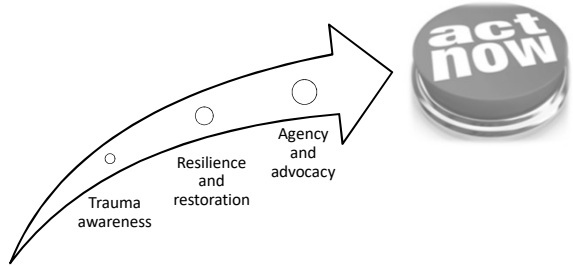

Being a change agent where you stand

- Engage in citizen dialogues
- Teach and practice deliberation
- Teach and model restorative practices
- Make context matter
- Strengthen the communities
- Communicate with local decision-makers and elected officials




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From Trauma Informed to Advocacy and Action

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Please feel free to contact me!

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- Blog: <https://jemmuldoon.blogspot.com/>
- Twitter: [@jemmuldoon](https://twitter.com/jemmuldoon)




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Suggested Websites:


- Starr Commonwealth (<https://starr.org/>)
- International Institute for Restorative Practices (<https://www.iirp.edu/>)
- National Child Traumatic Stress Network (<https://www.nctsn.org/>)
- CDC ACEs (<https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/childabuseandneglect/acestudy/index.html>)
- Helping Traumatized Children Learn (<https://traumasensitiveschools.org/>)
- SAMHSA Trauma Resources (https://store.samhsa.gov/search_results?k=trauma)



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Selected references

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