

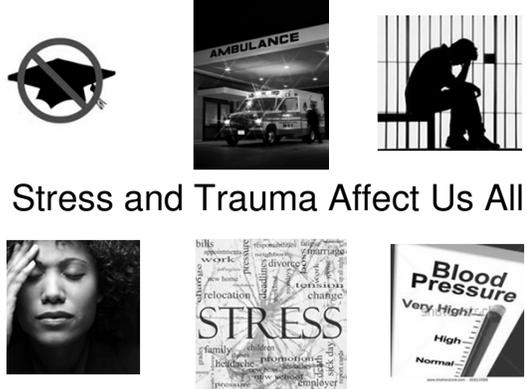
Transforming Trauma: Promoting Resilience and School Success by Creating Trauma-Informed, Safe, Supportive and Engaging Schools

UCSF Healthy Environments and Response to Trauma in Schools (HEARTS)

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Stress and Trauma Affect Us All

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These Children Made it Through and Grew Up to Change the World



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Vignette



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What is wrong with Carlos?



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What is wrong with his teacher?



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Shift Your Perspective

Change the paradigm from one that asks,
 "What is wrong with you?"
 to one that asks,
 "What has happened to you?"

(from Wisconsin Dept. of Health Services www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/tic)

Provides **context**, fosters **compassion**,
 helps us to see **strengths** in face of adversity

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What's happened to Carlos?

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What has happened to his teacher?

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A Trauma-Informed System:

- Realizes the widespread impact of trauma and paths towards resilience
- Recognizes how it shows up
- Responds by integrating into practices, procedures and policies
- Resists re-traumatization

(Adapted from SAMHSA Trauma Informed Approach)
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UCSF HEARTS Public Health Approach to Addressing Stress and Trauma in Schools

Intensive/Tertiary Intervention (5%)
 Trauma-informed psychotherapy with students + consultation with teachers
IEP consultation

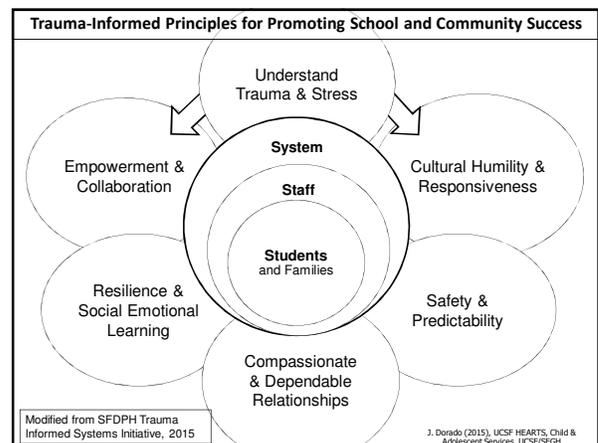
Early/Secondary Intervention (15%)
 Participation in Care Team Meetings for at-risk students and school-wide issues
 Trauma-informed discipline policies ; Teacher wellness groups

Primary Prevention (80%)

Capacity building with school staff
 Training on effects of complex trauma in schools and trauma-sensitive practices
 Promote staff wellness and address stress, burnout, & vicarious trauma

Use of stress and trauma lens to augment universal supports
 Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)
 Health education on coping with stress
 Safe and supportive school climate
 Social Emotional Learning (SEL) curricula
 Restorative Practices / Restorative Justice

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Bay Area Trauma Informed Systems Regional Collaborative

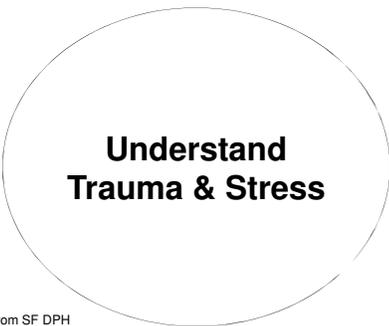




7 Bay Area Counties



Trauma-Informed Schools: Core Guiding Principle





(Modified from SF DPH Trauma Informed Systems Initiative, 2014)

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Understanding Chronic Stress and Trauma

“Learning about the psychobiology of stress, toxic stress, and trauma is liberating for people. It gives us explanatory reasons for some of the puzzling behaviors we engage in and the feelings that can come to dominate us.” (Bloom, 2013, p. 48)



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Stress Affects Our Performance



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Trauma = Event, Experience, & Effect

Event Actual or extreme **threat of harm**

↓

Terror
horror
pain

“**Fight, flight or freeze**”

Helpless to
escape

↓

Overwhelms brain and body

↓

Dis-integration

Dysregulation

↓

Lasting **adverse**
effects

(Herman, 1997; Van der Kolk, 2005; DSM-IV-TR; SAMHSA; Siegel, 2012; Bloom, 2013)

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Trauma

Toxic Stress

COMPLEX TRAUMA

ACEs

(Adverse Childhood Experiences)

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Stress and Trauma Are Public Health Issues

- Stress linked to 6 leading causes of death
 - Heart disease, cancer, lung ailments, accidents, cirrhosis of the liver, and suicide
- Trauma impacts more than just the individual
 - Ripple effect to others
- Some communities disproportionately affected:
 - Bigotry + Urban Poverty + Trauma = Toxic
- Sometimes multigenerational history of trauma
- Systemic, preventative approach needed

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Unaddressed Trauma Can Hurt School Performance

- More days of school absence (Hurt et al., 2001)
- Problems with attention skills, abstract reasoning, long-term memory for verbal information, and reading ability (Beers & DeBellis, 2002)
- Difficulties in self-regulation (Kim & Cicchetti, 2009)
- Lower grade-point average (Hurt et al., 2001)
- Higher risk of school drop-out (Porche et al, 2011)

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People who have experienced trauma may be injured, but they are not “sick” or “bad”

Resilience and healing is possible with support

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We Share the Same Neurobiology

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Neurons that fire together wire together (Hebb's Rule):

Formation of habits (automatic thoughts, feelings, behaviors)



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Trauma “Wears a Groove” in the Brain



“The Fear Song”

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Learning Brain and Survival Brain



- ❖ **Learning Brain = Rider**
 - Makes informed, rational decisions
- ❖ **Survival Brain = Horse**
 - Protective instincts based on feelings
- ❖ **When triggered, the rider falls off the horse**

(van der Kolk)(Ford, 2009)

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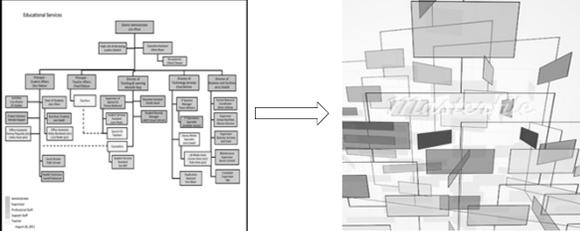
Common Triggers

Unpredictability	Transitions	Sudden change
Loss of control	Feeling vulnerable or rejected	Loneliness
Feeling disrespected	Confrontation	Embarrassment or shame
Sensory overload	Praise or positive attention	Intimacy

(from ARC, Kinniburgh & Blaustein, 2005)

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At Systemic Level: Chronic Stress and Trauma Can Lead to Dis-organization



Must address stress & secondary trauma on organizational level

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Safe and Supportive, Trauma-Sensitive Schools Attend to the Wellness of School Staff



(e.g., Educators, Support Staff, Paraprofessionals, Administrators)

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Brain Break: Belly Breathing

Slow breath out through mouth
Empty chest, then belly
(empty belly air all the way out)

Slow breath in through nose
Fill belly, then chest with air

- Exhale activates “brakes” in body (parasympathetic nervous system)
- Re-sets brain and body
- Allows body to metabolize stress arousal

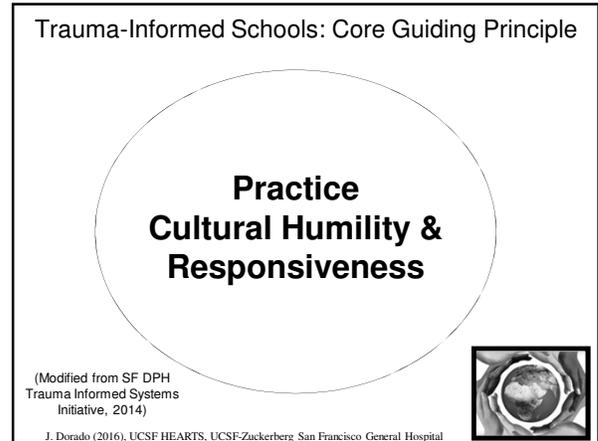


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Key Strategy for Creating Safe and Supportive Schools

- **Aggravating behavior is “a cause for a pause”**
- **Pause, take a breath, and ask yourself, “What is happening here?”**
- **Understand that BEHAVIOR HAS MEANING**
 - What **need** is this behavior communicating?
 - What can be done to address this need?
 - What is the **healthy intention** behind the behavior?
- **Applies to kids and to adults**

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Practice Cultural Humility

“Cultural Humility is a process of communal reflection to analyze the root causes of suffering and create a broader, more inclusive view of the world.”

- Lifelong learning and critical self-reflection
- Recognizing and changing power imbalances
- Developing institutional accountability

(Tervalon & Murray-Garcia, 1998)

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Insidious Trauma

“like drops of acid falling on a stone”
(Root, 1992)

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Implicit Bias

Take a test at implicit.harvard.edu

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Working Towards Cultural Congruence

(Anne Fadiman, 2008)

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Stress Can Interfere with Cultural Congruence

(adapted from presentation by Ghosh-Ippen, 2012)

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Work for equity to heal trauma's wounds

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Trauma-Informed Schools: Core Guiding Principle

Establish Safety & Predictability

(Modified from SF DPH Trauma Informed Systems Initiative, 2014)

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Students cannot upshift from “Survival Brain” to “Learning Brain” if they do not feel safe (true for all of us)

(Modified from SF DPH Trauma Informed Systems Initiative, 2014)

J. Dorado & L. Dolce (2012), UCSF HEARTS, Child & Adolescent Services, UCSF/SFGH

Establish Safety and Predictability

- **Physical Safety**
 - Protection from harm for students and staff
 - Clear safety procedures
 - Reduction of unnecessary triggers
- **Emotional Safety**
 - Build emotion management skills
- **Social Safety**
 - Build relationships with dependable, supportive others that can help when stressed
 - Prevent victimization and abuses of power
- **Predictability**
 - Routines and consistency
 - Predictable environment (posted schedules, school wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports)
 - Explicit preparation for changes and transitions

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Trauma-Informed Schools: Core Guiding Principle

Foster Compassionate & Dependable Relationships

(Modified from SF DPH Trauma Informed Systems Initiative, 2014)

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Strong Relationships: A Fundamental Cornerstone to School Success

One of the strongest predictors of academic success is the students' perception of "Does my teacher like me?" (Stutzman Amstutz & Mullet, 2005, citing Nelson, Lott, & Glenn)



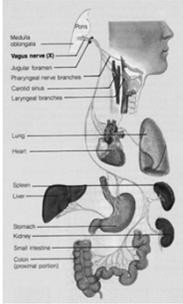

Emotionally warm, sensitive teachers had students w/greater growth in math and reading ability (Pianta et al., 2008)

Positive teacher-student relationship particularly important for students with self-regulation difficulties on tasks requiring fine motor skills, accuracy, and attention-related skills (Liew et al., 2010)

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Healthy Relationships

- Humans are hard-wired for connection; it is a basic need (Harlow, 1958)
- Healthy relationships involve attunement
 - Being sensitive and responsive to the feelings and needs of ourselves and of others
- Attuned relationships help us to feel safe and calm down when we are stressed out




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Co-Regulation



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Complex Trauma Interferes with Co-Regulation

- Excruciating dilemma when other humans are cause of trauma & pain
- Caregiver unavailable to provide co-regulation
- Derailed development of self regulation skills
- Can affect teacher-student relationship
 - Pulls for intense emotions from staff
 - Can cause secondary/vicarious trauma



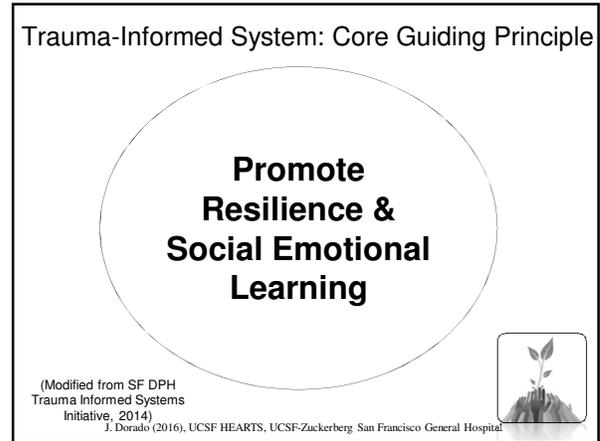
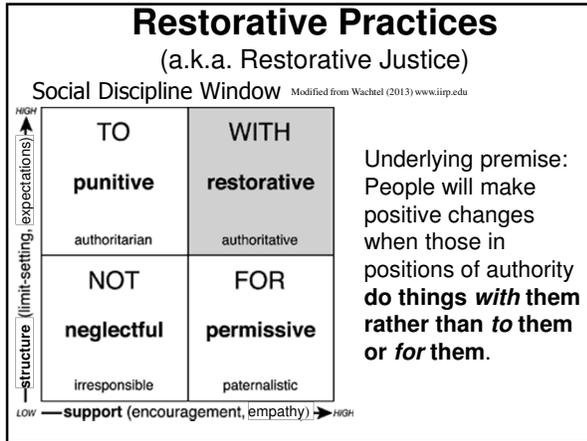

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You Can Make a Difference

- "Big I" = Interventions
- "Little i" = interactions (Ghosh-Ippen, 2013)
 - Patterned, repetitive stimuli help rewire the brain
 - Every positive, attuned interaction with a trustworthy other can help to rewire the brain (Perry, 2008, 2009)
- 5:1 ratio for relationship "deposits" to "withdrawals" (ratio of affirmations to criticisms/confrontations)
- Invest time in creating school community



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Resilience

- Facing the painful reality of what has happened, **and** knowing that we can overcome it
- Convey hope
 - Highlight and build on strengths
 - Acknowledge progress
- Build organizational wellness and self-care practices

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Build Resilience: Cultivate Climate and Culture of Wellness

6 habits of happiness worth cultivating

PAY ATTENTION
Studies show that mindful people have stronger immune systems and are less likely to be hostile or anxious.

GIVE THANKS
Research reveals the enormous power of simply counting our blessings. Regular expressions of gratitude promote optimism, better health, and resilience to others.

DRIP
When we who have we feel ourselves more positive and resilient to others.

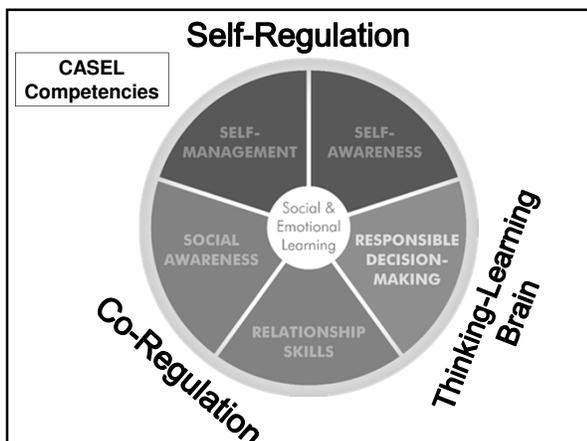
PRACTICE KINDNESS
Being kind to others makes us feel good. Altruistic acts light up the same pleasure centers in the brain as food and sex.

KEEP FIRING
Social connection is key to happiness. Research indicates quality and quantity. Make those closer.

BRING
Exercise releases endorphins and stress. It is the instant center.

Research reveals the enormous power of simply counting our blessings. Regular expressions of gratitude promote optimism, better health, and greater life satisfaction

(greatergood.berkeley.edu/articles/item/how-to-be-happy-five-prints)
Greater Good Science Center



Strategy: Build Student Skills to Address Hidden Injuries

Address the needs underlying the behaviors rather than punishing youth for having a skill deficit or being in “survival brain”

Find the “wheelchair ramp” needed for success!
(Greene, 1998)

- Scaffolding, skill building, support
- Differentiated discipline
- Modified behavioral supports

J. Dorado (2015), UCSF HEARTS

Skill Building

- School Wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (**PBIS**)
- **Explicit instruction in managing emotions**
 - Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Curriculum
- Regular **brain breaks**
- **Physical activity** to reset stress arousal level
- Peace Corners and/or Cool-Down Kits
- **Restorative practices** to restore any ruptured relationships and repair any harm caused
 - Builds relationships, empathy, perspective taking skills, self-reflection skills, problem-solving skills

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Trauma-Informed Schools: Core Guiding Principle

Facilitate Empowerment & Collaboration



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Trauma Helplessness Disempowerment

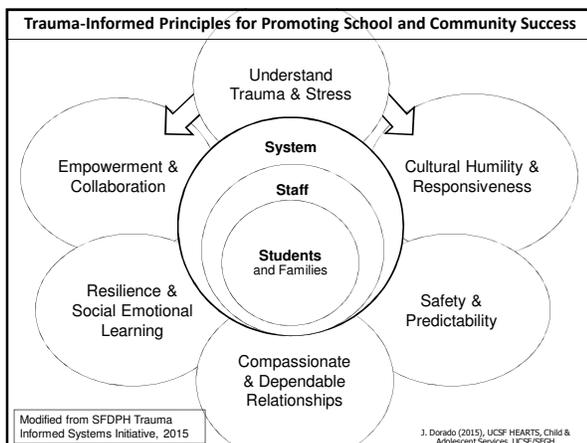


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- Create safe and supportive forums for voice and self-advocacy
- Engage and scaffold students and staff in making meaningful choices and decisions, develop sense of agency

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Trauma-informed educational practices create more safe, supportive, engaging schools that promote learning readiness, equity, growth, and resilience for everyone in the school community



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Resources

- National Child Traumatic Stress Network
 - www.nctsn.org
 - For Educators: Resources for School Personnel
- Massachusetts Advocates for Children: Trauma and Learning Policy Initiative
 - Helping Traumatized Children Learn (Cole et al.)
Freely downloadable at traumasensitiveschools.org/
- [Reaching and Teaching Children Who Hurt: Strategies for Your Classroom](#) (Susan Craig)
- Greater Good Science Center (for wellness practices)
 - greatergood.berkeley.edu

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Resources

- [The Restorative Practices Handbook for Teachers, Disciplinarians and Administrators](#) (Costello, Wachtel, & Wachtel)
 - www.iirp.org
- [The Heart of Learning: Compassion, Resiliency, and Academic Success](#) (Ray Wolpov, et al.)
Freely downloadable at the website below
 - <http://www.k12.wa.us/CompassionateSchools/HeartofLearning.aspx>
- [Lost at School](#) (Ross Greene) (Collaborative Problem Solving)
 - www.livesinthebalance.org
- Mindfulness in Education
 - www.mindfuleducation.org/resources.html

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For More Information:

Web articles featuring UCSF HEARTS:

- acestoohigh.com/2014/01/28/hearts-el-dorado-elementary/
- edsourcesource.org/today/2013/schools-focus-on-trauma-informed-to-reach-troubled-students
- greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/the_silent_epidemic_in_our_classrooms
- greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/how_to_support_stressed_out_teachers
- coe.ucsf.edu/coe/spotlight/ucsf_hearts_story.html

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