Trauma-Informed Restorative Practices

Police Services
Professional Development
April 6-7, 2015
Cole Auditorium
Trauma Informed Practices
What do we mean by a Trauma?

An event that poses an immediate, severe threat of injury, harm, or even death to the person or someone critically important to them.

Most Common Childhood Traumatic Events

Child abuse (shaking, burning, sexual abuse, neglect, malnutrition, assault)

Witnessing Family and Community Violence
Types of Traumatic Stress

- **Acute trauma** is a single traumatic event that is limited in time.
- **Chronic trauma** refers to the experience of multiple traumatic events.
- **Complex trauma** describes both exposure to chronic trauma—usually caused by adults entrusted with the child’s care—and the impact of such exposure on the child.
How Common is Trauma?

Figure 1. Prevalence of Adverse Child and Family Experiences among US Children Age 0-17 years

- 52.1% No adverse family experiences
- 25.3% One adverse family experience
- 22.6% Two or more adverse family experiences

Source: 2011/12 NSCH
### Children in Special Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Incidence per 1,000</th>
<th>Children w/out Disabilities</th>
<th>Children w/ Disabilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical Abuse</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>9.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual Abuse</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Abuse</td>
<td>2.9 (Goldson, 2002)</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Neglect, physical abuse, and emotional abuse are most often perpetrated by immediate family members. Sexual abuse is largely perpetrated by extrafamilial members (Sullivan and Knutson, 2000).
How can I tell if a child has a trauma history?

Some warning signs are

• Unregulated emotions
• Hard time putting feelings into words
• Impossible to tell what ‘triggered’ them
• Sees threats or insults where there are none
• Cannot seem to calm down from upsets
• Finds it difficult to shift from one activity to the next
• Easily over-stimulated
How does Trauma impact behavior?

- Time
- Behavior Intensity

- High
- Low

- Peak
- De-escalation
- Acceleration
- Agitation
- Trigger
- Calm
- Recovery
How does Trauma impact behavior?

![Graph showing the impact of Trauma on behavior over time. The x-axis represents time, and the y-axis represents behavior intensity. There is a peak in the graph indicating a high intensity of behavior, followed by a return to a lower, calm state.](image)
1. Calm

- Student is cooperative.
  - Accepts corrective feedback.
  - Follows directives.
  - Sets personal goals.
  - Ignores distractions.
  - Accepts praise.
How does Trauma impact behavior?
2. Trigger

- Student experiences a series of unresolved conflicts.
  - Repeated failures
  - Frequent corrections
  - Interpersonal conflicts
  - Deadlines
  - High rates of negative feedback
Stages of Trauma Reaction

AGITATION

Behavior Intensity

High

Low

Time
3. Agitation

- Student exhibits increase in unfocused behavior.
  - Off-task
  - Frequent start/stop on tasks
  - Out of seat
  - Talking with others
  - Withdrawn
How does Trauma impact behavior?

ACCELERATION
4. Acceleration

- Student displays focused behavior.
  - Provocative
  - High intensity
  - Threatening
  - Personal
Survival Mode: Fight/Flight/Freeze

The Learning Brain shuts down and the Survival Brain take over

Learning/Thinking Brain (Prefrontal Cortex)

Survival/Emotion Brain (Limbic System)
Trauma Reaction

- Coping Strategies
- Perceived Threat
Defusing the Acceleration Phase

Things to avoid:

- Raising your voice
- Engaging in power struggles
- Moving into the student’s space — physical proximity
- Touching the student
- Sudden or unpredictable movements
- Criticizing
- Arguing
- Threatening posture
Example: Avoiding a power struggle:

- Stay focused on the ultimate goal of de-escalation
- Ignore verbal disrespect
- Ask what student wants/needs
- Provide acceptable choices
- Predict the positive/neg outcome of different choices
- Wait
How does Trauma impact behavior?

![Graph showing the impact of Trauma on behavior over time. The intensity starts low, peaks at a point labeled 'PEAK', and then decreases back to low.]
5. Peak

- Student is emotionally dysregulated and may engage in:
  - Physical aggression
  - Property destruction
  - Self-injury
  - Escape/social withdrawal
  - Hyperventilation
Peak

- Intervention is focused on safety.
How does Trauma impact behavior?

![Graph showing the impact of trauma over time]

DECELERATION
6. De-escalation

- Student displays confusion but with decreases in severe behavior.
  - Social withdrawal
  - Denial
  - Blaming others
  - Minimization of problem
  - Avoidance
How does Trauma impact behavior?

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How does Trauma impact behavior?
Recovery

Help student to reflect and repair:

• What happened, and what were you thinking at the time?
• What have you thought about since?
• Who has been affected by what you have done? In what way?
• What about this has been hardest for you?
• What do you think you need to do to make things as right as possible?

International Institute for Restorative Practices
Avoid Re-escalation:
Where Are You in the Cycle?

Student’s Cycle

Responder’s cycle

Cognition cycle

Adapted from SFGH Safety Management and Response Techniques (SMART) Training
J. Dorado (2014), UCSF HEARTS, Child & Adolescent Services, UCSF/SFGH
Strategies for Self-Regulation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>(A) CORE SKILLS</th>
<th>(B) DISTRACTION</th>
<th>(C) SELF-SOOTHE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>DEEP BREATHING</td>
<td>COUNT NUMBERS</td>
<td>TAKE A LONG BATH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>OBSERVE &amp; DESCRIBE</td>
<td>WATCH TV</td>
<td>DRINK DECAF TEA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>RADICAL ACCEPTANCE</td>
<td>COLOR/PAINT/DRAW</td>
<td>LIGHT CANDLES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>MINDFULNESS/ AWARENESS</td>
<td>WORK A PUZZLE</td>
<td>LISTEN TO SOOTHING MUSIC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>HELP SOMEONE ELSE</td>
<td>EXERCISE</td>
<td>POSITIVE SELF- AFFIRMATIONS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>PROS &amp; CONS LIST</td>
<td>CALL A FRIEND</td>
<td>USE COMFORT BOX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>PUSH AWAY THOUGHTS</td>
<td>CALL YOUR SPONSOR</td>
<td>TAKE A “VACATION”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Aggression

Harm

Trauma

Fight, Flight, Freeze

Safe environment, caring adults, academic, social-emotional, & behavioral supports

Executive function

Engaged Learning
Compassion Fatigue

- Normal displays of stress resulting from the service work you perform on a regular basis. While the symptoms are often disruptive, depressive, and irritating, an awareness of the symptoms and their negative effect on your life can lead to positive change, personal transformation, and a new resiliency.
Compassion Fatigue

- Anger toward co-workers, blaming
- Receives unusual amount of complaints from others
- Substance abuse
- Compulsive behaviors such as overspending, overeating, gambling, sexual addictions
- Legal problems, indebtedness
- Reoccurrence of nightmares and flashbacks to traumatic event
- Chronic physical ailments such as stomach problems and back or neck pain
- Apathy, sad, no longer finds activities pleasurable
- Pre-occupied, difficulty concentrating
- Denying problems