

BECOMING A TRAUMA INFORMED SCHOOL

Presenter:

Dr. Gerald Cox

Licensed Psychologist

314-616-0701

jcpsyd@sbcglobal.net

jcpsyd@fz.k12.mo.us



WHY TRAUMA-INFORMED

- ✘ Traumatic childhood events and toxic stress impact a lot more students than we have previously realized.
- ✘ Trauma and toxic stress are significant non-academic barriers to learning.
 - Decreased IQ and reading ability (Delaney-Black et al., 2003)
 - Lower grade-point average (Hurt et al., 2001)
 - More days of school absence (Hurt et al., 2001)
 - Decreased rates of high school graduation (Grogger, 1997)
 - Increased expulsions and suspensions (LAUSD Survey)
- ✘ Many of the classroom behavior management strategies that we've learned don't work.

PREVALENCE

ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES (ACE) STUDY CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL & PREVENTION

Household dysfunction

- Substance abuse 27%
- Parental separation/divorce 23%
- Mental illness 19%
- Battered mother 13%
- Incarcerated household member 5%

Abuse

- Psychological 11%
- Physical 28%
- Sexual 21%

Neglect

- Emotional 15%
- Physical 10%

Nearly half of U.S. children have experienced trauma, according to a study by scientists at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. Researchers examined data from more than 95,000 children from birth to age 17 and found that 48 percent had encountered at least one of nine types of adverse experiences, including extreme economic hardship, physical or emotional abuse or neglect, incarceration of a parent, household substance abuse problems, living with a mentally ill family member, or exposure to violence. Twenty-two percent had two or more childhood traumatic experiences. These children were more than twice as likely to have chronic health conditions and were more than two-and-a-half times more likely to have repeated a grade in school. The researchers also found that children who learned resiliency skills — such as the capacity to stay calm and in control when faced with a challenge — had mitigated negative effects, including being much more likely to be engaged in school (*APA Monitor*, February 2015).

WHY?

- ✘ Several states have already started trauma-informed school programming:
 - + Massachusetts
 - + Washington
 - + Wisconsin
 - + Michigan
 - + California
 - + Oregon
 - + Illinois
 - + Missouri (SB638)

RELATIONAL TRAUMA AND TOXIC STRESS CAN IMPACT A CHILD'S ABILITY TO EMOTIONALLY SELF-REGULATE



CHILDREN MUST FEEL SAFE TO BE EMOTIONALLY AVAILABLE TO LEARN

www.harrycutting.com



**TRAUMA-INFORMED PRACTICES
HELP ALL STUDENTS**

**TRAUMA-INFORMED PRACTICES
CREATE SAFE LEARNING
ENVIRONMENTS BY BUILDING
SAFE RELATIONSHIPS, BY
CREATING PREDICTABLE ROUTINES
AND STRUCTURES, AND BY
TEACHING LAGGING THINKING
SKILLS**

THE MISSOURI MODEL: A DEVELOPMENTAL FRAMEWORK FOR TRAUMA-INFORMED

Trauma Aware



Trauma Sensitive



Trauma Responsive



Trauma Informed

WHAT?

- ✘ Psycho-education to increase educators' awareness of:
 - + the prevalence of trauma in children
 - + the psychological, biological, and neurological impact of trauma on the developing brain
 - + the educational impact of trauma
 - + the relationship between emotional regulation and learning

WHAT?

- ✘ Psycho-education to help educators understand:
 - + the relationship between trauma triggers and classroom behavior problems
 - + the relationships between students' physiological, safety, belonging, and esteem needs and learning potential
 - + the importance of identifying signs of emotional dysregulation in students
 - + the importance of understanding the need behind the behavior

WHAT?

- ✘ Psycho-education to help educators understand:
 - + the role that reenactment plays in patterns of misbehavior
 - + the potential destructiveness of fear-based behavior control strategies
 - + the ineffectiveness of reward-based behavior control strategies for emotionally dysregulated students

WHAT?

- ✘ Psycho-education to help educators understand:
 - + the importance of nurturing, supportive teacher-student relationships in helping students to feel safe and to be emotionally regulated
 - + the role of safe, supportive teacher-student relationships in promoting emotional healing.
 - + the need to shift away from behavior control strategies and toward emotional regulation interventions

WHAT?

- ✘ Psycho-education to help educators understand:
 - + the importance of providing structure and predictability for traumatized students
 - + The importance of providing choice
 - + The importance of strength-based learning
 - + the difficulty change and transitions can present for traumatized students
 - + the difficulties that traumatized students can experience with an array of common school situations (strangers, parties, unexpected touch, loud noises, bathrooms, changing clothes, expressive arts, communication arts, etc.)

WHAT?

- ✘ Psycho-education to help educators understand:
 - + the role of fear in anger, aggression, oppositional behaviors, and defiance
 - + the role of fear in apathy, task avoidance, and school avoidance
 - + the importance of not labeling students as “manipulative,” “attention seeking,” or “controlling,” and the role of mistrust, neglect, and fear in these behaviors

WHAT?

- ✘ Psycho-education to help educators understand:
 - + the role of adult nonverbal behaviors in the escalation or de-escalation of student aggression and other acting out behaviors
 - + the importance of active self-care when working with traumatized students

HOW?

- ✘ Trained counselors, administrators, and building staff in Collaborative and Proactive Solutions
- ✘ Whole building trauma trainings (phase I, II, III, & IV)
- ✘ Regular community and team building activities
- ✘ Targeted group trauma trainings (administrators; school, crisis and educational support counselors; school nurses; occupational therapists; physical therapists; behavior specialists; paraprofessionals alternative school staff)
- ✘ Trauma-informed Functional Behavioral Assessments, Behavior Intervention Plans, and IEPs
- ✘ District-wide mental health newsletter

HOW?

- ✘ Multiple district “at-risk” student committee
- ✘ In-building, social-emotional support teams
- ✘ BST homerooms
- ✘ Trauma focused book studies (“Help for Billy,” “Restoring Sanctuary,” “Reaching and Teaching Children Who Hurt,” “No Drama Discipline,” etc.)
- ✘ Regular team meetings on high needs, at-risk students

HOW?

- ✘ Full-time, trauma-focused cognitive behavior therapist
- ✘ Certified play therapists
- ✘ Parent education programs
- ✘ Outside professional training on trauma for educational staff
- ✘ Social-emotional curriculum in self-contained classrooms
- ✘ Sanctuary model in self-contained classrooms
- ✘ Trauma-informed de-escalation training

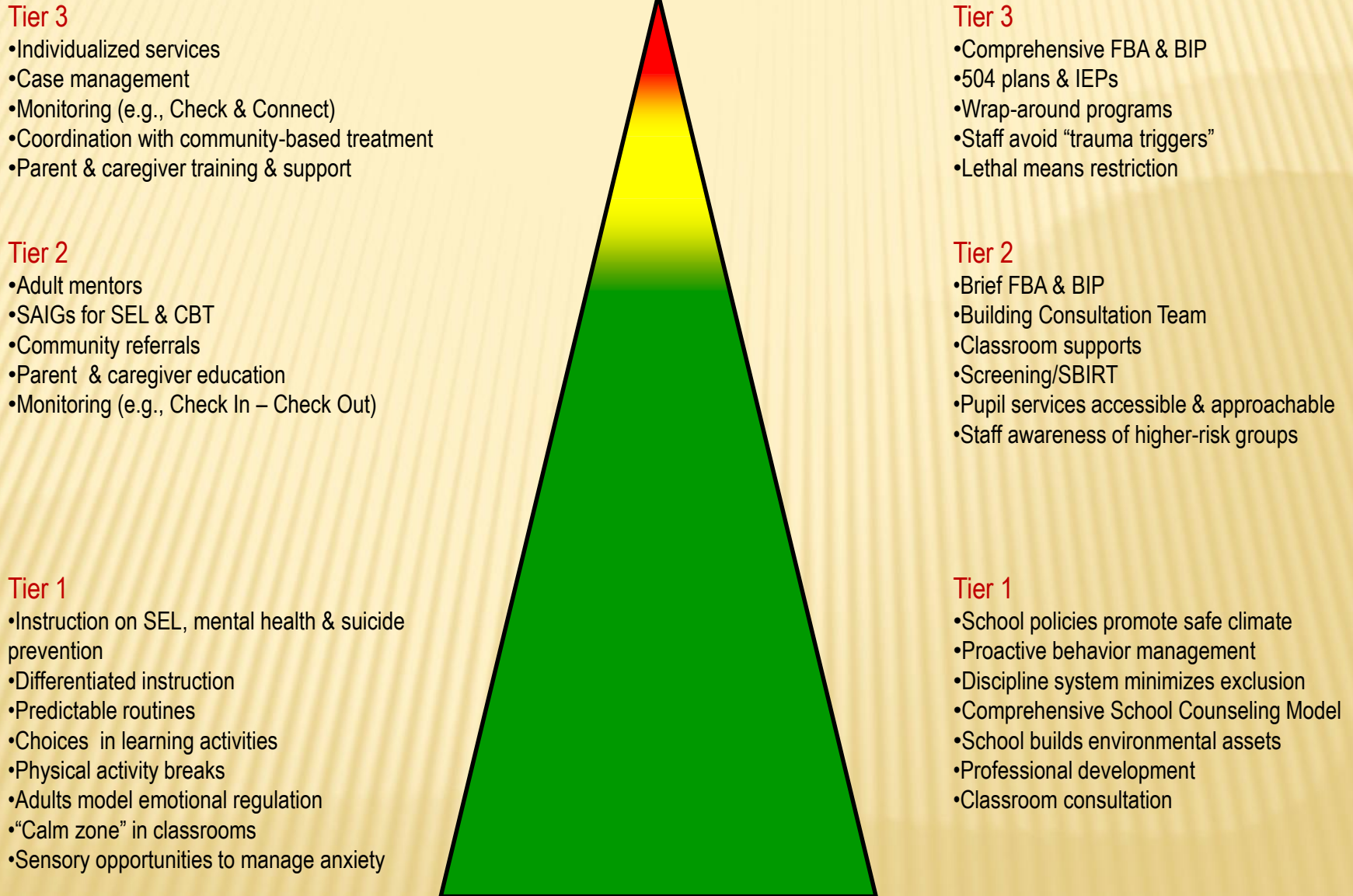
HOW?

- ✘ Social emotional curriculum in sped rooms
- ✘ Emotional regulation activities in sped and reg ed settings
- ✘ Referral of affected students to outside community partners
- ✘ Regular communication with outside community partners for student support and to coordinate interventions
- ✘ Team of concern meetings with community partners

FUTURE

- ✘ New teacher training videos
- ✘ Internet-based resources and collaboration
- ✘ Trauma-informed FBAs, IEPs, and BIPs
- ✘ Increased training in safety planning, identifying emotional triggers, and self-care for teachers
- ✘ Increased data collection about effectiveness of interventions
- ✘ Increased information sharing and collaboration with parents

USING THE PBIS FRAMEWORK TO SUPPORT STUDENTS' MENTAL HEALTH



Tier 3 (1-5%)

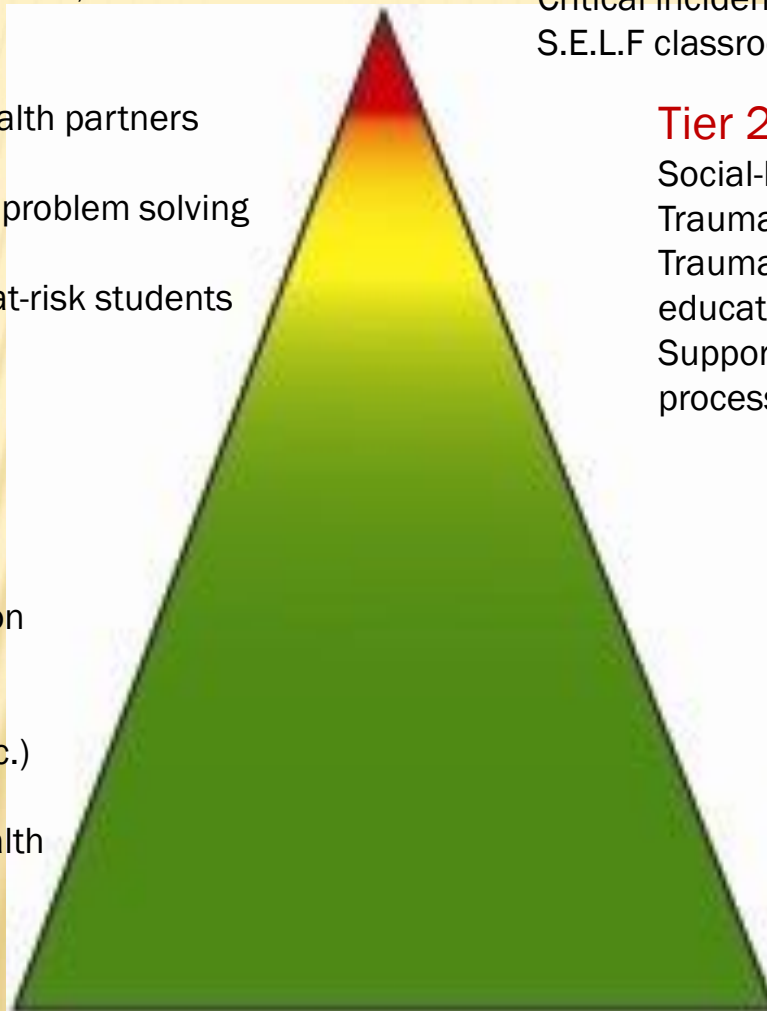
Social-emotional curriculum in self-contained programs and classrooms
Sanctuary trained alternative school programs and in-school programs
Coordination and regular communication with outside mental health partners
Trauma-informed CPI training
Regular team meetings on high needs, at-risk students

Tier 2 (5-15%)

Referral to community mental health partners
Parent education
Teachers trained in collaborative problem solving
Sanctuary CORE team
Safety planning and teaming on at-risk students

Tier 1 (80-90%)

Building level trauma trainings;
target group trainings
Second step curriculum
Predictable routines and transition supports
Emotional regulation activities
(mindfulness, deep breathing, etc.)
Calm corners and calm boxes
District-wide monthly, mental health newsletter
Whole building parent nights
Web based parent resources



Tier 3

Trauma-informed FBAs, BIPs, and IEPs
Certified play therapists
Trauma-focused cognitive behavior therapists
Trauma trained alternative school programs
Regular team meetings focused on staff safety and morale in self-contained programs
Team of concern meeting
Critical incident debriefing
S.E.L.F classrooms

Tier 2

Social-Emotional Support teams
Trauma trained behavioral specialists
Trauma trained, district-wide therapeutic educational support program
Support plans developed through disciplinary process

Tier 1

Trauma-focused book studies
Collaborative classroom practices
Differentiated instruction
Choice and strength-based learning strategies
Teacher training on maintaining boundaries and identifying own emotional triggers
community meetings among staff and students

RESOURCES

- ✘ Helping Traumatized Children Learn, Massachusetts Advocates for Children, 2005
<http://www.traumasensitiveschools.org>
- ✘ Wisconsin Department of Public Health
http://ssp.w.dpi.wi.gov/ssp_w_mhtrauma
- ✘ The Heart of Learning: Compassion, Resiliency, and Academic Success, Washington State
<http://k12.wa.us/CompassionateSchools/HeartofLearning.aspx>
- ✘ Attachment and Trauma Network
<http://www.attachmenttraumanetwork.com/index.html>
- ✘ National Child Traumatic Stress Network
<http://www.nctsn.org/>

RESOURCES

- ✘ Adverse Childhood Experiences study
<http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/acesstudy/index.html>
- ✘ Dr. Bruce Perry. Child Trauma Academy
<http://childtrauma.org/>
- ✘ Dr. Dave Ziegler. Jasper Mountain
http://www.jaspermountain.org/publications_resources.html
- ✘ Dr. Bessell van der Kolk. Trauma Center
<http://www.traumacenter.org/>

RESOURCES

- ✘ Dr. Sandra Bloom. The Sanctuary Model
<http://www.sanctuaryweb.com/>
- ✘ Dr. Ross Greene. Collaborative and Proactive Solutions <http://www.livesinthebalance.org/>
- ✘ Dr. Becky Bailey. Conscious Discipline
http://consciousdiscipline.com/about/dr_becky_bailey.asp
- ✘ Mrs. Heather Forbes. Beyond Consequences
<http://beyondconsequences.com/>

REFERENCES

- Bailey, B.A. (2000). *Conscious discipline*. Florida: Loving Guidance.
- Craig, S.E. (2016) *Trauma-sensitive schools*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Craig, S.E. (2008)). *Reaching and teaching children who hurt: Strategies for your classroom*. Maryland:Brookes
- Forbes, H.T. (2012). *Help for Billy: A beyond consequences approach to helping challenging children in the classroom*. Colorado: Beyond Consequences Institute.
- Greene, R.W. (2009). *Lost at school: Why our kids with behavioral challenges are falling through the cracks and how we can help them* (Revised 2nd edition). New York: Scribner.
- Greene, R. W. (2010). *The explosive child: A new approach for understanding and parenting easily frustrated, "chronically inflexible" children*. (Revised 4th edition). New York: HarperCollins.
- Greene, R. W. (2010). Collaborative Problem Solving. In R. Murrihy, A. Kidman, & T. Ollendick (Eds.), *A clinician's handbook of assessing and treating conduct problems in youth*. New York: Springer Publishing, 193-220.
- Siegel, D. & Bryson, T.P. (2014). *No-drama discipline*. New York: Bantam.
- Siegel, D. & Bryson, T.P. (2012). *The whole brain child*. New York: Bantam.
- Sauers, K. & Hall, P. (2016). *Fostering resilient learners: Strategies for creating a trauma-sensitive classroom*. Virginia: ASCD.