Bridging Hearts & Minds: Restorative Practices in Education

IASSW CONFERENCE

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And how are the Children?
ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES (ACE)

Changes the Conversation from “What’s Wrong With You” to “What’s Happened To You”
Adverse Childhood Experiences (www.ACEstudy.org)
TRAUMA

- Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE)
  1. Emotional, Physical, Sexual Abuse
  2. Neglect
  3. Parental Separation
  4. Parental Incarceration
  5. Drug Abuse
  6. Domestic Violence
  7. Extreme Poverty
EXPANDED ACES

Not included in the original ACE Study, these areas were examined as additional correlates of children's distress:

- Parents always arguing
- Someone close to the child had a bad accident or illness
- Exposure to community violence
- No good friends
- Below-average grades
- Removed from family
- Very overweight
- Physical disability
- Neighborhood violence is a “big problem”
- Homelessness
- Repeated a grade
The Pair of ACES

ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES

Maternal Depression
Physical & Emotional Neglect
Emotional & Sexual Abuse
Divorce
Substance Abuse
Mental Illness
Domestic Violence
Incarceration
Homelessness

ADVERSE COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENTS

Poverty
Violence
Discrimination
Poor Housing Quality & Affordability
Community Disruption
Lack of Opportunity, Economic Mobility and Social Capital

Those Neurons that Fire Together Wire Together

Neuroplasticity
Approximately 64% of children experience at least 1 adverse experience

20% experience 3 or more

U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
Toxic Stress Derails Health Development

Positive
Brief increases in heart rate, mild elevations in stress hormone levels.

Tolerable
Serious, temporary stress responses, buffered by supportive relationships.

Toxic
Prolonged activation of stress response systems in the absence of protective relationships.

Center on the Developing Child, Harvard University
TOXIC STRESS

Affects Prefrontal Cortex which is critical in self-regulatory activities, both emotional and cognitive. Leads to difficulty with:

- Concentration
- Sitting Still
- Rebounding from Disappointment
- Following Directions

Impairs Executive Functions

- Self-Control in cognitive and emotional realms
- Working Memory
Students with higher number of ACEs are more likely to:

- Be designated to special education
- Score lower on standardized tests
- Have language difficulties
- Be suspended or expelled
- Have poorer health
- Fail a grade
IMPACT ON SCHOOL

One out of Four children attending school has been exposed to a traumatic event that can affect learning and/or behavior.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACE SCORE</th>
<th>LEARNING OR BEHAVIOR PROBLEM</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ZERO</td>
<td>3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>FOUR OR HIGHER</td>
<td>51%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Key Developmental Tasks</td>
<td>Trauma’s Impact</td>
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<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Manage fears, anxieties and aggression</td>
<td>• Emotional swings</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Sustain attention for learning and problem solving</td>
<td>• Learning problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Control impulses and manage physical responses to danger</td>
<td>• Specific anxieties and fears</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Attention seeking</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Reversion to younger behaviors</td>
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</table>
### Adolescents (13-21)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Key Developmental Tasks</th>
<th>Trauma’s Impact</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Think abstractly</td>
<td>• Difficulty imagining or planning for the future</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Anticipate and consider the consequences of behavior</td>
<td>• Over- or underestimating danger</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Accurately judge danger and safety</td>
<td>• Inappropriate aggression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Modify and control behavior to meet long-term goals</td>
<td>• Reckless and/or self-destructive behaviors</td>
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[Image of a young woman]
Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) linked to:

- Risky behavior
- Psychological issues
- Serious illness
- Leading causes of death

People with six or more ACEs died nearly **20 years earlier on average** than those without ACEs.

Life expectancy by ACE score:

- **0** years
- **80** years
- **6+** years
Adverse Experiences

- Exposure to such events has been shown to increase the child’s short- and long-term social-emotional and behavioral struggles (e.g., anxiety, acting out behaviors, impulsivity, inattention, depression, etc.) and therefore often is misdiagnosed as another disorder (e.g., ADHD, ODD, Bipolar).
THE KIDS WHO NEED THE MOST LOVE WILL ASK FOR IT IN THE MOST UNLOVING OF WAYS.

-Lemon Lime Adventures
TRAUMA INFORMED CARE

1. RELATIONSHIPS & ATTACHMENT
2. SOCIAL CONNECTIONS
3. EMOTIONAL LITERACY (SEL)
4. MINDFULNESS
5. EXPRESSIVE ARTS
6. PLAY, MOVEMENT, EXERCISE, NATURE
7. ‘SPARKS’ & SERVICE LEARNING
8. PURPOSE, MINDSET & HOPE
9. PARENT/FAMILY ENGAGEMENT
“When educating the minds of our youth, we must not forget to educate their hearts.”
Social-Emotional Learning

- SEL is a process for helping children and even adults develop the fundamental skills for life effectiveness. SEL teaches the skills we all need to handle ourselves, our relationships, and our work, effectively and ethically.
Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)

A process through which children and adults develop the fundamental social and emotional skills of:

- 1. Self-Awareness
- 2. Self-Management
- 3. Social Awareness
- 4. Relationship Skills
- 5. Responsible Decision Making
These skills include:

- recognizing and managing emotions
- developing caring and concern for others
- establishing positive relationships
- making responsible decisions
- handling challenging situations constructively and ethically.
SEL (con’t)

They are the skills that allow children to –

- calm themselves when angry
- make friends
- resolve conflicts respectfully
- make ethical and safe choices
C.A.S.E.L. Meta-Analysis

- 207 research studies on the effects of Social and Emotional Programs

- 11% point gain on academic test scores

- 09% improvement in behavior

- 10% decrease in stress, anxiety, depression
Academic Impact of SEL

- 0.28 SEL effect size or academic performance
- More impact than most academic interventions.
- About the impact of a good literacy intervention.

I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.

Maya Angelou
Everyone you meet is fighting a battle you know nothing about.

Be kind.

Always.

**ZEST** — approaching life with excitement and energy; feeling alive and activated
- Actively participates
- Shows enthusiasm
- Invigorates others

**GRIT** — finishing what one starts; completing something despite obstacles; a combination of persistence and resilience.
- Finishes whatever he or she begins
- Tries very hard even after experiencing failure
- Works independently with focus

**CURIOSITY** — taking an interest in experience and learning new things for its own sake; finding things fascinating
- Is eager to explore new things
- Asks and answers questions to deepen understanding
- Actively listens to others

**OPTIMISM** — expecting the best in the future and working to achieve it
- Gets over frustrations and setbacks quickly
- Believes that effort will improve his or her future
7 Character Strengths

SOCIAL INTELLIGENCE -- being aware of motives and feelings of other people and oneself; including the ability to reason within large and small groups.
- Able to find solutions during conflicts with others
- Demonstrates respect for feelings of others
- Knows when and how to include others

GRATITUDE -- being aware of and thankful for opportunities that one has and for good things that happen
- Recognizes and shows appreciation for others
- Recognizes and shows appreciation for his/her opportunities

SELF-CONTROL --- regulating what one feels and does; being self-disciplined

SELF-CONTROL (SCHOOL WORK)
- Comes to class prepared
- Pays attention and resists distractions
- Remembers and follows directions
- Gets to work right away rather than procrastinating

SELF-CONTROL (INTERPERSONAL)
- Remains calm even when criticized or otherwise provoked
- Allows others to speak without interruption
- Is polite to adults and peers
- Keeps temper in check
Yesterday is history.
Tomorrow is a mystery.
Today is a gift.
That's why we call it 'The Present'.

- Eleanor Roosevelt
What is Mindfulness?

“Mindfulness means paying attention in a particular way; on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgementally.” Jon Kabat-Zinn (1994)
BENEFITS OF MINDFULNESS

- Better focus and concentration
- Increased sense of calm
- Decreased stress & anxiety
- Enhanced health
- Improved impulse control
- Increased self-awareness
- Skillful responses to difficult emotions
- Increased empathy and understanding of others
- Development of natural conflict resolution skills
RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

- Focuses on repairing harm and creating space for open communication, relationship building, healing, and understanding.

- Provides opportunity for those impacted by conflict to be part of finding solutions that meet their needs and promote community safety and well-being.

- RJ practices can help students develop skills needed to manage their own behaviors, treat others with respect, and solve their own problems.
RESTORATIVE PRACTICE IN SCHOOL

- BUILDING A POSITIVE SCHOOL CLIMATE (PROACTIVE CIRCLE)
- RESTORATIVE CHAT
- RESTORATIVE CONFERENCE
- RESTORATIVE DISCIPLINE
- PEACE CIRCLE (CONFLICT)
RESTORATIVE CHAT

SCRIPT (Minor Incidents)
1. Tell Me What Happened?
2. What Were You Thinking At The Time?
3. What Do You Think About It Now?
4. Who Did This Affect?
5. What Do You Need To Do To Make Things Right?
6. How Can We Make Sure This Doesn’t Happen Again?
7. What Can I Do To Help You?
Isn’t This Mediation?

**MEDIATION**
- Issue-focused
- Neutral facilitator
- Limited to “parties”
- Seeks compromise
- Time-bound

**PEACEMAKING**
- Relationship-focused
- Interested facilitator
- Inclusive
- Seeks healing
- No time limits
The circles are used for -

- classroom management
- conflict resolution
- compassionate climate building

The philosophy of the circle is to allow one to feel safe and at peace so they are able to learn, cooperate and respect others. Through this atmosphere children are able to listen and share with each other, communicating the ways they are affected by the actions and behaviors of another.
PEACE CIRCLE FORMAT

- WELCOME
- MINDFULNESS
- OPENING
- CHECK-IN
- ACTIVITY/ROUNDS
- CHECK-OUT
- CLOSING
- THANK YOU
WHAT is being practiced in Circles?

- **RESPECT** – *every perspective is valued as meaningful to that individual*
- **EQUALITY** – *expectations are the same for adults as they are for students*
- **EMPATHY & EMOTIONAL LITERACY** – *greater opportunity to reflect on what you are feeling and to talk about your feelings than in normal conversations. We are nurturing and developing our capacity for empathy.*
- **PROBLEM SOLVING** – *operating from a place of confidence in the innate capacity of humans as a collective to work our way through difficult places.*
- **RESPONSIBILITY** – *practicing with both words and actions. The physical structure of a Circle encompasses a non-verbal kind of accountability.*
- **SELF REGULATION AND SELF AWARENESS** – *each participant is exercising self-control and self-discipline to make the circle possible. All must wait to speak, listen without responding immediately, and delay their own need to speak.*
- **SHARED LEADERSHIP** – *practice of fundamental democracy in which all voices are heard and all interests must be treated with dignity*