Components of a School-Based Trauma-Informed Program

TLC - A Trauma Informed Lens to Improve School Climate

Tiered Intervention Systems
Implement school-wide programs that are trauma-informed such as PBIS, Restorative Practices, Social-Emotional Learning and Response to Intervention.

Learn Self-Regulation Skills
Teach and model strategies for self-regulation such as deep breathing, mindfulness, impulse-control, empathy, coping skills and sensory input.

Create a Sense of Safety and Connection
Build greater student connections to school by providing physical and emotional safety.
Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) Questionnaire
Finding your ACE Score

While you were growing up, during your first 18 years of life:

1. Did a parent or other adult in the household often …
   
   Swear at you, insult you, put you down, or humiliate you?
   
   or
   
   Act in a way that made you afraid that you might be physically hurt?

   Yes No If yes enter 1 ________

2. Did a parent or other adult in the household often …
   
   Push, grab, slap, or throw something at you?
   
   or
   
   Ever hit you so hard that you had marks or were injured?

   Yes No If yes enter 1 ________

3. Did an adult or person at least 5 years older than you ever …
   
   Touch or fondle you or have you touch their body in a sexual way?
   
   or
   
   Try to or actually have oral, anal, or vaginal sex with you?

   Yes No If yes enter 1 ________

4. Did you often feel that …
   
   No one in your family loved you or thought you were important or special?
   
   or
   
   Your family didn’t look out for each other, feel close to each other, or support each other?

   Yes No If yes enter 1 ________

5. Did you often feel that …
   
   You didn’t have enough to eat, had to wear dirty clothes, and had no one to protect you?
   
   or
   
   Your parents were too drunk or high to take care of you or take you to the doctor if you needed it?

   Yes No If yes enter 1 ________

6. Were your parents ever separated or divorced?

   Yes No If yes enter 1 ________

7. Was your mother or stepmother:
   
   Often pushed, grabbed, slapped, or had something thrown at her?
   
   or
   
   Sometimes or often kicked, bitten, hit with a fist, or hit with something hard?
   
   or
   
   Ever repeatedly hit over at least a few minutes or threatened with a gun or knife?

   Yes No If yes enter 1 ________

8. Did you live with anyone who was a problem drinker or alcoholic or who used street drugs?

   Yes No If yes enter 1 ________

9. Was a household member depressed or mentally ill or did a household member attempt suicide?

   Yes No If yes enter 1 ________

10. Did a household member go to prison?

    Yes No If yes enter 1 ________

Now add up your “Yes” answers: ________ This is your ACE Score
5 Tips for Teaching Self-Regulation

1. Teach Stress Response
   Help students become aware of their bodies' reactions (fight, flight and freeze) to strong feelings like stress, anger and sadness.

2. Model & Practice Calm Down Strategies
   Introduce students (and teachers) to various calm down strategies that can be done at any time. These exercises can include deep breathing, Five Finger Breathing, Hand Pull, Arm Massage and Arm Pretzel.

3. Build Calm Down Kits
   Outfit classrooms with a Calm Down kit which includes tools that use visual, auditory, tactile and even olfactory stimulation.

4. Classroom Demonstration of Calm Down Tools
   Teach students (and teachers) how to properly use Calm Down tools. Distinguish the difference between 'tools' and 'toys'. Allow them to experience using each tool.

5. Create Calm Spaces in Classrooms
   Help teachers create a "Calm Down", "Chill Out" or other relaxing space in classrooms by sharing ideas and photos.