

Educational Outcomes for Students Impacted by Trauma

**House Education Committee
November 22, 2013**



**The Heart of
Learning and Teaching:**
Compassion, Resiliency, and Academic Success

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“Overwhelming traumatic events can alter a child’s world-view and even the architecture of his or her developing brain.....

After learning that so many children are affected by traumatic experiences and understanding the neurobiological impact trauma can have on learning, many educators experience an “aha” moment. It is a relief that researchers can finally explain what many administrators and teachers have been dealing with for years.”

Susan Cole, et al
Helping Traumatized Children Learn, Volume 2
Massachusetts Advocates for Children/Harvard Law School
November 2013



Trauma is the reaction to the events rather than the events themselves

Potential traumatic events seen in students:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Physical neglect
- Emotional neglect
- Drug and alcohol abuse
- Divorce
- Military deployment
- Death in the family
- Extreme poverty
- Witnessing Domestic Violence
- Incarceration of a family member



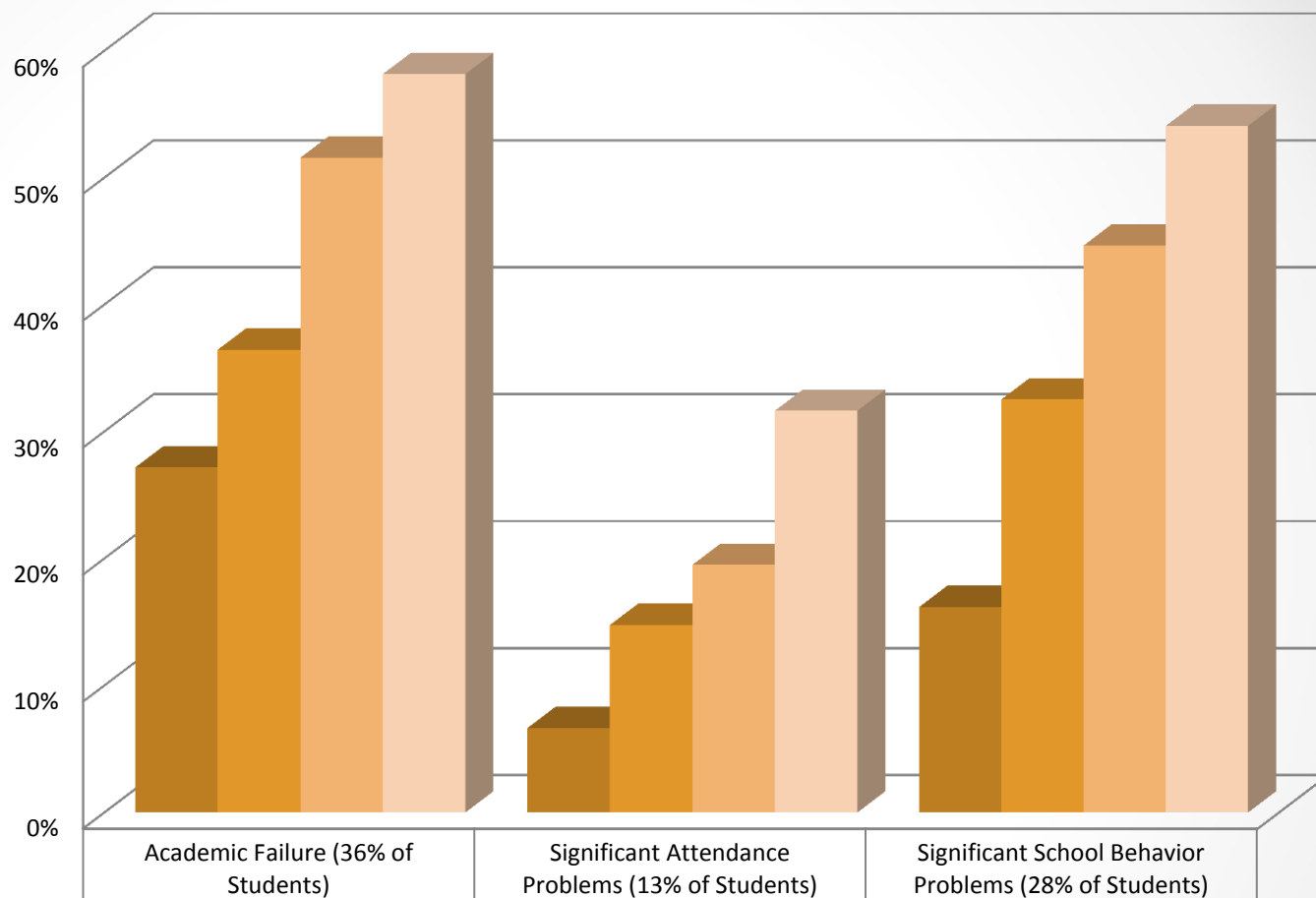
Spokane Trauma/School Success Study Summary

- Ten schools – 1,515 students
- 8 elementary buildings (4 Title I)
- Students in Grades K-6
- Reviews of randomly selected students
- Teachers reported factually what they knew about trauma exposure, academic challenges, and chronic health concerns. Suspensions were not reported.
- Academic problems were:
 - Failing to meet grade expectations in one or more core subjects
 - Attendance problems severe enough to interfere with academic success
 - School behaviors severe enough to interfere with academic success

Blodgett et al, 2010
WSU - Spokane



Percent of Children Impacted by Trauma Who Are Currently Experiencing Significant Academic Problems

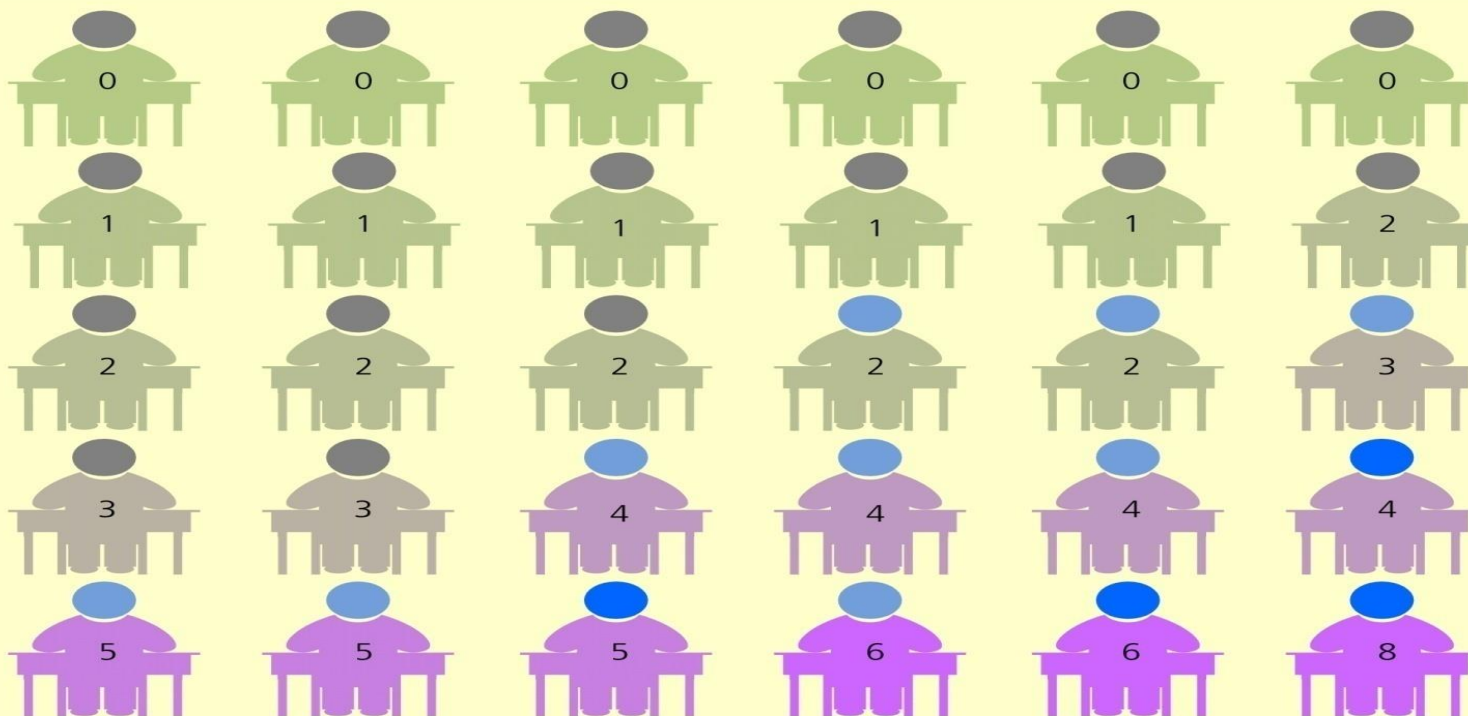


■ No Known Adverse Events N=828	27%	7%	16%
■ One Reported Adverse Event N=332	36%	15%	33%
■ Two Reported Adverse Events N=159	52%	19%	45%
■ Three or more Adverse Events N=196	58%	32%	54%



Washington School Classroom (30 Students) Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

6 students with no ACE
5 students with 1 ACE
6 students with 2 ACEs
3 students with 3 ACEs
7 students with 4 or 5 ACEs
3 students with 6 or more ACEs



Trauma Negatively Impacts:

- A student's ability to form healthy attachments
- A student's social emotional development
 - Communication and Connectedness
 - Empathy, Compassion & Respect
- Emotional regulation
 - Hope for the immediate and long-range future
 - Identification of needs and/or how to get them met
- Cognition and language
 - “Survival trumps learning”
 - Development of executive function and personal agency

The Heart of Learning and Teaching:
Compassion, Resiliency, and Academic Success



Families, schools, and communities can prepare students to THRIVE by developing skills of resiliency through modeling and creative instruction.

The seven crucial C's of Resilience

- **Competence,**
- **Confidence,**
- **Connection,**
- **Character,**
- **Contribution,**
- **Coping,**
- **Control.**

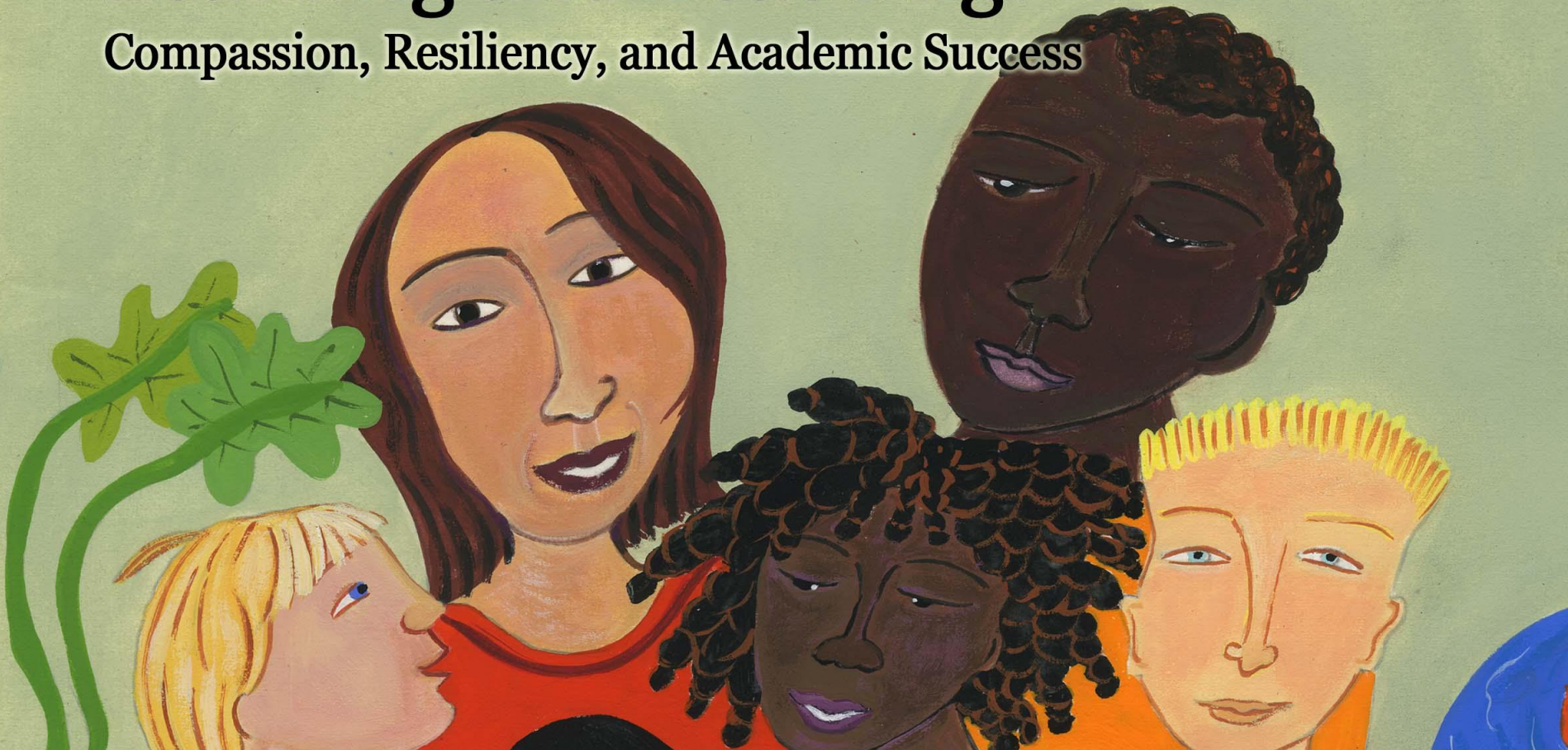
Dr. Kenneth Ginsberg





The Heart of Learning and Teaching:

Compassion, Resiliency, and Academic Success



How We Teach

Compassionate Teaching
and Discipline Principles

- 1** Always empower.
Never disempower.
- 2** Provide unconditional
positive regard.
- 3** Maintain high
expectations.
- 4** Check assumptions.
Observe. Question.
- 5** Be a relationship
coach.
- 6** Provide guided opportunities
for helpful participation.



What We Teach

Compassionate Curriculum
Strategies

Domain One	Safety, Connection, and Assurance of Well-Being
Domain Two	Emotional and Behavioral Self-Regulation
Domain Three	Competencies of Personal Agency, Social Skills and Academics



OSPI Focus areas for working with schools to address the impact of trauma on learning

Student and School Success (formerly School Improvement)

- Principle 6: Establish a Safe Learning Environment
- Principle 7: Engage Families and Communities

Teacher Principal Evaluation Program (TPEP)

- Quality teaching and leading is critically important.
- Professional learning is a key component of an effective evaluation system. (establishing a healthy culture and climate in the school that supports optimal learning for all students)

Common Core

- Consistent learning expectations for all students.
- Clear standards that focus on understanding over memorization.



Research References

Susan Cole, J.D., M.Ed., Massachusetts Advocates for Children and Trauma and Learning Policy Initiative, Harvard University, Boston, MA.

Christopher Blodgett, PhD, Washington State University, Spokane, Area Health Education Center, Founder of the “CLEAR Initiative” (Collaborative Learning for Educational Achievement and Resilience).

Robert Anda, MD, MS, Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study Co-Founder and Principal Investigator, Co-Founder ACE Interface, Senior Science Consultant to the Center for Disease Control.

Vincent J. Felitti, M.D. Adverse Childhood Experience Study Co-Founder and Investigator, Founder--The California Institutes of Preventive Medicine, Medical Director, Kaiser Permanente, San Diego, CA.

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