

Policy Issues in Implementing Trauma-Informed Schools

Presenters:

- Pamela Vona, MA, Treatment and Services Adaptation Center for Resiliency, Hope, and Wellness in Schools
- Christopher Blodgett, PhD, CLEAR Trauma Center, Washington State University
- Erica Ramirez, MEd, Community Health Advocates School at Augustus F. Hawkins High School

Moderator:

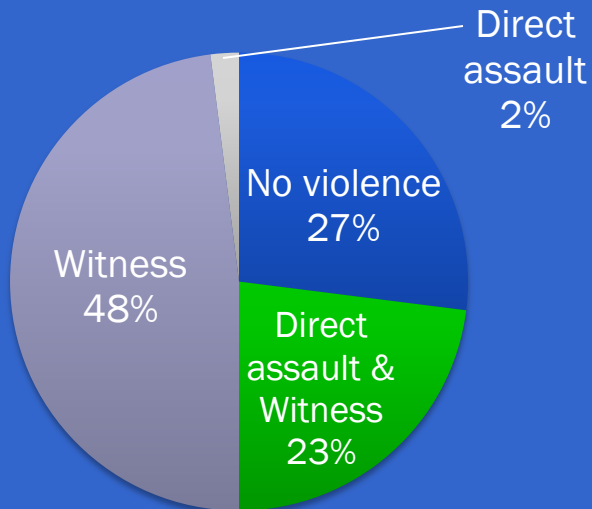
- Diane Elmore, PhD, MPH, UCLA-Duke University National Center for Child Traumatic Stress

A Framework for Trauma-Informed Schools

Pamela Vona, MA
Treatment and Services
Adaptation Center for Resiliency,
Hope, and Wellness in Schools

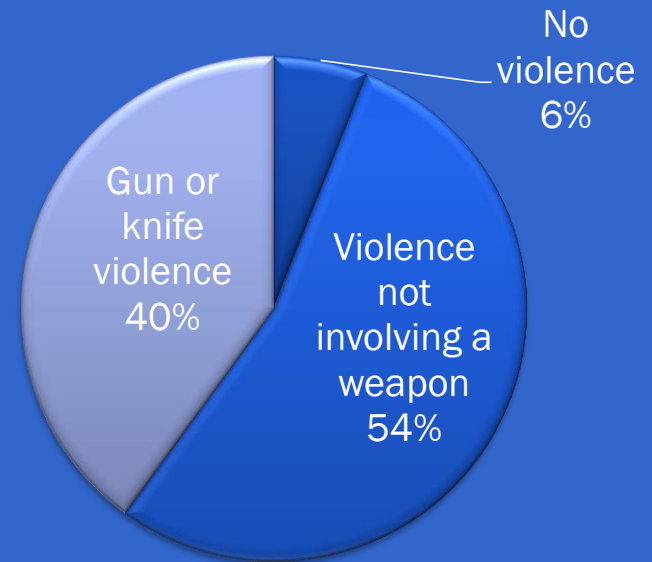
Trauma-Informed Schools: A Rationale

National Survey of Adolescents (1995)



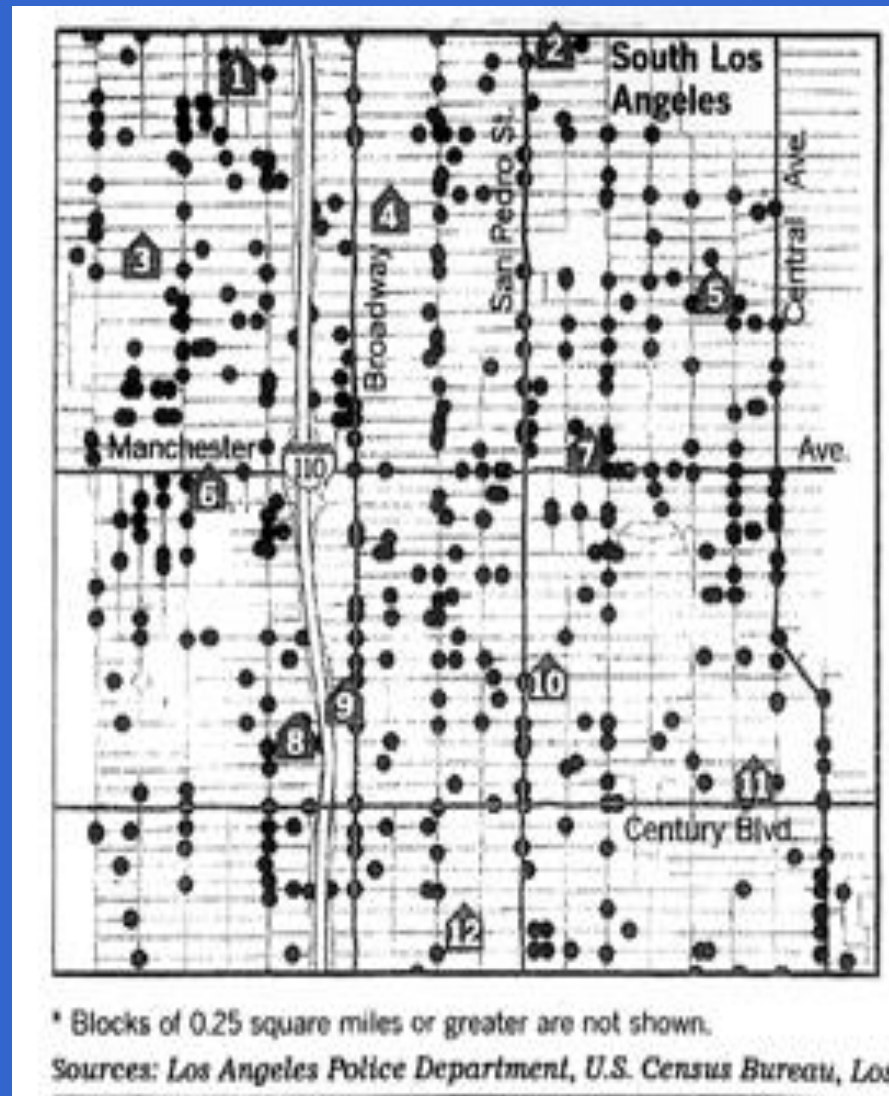
- No violence
- Direct assault & Witness
- Witness
- Direct assault

Los Angeles Unified School District (2004)



- No violence
- Violence not involving a weapon
- Gun or knife violence

Violence Exposure and Students



How Do Traumatic Events Impact Students?

...One night a year ago, I saw men shooting at each other, people running to hide. I was scared and I thought I was going to die. After this happened, I started to have nightmares. I felt scared all the time. I couldn't concentrate in class like before. I had thoughts that something bad could happen to me. I started to get in a lot of fights at school and with my brothers...

-Martin, 6th grade

How Do Traumatic Events Impact Students?

Decreased IQ and reading ability
(Delaney-Black et al., 2003)



Decreased rates of high school graduation
(Grogger, 1997)



More suspensions and expulsions
(LAUSD survey, 2006)

Lower grade point average
(Hurt et al., 2001)

More days absent from school
(Hurt et al., 2001)

Schools Reduce Disparities in Access to Trauma Services

- Ideal entry point to enhance access to mental health services, especially for racial and ethnic minority children and their families
- Trauma-informed services following Katrina:
 - Students assigned to evidence-based intervention at a community clinic: **15% completed** treatment
 - Students assigned to school-based evidence-based intervention: **91% completed treatment**



What is a Trauma-Informed School?

As outlined by SAMHSA:

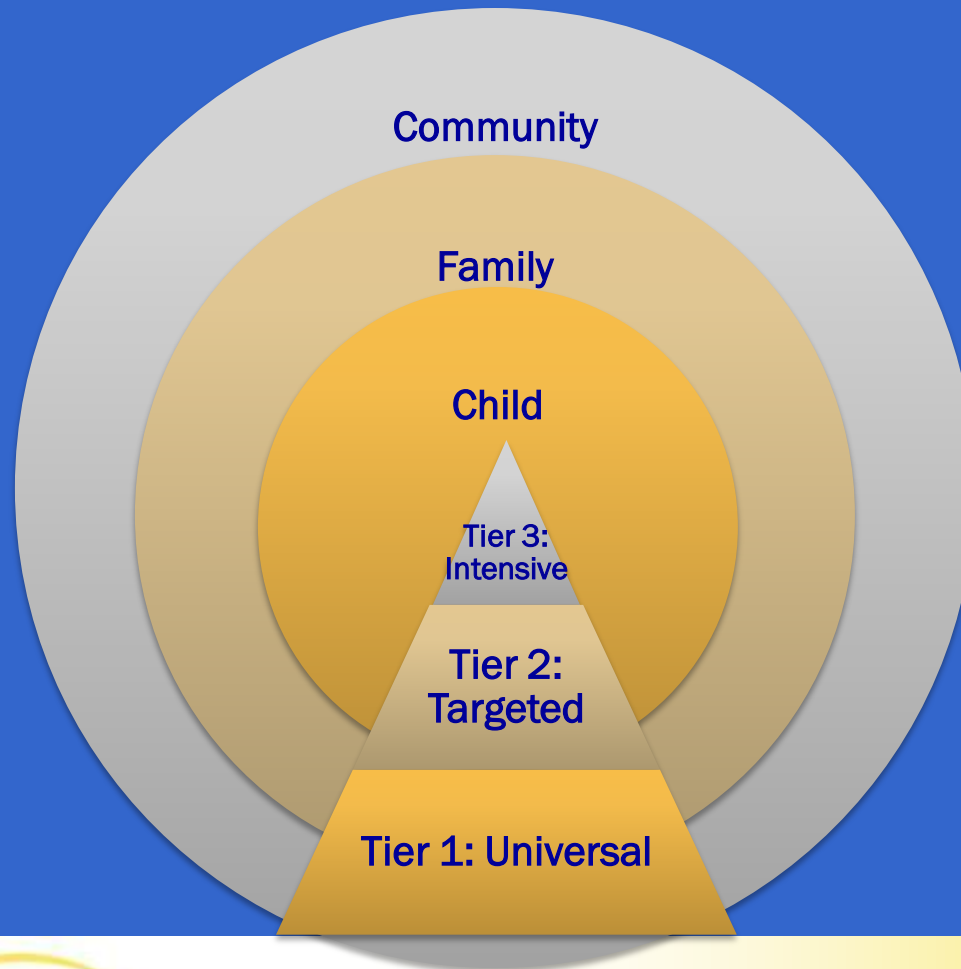
- 1) Realize the impact of trauma through building awareness with all school personnel, students, and families
- 2) Recognize the signs and symptoms of trauma in students and staff
- 3) Respond through use of trauma-informed policies, practices, and evidence-based interventions
- 4) Seek to actively prevent re-traumatization of students

NCTSN Schools Committee



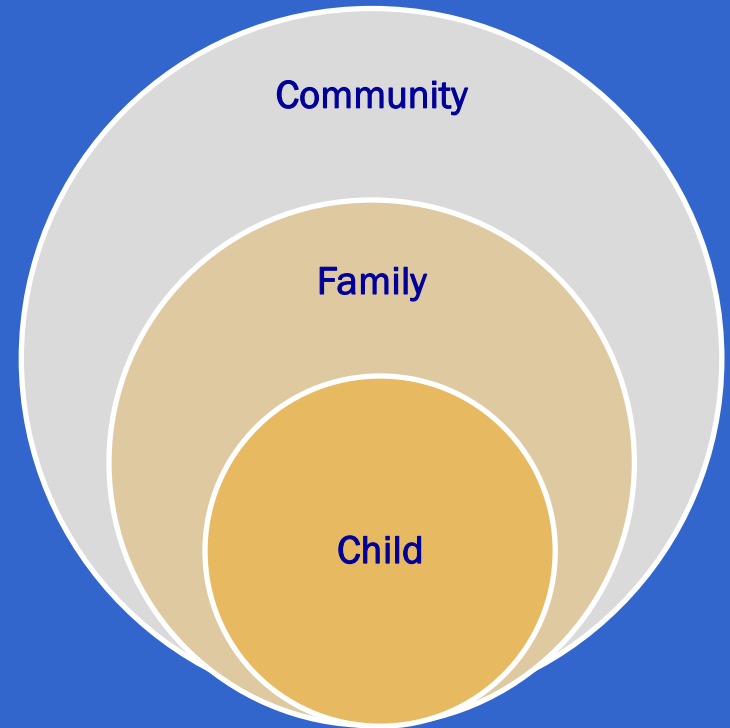
- NCTSN Schools Committee Co-Chairs:
 - Christopher Blodgett, Ph.D.
 - Lynn Garst, M.Ed.
 - Marleen Wong, Ph.D.

NCTSN Schools Committee: Trauma-Informed School Framework



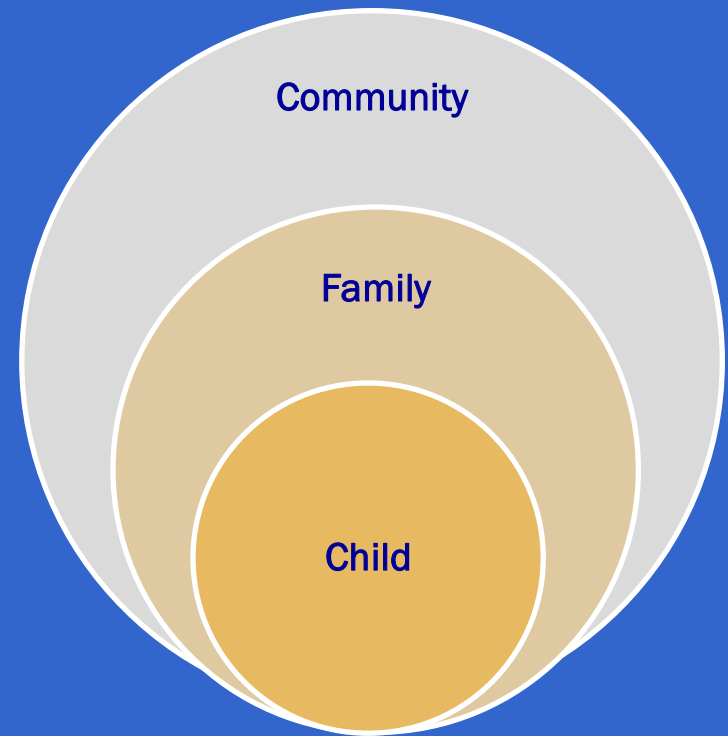
NCTSN Schools Committee: Trauma-Informed School Framework

- Core Area 1: Building and Supporting Trauma-Informed Partnerships and School Communities
 - Community partnerships
 - Clear and consistent messages
 - Legal policy and funding support
 - Array of access to trauma-informed supports
 - Staffing
 - Workforce development
 - Sustainability of trauma-informed policies



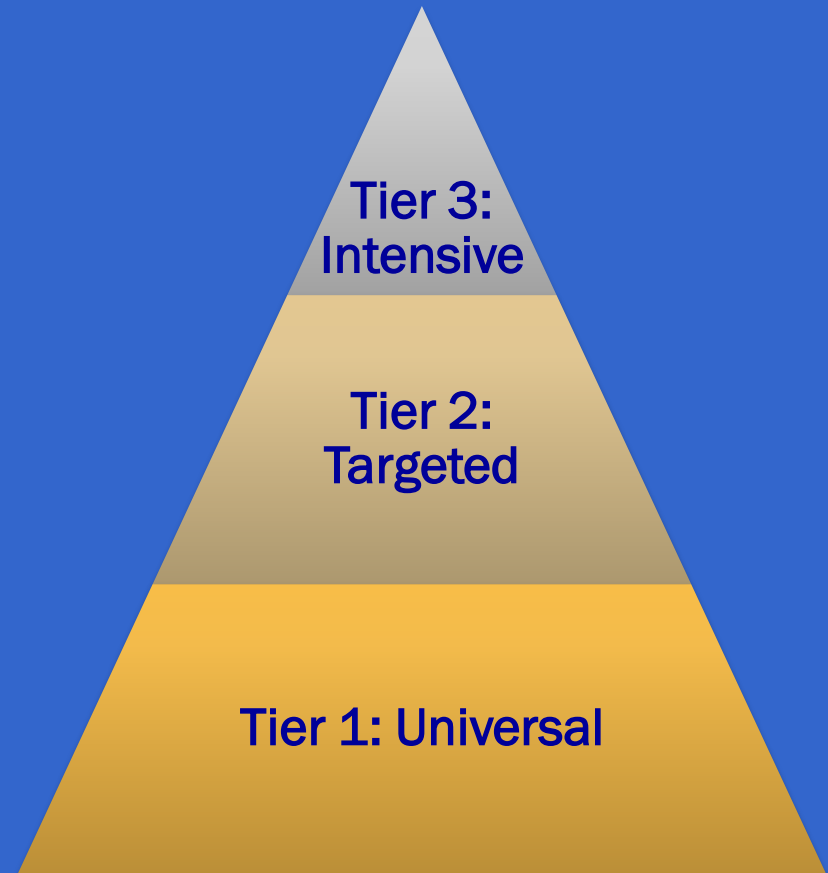
NCTSN Schools Committee: Trauma-Informed School Framework

- **Core Area 2: Creating and Supporting Partnerships with Families**
 - Educating families on effects of stress and trauma
 - Promoting healthy activities and protective factors
 - Inclusion in child specific planning
 - Inclusion in school-wide planning



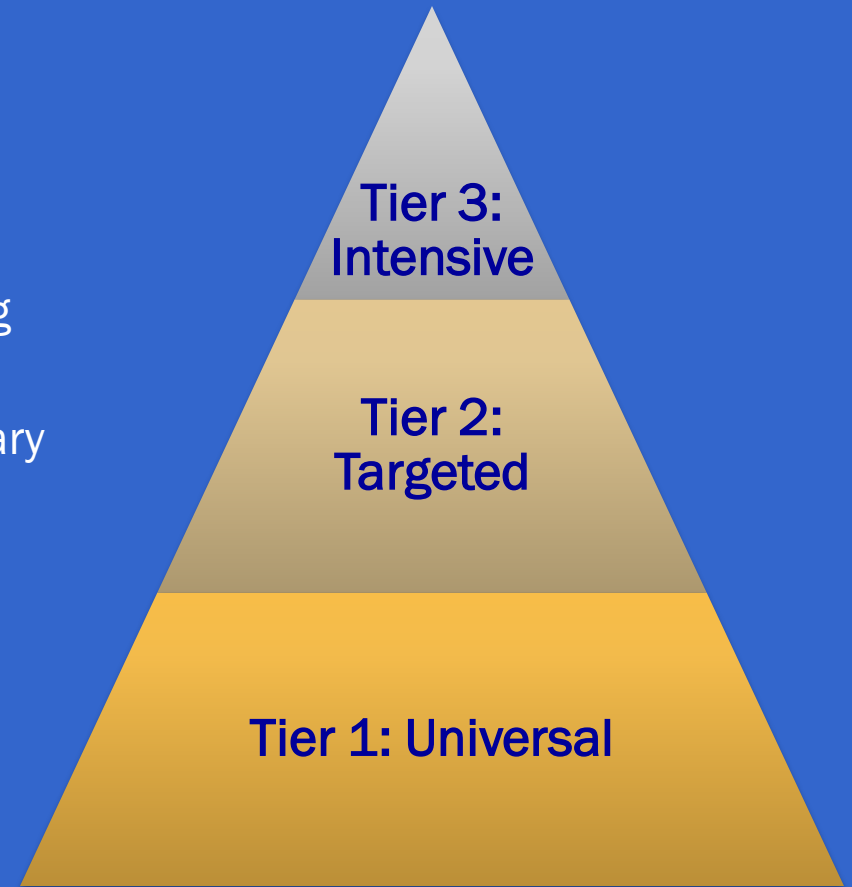
NCTSN Schools Committee: Trauma-Informed School Framework

- **Core Area 3: Universal Support: Promoting Safe Environments and Healthy Students**
 - School mission and vision
 - Predictable and supportive learning
 - Trauma education and awareness
 - Professional development
 - Developing a sense of school community
 - Focus on student social and emotional wellness and skills
 - Focus on organizational stress and staff self-care
 - Cultural competency
 - Developmentally appropriate responses
 - School attendance/trauma-informed discipline policies



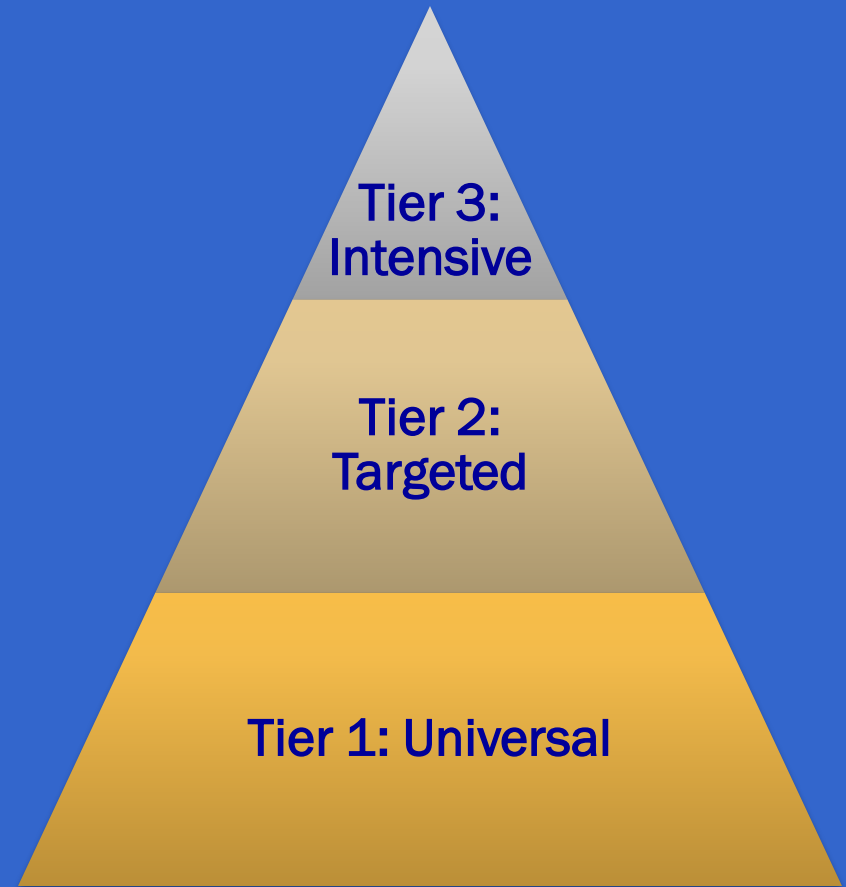
NCTSN Schools Committee: Trauma-Informed School Framework

- Core Area 4: Targeted/Early Intervention:
Identifying Students and Staff At-Risk
 - Psychoeducation for students
 - Teaching social skills
 - Identification of students experiencing traumatic stress
 - Prevention and awareness of secondary traumatic stress
 - STAT
 - Early Intervention
 - CBITS, SSET, Bounce Back
 - Multidisciplinary team approaches
 - Addressing unique needs of students



NCTSN Schools Committee: Trauma-Informed School Framework

- **Core Area 5: Intensive Support for Traumatized Students**
 - Trauma informed behavior support plans
 - Emergency management/crisis response
 - Consultation and partnership with school staff
 - Trauma-informed special education services
 - Referring for services



Trauma-Informed Schools: Current Federal Policies

- Existing Policies/Initiatives:
 - SAMHSA Safe Schools/Healthy Students
 - SAMHSA National Child Traumatic Stress Initiative
 - DOE Successful, Safe, and Healthy Students
 - DOE Project AWARE
 - DOE Every Student Succeeds Act
 - President Obama's Now is the Time Initiative
 - White House Conference: Rethinking School Discipline



Getting More Information

- For information about the NCTSN Schools Committee and the Trauma-Informed School Framework, please contact the Director of the NCCTS Service Systems Program, Dr. Jane Halladay Goldman at jhalladay@mednet.ucla.edu

Integrating Trauma-Informed School Response in Educational Policy

Christopher Blodgett, Ph.D., Director
Child and Family Research Unit/CLEAR Trauma Center
Washington State University

Collaborative Learning for Educational Achievement and Resilience (CLEAR)



- Common principles, no consensus on methods in school responses
- Recognizing the graded developmental effects of trauma
- CLEAR:
 - Three-year professional development and coaching model
 - Implementation science practice
 - Progressive individual practice change
- Key lessons from schools

The Need to Align Trauma Response with Educational Policies

- Schools are inherently stressed systems. Aligning with policies:
 - Supports consistency and predictability
 - Supports innovation adoption and sustainable change
- Trauma response has to support improved academic outcomes to be sustainable



School Discipline Reform

- The schools-to-prison pipeline
- Shifting to accountability without exclusionary, punitive responses
- Understanding dysregulation of brain function under stress
- Shift to authoritative school climates and trauma practice
 - Accountability
 - High standards
 - Quality of relationships
 - Consistency and predictability in rules and relationships



Social and Emotional Learning (SEL)

- Primary predictor of academic success
- SEL practice challenged by needs of more vulnerable students
 - Addresses why SEL response can disconnect around trauma behaviors
- Trauma-informed practices provide for phased response in multi-tiered systems of support
- Trauma-informed principles SEL
 - Respectful relationships and communication
 - Appropriate expression of emotions and resolution of conflict
 - Management of transitions
 - Individualization of instruction based on students' developmental level and needs

Adults as the Focus for Change

- Educators reflect the same trauma risk as any other adult
- Pre-service training rarely prepares teachers to understand behavior
- Staff differences predictive of student success, job satisfaction, work stress, and burnout
 - Sense of efficacy in implementing SEL practices
 - Personal capacity for self-regulation of stress and emotions
 - Attributions about students' behavior and motivation
- Coaching may be necessary to address core skill development
- Addressing staff burden by increasing 'compassion satisfaction'

Multicultural Education

- Multicultural education integrates appreciation of culture in all activities
 - Increases personal meaning of education
 - Supports higher quality student-teacher relationships
- Disproportionate risk of trauma in disenfranchised communities
 - Cultural differences in learning styles can be confounded with trauma coping
- Re-traumatization risk increases in students from diverse backgrounds
- Children care about learning when they believe you care about them
- Strong cultural identification improves academic success and school affiliation

How NCTSN Members/Partners Can Support Trauma-Informed Practices and Policies in Schools



- Advocate
- Prepare yourself
 - Understand the drivers of change in school partners
- Address universal and specialized responses in a whole school approach
- Address how good training has to be matched with continuing supports

Creating Trauma-Informed School Communities: Lessons from South Los Angeles



Overview

- Development and growth of CHAS, a Los Angeles public high school
- CHAS and its trauma-informed programming and curriculum
- Policy challenges and supports

The Time and Place

- School-to-prison pipeline discipline practices
- High poverty, few job opportunities
- Low graduation rate and increase in for-profit colleges
- Reduction in force in LAUSD
- Resilience, pride, and a determined community



Hawkins High – Schools for Community Action

- Three schools on one shared campus, each with pathway-based concepts of community cultural wealth
- CHAS - Community Health Advocates School
- RISE - Responsible Indigenous Social Entrepreneurship School
- CDAGS - Critical Design and Gaming School



What is an effective and powerful learning environment?
Task Card
What school does our community deserve?

Task:

- 1- Review your resource card.
- 2- Discuss how the images and quotes relate to the specific question on your resource card.
- 3- Talk about how the images and quotes represent the different parts of the school that our community deserves.
- 4- Be sure to **take notes** that detail each group members response and the overall group discussion.
- 5- **Create a poster** that represents your groups' conversations and insights.

Community Meetings and Public School Choice (PSC)

- Earned Insurgence - Bob Moses' concept of earning the right to fight alongside the community
- Families, gang intervention workers, teachers, priests, local police, and alumni came together to plan the schools South Central deserved
- Every meeting models inclusive pedagogical practices



Our School Model

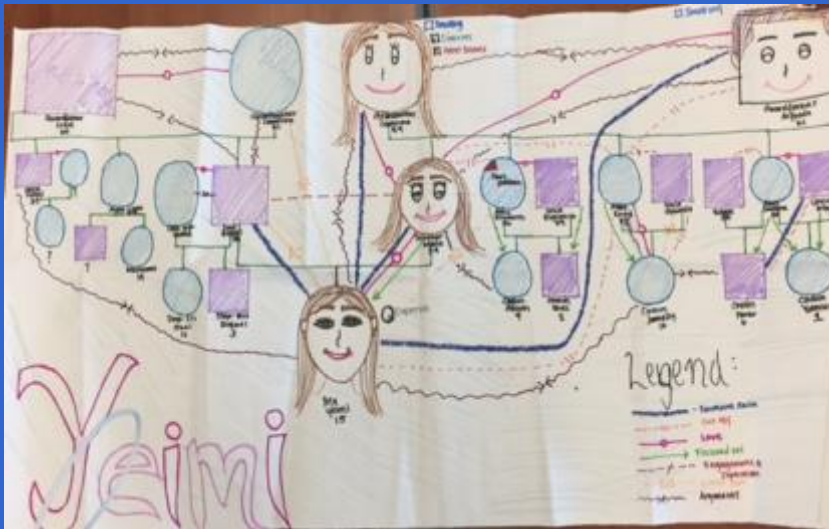
Linked Learning - horizontal and vertical implementation of a career pathway in schools



“Imagine a school training kids how to identify their own and others’ trauma and equipping them with tools to heal themselves and others.”



Mission: Community Health Advocates School (CHAS) will nurture, empower, and inspire the future social workers and community health advocates of South Central



The Community Health Advocates School (CHAS)

Learning Lab
Literacy Intervention
Restorative Justice:
Re-Entry Circles

Mentor Program
Restorative Justice: Conflict
and Harm Circles
Groups for Students

Restorative Justice: Advisory Community Circles
CHAS Outcomes Cycle
Trauma Awareness, Secondary Traumatic Stress,
Restorative Justice Training for Staff
Linked Learning
Teacher and Staff Voice

The Community Health Advocates School (CHAS)

Hawkins 1.0

- Battle for culture
- Gang warfare
- Traumatized educators

Hawkins 5.0

- Hawkins considered safe haven (zero suspensions, Fall semester 2015)
- Partnerships - Homies Unidos, Social Justice Leadership Institute
- Teacher-led reform



Hawkins 1.0

- Under-resourced:
3 principals, 3
counselors,
0 campus aides
- Low graduation
Rates
- Students not well-
prepared “transplants”

Hawkins 5.0

- Community partnerships
for families &
collaboration on budgets;
grants
- Increased support on
campus
- Students immersed in
culture of care from
teachers “up in their
business”

Linked Learning Projects



Policy Talons (Challenges)

- Funding:
 - Restorative Justice (CA Endowment)
 - Career pathway course development (SSP Grant - CDE)
 - Linked Learning (James Irvine Foundation)
 - Crowdsourcing (NAMI and other endeavors)
 - Health pathway (CA Endowment)
 - Beyond the Bell (21st Century Community Learning)
 - CTE course (Perkins grant)
- Staffing
 - Hiring restrictions
- Curriculum
 - UCCI courses
- Timely District support for identified school needs

Policy Feathers (Strengths)

- Pilot School Autonomy
 - Elect-to-Work Agreement
 - Creating an Advisory Board
 - Community school increase in enrollment
 - Scheduling - Advisory, Block Schedule, 2 PD days
- Collaboration
 - University partners--USC
 - Community partners--St. John's clinic
 - Local and national organizations
- Governance
 - Teacher voice
 - Principal evaluation
- District adopted Restorative Justice



Thank You

To submit questions for presenters during the Question and Answer period, please send your question to question@nctsn.org