Implementing a Trauma Informed School Program

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In order to see where we are going, we not only must remember where we have been, but we must understand where we have been.

Ella Baker
7.5 Million US Children with Unmet Mental Health Needs

- Research suggests that schools may function as the de facto mental health system for children and adolescents.

(Center for Health and Behavioral Health in Schools, 2012)
Trauma Responsive Schools: Bullying Prevention Project

- Grant funded project through Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority ICJIA (Lurie Children’s Hospital had the same funding and objectives - we worked together)
- Awarded in 2018 to further flush out the structure and scalability of a statewide initiative for trauma informed schools (does this work in rural areas like it does in urban areas of the state.)
- Initially - 9 schools in 3 Southern Illinois Counties - Franklin, Williamson and Saline; Lurie Children’s Hospital *Center for Childhood Resilience had 11 schools in this groundwork.
TRS/BP Project Schools

Christopher School District
- Christopher Elementary School

Eldorado School District
- Eldorado Elementary School

Harrisburg School District
- West Side Primary School
- East Side Intermediate School

Marion School District
- Adams School
- Jefferson Elementary School
- Lincoln Elementary School
- Longfellow Elementary School
- Washington Elementary School
The TRS/BP Grant also partners with several agencies promoting similar missions in the Southern Illinois region, including:

- Building Compassionate Communities SOC
- Center for Rural Health & Social Services Development
- Project Connect SOC
- Resilient Southern Illinois
- Southern Illinois Violence Prevention Initiative
- Stress & Trauma Treatment Center
- Trauma Based Behavioral Health Fellowship
Trauma Responsive Schools Implementation Assessment (TRS-IA)

- An evidence-informed self-assessment that can quickly (~20 minutes) and efficiently identify trauma responsive programming and policy domains of strength, as well as areas with greater room for improvement.
Steps to Complete TRS-IA

- Step 1: Create a Team
- Step 2: Register School in SHAPE system
- Step 3: Individual Completion of TRS-IA (paper or online form)
- Step 4: Create Consensus via a Leadership Meeting
- Step 5: Enter Consensus Scores into SHAPE
1. Create REACH Team

Include different voices
1. Administrators
2. Teachers
3. School-Based Mental Health Professionals
4. Caregivers
5. Community Based Partners

Diversity
- Background
- Years of Experience
- Roles

When assessing school functioning and setting school-wide goals, WHAT is important to consider in your team composition?
TRAUMA RESPONSIVE SCHOOLS/BULLYING PREVENTION (TRS/BP) GOALS

Helping schools implement written action plans aimed to improve their ability to prevent bullying and support and promote resilience of students and staff exposed to trauma.

Take lessons learned from the pilot project to create a scalable model that can be used in other schools and districts across the state of Illinois.
1. Create an action plan that will help your school move towards becoming a trauma responsive school community

2. Create an action plan that aligns with whatever is unique to your school community and prioritize needs and strengths of the students and community.

Create a plan that is data driven, that considers the results of the TRS-IA as well as any other data that addresses school policies, procedures, practices and relationships.

Identifying potential strengths and barriers that may impact implementation of the action plan.
Main Themes of the ICJIA Trauma Responsive Schools (TRS) Action Plans

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identification of a need and plan for foundational trauma training(s) for all school staff (e.g., NSELS, CCR, other partners)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Expressed need and plans for ongoing training in strategies that support the various pillars of trauma responsiveness</td>
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<tr>
<td>Highly elevated need for education for teachers on secondary traumatic stress and self-care</td>
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<tr>
<td>Need for de-stigmatization around mental health promotion and treatment for school staff (e.g., newsletters and Employee Assistance Program)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Need to move beyond collection and monitoring of implementation data to measurement of impact data (e.g., self-care instruments)</td>
</tr>
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<td>Requests for training in evidence-based trauma-focused interventions for students in need</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exploration of whole classroom emotion regulation strategies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Definite need for financial resources to support the implementation of action plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Questions/concerns regarding ongoing coaching/progress monitoring of action plan</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Important Progress Monitoring Metrics

- 5 Essentials Survey
- TRS-IA
- Behavior, Attendance and Grades (BAG)
- Panorama Surveys
- Trauma Knowledge and Skills
- Attitudes Related to Trauma-Informed Care
The SHAPE (School Health Assessment and Performance Evaluation System)
TRS/BP Tiered Supports and Structures

- Teacher coaching
- Individual counseling
- Small group counseling services and teacher support groups
- SEL Curriculum
  - Trauma 101 and other training
  - Development of trauma responsive policies and procedures
2019-2022 TRAINING BY THE NUMBERS

Grant Activities Based on TRSLA Domain

- **Prevention/Early Intervention Trauma Programming**
  13 trainings and 306 participants trained, including in Child and Adult Relationship Enhancement (CARE)

- **Whole School Trauma Programming or Self-Care**
  23 trainings and over 497 participants in Trauma 101, Self Care, Building Relationships, and Classroom Strategies

- **Classroom Strategies**
  3 trainings with 59 participants trained

- **Community Context**
  3 events with ~450 participants total included
ADDITIONAL SUCCESSES OF 2019-2022

- CARE classroom coaching provided
- Districts provided SEL curriculum
- Provided PLC meetings
- Implementation of an SEL screener and evaluation
- Weekly teacher support groups teacher support text line developed
- Tier 3 individual counseling supports, including TF-CBT
- Website created with resources
- Provided outside Trauma-Informed Schools professional development opportunities
Who does CARE help?

With strong trauma-informed underpinnings, CARE serves youth ages 2 years to 18 years old and is tailored by age. CARE uses evidence-based interaction skills drawn from research-supported parenting programs to improve relationships with and to build resilience for children/teens in a variety of settings. These settings include (but are in no way limited to):

- medical settings
- schools, daycare, and after school programs
- agencies serving the foster care system
- residential treatment centers
- transitional living programs
- family courts/juvenile justice systems
- military settings
- shelters
- mental health entities

In the end, pretty much any community program serving children and teens . . . or as we say:
## WHAT THE DATA SAYS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>2019-2020</th>
<th>Descriptor</th>
<th>2020-2021</th>
<th>Descriptor</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Whole School Safety Planning</td>
<td>2.88</td>
<td>Progressing</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>Mastery</td>
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<tr>
<td>Whole School Prevention Planning</td>
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<td>Progressing</td>
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<td>Mastery</td>
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<tr>
<td>Whole School Trauma Programming</td>
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<td>Emerging</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>Progressing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Classroom Strategies</td>
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<td>Progressing</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>Mastery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prevention/Early Intervention Programming</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>Emerging</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>Mastery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Targeted Trauma-Informed Programming</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>Progressing</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>Mastery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff Self Care</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>Emerging</td>
<td>2.15</td>
<td>Progressing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Community Engagement</td>
<td>2.13</td>
<td>Progressing</td>
<td>3.15</td>
<td>Mastery</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Fall Into Community

Communities of Practice

UPDATE - FALL 2022

Themes from Action Plans

Whole School Safety Planning: 10%
Whole School Prevention Planning: 24%
Whole School Trauma Programming: 62%
Classroom Based-Strategies: 28%
Prevention/Early Intervention Trauma Programming: 14%
Targeted Trauma Programming: 14%
Staff Self-Care: 56%
Family Engagement/Community Context: 20%
Results

- Increase in the use of trauma responsive strategies by trauma responsive schools team members
- Self Guided Schools improved as much as consultant supported schools
- Project was equally successful across urban, rural and suburban communities
- Significant improvements on the Trauma Responsive Schools Implementation Assessment Domains
- Of the Trauma Responsive Schools 82% completed or made progress in implementing their action plan goals
Scalability for a State

- Illinois Children’s Mental Health Partnership
- Whole Child Task Force
- The Stress and Trauma Treatment Center
- Partnership for Resilience
- Resilient Southern Illinois
- SIU School of Medicine
- Illinois State Board of Education
- Department of Health and Human Services
- Center for Childhood Resilience
How to provide the most wide scale program

- Using Existing Regional Office of Education Models - Social Emotional Learning Hubs - Directors and Coaches who are learning how to do the assessments and action plans, provide asynchronous and in person professional development, ongoing trauma training, self care and wellness training - all dependent on their action plans.
REACH

- Resilience Education to Advance Community Healing (REACH) statewide initiative is a collaborative effort with many local and statewide organizations

- The Resilience Education to Advance Community Healing (REACH) Statewide Initiative is supported by Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Funds (ESSER II) from the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education at the U.S. Department of Education. For more information, please visit oese.ed.gov
Resilient Schools Certification

- A resilience supportive school is one in which the school environment, programming, policies, practices, and staff capacity work together to support students’ resilience.

- All Illinois students deserve a school environment that is safe and supportive, culturally attuned, trauma-responsive, and able to promote positive mental health and wellness.
The Resilient Schools Certification (RSC) is a shared measurement framework reflecting a number of potential factors - including school-based mental health support structures; cultural responsiveness, anti-racism, and equity; social-emotional learning integration; and capacity for trauma-responsive policies and practices.

Certification data will be used to offer schools a blueprint for addressing gaps and activating positive change. When aggregated and analyzed, Certification data can shine a light on where regional and state resources and policies may be directed towards sustainable statewide change.
REACH Scaling Plans

- REACH efforts began in 2018, and have expanded over the last 4 years.
- By 2024, REACH capacity building efforts will support over 850 schools in 426 districts across Illinois.
Discussion

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