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DENVER

**SCHOOL OF
EDUCATION**

Early Childhood Trauma & Resilience: What Families Can Do

Facilitation Guide



Part I: Trauma and Resilience Glossary

Adult Healing - a healing centered engagement technique to support adult providers with their own healing.

Adverse Childhood Experiences - traumatic experiences that occur during childhood, before age 18, the impact of which may interfere with a person's health, opportunities, and stability throughout their lifetime.

Child Traumatic Stress - prolonged or recurrent exposure to traumatic and/or stressful events in childhood, overwhelming a child's ability to process, cope or recover from what they have experienced.

Family Protective Factors - conditions or attributes of individuals, families, communities, and the larger society that lessen risk and encourage the healthy development and well-being of children, youth, and families.

Healing Centered Practices - is holistic involving culture, spirituality, civic action and collective healing. A healing-centered approach views trauma not simply as an individual isolated experience, but rather highlights the ways in which trauma and healing are experienced collectively.

Resilience - the ability to successfully adapt to stressors, maintaining psychological well-being in the face of adversity.

Savior Mentality - a state of mind in which an individual holds a belief that they are responsible for saving, assisting or "fixing" others.

Toxic Stress - the body's response to lasting and serious stress, without enough support from a caregiver. prolonged activation of the stress response, with a failure of the body to recover fully. It differs from a normal stress response in that there is a lack of caregiver support, reassurance, or emotional attachments.

Trauma - a person's emotional response to a distressing experience including but not limited to experiencing a serious injury/death to oneself or someone else; facing imminent threats of serious injury or death to oneself or others; or experiencing a violation of personal physical integrity; a deep emotional wound.

Trauma Responses - the involuntary use of over-adaptive coping mechanisms in the presence of a real or perceived trauma.

Trauma Informed Practices - responses to challenging behavior that focus on what a child has experienced rather than what is 'wrong' with them.

Types of Trauma:

Complex Trauma - Exposure to multiple or prolonged traumatic events, including but not limited to: psychological maltreatment; neglect; physical and sexual abuse; and/or family violence.

Medical Trauma - a set of psychological and physiological reactions to pain, injury, serious illness, medical procedures and frightening treatment experiences.

Family Violence - Actual or threatened physical or sexual violence, or emotional abuse.

Natural Disasters - Situations where local, state and/or national agencies and disaster relief services are called into action (e.g. fires, floods, tornados).

Community & School Violence - Predatory violence (robbery, stalking, bullying) and violence that comes from personal conflicts between people who are not known to the child (fights, shootings, stabbings, beatings) resulting in threats to or injury of the child.

Neglect - a form of abuse where the responsible caregiver of someone who is unable to care for themselves, fails to do so. Can be attributed to carelessness, indifference, or unwillingness and abuse. Neglect includes lack of food, shelter, clothing and/or access to medical treatment and health care.

Physical Abuse - Causing or attempting to cause physical pain or injury (punching, kicking, hitting, burning or harming a child in other ways). Can consist of a single incident or multiple incidents

Sexual Abuse - Includes a wide range of sexual behaviors that take place between a child and an older person. Behaviors may include but are not limited to: sexual kissing, touching, fondling of genitals, intercourse, 'flashing', verbal pressure for sex, sexual exploitation and prostitution, and exposure to pornography.

Traumatic Grief - the development of significant trauma symptoms related to the expected (natural causes or illness) or unexpected (accident or violence) death of an attachment figure (e.g., parent or sibling) or another important person (e.g., grandparent, other relative, friend or peer).

Refugee/War Zone Trauma - Exposure to war, political violence or torture. Can be the result of living in a region affected by bombing, shooting or looting as well as forced displacement to a new home due to political reasons.

Historical Trauma - refers to cumulative emotional and psychological wounding, as a result of group traumatic experiences, transmitted across generations within a community.

Racial/Race Based Traumatic Stress - refers to the stressful impact or emotional pain of one's experience with racism and discrimination.

Part II: Identifying Personal Trauma & Personal Resilience Factors

ACES Questionnaire

Adverse Childhood Experience Questionnaire for Adults
 California Surgeon General's Clinical Advisory Committee



Our relationships and experiences—even those in childhood—can affect our health and well-being. Difficult childhood experiences are very common. Please indicate if you have had any of the experiences listed below. Research shows adverse childhood experiences as they may affect your health today or in the future.

Instructions: Below is a list of 10 categories of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). From the list below, please place a checkmark next to each ACE category that you experienced prior to your 18th birthday. Then, please add up the number of categories of ACEs you experienced and put the total number at the bottom.	
Did you feel that you didn't have enough to eat, had to wear dirty clothes, or had no one to protect or take care of you?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Did you lose a parent through divorce, abandonment, death, or other reason?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Did you live with anyone who was depressed, mentally ill, or attempted suicide?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Did you live with anyone who had a problem with drinking or using drugs, including prescription drugs?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Did your parents or adults in your home ever hit, punch, beat, or threaten to harm each other?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Did you live with anyone who went to jail or prison?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Did a parent or adult in your home ever swear at you, insult you, or put you down?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Did a parent or adult in your home ever hit, beat, kick, or physically hurt you in any way?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Did you feel that no one in your family loved you or thought you were special?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Did you experience unwanted sexual contact (such as fondling or oral/anal/vaginal intercourse/penetration)?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Your ACE score is the total number of checked responses:	

How much do you believe these experiences have affected your health? Not Much Some A Lot

Resilience/Stress Questionnaire

Your answers are confidential. You do not need to share them with anyone, but you may find it helpful to do so. If answering any of the questions is disturbing, you may answer them at another time if you prefer.

Please circle the most accurate answer under each statement:

1. I believe that my mother loved me when I was little.

Definitely True	Probably True	Not Sure	Probably Not True	Definitely Not True
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2. I believe that my father loved me when I was little.

Definitely True	Probably True	Not Sure	Probably Not True	Definitely Not True
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3. When I was little, other people helped my mother and father take care of me and they seemed to love me.

Definitely True	Probably True	Not Sure	Probably Not True	Definitely Not True
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4. I've heard that when I was an infant someone in my family enjoyed playing with me, and I enjoyed it, too.

Definitely True	Probably True	Not Sure	Probably Not True	Definitely Not True
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5. When I was a child, there were relatives in my family who made me feel better if I was sad or worried.

Definitely True	Probably True	Not Sure	Probably Not True	Definitely Not True
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6. When I was a child, neighbors or my friends' parents seemed to like me.

Definitely True	Probably True	Not Sure	Probably Not True	Definitely Not True
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7. When I was a child, teachers, coaches, youth leaders, or ministers were there to help me.

Definitely True	Probably True	Not Sure	Probably Not True	Definitely Not True
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8. Someone in my family cared about how I was doing in school.

Definitely True	Probably True	Not Sure	Probably Not True	Definitely Not True
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9. My family, neighbors and friends talked often about making our lives better.

Definitely True	Probably True	Not Sure	Probably Not True	Definitely Not True
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10. We had rules in our house and were expected to keep them.

Definitely True	Probably True	Not Sure	Probably Not True	Definitely Not True
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11. When I felt really bad, I could almost always find someone I trusted to talk to.

Definitely True	Probably True	Not Sure	Probably Not True	Definitely Not True
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12. As a youth, people noticed that I was capable and could get things done.

Definitely True	Probably True	Not Sure	Probably Not True	Definitely Not True
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13. I was independent and a go-getter.

Definitely True	Probably True	Not Sure	Probably Not True	Definitely Not True
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14. I believed that life is what you make it.

Definitely True	Probably True	Not Sure	Probably Not True	Definitely Not True
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_____ How many of these Protective Factors did I have as a child and youth?

_____ How many still help me now?

Comments on Resilience and Protective Factors:

Part III: Building Trauma Informed Home Environments

Activity 1: 5 Critical Steps to Implementing a Trauma-Informed Home Immediate Action Plan

TO BE COMPLETED INDIVIDUALLY OR IN GROUPS

Concept	Mantra	Strategy
1. The stress is coming from outside.	It's not about me.	Drop your personal mirror.
<i>Immediate steps I/we can take:</i>		
2. Allow the student to de-escalate and regulate before solving the issue.	Problem solving and solutions can't be worked through while "in the moment."	Designate a quiet place(s) where students can feel safe to de-escalate.
<i>Immediate steps I/we can take:</i>		
3. It's never about the issue at hand. It goes much deeper.	What's really driving this child's behavior?	Be the one who listens and values the student's voice...ask how you can help. Explore the underlying issue behind the behavior.
<i>Immediate steps I/we can take:</i>		
4. It's a brain issue, not a behavior issue.	My job is to help this school regulate, not simply behave.	Incorporate regulatory activities into the culture of the classroom and support students in their ability to learn how to self-regulate.
<i>Immediate steps I/we can take:</i>		
5. Discipline is to teach, not to punish.	Discipline should happen through the context of relationships.	Use consequences that keep students in school and foster the building of trust and safety with caring adults.
<i>Immediate steps I/we can take:</i>		

Activity 2: Hot Button Diffuser: Trauma Informed Responses Toolbox



TO BE COMPLETED INDIVIDUALLY AND DISCUSSED IN GROUPS

1. Write down three (3) behaviors that you, personally find (or have found) challenging. Be careful to identify those behaviors that are “Hot Buttons” - behaviors that really “push your buttons.” Be as specific and as detailed as possible, think about the 5 W’s as you are brainstorming.

BEHAVIOR 1	BEHAVIOR 2	BEHAVIOR 3

2. What are three emotions (use feeling words!) that describe how the identified behavior leaves you feeling.

BEHAVIOR 1	BEHAVIOR 2	BEHAVIOR 3

3. What do you do in response to each of these behaviors? Be sure to list how YOU respond/react.

BEHAVIOR 1	BEHAVIOR 2	BEHAVIOR 3

4. What areas are triggered for you when the behaviors occur?

BEHAVIOR 1	BEHAVIOR 2	BEHAVIOR 3

5. What possible explanations are there for the behaviors you've identified?

BEHAVIOR 1	BEHAVIOR 2	BEHAVIOR 3

6. What might the child need when displaying the behaviors?

BEHAVIOR 1	BEHAVIOR 2	BEHAVIOR 3

7. Knowing what you know now, how might you respond the next time you encounter the behavior.

BEHAVIOR 1	BEHAVIOR 2	BEHAVIOR 3

8. Identify 3 Trauma informed responses you can employ when you encounter the identified behavior.

BEHAVIOR 1	BEHAVIOR 2	BEHAVIOR 3

Activity 3: Personal Action Activity Log

YOUR THOUGHTS MAY BE INVOLUNTARY AT TIMES, BUT YOU HAVE MORE CONTROL THAN YOU THINK! BEING AWARE OF YOUR THOUGHTS AND ACKNOWLEDGING WHEN THEY OCCUR CAN ASSIST YOU IN CHALLENGING YOUR HABITUAL RESPONSES AND CHANGING HOW YOU INTERACT WITH ALL STUDENTS.

THIS LOG IS TO BE COMPLETED INDEPENDENTLY OVER THE COURSE OF 2 WEEKS TO ONE MONTH. DYAD OR GROUP DISCUSSION AT THE END OF THE DESIGNATED TIME.

AWARE

What is the one thought, behavior, student or situation that you recognize as challenging and chose to focus on?

ACKNOWLEDGE

You should make it your mission to be aware of each time you are faced with the challenge. To keep track and increase awareness, list each instance/situation and your understanding of what lead to the situation (use another sheet if necessary):

Date	Situation

CHALLENGE

What did you do in the situation?

Were your actions helpful at deescalating the situation?

Were your actions helpful at comforting and building trust with the people involved?

CHANGE

What steps can you to take to regulate your responses the next time you are faced with this situation or similar?

Part IV: Discussion Questions

1. What is the difference between Trauma and stress?
2. What are the 3 categories of Adverse Childhood Experiences?
3. What are the long term impacts of increased ACEs?
4. How does toxic stress impact behavior?
5. Where can toxic stress occur?
6. Discuss the types of trauma and give examples of each.
7. How does historical/racial trauma differ from the other forms of trauma discussed?
8. What part of the brain is most impacted by stressful/traumatic experiences?
9. Discuss the impact of trauma for infants 0-12 months. What should you expect to see? What should you be looking for? What losses may be experienced?
10. Discuss the impact of trauma for children 1-3 years. What should you expect to see? What should you be looking for? What losses may be experienced?
11. Discuss the impact of trauma for children 3-5 years. What should you expect to see? What should you be looking for? What losses may be experienced?
12. Discuss the impact of trauma for children 5-7 years. What should you expect to see? What should you be looking for? What losses may be experienced?
13. What are trauma informed practices and who are they for?
14. Discuss the difference between logical consequences and punitive consequences.
15. Discuss the difference between discipline and punishment.
16. How does your own personal trauma impact your work in the classroom?
17. What Family Protective Factors are easiest to identify? Which are more difficult?
18. What is the benefit of moving from asking "What's wrong with you?" to asking "What happened to you?"
19. Discuss the difference between traditional reacting and trauma informed responding.
20. Discuss the importance of emotional space, list ways to provide space to students in the classroom.
21. Discuss the importance of your own awareness and healing.
22. What is Savior Mentality? How can it be avoided?
23. What is resilience? Who has resilience? How is it cultivated?
24. What are the primary tenets of attachment and bonding? What are the effects?
25. Discuss the importance of the brain in building positive relationships.
26. Discuss how positive relationships can affect early childhood trauma.
27. Put the terms from the Glossary in your own words.