

## Trauma Informed Care Training Takeaways

### What to Look For:

- Traumatized children may experience symptoms such as nausea, flashbacks, trembling, memory gaps, fear, and anger.
- These same symptoms can trigger behaviors that teachers may misinterpret as not cooperating, appearing adversarial, or behaving in an aggressive manner.
- Traumatized children may be in a hypervigilant state or in a constant state of arousal.
- These individuals may come off as hostile, particularly when they are feeling threatened.
- Be aware of children who are disengaged, “tuned out,” or avoiding being out in the world.
- Traumatized individuals may feel numb and show no outward signs of distress, which can be misinterpreted as little or no trauma because the person is not acting out.
- In teens, trauma can affect their brain development by interrupting the creation of coping strategies to deal with difficult situations and their ability to trust others.
- This will impede any effort of authority figures to effectively relate to them and gain their trust.

### How to Handle:

- Allow a child in crisis time to calm down, feel safe, and reach a place where they can process what you are saying to them.
- Address the victim’s safety and security needs by ensuring his or her physical concerns are acknowledged and addressed
- When they are ready to talk, allow the traumatized person to vent about his or her feelings, and make sure that you validate those feelings.
- Enable prediction and preparation by explaining to the child what happens next in the disciplinary process and his or her role in that process.
- Identify resources that will help the child heal and prepare for their future.

### Avoid Retriggering Trauma:

- Sometimes we can inadvertently re-traumatize children in crisis. Key triggers to re-traumatization include:
  - Feeling a lack of control
  - Experiencing unexpected change
  - Feeling threatened or attacked
  - Feeling vulnerable or frightened
  - Feeling shame

### **Smart Tips:**

- Review policies and procedures to identify and remove any that are potentially harmful for children with histories of trauma.
- Provide education and training of staff about creating a trauma-informed environment.
- Create an environment where every child gets what they need in order to learn and thrive.
- Build an environment where all children feel valued, safe, respected, and heard.
- What else can we do?
  - Yoga
  - Mindfulness/Meditation
  - Breathing exercises
  - Coloring
  - Maintain a regular schedule
  - Use soothing tones when speaking
  - Create an environment of trust

### **Questions?**

Resilient Youth Somerset, <http://childrenshopeinitiative.com/resilient-youth-of-somerset-county>

Aces Too High, [www.acestoohigh.com](http://www.acestoohigh.com)

Tracey Heisler, CASA SHaW, [tracey@casashaw.org](mailto:tracey@casashaw.org)