Behavior Support through a Trauma Informed Lens

Presented by: Jim Anderson and Laura Zeff

What would you like to walk away with today?
Today’s Objectives

• Gain an understanding of:
  – the prevalence of trauma,
  – the impact of trauma on students’ behavior and ability to learn
  – the significance of building relationships with students
  – importance of teaching students behavioral strategies

• Learn what must be in place for a coherent continuum of behavior instruction and supports

What is behavior?

What are the challenges you are facing with behavior?
**What is TRAUMA?**

- I can’t find my favorite shoes!!!!
- You yelled at me!
- My 80 year-old dad passed away
- I witnessed my mother being killed

**What is Trauma?**

Experiences or situations that are emotionally painful and distressing, and that overwhelm people’s ability to cope, leaving them powerless.
Defining trauma:
Acute Trauma

Usually associated with a single event
(1) Experiencing a serious injury to self or witnessing a serious injury to or the death of someone else

(2) Facing imminent threats of serious injury or death to yourself or others

(3) Experiencing a violation of personal physical integrity

Defining trauma:
Chronic Traumatic Situations

Exposure to acute traumatic events repeatedly over long periods of time

(1) Witnessing and/or listening to violence, extended hunger, living in continual fear

(2) Discrimination, racism, oppression, and poverty have also been defined as life situations that are traumatic*

*Center for Nonviolence & Social Justice
Symptoms of Acute Trauma

- Fear
- Anxiety
- Panic Attacks
- Denial
- Confusion
- Anger
- Sadness
- Fatigue
- Poor Concentration
- Lack of self care

Symptoms of Chronic Trauma

- Same as acute trauma and...
- Rage
- Over-reactions
- Misperception about surroundings
- Inability to engage or show attachment
- Minimize impact of trauma
- Survival instinct – lie, steal, seek shelter, food
- Fighting
- Sexual avoidance or promiscuity
- Unhealthy relationships
## Manifestations of Child Trauma

| **Self Regulation** | • Shut-down, inattentive, bored, or listless; or  
|                     | • hyperactive, impulsive, aggressive, reactive, and/or silly.  
|                     | • May range from guarded/constricted to intense  
| **Interpersonal**   | • Social withdrawal or isolation  
|                     | • Difficulty developing close or lasting friendships.  
| **Intrapersonal**   | • Hesitant in approaching new tasks; unwilling to take risks  
|                     | • Easily frustrated or “giving up” in the face of failure  
| **Cognitive**       | • Difficulty understanding information and following directions.  
|                     | • Trouble asking for/accepting help or over-dependent  
|                     | • Trouble generating ideas and solving problems  

## The Trauma Lens

Trauma Informed practice is a shift of paradigm from one that asks a student, “what’s wrong with you?”

To one that wonders, “what might have happened to you to explain your behavior?”
Practice saying it in a different way.

KEEP CALM IT'S ACTIVITY TIME!!!

Physiological Effects of Trauma
Epigenetics

- Study in the field of genetics
- Aim is to understand:
  - what causes genes to be turned on/off, or
  - how they are altered by the environment
- Gene NR3Cl & Cortisol

Cortisol is increased by stress

The long-term activation of the stress-response system — and the subsequent overexposure to cortisol and other stress hormones

- **Obesity**: cortisol increases fat on the waist.
- **Diabetes**: cortisol increases blood sugar.
- **High blood pressure**: cortisol disrupts fluid balance.
- **Heart disease**: cortisol increases cholesterol.
- **Cancer**: cortisol impairs immune function.
- **Depression**: cortisol promotes negative feelings.
- **Senile dementia**: cortisol impairs brain function.
The GOOD News

• We can impact the brain!
• Resiliency can be built
• We can reduce the negative effects of trauma

4 critical experiences

• **Competence** – authentic success
• **Belonging** – feeling valued
• **Usefulness** – a sense of contribution/purpose
• **Potency** – belief in self/empowerment
Resiliency

**What is resiliency**

- The ability to bounce back
- The capacity to resume positive functioning following adversity
- A person’s ability to adapt successfully to acute stress, trauma, or more chronic forms of adversity

The Science of Resilience

Negative Outcomes  Positive Outcomes

The Science of Resilience

Positive Outcomes

Negative Outcomes

Resilience Fulcrum


Resilience Factors

• Sense of Safety
• Ability to be calm
• Self-efficacy and community efficacy
• Connectedness
• Hope
Levels of Positive Behavior Support

School-Wide

Classroom

Individual
The Trauma Lens

Trauma Informed practice is a shift of paradigm from one that asks a student, “what’s wrong with the kids at this school?”

To one that wonders, “what might be going on in the community that might be impacting student behavior?”

Eight Key Features of School-Wide Positive Behavior Support

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Administrative Leadership and Support</th>
<th>School leaders actively support the adoption, implementation and maintenance of School-Wide Positive Behavior Support.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Team-based Implementation</td>
<td>The School-Wide Positive Behavior Support team is composed of members from all stakeholder groups (administrator, general educator, special educator, classified staff, support staff, parents, and students).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioral Expectations Defined</td>
<td>A small number (3–6) of positively stated expectations are in place for all students and staff. Behavior expectations need to be concrete, positive behaviors so that every student, staff, and family can remember and follow them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavior Expectations Taught</td>
<td>Behavioral expectations are taught to all students through explanation, modeling, practicing, and processing on a regular and ongoing basis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledge and Reinforce Appropriate Behavior</td>
<td>Appropriate behaviors are modeled by all students, staff, and families and are acknowledged and reinforced on a regular and ongoing basis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitor and Correct Behavioral Errors</td>
<td>Consequences are consistent and are developed for a continuum of behavioral errors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data-based Decision Making</td>
<td>Data is analyzed and used to guide decisions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family and Community Collaboration</td>
<td>Partnerships are built between the school, home, and community.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The image describes a Continuum of School-Wide Instructional & Positive Behavior Support. The Continuum is divided into three tiers:

**Universal Interventions:**
- School-/Classroom-Wide Systems for All Students, Staff, & Settings

**Selected Interventions:**
- Classroom & Small Group Strategies
  - (10-20% of students)

**Targeted Interventions:**
- Individual Interventions
  - (High-risk students)
  - (3-5%)

**Intensive Interventions:**
- Universal Systems of Support
  - (75-85% of students)

The Continuum includes various strategies and interventions at each tier, such as:

- **Universal Interventions:**
  - Effective academic support
  - Social skills training
  - Positive, proactive discipline
  - Teaching school behavior expectations
  - Active supervision and monitoring
  - Positive reinforcement systems
  - Firm, fair, and corrective discipline
  - Effective classroom management
  - Community and service learning

- **Selected Interventions:**
  - Classroom & Small Group Strategies
  - (10-20% of students)
  - Alternative to suspension and expulsion
  - Community and service learning

- **Targeted Interventions:**
  - Individual Interventions
  - (High-risk students)
  - (3-5%)
  - Multi-agency collaboration (wrap-around) services
  - Community and service learning

- **Intensive Interventions:**
  - Universal Systems of Support
  - (75-85% of students)
  - Alternative to out-of-school suspension
  - Community and service learning

Adapted from: Sprague & Walker, 2004
Case study

- Everyday when the students return to class from recess/nutrition it takes 15 minutes to focus the students.
- What should be done?
We need to look at the capacity and competence of the setting (context) as well as the skills of the student.

Levels of Positive Behavior Support

School-Wide

Classroom

Individual
The Trauma Lens

Trauma Informed practice is a shift of paradigm from one that asks a student, “what’s wrong with this class?”

To one that wonders, “what might have happened to explain the behavior of this group of kids?”

What keeps you engaged in class?
Good instruction will reduce problem behavior and good behavior support will provide instructional environments more conducive to learning.

Five Critical Elements

S-T-O-I-C

This can apply to classrooms and common areas!

- Structure
- Teach
- Observe
- Interact
- Correct
Structure
Structure your classroom to prevent misbehavior

- Identify and modify variables to positively influence student behavior.

Adapted from Discipline in the Secondary Classroom, R. Sprick, 2006

Write the following words in alphabetical order (the order they come in the alphabet)

apple pumpkin log river fox pond

1. qelpop
2. ikmnpppy
3. qbo
4. enrv
5. fox
6. chop
Teach Expectations

Teach, review, re-teach your expectations!

• Teach students EXACTLY what behaviors will result in their success.

Observe

Observe whether students are meeting expectations (monitor)

• Monitor and Make Decisions Based on Objective Data
Interact Positively
Interact positively with all students

- Model the core beliefs that ALL are treated with dignity and respect.

![Diagram showing Positive Interactions and Corrective Interactions with a ratio of 4:1](Adapted from the work of Randy Sprick)

Correct Fluently
Correct misbehavior fluently (consistently, calmly, respectfully)

- Respond to misbehavior immediately using a plan that reduces any escalation including a brief statement.

(Adapted from the work of Randy Sprick)
Responses to Misbehavior

- Proximity
- Verbal Reminder of the expectation
  - Allow reasonable time to respond
- Provide choices
- Reminder of pre-determined consequence
- Discussion
- Give a positively stated directive

Let’s think about how our response to behavior influences student behavior......
The adult response can make a HUGE difference!
Professional
Cultural
Informed
Fidelity-Based
Educational
Instructive
Preventative

guiding principles
Interactive Map of Core Features

Classroom Interventions and Supports

Foundations (Table 1)

1.1 Settings
The physical layout of the classroom is designed to be effective

1.2 Routines
Predictable classroom routines are developed and taught

1.3 Expectations
Three to five classroom rules are clearly posted, defined, and explicitly taught

Practices (Table 2)

2.1 Supervision
Provide reminders (prompts), and actively scan, move, and interact with students

2.2 Opportunity
Provide high rates and varied opportunities for all students to respond

2.3 Acknowledgment
Using specific praise and other strategies, let students know when they meet classroom expectations

2.4 Prompts and Proactive Interactions
Provide reminders, before a behavior is expected, that clearly describe the expectations

2.5 Error Corrections
Use brief, contingent, and specific statements when misbehavior occurs

2.6 Other Strategies
Use other strategies that prevent escalation, minimize inadvertent reward of the problem behavior, create a learning opportunity for emphasizing desired behavior, and maintain optimal instructional time

2.7 Additional Tools
More tips for teachers

Data Systems (Table 3)

3.1 Counting
Record how often or how many times a behavior occurs (also called frequency)

3.2 Timing
Record how long a behavior lasts (also called duration)

3.3 Sampling
Estimate how often a behavior occurs during part of an interval, the entire interval, or at the end of an interval

3.4 ABC Cards, Incident Reports, or Office Discipline Referrals
Record information about the events that occurred before, during, and after a behavior incident

Self-Assessment

Teachers should start with the first statement on the self-assessment. When unsure of an answer, teachers should go to the part of the interactive map indicated and read more about the practice.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classroom Interventions and Supports Self-Assessment</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The classroom is physically designed to meet the needs of all students.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Classroom routines are developed, taught, and predictable.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Three to five positive classroom expectations are posted, defined, and explicitly taught.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Prompts and active supervision practices are used proactively.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Opportunities to respond are varied and are provided at high rates.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Specific praise and other strategies are used to acknowledge behavior.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Reminders are consistently given before a behavior might occur.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. The response to misbehavior in the classroom are appropriate and systematic.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Data systems are used to collect information about classroom behavior.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. If yes, continue with self-assessment. If no, begin with Table 3 on the interactive map.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. If yes, continue with self-assessment. If no, begin with Table 3 on the interactive map.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**1.1 Settings**
The physical layout of the classroom is designed to be effective

**1.2 Routines**
Predictable classroom routines are developed and taught

**1.3 Expectations**
Three to five classroom rules are clearly posted, defined, and explicitly taught

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description and Critical Features</th>
<th>Elementary Examples</th>
<th>Secondary Examples</th>
<th>Non-Examples</th>
<th>Empirical Support and Resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What key strategies can I use to support behavior in my classroom?</td>
<td>How can I use this practice in my elementary classroom?</td>
<td>How can I use this practice in my secondary classroom?</td>
<td>What should I avoid when I’m implementing this practice?</td>
<td>What evidence supports this practice, and where can I find additional resources?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Design classroom to facilitate the most typical instructional activities (e.g., small groups, whole group, learning centers)
- Arrange furniture to allow for smooth teacher and student movement
- Ensure instructional materials are neat, orderly, and ready for use
- Post materials that support critical content and learning strategies (e.g., word walls, steps for the writing process, mathematical formulas)
- Design classroom layout according to the type of activity taking place:
  - Tables for centers
  - Separate desk for independent work
  - Circle area for group instruction
- Consider teacher versus student access to materials
- Use assigned seats and areas
- Be sure all students can be seen
- Design classroom layout according to the type of activity taking place:
  - Circle for discussion
  - Forward facing for group instruction
  - Use assigned seats
- Be sure all students can be seen
- Consider options for storage of students’ personal items (e.g., backpacks, notebooks for other classes)
- Equipment and materials are damaged, unsafe, and/or not in sufficient working condition or not accessible to all students
- Disorderly, messy, unclean, and/or visually unappealing environment
- Some students and/or parts of the room not visible to teacher
- Congestion in high-traffic areas (e.g., coat closet, pencil sharpener, teacher desk)
- Inappropriately sized furniture
- Teachers can prevent many instances of problem behavior and minimize disruptions by strategically planning the arrangement of the physical environment
- Arranging classroom environment to deliver instruction in a way that promotes learning

Video: [http://louisville.edu/education/about/primarylevel/structure/group](http://louisville.edu/education/about/primarylevel/structure/group)
Book: *Structuring Your Classroom for Academic Success*
| Practices |
| --- | --- |
| **Prevention** | **Response** |
| **2.1 Supervision**<br>Provide reminders (prompts), and actively scan, move, and interact with students. | **2.5 Error Corrections**<br>Use brief, contingent, and specific statements when misbehavior occurs. |
| **2.2 Opportunity**<br>Provide high rates and varied opportunities for all students to respond. | **2.6 Other Strategies**<br>Use other strategies that preempt escalation, minimize inadvertent reward of the problem behavior, create a learning opportunity for emphasizing desired behavior, and maintain optimal instructional time. |
| **2.3 Acknowledgment**<br>Using specific praise and other strategies, let students know when they meet classroom expectations. | 2.7 Additional Tools<br>More tips for teachers |
| **2.4 Prompts and Precorrections**<br>Provide reminders, before a behavior is expected, that clearly describe the expectation. |  |

2.6 & 2.7 will be addressed later in the presentation.

4. **Prompts and active supervision** practices are used proactively. If yes, continue with self-assessment. If no, begin with 2.1 on the interactive map.  
5. **Opportunities to respond** are varied and are provided at high rates. If yes, continue with self-assessment. If no, begin with 2.2 on the interactive map.  
6. Specific praise and other strategies are used to **acknowledge behavior**. If yes, continue with self-assessment. If no, begin with 2.3 on the interactive map.  
7. **Reminders** are consistently given before a behavior might occur. If yes, continue with self-assessment. If no, begin with 2.4 on the interactive map.  
8. The responses to misbehaviors in the classroom are appropriate and systematic. If yes, continue with self-assessment. If no, begin with 2.5 on the interactive map.
Frequency

The number of times the target behavior occurs during a specific time period.

Data Systems (Table 3)

3.1 Counting
Record how often or how many times a behavior occurs (also called frequency).

3.2 Timing
Record how long a behavior lasts (also called duration).

3.3 Sampling
Estimate how often a behavior occurs during part of an interval, the entire interval, or at the end of an interval.

3.4 ABC Cards, Incident Reports, or Office Discipline Referrals
Record information about the events that occurred before, during, and after a behavior incident.

9. Data systems are used to collect information about classroom behavior. If yes, continue with self-assessment. If no, begin with Table 3 on the interactive map.
Duration

- Total amount of time a student engages in the target behavior during the specific time period.

  - How long does the behavior last?
  - Behaviors that have a discrete beginning and end
    - Temper tantrum: student falls on floor, kicks peers and screams
    - Screaming

Antecedent  Behavior  Consequence

What happened before the behavior?  Describe what you see.  What happened after the behavior?
### A-B-C

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Antecedent (Before the behavior)</th>
<th>Behavior (The behavior)</th>
<th>Consequence (After the behavior)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Joshua was asked to start his math test by the teacher.</td>
<td>Joshua knocked over his desk and threw a book at the teacher.</td>
<td>Joshua was sent to the office by the teacher.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Antecedent (Before the behavior)</th>
<th>Behavior (The behavior)</th>
<th>Consequence (After the behavior)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The class was working on a writing assignment.</td>
<td>Hector tapped his pencil on his desk and then started humming loudly.</td>
<td>The teacher walked over to Hector and asked him if he needed help.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 2.6 & 2.7

**Additional Tools for Teachers**

In addition to using the evidence-based strategies provided in the prior interactive map, self-assessment, and detailed tables, teachers should apply the following strategy and consider the following guidelines when responding to students’ challenging behavior.

**Responding to Behaviors in the Classroom—Make It FAST!**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>F</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>S</th>
<th>T</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Functional</td>
<td>Accurate</td>
<td>Specific</td>
<td>Timely</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Responding to behavior in a way that tries to address the reason or purpose why a student behaves within specific situations will help reduce the likelihood of the behavior happening in the future (see Practical PBIS Training Manual for more information).
- As much as possible, an accurate and consistent response is essential to minimizing problem behavior and increasing compliant behaviors.
- It is best to be as specific as possible when addressing student behavior; using the student’s name and the reason for the response are examples of how teachers can be specific.
- Responding to behavior immediately after the behavior will make the response more powerful.

**Types of Behavior and Common Responses**

- **Appropriate or expected behavior**
  - When a student does an appropriate behavior, let the student know by telling the student how she behaved and the value of doing so.
  - Be as specific as possible, and try to always use the student’s name.
  - Consider using praise and other acknowledgment strategies.

- **Infrequent and non-disruptive minor behaviors**
  - When a mistake occurs, try to draw as little attention to the behavior as possible.
  - Give students reminders of what is expected.
  - Model what is expected.
  - Reinforce what is expected by using specific praise or other acknowledgment strategies.

- **Repeated and non-disruptive minor behavior errors and/or disruptive major behavior errors**
  - Follow school procedures for responding to rule violations and individualized behavior support plans.
  - Try to be as specific as possible when addressing student behavior; using the student’s name and the reason for the response are examples of how teachers can be specific.
  - Follow school procedures for responding to rule violations and individualized behavior support plans.

- **Administrator-managed behaviors**
  - Follow school procedures for responding to rule violations and individualized behavior support plans.

**plus all of the other tools you already have/use.**
• Work in groups of 3
• Read the scenario
• Brainstorm some possible strategies
• Identify resources from your school/District you can use
Levels of Positive Behavior Support

| School-Wide | Classroom | Individual |

The Trauma Lens

Trauma Informed practice is a shift of paradigm from one that asks a student, “what’s wrong with you?”

To one that wonders, “what might have happened to you to explain your behavior?”
Is it a Can’t Do OR Won’t Do?

• When a student struggles with.....
  – Fractions
  – Writing an essay
  – Shooting a basket

• How do we react?
  – Supportive...develop and implement instructional strategies

We TEACH them.
• When a student misbehaves...
  – Often times we assume it is a choice or a won’t do

• Maybe they don’t have the social skills, support or circumstances necessary to meet the behavior expectation.

How do we expect them to “learn” ..... punish or teach?

• What if we mirrored the instructional strategies we use with academic challenges to behavior?

• Might students learn more appropriate, pro-social behavior?
So, ask yourself... is this a **can’t do** or a **won’t do**?

1. **Problem Behavior**
   - Is the student aware that s/he is engaging in the behavior?
   - Yes
   - No

   Yes
   - Does the student have the ability to perform the appropriate behavior?
   - Yes
   - No

   No
   - Has the function of the behavior been determined?
   - Yes
   - No

   No
   - Develop a signal or cue to make the student aware of the behavior.
   - Develop a way to monitor or have the student self monitor the behavior.
   - Provide feedback (both positive and corrective).

   Yes
   - Analyze the behavior to determine the function of the behavior.
   - Develop a plan to teach/reinforce replacement behavior
   - Involve all stakeholders
   - Implement the plan

Adapted from Discipline in the Secondary Classroom, R. Sprick, 2008
Even with the best laid plans...

- We have fire drills
- We have earthquake/hurricane/tornado drills
- We practice “lockdowns”
- We are trained to know what to do when there is an active shooter on campus

Do we plan/practice how to respond to escalating behavior?
Let’s take a closer look at the Escalation Cycle….

What does it look like?

What can I do?

The most important thing adults can do is STAY CALM!

Interim Behavior Response Plan (IBRP)

Los Angeles Unified School District
Division of Special Education
Interim Behavior Response Plan (IBRP)

The Interim Behavior Response Plan (IBRP) supports school teams in the development and implementation of an immediate and interim plan for preventing and responding to behaviors. This plan does not replace Functional Behavior Assessments and/or Behavior Support Plans.

The cycle of acting out behavior follows a distinct sequence. It is important that those responding to the acting out behavior create and implement a plan based on each part of the cycle and that planned responses are individualized based on the student’s own behavior characteristics. Each stage of the IBRP addresses the student’s behaviors as well as staff responses (suggested strategies) that should be used to support the student in remaining calm.

Tiers must address both student and staff responses for each stage.

The Escalation Cycle

Intensity

Time

Calm

Agitation

Devolution

Peak
ACTIVITY

Using the scenario, work in teams of 2 – 3 to complete an Interim Behavior Response Plan.
Compassion Fatigue as an Occupational Hazard

- When we approach individuals with an open heart and a listening ear, Compassion Fatigue can develop.
- Compassion Fatigue is not a sign of weakness or incompetence; rather, it can be the cost of caring.

What is our professional protective gear? (Protective Factors)

- Self-Care
- Competent consultation and supervision
- Training
- Sense of control
- Spirituality
- Exercise
- Humor
- Satisfying personal relationships
Our Ethical Responsibility for Self-Care

- Respecting the dignity and worth of oneself.
- Taking responsibility for self-care (physically, psychologically, socially)
- Acknowledging the relationship between self-care and duty to perform.

How wonderful it is that no one need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world.

Anne Frank