

# Becoming a Trauma-Informed School

*February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2023*

*Training series session #5:*

**Becoming a Trauma-Informed School: Logistics**

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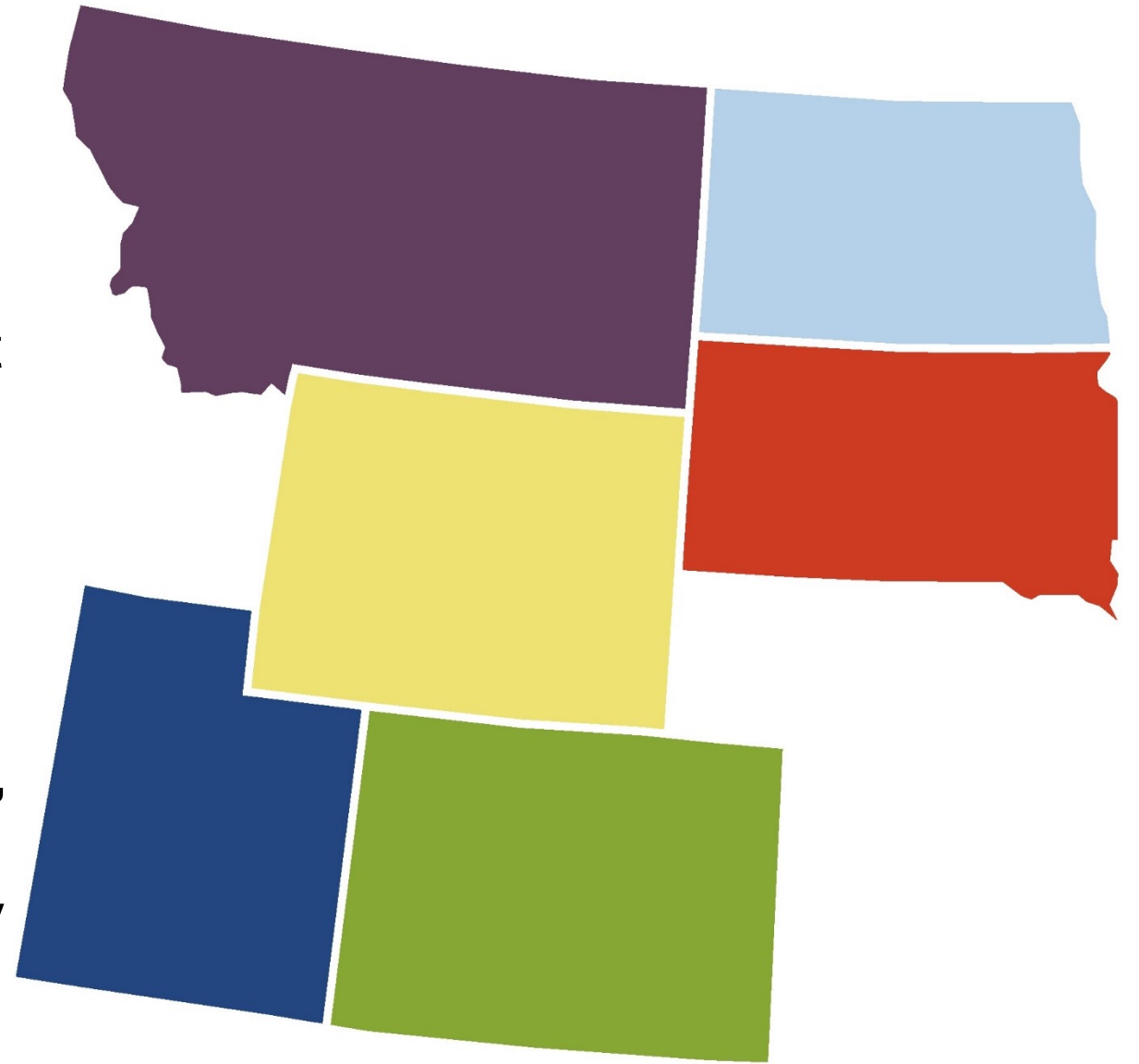
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The work of the Mountain Plains MHTTC is supported by grant H79SM081792 from the Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

# The Mountain Plains Mental Health Technology Transfer Center

The Mountain Plains Mental Health Technology Transfer Center (Mountain Plains MHTTC) provides training and technical assistance to individuals who serve persons with mental health concerns throughout Region 8 (Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah and Wyoming).

We belong to the Technology Transfer Center (TTC) Network, a national network of training and technical assistance centers serving the needs of mental health, substance use and prevention providers. The work of the TTC Network is under a cooperative agreement by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration (SAMHSA).



# Land Acknowledgement Statement

Today, the University of North Dakota rests on the ancestral lands of the Pembina and Red Lake Bands of Ojibwe and the Dakota Oyate - presently existing as composite parts of the Red Lake, Turtle Mountain, White Earth Bands, and the Dakota Tribes of Minnesota and North Dakota. We acknowledge the people who resided here for generations and recognize that the spirit of the Ojibwe and Oyate people permeates this land. As a university community, we will continue to build upon our relations with the First Nations of the State of North Dakota - the Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara Nation, Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate Nation, Spirit Lake Nation, Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, and Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians.



The MHTTC Network uses affirming, respectful and recovery-oriented language in all activities. That language is:

STRENGTHS-BASED  
AND HOPEFUL

INCLUSIVE AND  
ACCEPTING OF  
DIVERSE CULTURES,  
GENDERS,  
PERSPECTIVES,  
AND EXPERIENCES

HEALING-CENTERED AND  
TRAUMA-RESPONSIVE

INVITING TO INDIVIDUALS  
PARTICIPATING IN THEIR  
OWN JOURNEYS

PERSON-FIRST AND  
FREE OF LABELS

NON-JUDGMENTAL AND  
AVOIDING ASSUMPTIONS

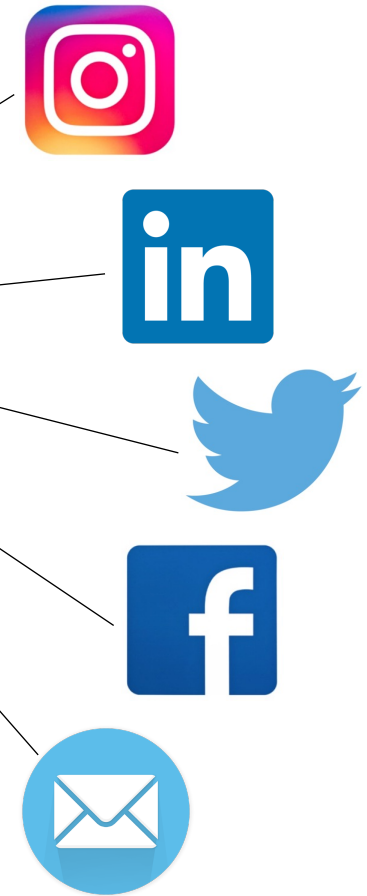
RESPECTFUL, CLEAR  
AND UNDERSTANDABLE

CONSISTENT WITH  
OUR ACTIONS,  
POLICIES, AND PRODUCTS

# Stay Connected

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# Training Details

1. Learn what Trauma is, what it looks like, and how to respond in a supportive way
2. Learning the key components of what it means to be “Trauma-Informed” within a host environment focused on academics
3. **Identify logistical and operational elements of implementation of a trauma-informed approach to supporting public education**
4. Developing relevant metrics for measuring progress and success in School-Based Trauma-Informed practices.



# One can control for outcomes

(By any means necessary)

But no one can control for both  
at the same time

# One can control for process

(Healthy outcomes typically follow healthy processes)

## Phase One

- Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) -
  - Understanding current school culture
- Establish a network of support and partnerships
  - District and school administration buy-in & resources, community-based providers and services, Parent and student participation and support, staff buy-in and commitment.
  - Seek funding if necessary (grants, research programs, district monies)
- Select evidenced-based social emotional learning curricula and programs/persons for trauma-informed training

# Research, Network, Marketing

## Phase Two

- Establish a “core champions” group and processes for group to follow for meetings, communication, roles/responsibilities, how to communicate out to school community and so on
- The core group selects relevant SEL programming and tiered Response to Intervention (Zones of Regulation, Restorative Justice, Peer processing support for teachers, promotion of self-care as school community value)
- Begin review of school policies and protocols for updating and revision based on trainings and best practice



## Phase Three

- Implementation of SEL programming and Tiered Supports
- Trial phase for new discipline approaches and referral processes
- Setting expectations to practice for peer supports and self-care
- Establish outcome goals and identify metrics for measuring progress
- Begin school-wide trauma-informed trainings



# Phase Four

- Circle back to partnerships, check-in and update school community at-large
- Conduct SWOT again, assess current practice in alignment to identified goals
- Establish feedback loops for on-going input and continuous improvement
- Assess impact and celebrate successes, engagement, and re-generate buy-in
- Do it again and again to sustain positive shift



# Becoming a Trauma-Informed School

Awesome School

Principal

Project Start Date: 3/16/2022

Scrolling Increment: 1

Legend:

On track

Low risk

Med risk

High risk

Unassigned

Milestone description	Category	Assigned to	Progress	Start	Days
<b>Phase One</b>					
Research Evidenced-Based Social-Emotional Learning Programs and Trauma-Informed Training	On Track	MH Practitioner	50%	3/16/2022	15
School Community assessment (SWOT), Identify needs and related goals	On Track	Principal		3/26/2022	20
Explore community support, partnerships and funding	On Track	Principal and Core Champ	25%	4/5/2022	10
Task 4	Milestone			4/5/2022	1
Task 5	Med Risk		10%	3/22/2022	6

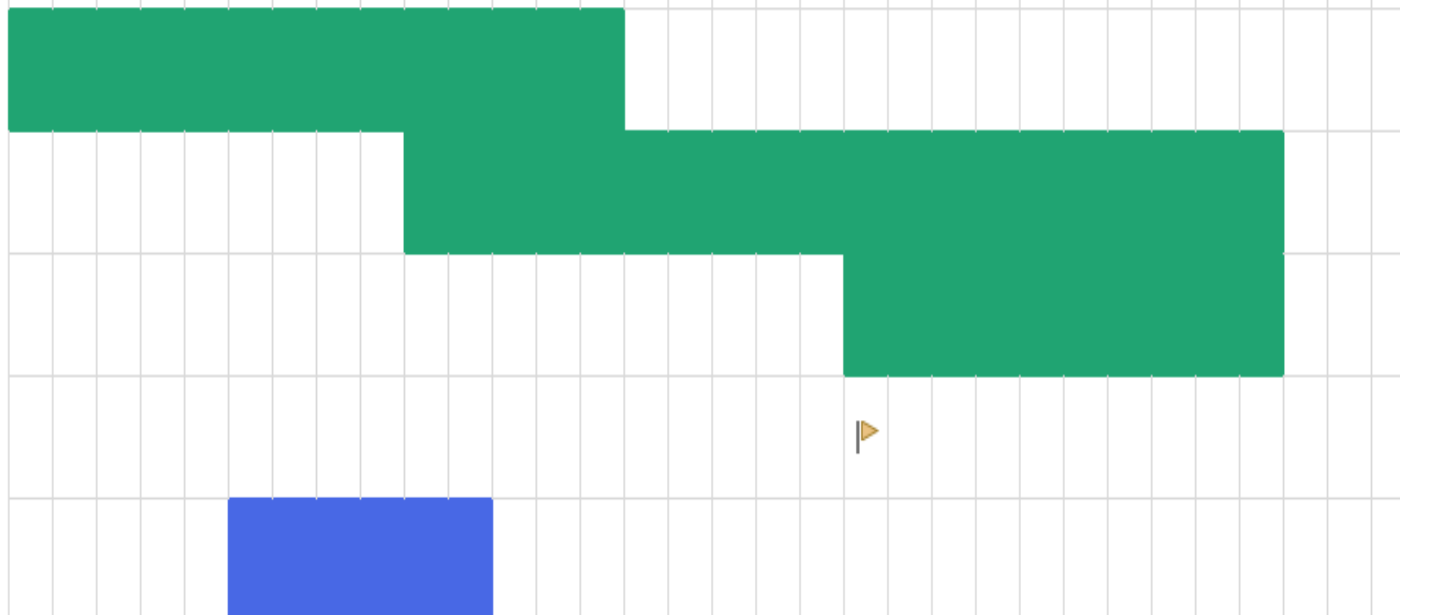
March

April

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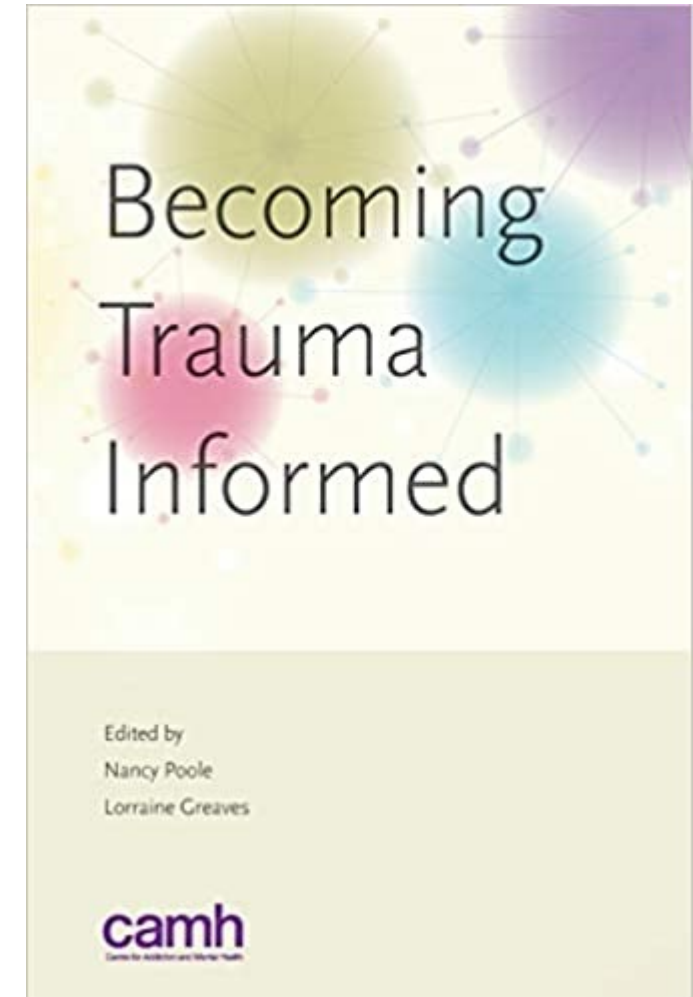
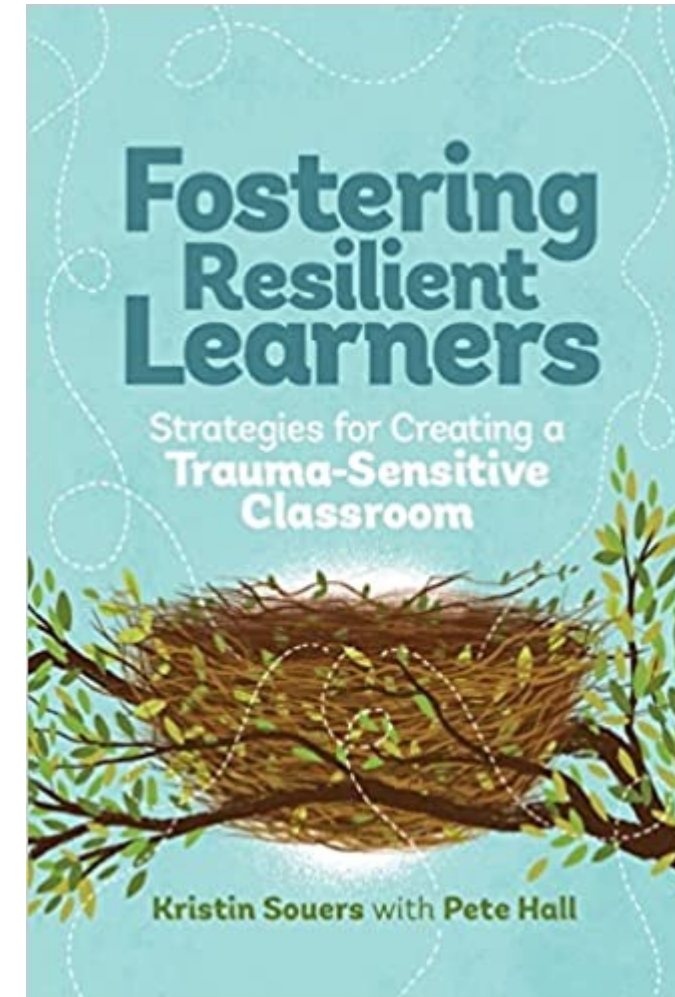
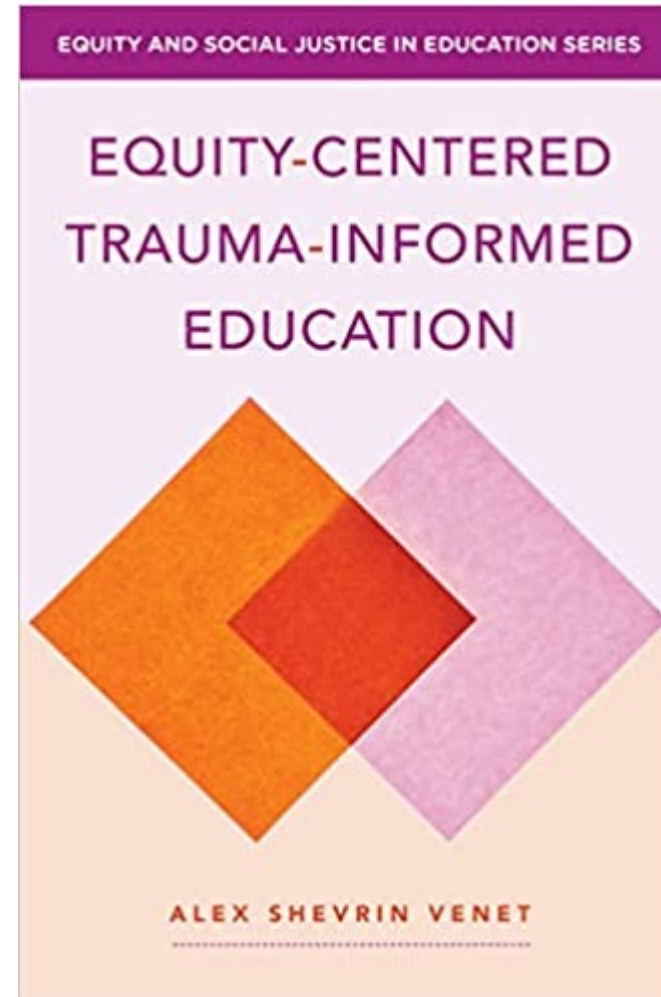
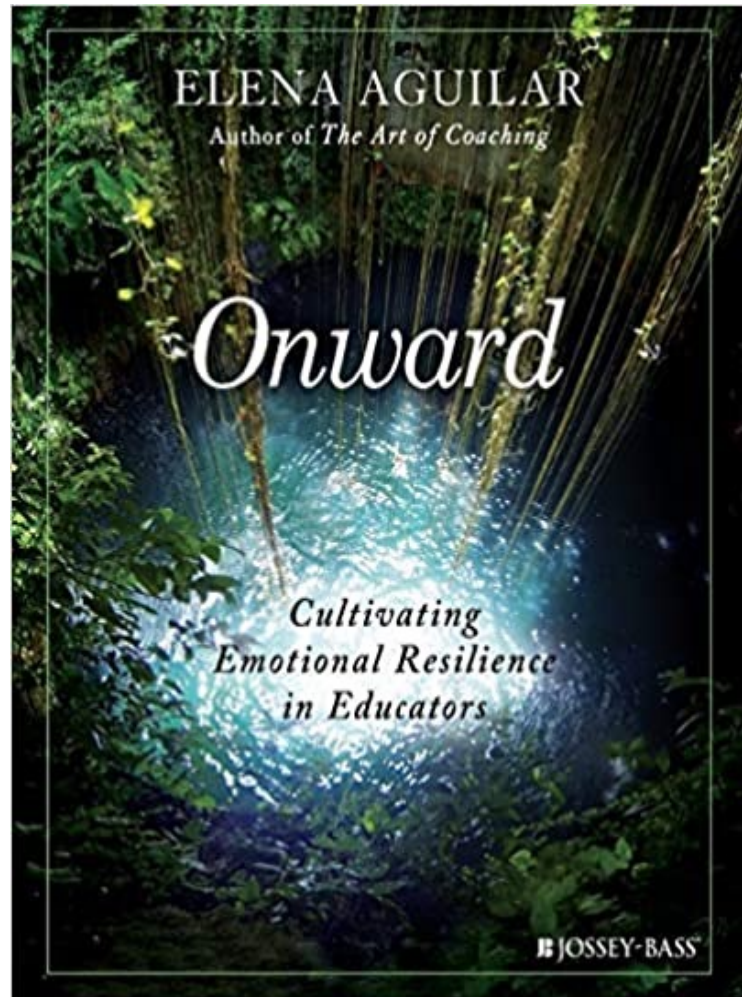


# *Resources for Planning*

- <https://traumaawareschools.org/interventions>
- <https://traumasensitiveschools.org/becoming-a-trauma-sensitive-school/>
- [https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/sites/default/files/Building%20TSS%20Handout%20Packet\\_ALL.pdf](https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/sites/default/files/Building%20TSS%20Handout%20Packet_ALL.pdf)
- [file:///C:/Users/Tford/Downloads/Trauma%20Sensitive%20Schools %20Whole%20School%20Transformation.pdf](file:///C:/Users/Tford/Downloads/Trauma%20Sensitive%20Schools%20Whole%20School%20Transformation.pdf)
- <https://www.nea.org/professional-excellence/student-engagement/trauma-informed-schools>

# Resources for Planning

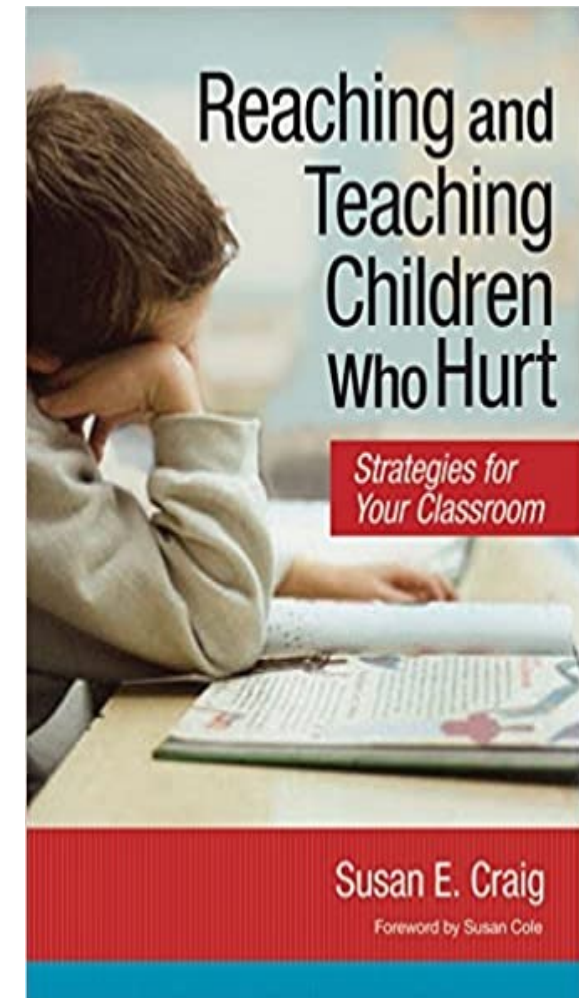
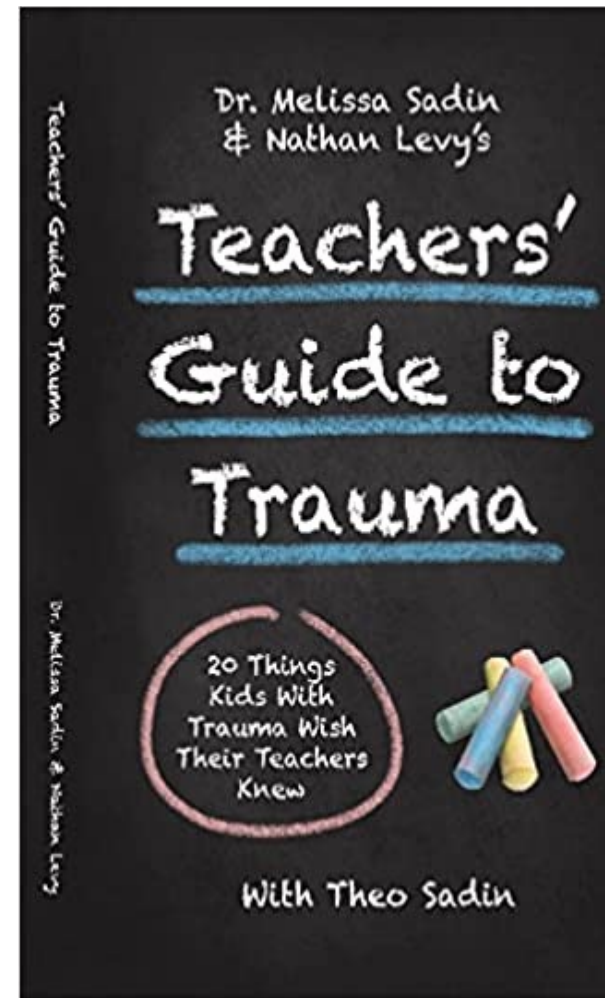
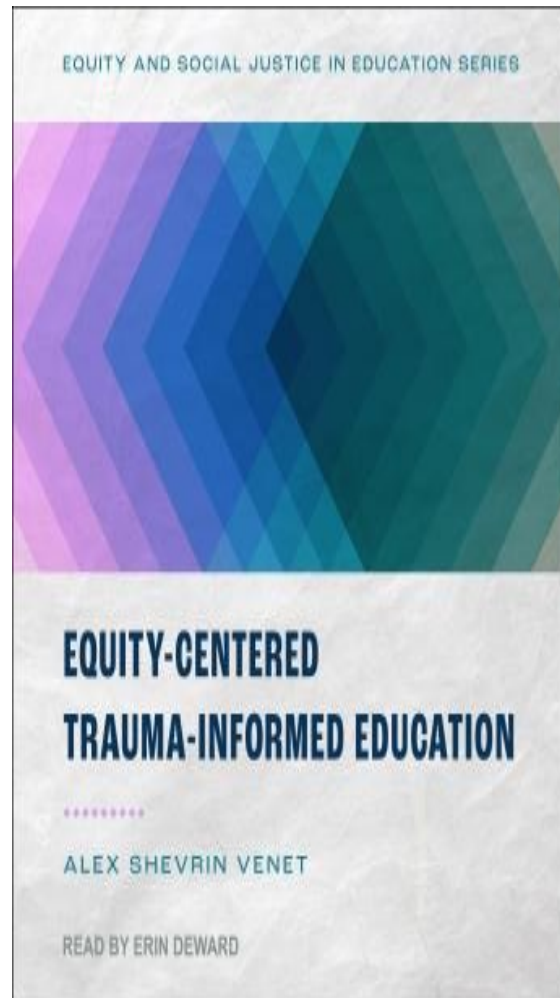
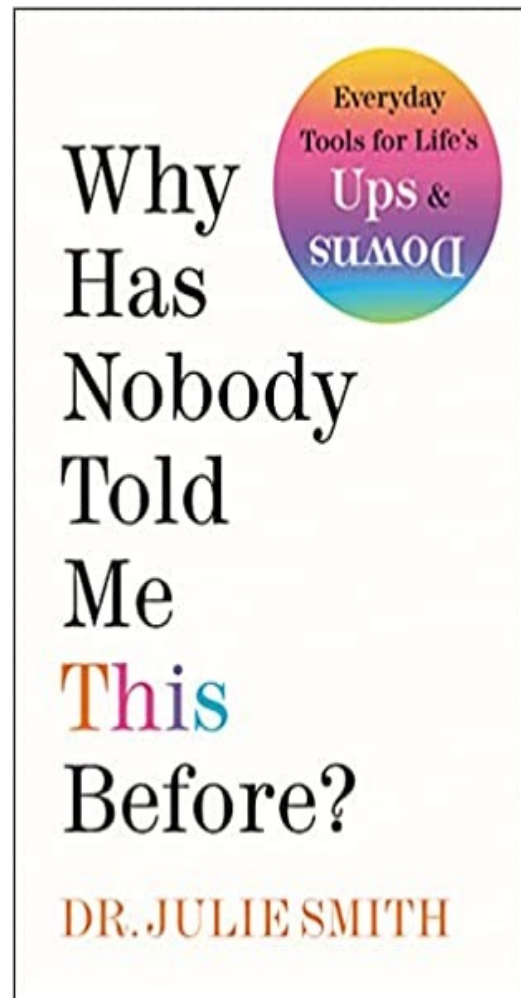
- Books for project leaders or school-wide





# Resources for Planning

- Books for project leaders or school-wide



## 2 minutes

Breathe  
Stretch  
Use gratitude  
Laugh  
Use mindfulness  
Doodle  
Acknowledge one of your  
accomplishments  
Say no to a new responsibility  
Compliment yourself  
Look out the window  
Daydream  
Share a favorite joke  
Awareness of feelings

## 5 minutes

Listen to music  
Chat with a co-worker  
Sing out loud  
Jot down dreams  
Step outside for fresh air  
Enjoy a healthy snack  
Color  
Make a cup of coffee/tea  
Schedule wellness time for the week  
Send a thank you card/email  
Sit under a weighted blanket

## 10 minutes

Take a walk (inside/outside)  
Write in a journal  
Call a friend or family  
Meditate  
Tidy your work area  
Eat lunch with a co-worker  
Draw a picture  
Dance  
Evaluate your day  
Listen to soothing sounds  
Read a magazine  
Have a cleansing cry  
Do yoga poses



# Putting it to Practice

## In Review:

- ❑ The Fundamentals of Trauma
  - ❑ It isn't what happened, it's the impact of what happened
  - ❑ Trauma is stored in the body as dysregulation
  - ❑ Trauma is resolved through the integration of our body experiences and sensations, our thoughts and psychology, our emotions and our ability to regulate them and learning how to access our sense of safety after challenging events
- ❑ Supportive Responses and Interventions
  - ❑ RTI (Tiered Response to Interventions) and FBAs (Functional Behavior Assessments) and PBSP (Positive Behavior Support Planning)
  - ❑ Non-violent communication techniques (active listening, motivational interviewing, compassionate, open, accepting and loving, bounded)
  - ❑ Neurosequential Model of Therapeutics (sense of safety attended to first)
  - ❑ Understanding behavior as communication, teaching and supporting over punitive discipline (Zones of Regulation)

# Putting it to Practice

## The Process of Becoming a Trauma Informed School

- Evidenced-based research
- Creating buy-in and key partnerships
- Identification of guiding values and principles and aligning documentation and policies to reflect them
- School-wide training on Trauma-Informed practices for ALL staff (& on-going supports)
- Staged, phased or evolutionary lens for project management over time to keep goals and objectives realistic, achievable, and to support continuous improvement
- Process over outcomes



# Putting it to Practice

**So .... Let's explore how this  
can play out in real life!**

# Theme: Bullying

## Traditional Paradigm

- Student tells a teacher (was pushed down and kicked on the playground)
- Teacher tells administration
- Parents are informed
- Student receives a “talking to” (from teacher or principal or dean of students)
- Student made to apologize to other student

## Trauma-Informed

- Student tells teacher
  - Teacher takes or sets a time to listen to whole story and assist student in increasing their sense of safety; helping student identify boundaries that need to be expressed and actions that can be taken if something happens again
  - Teacher connects with “bully” to also hear the whole story and assist with sense of safety and boundary setting; facilitates empathy building

# Theme: Bullying

## Traditional Paradigm

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- Teacher tells administration
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- Student made to apologize to other student

## Trauma-Informed

- For first offense, teacher handles and promotes safety, empathy and relationship development. Administration does not need to be involved,
- If repeats: Administrator will set up family meetings to better understand each student’s context; School Counselor facilitates dialogue between students with each student bringing a support person with them, if needed; Support students’ sharing each of their experiences with the other
- RTI - Support Interventions identified and assigned; Both students supported in their areas of strengths and interests to be engaged, identify an adult each student is best connected to at school, boundaries clearly stated and written out, plan for each students needs to avoid future confrontation

# Theme: Bullying

## Traditional Paradigm

- Consequence driven



## Trauma-Informed

- Relationship Driven





**Referral Forms / Process**

?

**District Discipline Matrix**

?

**WHAT COMPONENTS OF SCHOOL  
PROTOCOLS ARE INVOLVED?**

?

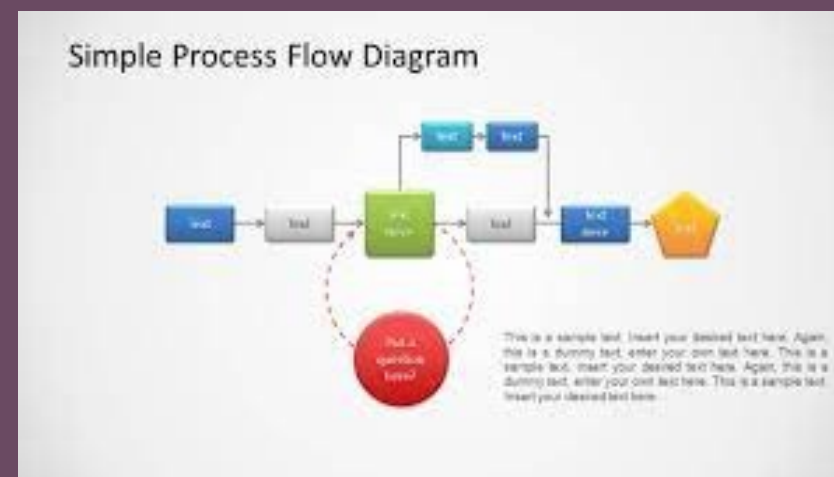
**Parent Engagement**

**Classroom Management  
Expectations of Teachers**

?

# Process Flow Charting

- It is important to flush out the overlapping elements of protocols, roles, policies, and values
- This can be done largely in part through process flow charting
- Creating visuals and mapping out each step of a given process helps us identify gaps in the process



### **Calls for Support:**

- **2 or more calls per specific student** will prompt Restorative Meeting between Teacher and Student as facilitated by Restorative Practice Coordinator.
- **3 or more calls for classroom support** will prompt support from Mental Health Consultant for classroom consultation

### **Student Referral:**

For ALL Non-Urgent Academic and Behavioral/Mental Health Concerns by a Teacher, School Staff, or Parent.

### **MTSS Process**

MH Consultant, School Psychologist, and Restorative Practice Coordinator should be present

### **Tier One Behaviors:**

Are supported via classroom-wide interventions. Teaching staff are supported by:

- \*Mental Health Consultant
- Instructional Coaches
- Restorative Practice Coordinator

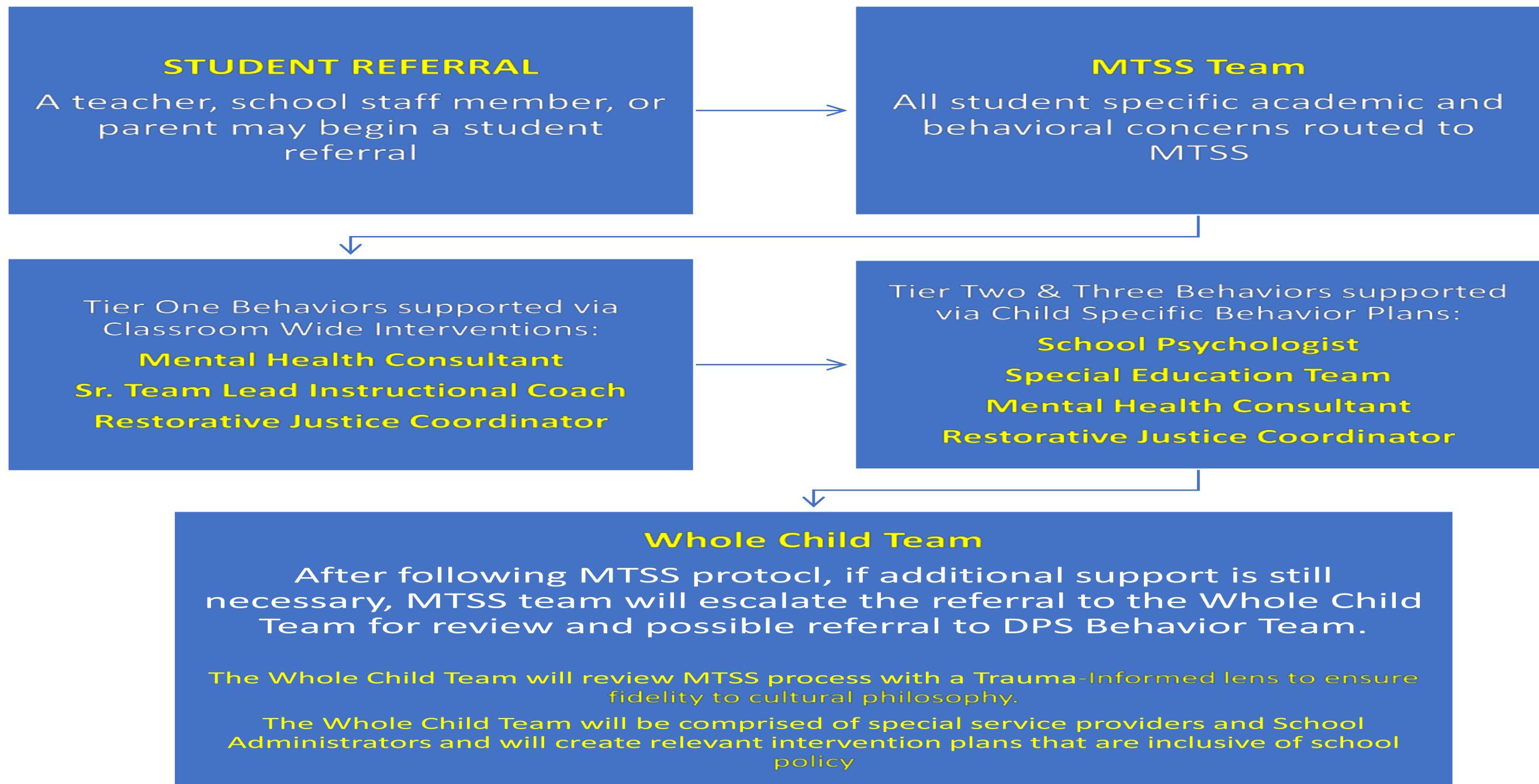
### **Tier Two and Three Behaviors :**

Are supported via child specific behavior plans. Teacher Staff are supported by:

- \*School Psychologist
- Special Education Team
- Mental Health Consultant

### **Whole Child Team:**

1. After following MTSS protocol with a minimum of two cycles of review, if additional support is still necessary, the MTSS team will escalate the referral to the Whole Child Team for review and continued support planning.
2. Whole Child Team will review Student Tracker Data on a monthly basis to identify trends and needs for school community; Training needs, teacher support, student behavior needs, etc.



***Shared Objectives:***

- **Evolve “traditional discipline” in the form of a punishment/consequence focus to a “meeting unmet needs” model that is trauma informed.**
- **Empower classroom teachers to create supportive, trauma-informed classroom communities that can handle PBIS Tier One behaviors within the classroom**
- **Provide students the opportunity to learn self-management and self-regulation skills within the classroom and throughout school experience to communicate needs proactively (vs. using**

Front office staff notifies RPC of teacher concern

- RPC will respond to the concern by going directly to the classroom and providing real-time intervention support based on and promoting restorative practices.
- RPC will document the call for support in the data tracker.
- RPC will notify an Administrator immediately if there is a Tier Two behavior concern or above

If receiving recurring calls for Tier One Behaviors

- RPC will remind the teacher to review the teacher process flow for challenging behavior found in the challenging behavior tool kit provided at the beginning of the year.
- RPC will notify the identified teacher's Sr. Team Lead Instructional Coach to inform him/her of the number of support calls made and to remind the Team LEad to connect the teacher to the Mental Health Consultant.

Data Sharing and Committee Participation

- RPC will provide monthly reports from the data tracker to the Whole Child Team
- RPC will participate in MTSS, Attendance Committee, and Whole Child Team to promote consistent sharing of student intervention services

# Resources to Insure a Trauma – Informed Response



Self Reflection Checklists



Teacher Observation and Reflective Practice Checklists



School Organization Reflective Checklists



# A thinking Lens for Reflection and Inquiry...

## **Knowing yourself**

- What captures my attention as the children engage, explore and interact?
- What delights me as I watch and listen?
- What in my background and values is influencing my response to this situation and why?
- What adult perspectives, i.e. standards, health and safety, time, goals are on my mind?

## **Finding the details of the competent child that engage your heart and mind**

- What do I notice in the children's faces and actions?
- Where do I see examples of children's strengths and competencies?
- What do I think is valuable about this experience?

# A thinking Lens for Reflection and Inquiry...

## **Seeking the child's point of view**

- What is the child drawn to and excited about?
- What might the child be trying to accomplish?
- Why might the child be interacting with others this way?
- What developmental themes, ideas or theories might the child be exploring?

## **Examining the physical/social/emotional environment**

- How is the organization and use of the physical space and materials impacting this situation?
- How could we strengthen relationships here?
- How are schedules and routines influencing this experience?



# A thinking Lens for Reflection and Inquiry...

## **Considering multiple perspectives**

- How might the child's culture and family background be influencing this situation?
- What questions might we ask to get the perspective of the child's family?
- Who else or what other perspectives should we consider?
- What child development or early learning theories should we consider in this experience?
- What desired early learning outcomes do I see reflected here?

## **Considering opportunities and possibilities for next steps**

- What values, philosophy and desired outcomes do I want to influence my response?
- What new or existing relationships could be strengthened?
- Which learning goals could be focused on here?
- What other materials and activities could be offered to build on this experience?
- What new vocabulary could we begin to use?

# Bryan Post's 4 Point Trauma-Informed Daily Checklist

*\*The purpose of the 4 Point Trauma-Informed Daily Checklist is to provide the trauma-sensitive practitioner a daily quick reference checklist that brings to the conscious mind the core areas of trauma-informed practice. Use it daily at the beginning of the day to center yourself and your conscious mind on the importance of the work you do and those you serve. Choose Love.*



FYI: The Post Institute offers free online Trauma-Informed training [certifiedtraumainformed.com](http://certifiedtraumainformed.com)

## Awareness of Self

- I am aware of my breathing.
- I am aware of my thoughts.
- I am aware of my feelings.
- I am aware of my body.
- I am taking this moment to place all others concerns out of my immediate consciousness and am choosing to focus on my work and those I serve.



*(Post, Bryan and Bridgewater, Tricia. Bryan Post's 4 Point Trauma Informed Daily Checklist. Oklahoma City, OK. Post Institute. October 2018.) All Rights Reserved. © 2018 Bryan Post*

# Awareness of Others

\_\_\_ I have been charged with the care of a sensitive child(ren). I am seeing him/her/them in my mind at this moment.

\_\_\_ I am placing the spirit of who this child is and what he/she/they has experienced in my heart-center and allowing myself to feel love and compassion. This will guide me in connecting with him/her/they.

\_\_\_ In my mind I am saying and smiling, “Hello \_\_\_\_\_ it is good to see you”. I am fully checking in with the child in my care.

\_\_\_ I am observing \_\_\_\_\_ for the first time today and will continue to check in with him/her/they throughout the day. Prevention is my focus.



# Awareness of Environment

\_\_\_ I am aware of the sensory environment and the challenges that it may present to my child. ( Visual, Auditory, Olfactory (Smell), Gustatory (Taste), Tactile, Vestibular (Balance), Proprioceptive (Body Awareness), Interoception (Digestion/Temperature/Emotional Awareness)

\_\_\_ I am making adjustments in the sensory environment to best support the sensitive child in my care.

\_\_\_ I am checking in with and paying attention to the child to assess their reaction to the immediate environment.

\_\_\_ I am making ongoing adjustments in the sensory environment to best support the sensitive child(ren) in my care.



# Awareness of Cognitive and Emotional

\_\_\_ I am aware of \_\_\_\_\_ facial expression, posture, tone of voice and reciprocal interaction.

\_\_\_ I am aware of the structure and routines that have been created and am actively maintaining them.

\_\_\_ I am clear in my communication and expectations.

\_\_\_ I am being emotionally flexible and taking responsibility for the dynamics within my control.





Teacher Name: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_

**Trauma Sensitive Teacher Checklist**

Classroom Strategies and Techniques	Yes	No	Examples
1. Are behavior expectations communicated in clear, concise and positive ways			
2. Does teacher use a strengths-based perspective?			
3. Are activities structured in predictable and emotionally safe ways?			
4. Does teacher provide students opportunities to practice emotional regulation in classroom?			
5. Does teacher have consistent emotional responses?			
6. Does teacher use self-regulation strategies?			
7. Does teacher engage in self-care?			
8. Does teacher respond to behavior in a non-reactive way?			
9. Does teacher respect student's confidentiality?			
10. Does teacher plan for repetitive behavior issues?			
11. Does teacher contact caregivers to provide positive feedback about students?			
12. Does teacher continue to engage in self-study about trauma informed schools?			

Berkeley County School's Trauma Sensitive Learning Community Evaluator: \_\_\_\_\_

Date and Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Principal Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Evaluator Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**Classroom Strategies and Techniques**

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11. Does teacher contact caregivers to provide positive feedback about students?
12. Does teacher continue to engage in self-study about trauma informed schools?

# 10 Principles of Positive Discipline

- 1. Know the Child** (child's hx, preference, likes, dislikes, interest, temperament)
- 2. Know typical child development and behavior-** we sometimes punish/reprimand children for typical childhood behaviors- the more we know and understand child development the less likely we are to perceive the child's behavior as disrespect (children can't wait with nothing to do, children do not have fully developed inner speech)
- 3. Adults are accountable as models** –children learn by watching –being an adult model for desired behavior and regulation can be far more powerful than by just telling them what to do- adults often send mixed messages to children (ex- adult yelling- Don't grab that toy while grabbing it out of a child's hand)
- 4. Adults must maintain control-** adult must go first- understand their own hot buttons and work on their self regulation first, children are not responsible for adult emotions- you have a choice in how you choose to respond to a child, an out of control adult cannot demand that a child get in control



# 10 Principles of Positive Discipline

- 1. Adults must see the world from the child's point of view-** get the message from the child but don't shoot the messenger- a child's two states of being are extending love or calling for love
- 2. Adults must speak clearly and assertively to children**
- 3. Recognize that discipline is an opportunity to teach, not punish-** making children feel bad does not help them behave better
- 4. Adults must be in relationship with the child-** positive discipline is relationship based
- 5. Seek solutions not blame**
- 6. Communicate with the intention of love, not fear** - can not scare children to do what we want, we have a choice to understand the situation/circumstance from a better perspective and point the child in the right direction or fill them with negative messages and turn them to bullies or victims

# 10 Principles of Positive Discipline

## SAFE Resolution

- S-something happened
- A-Assure your help
- F-Facilitate discussion
- E-Explore solutions



Pure



Safe



Beneficial

## PURE approach

- P- State the child's positive intent
- U-state the behavior that is unacceptable
- R- state the reason
- E- explore alternatives/what else could you do

## Discipline

For students affected by trauma, traditional school discipline practices that include harsh language, negative interactions, and removal from the community may mimic traumatic experiences, trigger trauma-related responses, and reinforce the belief that adults are not predictably safe and trustworthy.

### Guiding questions

1. What is our primary approach to discipline?
2. How effective is this approach for students exposed to trauma?
3. How does our approach to discipline align with the core principles of trauma sensitivity (i.e., trauma awareness; safety; choice, control, and empowerment; relationship driven; culturally competent; collaborative; holistic)?
4. How do our discipline policies and practices facilitate or hinder student, family, and staff well-being? For example, are there practices that could be re-traumatizing to students and families?
5. Who is involved in developing discipline policies and procedures?
6. What do we need to do differently to ensure a trauma-sensitive approach?

# Trauma-sensitive discipline practices

Check the discipline practices your school currently uses. Circle the practices you would like to add or use more often.

	Engage in proactive planning.
	Identify the reasons behind behaviors.
	Hold students accountable but in clear, understandable, and respectful ways.
	Implement positive behavioral supports.
	Minimize isolation and disconnection from the community.
	Use restorative approaches.
	Model respectful, nonviolent relationships and restorative practices.

## 3 TYPES OF DISCIPLINE

**Preventative discipline**

*Establishing classroom rules to prevent disruptions*

- Posting classroom rules on a wall
- Reminding the students of the rules every day
- Giving rewards for good behavior
- Verbalizing the consequences of bad behavior
- Making sure that each student is clearly visible to the teacher
- Asking parents to sign the list of classroom rules
- Involving school administrators into rules enforcement

**Supportive discipline**

*Measures taken when classroom rules are broken*

- The teacher's immediate and confident reaction to disruptive behavior
- Reminding the students of the rules
- Verbal warnings
- Nonverbal warnings
- Redirecting the disruptive student's behavior
- Redirecting the students' attention to a new educational task

**Corrective discipline**

*Measures taken when supportive discipline doesn't help*

- Verbal altercation with the disruptive student
- Placing the disruptive student in a time out
- Removing the disruptive student from the classroom
- Informing the principal of the student's bad behavior
- Informing the parents of the student's bad behavior
- Scheduling a meeting with the parents and with the principal



**eurekly!**  
Live Learning

# Trauma-Sensitive Teacher Behavior Checklist

Date/Time of Observation: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Observers: \_\_\_\_\_

Last Name & Grade Level of Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

## Trauma-Sensitive Teacher Behavior Checklist

### Teacher Target Behaviors

### Observations

Creates and/or maintains consistent daily routines for the classroom. (Students know the order of the day or events and how they will be carried out. There is a schedule for the day or calendar of events visible to the students. Expectations are communicated in clear, concise, and positive ways)

Tells children when something out of the ordinary is going to occur. (Activities are structured in predictable and emotionally safe ways. Teacher warns children about bell, fire drill, special assembly, visit from an outsider, etc.)

Offers children developmentally appropriate choices. (Students' strengths and interests are encouraged and incorporated. Students have ownership of their behaviors and interests. Students are allowed to choose options or activities, such as where they want to sit or do for certain activities.)

Anticipates difficult periods and transitions and offers extra support during these times. (Teacher sits by student, walks with student, etc.)

Uses techniques to support children with trauma-related behaviors.

<p>Uses techniques to support children's self-regulation. (Teacher introduces breathing and other centering activities, such as mindfulness, during and outside of school-wide mindfulness activities to help children self-regulate. Opportunities exist for students to learn and practice regulation of emotions and modulation of behaviors.)</p>	
<p>Helps students manage their feelings during intense emotional moments by remaining composed and offering empathy and support. (Opportunities exist for learning how to interact effectively with others. Teacher calmly initiates healthy and reparative interactions, validates student's feelings and communicates that s/he understands that the student is upset, explains to the student that s/he needs to keep his body safe, and slowly moves between student and what or who s/he is acting out toward. (This shows that the teacher understands that children make sense of their experiences (negative and positive) by reenacting them in play or through interactions with peers or adults.)</p>	
<p>Is appropriately nurturing and affectionate. (Teacher is sensitive to children's individual triggers, physically affectionate only when student seeks it.)</p>	
<p>Uses positive guidance and supportive interventions to help all children. (Teacher guides children to appropriate activities, helps children understand their action and how it impacts others.)</p>	
<p>Goals for achievement of students affected by traumatic experiences are consistent with the rest of the class. (Information is presented and learning is assessed using multiple modes. Opportunities for all students exist for learning how to plan and follow through on assignments.)</p>	

## Trauma-Sensitive Teacher Behavior Reflection – Version 1 (short)

Target Behavior	What does this look like?	Reflect: When and How do I do this?	SMART goals for consistently incorporating this behavior in my classroom
Creates and/or maintains consistent daily routines for the classroom	<p>Students know the order of the day or events and how they will be carried out. There is a schedule for the day or calendar of events visible to the students.</p> <p>Expectations are communicated in clear, concise, and positive ways.</p>		
Tells children when something out of the ordinary is going to occur	<p>Activities are structured in predictable and emotionally safe ways. Teacher warns children about bell, fire drill, special assembly, visit from an outsider, etc.</p>		

## Trauma-Sensitive Teacher Behavior Reflection – Version 1 (short)

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Offers children developmentally appropriate choices	Students' strengths and interests are encouraged and incorporated. Students have ownership of their behaviors and interests. Students are allowed to choose options or activities, such as where they want to sit or do for certain activities.		
Anticipates difficult periods and transitions and offers extra support during these times	Teacher sits by student, walks with student, etc.		
Uses techniques to support children's self-regulation.	Teacher introduces breathing and other centering activities, such as mindfulness, during and outside of school-wide mindfulness activities to help children self-regulate. Opportunities exist for students to learn and practice regulation of emotions and modulation of behaviors.		
Helps students manage their feelings during intense emotional moments by remaining composed and	Opportunities exist for learning how to interact effectively with others. Teacher calmly initiates healthy and reparative interactions, validates student's feelings and communicates that s/he understands that the student is upset, explains to the student		



# Resource:

- <https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/building-trauma-sensitive-schools>



## Building Trauma-Sensitive Schools Facilitation Guide

## Functional behavioral assessments

Use this checklist as a guide for conducting trauma-sensitive functional behavioral assessments.

	Assessments consider school routines that could trigger a student affected by trauma.
	Assessments include examples of trauma-related cues or triggers in the school environment that may lead to fight, flight, or freeze responses.
	Assessments consider trauma-related physiological responses as possible drivers of behavior (versus more purposeful or obvious motivations such as seeking attention or avoiding difficult tasks).
	Assessments consider a wide range of potentially traumatic experiences that may increase the likelihood of problem behavior.
	Assessments consider student strengths.



## Trauma-Sensitive Student Plans

In a trauma-sensitive school, individual student plans, such as behavioral support plans and individualized education programs (IEPs) address trauma when appropriate.

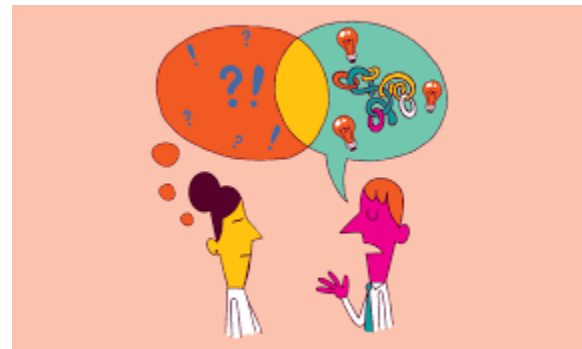
Use this checklist as a guide for creating trauma-sensitive student plans.

	Behavior support plans include a place to identify student-specific trauma-related triggers.
	Behavior support plans include a place for necessary accommodations and helpful adult responses for students who have been exposed to trauma.
	Individualized strategies for supporting students include a focus on physiological regulation.
	Plans include strategies or routines for supporting students during difficult times and in potentially triggering situations.
	Social and emotional IEP goals include ways to build skills that support resilience and skill building for students exposed to trauma.
	Plans include opportunities for teaching students exposed to trauma about the stress response and strategies for managing physiological responses.

## Trauma-sensitive communication practices

Check the communication practices your school currently uses. Circle the practices you would like to add or use more often.

	Maintain privacy and confidentiality in all communication with students, parents, and community partners.
	Communicate information clearly.
	Communicate information in the family's home language.
	Ensure all communication processes are respectful of students and families.
	Consider potential trauma triggers for families in all communication (e.g., letters home, calls, meetings and conferences).
	Create formal structures for family feedback.
	Develop trauma-sensitive processes for communicating with families regarding difficult issues, such as filing abuse and neglect reports or discussing their child's trauma-related difficulties.



## Trauma-sensitive safety practices

Check the safety practices your school currently uses. Circle the practices you would like to add or use more often.

	Create procedures for ensuring physical and emotional safety for all students.
	Create procedures for ensuring physical and emotional safety for all staff.
	Develop policies related to maintaining confidentiality and privacy as it relates to student, family, and staff safety issues (e.g., custody issues, experiences of domestic violence, restraining orders).
	Develop and uphold policies related to bullying, harassment, and other forms of violence in the school.
	Incorporate trauma-sensitive practices into emergency procedures to address and mitigate the impact of acute traumatic events on students and staff.



# Holding Space for New Practitioners of Trauma Informed Education

## Possible Components:

- Basic, advanced, and on-going training
- Peer support / brainstorming / Processing groups
- Book Clubs / Resource Sharing Platforms
- “Toolkit” - Visuals, lesson planning, assessments, guided reflections, activities for classroom to promote SEL, etc.
- Vicarious trauma self assessments and resources (EAP)
- Opportunities to PRACTICE new skills safely
- Clearly identified leadership for crisis support and reflective processing (Compassionate Accountability)
- Regular focus on self-care



# Applying Knowledge of Trauma Informed Practices to Challenging Behavior

*(Safe Practice)*

## Priming Videos:

<https://youtu.be/bM6Kb2q8Dho>

<https://youtu.be/QbFlfYCBs0M>

## Instructions:

1. Complete, if you haven't already, the Hot Button activity sheet (found [HERE](#)) to be conscientious of your personal triggers
2. Within your grade level team or with others in a similar developmental age range of students, please complete the following reflections and questions on the Google doc provided. Please assume the student in the scenario is at or near **the grade you level you teach**.
3. Here is an additional link to another video that may also offer insight (7:38 minutes).  
<https://youtu.be/QbFlfYCBs0M>

1. Please save your Google doc onto the shared drive. Please save your document under your relevant grade level group, i.e. “ECE-Kinder” or “Grades 4-5” depending upon how the breakout rooms shake out.
2. *Please note the sequencing of these questions related to the scenario provided, as this sequence represents the process we hope each of you will integrate into your interventions and which can be replicated in the future when you need to reflect upon challenging behavior in your classrooms.*
3. For each of the questions below, please document responses for all members of your group. Names do not need to be included or paired with the responses, please just capture the whole groups’ experiences.



## Student Scenario:

Emilio is a new student, from Louisiana, joining your class 1-2 months after the start of the school year. Little is known about the student except that his mom is a single mom with three other children ages 3, 12, and 16. The emergency contact his mother listed at enrollment is a case manager from a local non-profit service agency, there is no other next-of-kin identified and his record has a red flag that his father is not authorized to pick him up or to have any contact.

On the first day in your class he presented with eyes opened-wide, lots of watching of others, quickly following instructions, and keeping his words to a minimum. You observed him making a new friend with another student in class during recess and he willingly joined a game with other students ½ through recess time. Quiet in his demeanor, albeit a bit “spacey,” Emilio’s academic records indicate that he struggles with literacy and verbal expression but seems to excel in math. By all accounts he seemed to join the classroom community well and has been a pleasure to have in class for his first couple of weeks at School.

## Student Scenario (Continued):

The Monday of his third week, Emilio enters your classroom with the sleeve of his sweatshirt in his mouth, soaked from drool and his eyes cast down toward the ground. He promptly took his seat and followed the directions for your morning activity. At the start of your literacy lesson, about mid-morning, Emilio put his head down on his desk and his sweatshirt hood over his head. Emilio did not follow your directions to pair up with another student. You checked-in with him and give him a personalized request to start working with his peer. Emilio glares at you and then quickly looks away, goes and sits with his partner, but does not say anything.

His peer tries to engage him with the assignment. You begin your rounds around the room assisting students. Suddenly, Emilio is standing over his peer partner who is laying on the floor and Emilio has his hands around the other student's neck. You yell his name instantly running towards him, "Emilio! Hands off – We do not lay hands on each other in this classroom." He quickly stands and furtively looks around the classroom as he is breathing hard and walks out of the classroom....

## Questions to Guide Your Intervention Design:

1. Given this scenario, please “try on” this experience as if it was really happening in your classroom. Identify whether any of your hot buttons may be pushed by this student’s behavior. If there is a trigger behavior that resonates with you, please consider how you usually respond internally to the said trigger.
  - a. What feelings come up for you?
  - b. What thoughts about the student arise?
  - c. What thoughts arise about yourself?
  - d. What do you notice about the sensations in your body in response to the stress?
  - e. What can you do to help yourself in that moment to self-regulate some and bring your prefrontal cortex thinking back “online?”

2. Please consider the student in question's stage of development. [HERE](#) is a document that may help guide you as you note the typical and relevant (to the behaviors in question) social-emotional milestones and capacities for this age.

3. Remembering the ACEs (Adverse Childhood Events) study – are there any indicators that this student may have experienced trauma?

4. Now consider the scenario and tune into this student's state of central nervous system arousal.

a. Does this student appear hyper-aroused, hypo-aroused, or regulated? Is this student demonstrating that he/she is in a stress response of fight, flight or freeze? Does the student appear to be feeling safe?

b. What are some indicators in the student's behavior that lead you to this conclusion?

5. Consider the information you learned about using a Neurosequential State Model approach (Review of this information on the shared drive found [HERE](#) and [HERE](#)). Based upon what you determined about this student's central nervous system state, what is recommended as THE FIRST STEP to take in working towards supporting this student? What could you do next?

6. Remember the video that quickly highlighted the primary functions of behavior as 1) Escape demands /Avoidance, 2) Sensory Based 3. Want Something / Obtain, 4. Attention. What might be a function of this student's behavior? In other words, why might this student be engaging in these behaviors? While the behaviors may be "maladaptive" to your classroom environment, what NEED might this student have that could be met in a appropriate way?

7. Given all the above reflections, what actions could you, as the teacher, take to help increase the quality of your relationship with this student?

8. What steps could you take to build the home to school connection to foster understandings?

9. Given this scenario, which behaviors might you focus in on to intentionally redirect or help the student learn a new skill for self-management around?

10. Consider the list of common strategies used in classrooms today below. Which of these strategies might be relevant to try and why? Add three more of your own ideas!

## COMMON STRATEGIES:

- **Personalized Visual Schedule**
- **Limited choice (aka Class expectation is no gum you can throw it away in this trash can or that trash can and you get 2 pts whichever you choose if you make the basket!)**
- **Chill Zone or Cozy Corner -time in“**
- **First /Then Board**
- **Restorative conversations in circle times**
- **Peer pairing / peer buddy**
- **1:1 time**
- **Personalized calm down tools**
- **Zones of Regulation check-in**
- **Incentive points**
- **Positive affirmation: verbal, notes or calls home, bragging to the whole class about student**
- **Cue cards**
- **Sensory breaks (engage in heavy work, take a nap or walk, headphones, wiggle/yoga zone**
- **Class level problem solving œEX. how to we -take turns“ or teaching the skill of what you want to see in student behaviors**
- **Anchor object from home (picture of parent, stuffy, blanket, toy, phone)**
- **Transition warnings**
- **Class jobs (opportunities for student to hold value and purpose)**

11. Try writing a SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Timely) goal around ONE of the challenging behaviors.

*Thank you so very much for your time and consideration as you work to integrate these concepts. This document may be utilized again and again (with your own student scenarios) in the future to assist in reflections, processing, and planning around challenging behavior. Please create your own copy and keep it handy.*

*Lastly, you may find this STUDENT INVENTORY document “What Helps My Student Feel Calm” helpful as you get to know your students and track their behavior and responses to different circumstances throughout the school day. This can function as a student inventory that you can add to as the school year progresses. Imagine how much you will know and understand about your students using your Trauma-Informed eyes!*

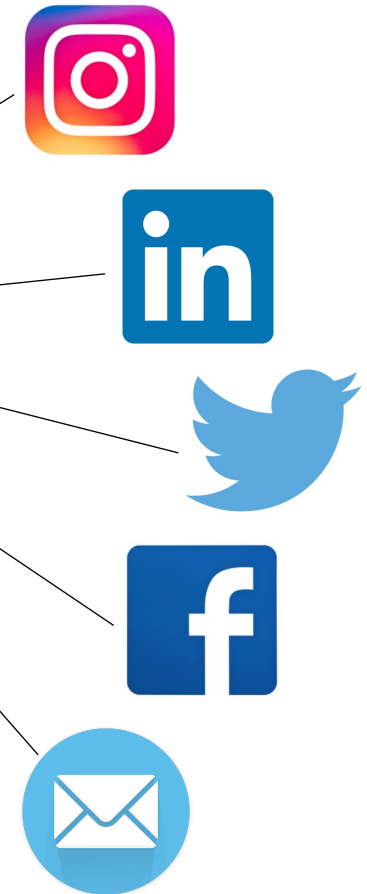
*Questions? Tamera Ford, LCSW 720-300-7234*



# Stay Connected

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Scan this QR code to follow us on Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter, and Facebook. You can also join our e-mail newsletter!



# Becoming a Trauma-Informed School

*THANK YOU!*



Mountain Plains (HHS Region 8)

**MHTTC**

Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network  
Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration