ESS partners with school districts to help them implement culturally inclusive mental health and behavioral support programs that help improve care, strengthen outcomes, and maintain students in their home district.
Housekeeping

- Materials presented today use information from:
  - The National Child Traumatic Stress Network
  - Child Mind Institute
  - SAMHSA
  - Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL)
  - Effective School Solution Practices

- Asking Questions

- Take care of yourself
Topics We’re Going to Cover

1. Impact of traumatic stress on children and adolescents
2. 10 Tips on how to support students in the classroom
3. Self care for teaching staff and for students
4. The role of blended mental health models during COVID-19
5. Resources/Referrals you can turn to when concerned about a student
Impact of Traumatic Stress on Children and Adolescents
What is Traumatic Stress?

Childhood traumatic stress occurs when violent or dangerous events overwhelm a child’s or adolescent’s ability to cope.

Traumatic events may include:

- Neglect and psychological, physical, or sexual abuse
- Racism
- Race related injury/threat by another
- Discrimination
- Natural disasters, terrorism, and community and school violence
- Witnessing or experiencing intimate partner violence
- Commercial sexual exploitation
- Serious accidents, life-threatening illness, or sudden or violent loss of a loved one
- Refugee and war experiences
- Military family-related stressors, such as parental deployment, loss, or injury

Source: SAMHSA
Like adults, children are experiencing new or intensified stressors as a result of the pandemic, including loss of routine, separation from friends and extended family, and increased anxiety and frustration.

Some more extreme stressors:
- Food insecurity
- Job loss of caregiver
- Loss of parent or loved one
- Not being able to engage in rituals
- Extreme illness in the household
- Exposure to abuse

Source: SAMHSA
## Signs of Traumatic Stress

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Reactions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Preschool**                 | • Fearing separation from parents or caregivers  
• Frequently crying and/or screaming  
• Eating poorly and losing weight  
• Having nightmares                                                                                                                                 |
| **Elementary School Students** | • Becoming anxious or fearful  
• Feeling guilt or shame  
• Having a hard time concentrating  
• Having difficulty sleeping                                                                                                                                 |
| **Middle and High School Students** | • Feeling depressed or alone  
• Developing eating disorders and self-harming behaviors  
• Beginning to abuse alcohol or drugs  
• Becoming sexually active                                                                                                                                 |

Source: SAMHSA
Impact of Child Traumatic Stress

- Learning problems, including lower grades and more suspensions and expulsions
- Difficulty regulating their emotions and focusing on learning
- Lack of skills necessary to regulate their behaviors and recognize their own actions
- Inflexibility and outbursts for no apparent reason
- Increased use of health services, including mental health services
- Increased involvement with the child welfare and juvenile justice systems
- Long term health problems, such as diabetes and heart disease

*Trauma is a risk factor for nearly all behavioral health and substance use disorders*

Source: SAMHSA, Child Mind Institute
“What happened to you?”

vs.

“What’s wrong with you?”
10 Tips on How To Support Students in the Classroom
Tip #1
Patience, Tolerance and Reassurance

• The classroom starts with you
• Remain calm and deal with your own worry and anxiety
• Use coping skills to calm yourself
• Children will follow both verbal and non-verbal reactions
• Plan for SEL that you will use in your classroom
• Plan for how to manage if a student does not have a face covering on
• Don’t complain in front of students
Tip #2
Misbehavior is a symptom

- Behavior is communication
- Behavior has function
- Behavior occurs in patterns
- Behavior can be changed
  - Manage antecedents
  - Reinforce desired behavior
  - Teach a replacement behavior
  - Respond to a student’s inappropriate behavior in a way that deters it

Source: Child Mind Institute
Tip #3
Environmental Interventions

- Warm lighting
- Increase natural lighting if possible
- Reduction of florescent lights
- Sound machines
- Decrease wall hangings (mindfulness of what is hung)
- Temperature regulation
Tip #4
Transition Time Interventions

- Play soft music
- Be present in the hallways during passing time
- Connect with student during passing time
- Ring a singing bowl to stop activities
- Keep students informed of changes to the schedule
- Post daily schedules
- Greet students at the door using names
- Leave a note on the student’s desk
- Have struggling student come to the classroom before school
- Plan lunch with student
- Assign mentor to student
• “Good morning, Charlie! It’s great to see you today.”
• “Charlie, you’ve made my day by coming to my class.”
• “Charlie, just checking in with you to see how it’s going. Anything I can help you with?”
• “Charlie, I have to tell you...I am so appreciative of your positive attitude. You’ve really changed things around. I am so proud of you.”
Taped pacing area
• go.noodle.com
• Gallery walks
• Think-Mix-Pair-Share activities
• Walk and Talk
• Face covering breaks
Tip #7
Remember Your Nonverbal Cues

- Paralleling
- Proximity
- Posture
- Pace of response
- Eye contact
- Facial expressions
- Tone of voice
- Gestures
- Extended exhales
- Length of sentences
Tip #8
Teach Social Emotional Learning

- The goal is self awareness and self regulation
- Model emotional regulation
- Recognize and validate emotions
- Have strategies in place for de-escalating
- Use those strategies for yourself
- Teach brain health
- Incorporate mindfulness practices
- Teach and model empathy and active listening skills
- Normalize emotions
- Practices such as check-ins, circles, greetings, and sharings will help to create a sense of security and routine
Rather than asking students about what they did over the summer, consider these questions instead:

○ What do you **LOVE** about learning?
○ What do you most **LOOK FORWARD** to this school year?
○ What are three **AWESOME** things about yourself?
○ What is one thing you’d like your teacher and classmates to **KNOW ABOUT YOU**?
○ What is **SOMETHING NEW** you’d like to make, create, try, build and/or learn about?
Tip #9  
Classroom Strategies

• Provide consistency and structure
• Create new classroom rules or contracts
• Reframe discipline problems into teachable moments
• Timely interventions in conflicts and hurtful exchanges
• Support families by relaying positive information and resources
• Teaching and modeling of empathy and active listening skills
• Explore stress-management strategies to diffuse tense situations and help students process feelings in the moment
• Give students opportunities to demonstrate their strengths
Tip #10
Connect to Parents/Caregivers

• The power of positive phone call home
  • Identify yourself
  • Immediately assure the parent you are not calling for a negative reason
  • Tell them the good news
  • Resist the temptation to talk about challenges
  • Do not energize negative behaviors. Even if you are dealing with negative behavior from this student, this is not the time to address it.
  • Thank them for their time.
Self care for teaching staff and for students
How Educators Feel Right Now

Anxiety

N = 5000
Webinar Participants
March 23-24

Source: Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning
Self Care

- Realize
- Recognize
- Respond
  - Proper Rest
  - Nutrition
  - Exercise
  - Stress reduction activities
  - Self-care accountability buddy system
- Model self care
- Be kind to yourself
The Role of Blended Mental Health Models during COVID-19
What is a Blended Mental Health Model for Schools?

• A Blended Mental Health Model is a form of mental health delivery that seamlessly combines in-person and virtual services.

What Flexibility Does a Blended Mental Health Care Offer?

• With Hybrid learning, districts need to prepare and implement flexible, powerful mental health safety nets that are equally effective in supporting students both in-school and at home, in the same way that they are providing blended delivery models for academic programming.
Resources/Referrals You Can Turn To When Concerned About A Student
Resources

• SAMHSA Disaster Distress Helpline at 1-800-985-5990
• SAMHSA Disaster Distress Helpline texting TalkWithUS to 66746
• The Crisis Text Line by texting TALK to 741741
• National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK
• Autism Response Team 9am to 5pm in all time zones at 1-800-AUTISM2
• In Spanish at 1-888-772-9050
• Make a list of local resources
• Effective School Solutions
Questions?
WHEN SOMEONE ASKS WHY ANYONE WOULD EVER BECOME A TEACHER, REMIND THEM WHY IT'S WORTH IT. EVERY JOB HAS ITS UPS AND DOWNS, BUT NOT EVERY JOB CAN CHANGE A LIFE.