

Creating Trauma Informed Classrooms

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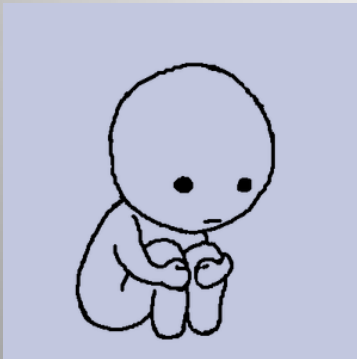
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illinois
action for
children

Children Exposed to Trauma (CET) What does it mean?

- One time episode vs. regular ongoing exposure
- Impacts all children regardless of race, class, geographic location, family background
- Violence
 - Home, community, media
- Abuse and/or Neglect
 - Physical, emotional, psychological, or sexual
- Accidents
- Medical needs
- Natural disasters
- Homelessness
- Death or loss of loved one



Trauma's Impact on Children

- Survival instincts: Fight, flight, or freeze
- Developmental impacts: Socially, emotionally, cognitively
- Behavioral changes: Regression, aggression, withdrawal, personality changes
- Increased likelihood of expulsion



What do CET need?

- Safe, secure, and loving relationships
- Consistency
- Predictability
- Protection
- Patience
- Supportive relationships with parents
- Safety, safety, safety



What are Trauma Informed Classrooms?

- Caregivers who are positive, loving, and patient – Who “Get Them”
- Environments that create safe, predictable, calm, cozy spaces
- Activities that allow children to explore feelings, develop skills, and PLAY
- Teaching social-emotional skills
- Maintaining relationships with family

How do we support the teachers?

- Compassion fatigue
- Need for support, reflection
- Education and information on trauma
- Time to think, plan, collaborate
- An ear to listen, an extra set of hands to help, eyes to observe



Resources

- Illinois Childhood Trauma Coalition - <http://illinoischildhoodtrauma.org/>
- NCTSN - <http://www.nctsn.org/category/location/Illinois>
- Barr Harris Children's Grief Center - <http://barrharris.org/>
- Caregiver Connections - <http://www.caregiverconnections.org/>

But Let's Be Real...

- Not enough resources
- Parents not always ready or comfortable - May take time
- Access issues
- Your role is essential to helping children exposed to trauma!



Next Steps

- Thinking about your program...
 - What are you already doing to support CET?
 - What 3 things will you take with you from today's sessions to use in your program?



Conclusion and Questions

- “Anything that’s human is mentionable, and anything that is mentionable can be more manageable. When we can talk about our feelings, they become less overwhelming, less upsetting, and less scary. The people we trust with that important talk can help us know that we are not alone.”

— [Fred Rogers](#)

