WORKING WITH TRAUMA-AFFECTED AND SUICIDAL YOUTH: BUILDING PERSONAL AND TEAM RESILIENCE

Illinois School Psychology Internship Consortium
Suicide Prevention Showcase
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Karen Flint Stipp PhD & Kyle Miller PhD
Illinois State University
1. Consider self-care as an antidote to stress and trauma, for school professionals and the youth they serve

2. Identify and explore self-care practices for building and sustaining personal & team resilience

3. Reflect on current stress-management strategies; Create or update self-care plans for building and sustaining resilience

4. Recognize active ingredients in evidence-based suicide prevention programs and consider applying them in culturally relevant ways with population & setting

OBJECTIVES
TRAUMA AFFECTS ANYONE IN THE ROOM (TIER 1?)

Secondary Trauma: Acquired through relationship with people who carry trauma

trauma event/stress: adequate promotive factors in facing threat; exclusion

TRAUMA: physical violence/injury from people who should give care; invasive medical procedure

CHRONIC TRAUMA: extended threat; lack of basic resources; abandonment/oppression
INTERSECTION OF I94 & I55: A TRAUMA & RESILIENCE STORY
INTERSECTION OF
TRAUMA & PROMOTIVE
FACTORS

► TRAUMA or trauma
► Promotive (care) factors:
  ▪ Problem-solving skills
  ▪ Consultation/Care: IDOT guy!
  ▪ Family/friend supports
  ▪ Nutrition, hydration, warm bath
  ▪ Financial resources; time off work

► Secondary Trauma:
  IDOT guy?
DSM-5 neglects to mention the:

- Trauma effects of disrupted attachment may persist into adolescence and adulthood
- Intersection between trauma and other high-suicide risk disorders - major depressive disorder, OCD, borderline personality disorder – brief mentions of high comorbidity)

Research indicates:

- Similar neurology for trauma and for other disorders with high suicide risk; perhaps causation
  (Ball & Links, 2009; Cattane et al., 2017)
Trauma disrupts neural pathways
- for hours or days (trauma/stress)
- for months or years (TRAUMA)

Neurons can develop new paths (at any age)

Brain plasticity means that brains can change; people can change

Promotive factors support healing
Promotive Assets: Positive factors within the person, self-efficacy, self-esteem, health  (Zimmerman, 2013)

Promotive Resources: Positive factors outside the person  (Zimmerman, 2013)

- **for students:** family; shelter/safety; mentors; supportive peers; opportunity to build skills; self-care
- **for school professionals:** family/friends; shelter/safety; colleagues/peer consultation; knowledge & skills; administrative support; self-care
Unresolved TRAUMA, or even trauma, can spiral a minor stressor into a fight-flight-freeze dysregulation.

Students are not just “pushing our buttons”; their dysregulation affects us.

This tier 1 begins before the school day.

PROTECT YOUR BUTTONS
WORK/LIFE BALANCE: FOUR BURNERS
**BIO (PHYSICAL) SELF-CARE**

- **breathe**
- **hydrate & nourish**
- **sleep**
- **move**
Insight Timer

Sleep

Around one in three people suffer from mild insomnia. If you wake consistently at night...

Sort  Length  Filters

Night Shift automatically shifts the colors of your display to the warmer end of the color spectrum after dark. This may help you get a better night’s sleep.

Scheduled

From 10:00 PM  To 7:00 AM

Manually Enable Until Tomorrow

COLOR TEMPERATURE

Less Warm  More Warm

Warmer settings may affect the appearance of some onscreen motion.
PSYCHOLOGICAL (EMOTIONAL) SELF-CARE

Speak kindly to yourself
Recognize:
► This moment
► Ways you’re okay
► Ways you’re not okay

SEEK CARE
Care for the people you care about

“Vent” selectively

Make time for people who bring joy

Show grace; have mercy

SOCIAL SELF-CARE
SPIRITUAL SELF-CARE

- Find meaning
- Create: Sing, write, dance, draw, pray, play, build
- Rejoice; celebrate
- Find ways to love this work . . . even in failure
INTELLECTUAL SELF-CARE

- Attend events (musical performances, special lectures, plays)
- Visit museums & exhibits
- Engage in stimulating conversation
- Play stimulating games
- Read!
- Carefully select movies and TV
SET GOALS... BUT ADJUST AS NEEDED

"GOOD DAY" TO-DO LIST
- Go for a run
- Grocery shop
- Return shoes
- Go to post office
- Fold laundry
- Clean toilets
- Call utility company
- Mow lawn
- Schedule dentist
- Try that Indian recipe

"HARD DAY" TO-DO LIST
- Eat something. Anything.
- Shower if possible.
- Drink water
- Email my therapist
- Try to rest
- Feed the dog
- Be gentle with myself

UPDATE OR CREATE A SELF-CARE PLAN
PROTECT YOUR COLLEAGUES’ BUTTONS
Professional Learning Communities: Collaborative cycles of inquiry and action that require continuous educator learning (Stoll, Bolam, McMahon, Wallace & Thomas, 2006; Popp & Goldman, 2016)

Consultation Teams for Professionals Working with Suicidality: Mirrors the therapeutic process in terms of a dialectical approach and the balance of acceptance and change (Waltz, Fruzzetti, & Linehan, 1998)

Adapt collaboration & consultation for work with trauma, to decrease suicidality (Adapted from SAMHSA) . . .

TRAUMA-INFORMED LEARNING COMMUNITIES
(ADAPTED FROM SAMHSA)
- Recognize trauma in community:
  - Find support from school & community specialists
  - Administrator buy-in with peer supervision structure/time; encouraging usage of EAPs/“mental health” days; professional development
- Realize trauma responses in self & colleagues
- Respond to colleagues’ difficult encounters with safety; help each other regulate in their best ways e.g. breathing, reframing, being mindful
- Resist re-victimization: normalize secondary trauma experiences; plan next steps

TRAUMA-INFORMED LEARNING COMMUNITIES
(ADAPTED FROM SAMHSA)
Peer Supervision (adapted for schools from NCTSN)

- Include specialists as peers
- Develop team routines for reflecting on trauma responses
- Select a model, e.g. Psychological First Aid: reflectively listen, protect, connect
- Structure group resilience-building activities, e.g. group mindfulness, yoga, walking, writing/creative exercises

TRAUMA-INFORMED LEARNING COMMUNITIES
(ADAPTED FOR SCHOOLS FROM NCTSN)
CONSIDER A TEAM-CARE PLAN
I'VE MADE IT A PRIORITY TO PRACTICE SELF-CARE SO THAT I NEVER LOSE MY FIGHT OR DRIVE TO INSPIRE CHANGE FOR OTHERS.

#truthytuesday with Letitia Elizabeth
REFERENCES


SAMHSA (2017, October 11). SAMHSA addresses trauma by supporting community programs throughout US. Retrieved from https://newsletter.samhsa.gov/2017/05/16/trauma-informed-communities/


