STUDENT AGGRESSION AWARENESS – PART II

TRAUMA INFORMED MANAGEMENT OF ESCALATED STUDENT BEHAVIOR AND SELF CARE STRATEGIES FOR EDUCATORS

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Founder, Innovative Behavioral Consulting, LLC

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www.pswctup.org
De-escalation Practices Through a Trauma Responsive Lens

TOVAH DENARO (SHE/HER)

INNOVATIVE BEHAVIORAL CONSULTING, LLC
Hello!

- Tovah Denaro (she/her)
  - MS.Ed.
  - Doctoral Candidate, USC
Agenda

- De-escalation and self reflection
- Trauma and Alarm Reactions
- Self Care (light)
- Behavior as Communication
- De-escalation tips in the moment
Objectives

Learn Learn to remain in control.

Learn Learn to avoid the wrong response which can make the situation worse.

Learn Learn to support anyone, anywhere, with any issue.

Learn Learn specific strategies to walk away with today, to support youth and yourself at all levels of the escalation.
Our Brain

- Thinking brain
- Brain that controls emotions
- Survival brain

**Basic Needs**

Figure 1. Key areas of the brain (Image © 2014 Soteris).
To begin...

UNDERSTANDING TRAUMA AND BRAIN DEVELOPMENT
Alarm Reactions

- Fight
- Flight
- Freeze
- Fawn
In the chat…

Is there ever a time when stress is beneficial to you?
The Stress Cycle

Baseline

Alarm

Optimal Performance Range

Exhaustion

Optimal performance range
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cognitive Distortion</th>
<th>Thinking patterns</th>
<th>Behavior Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Victim Mindset</td>
<td>All about me&lt;br&gt;Personal attacks&lt;br&gt;Poor me&lt;br&gt;Why do things keep happening to me</td>
<td>Allow crisis to occur&lt;br&gt;Self-fulfilling prophecy&lt;br&gt;Blaming&lt;br&gt;Denial&lt;br&gt;Guilt&lt;br&gt;Negative self-talk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polarity mindset</td>
<td>Thinking in extremes&lt;br&gt;- Everything is “the end of the world.”&lt;br&gt;- Nothing is of consequence.</td>
<td>Create crisis to feel better&lt;br&gt;Not flexible&lt;br&gt;Doesn’t see perspectives&lt;br&gt;Stuck with one strategy&lt;br&gt;Responds in extremes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional mindset</td>
<td>I feel it, therefore it is true</td>
<td>Emotional outbursts&lt;br&gt;Power struggles&lt;br&gt;Passive aggressive&lt;br&gt;Angry and frustrated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perfectionist</td>
<td>Nothing is ever good enough. Nothing meets your standards.</td>
<td>Always think you are right&lt;br&gt;Step on other’s toes&lt;br&gt;Attack leadership&lt;br&gt;Overall unhealthy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Inside-out change

Changing your way of thinking and responding in order to make a difference in the situation at hand.
Individuals who maintain a high level of wellness can cope more effectively with crisis.
In the chat...

WHAT DO YOU DO FOR SELF CARE?
“There is no better Tier 1 intervention than that of a healthy adult.”

- Dr. Adam Saenz, author of “The Power of a Teacher: Restoring Hope and Well-Being to Change Lives”
Compassion Fatigue

"Compassion Fatigue is a state experienced by those helping people in distress; it is an extreme state of tension and preoccupation with the suffering of those being helped to the degree that it can create a secondary traumatic stress for the helper."

Dr. Charles Figley
Professor, Paul Henry Kurzweg Distinguished Chair
Director, Tulane Traumatology Institute
Tulane University, New Orleans, LA
ONE DOES NOT SIMPLY

AVOID COMPASSION FATIGUE
Why Do We Need to Talk About This?

- “The body keeps the score…”
- Allostatic Load = The body’s ability to maintain balance (homeostasis) under stress
- Consistent flight/fight/freeze mode means our allostatic load is too high
- High Allostatic Load = Body Functions Less Effectively
It’s not just work. There’s so much more at play that is compounding what we are feeling right now...

- Inconsistent Messages
- Expectations
- Social Issues
- Politics
- Educational Hot Topics

SO MUCH UNCERTAINTY

What is Impacting Us?

Tovah Denaro, Innovative Behavioral Consulting, 2022
Feeling helpless and hopeless

A sense that one can never do enough

Hypervigilance (compounded by screentime)

Diminished creativity

Inability to embrace complexity
Compassion Fatigue (CF) refers to the profound emotional and physical erosion that takes place when helpers are unable to refuel and regenerate.

Vicarious trauma (VT) was coined by Pearlman & Saakvitne (1995) to describe the profound shift in world view that occurs in helping professionals when they work with clients who have experienced trauma. Helpers notice that their fundamental beliefs about the world are altered and possibly damaged by being repeatedly exposed to traumatic material.

Burnout is a term that has been used since the early 1980s to describe the physical and emotional exhaustion that workers can experience when they have low job satisfaction and feel powerless and overwhelmed at work. However, burnout does not necessarily mean that our view of the world has been damaged, or that we have lost the ability to feel compassion for others.
Compassion Fatigue
- Exhaustion from giving emotional + mental resources

Burnout
- Happens slowly
- Caused by extreme, consistent stress that is not managed/addressed
- You’re in “survival mode”
- Often mislabeled or misdiagnosed as depression

Vicarious Trauma
- Contagious, caused by exposure to trauma of others
- Happens quickly
- Causes a shift in a person’s worldview/opinions

All 3 are Stress Responses

Symptoms can overlap

Tovah Denaro, Innovative Behavioral Consulting, 2022
Avoiding these Stress Responses
Building a relationship with each student is the precursor for building classroom community

"...the foundation of culturally responsive instruction is not technical, but relational. It’s about authentic caring." - Zaretta Hammond

“There is no more effective neurobiological intervention than that of a safe relationship.” Dr. Bruce Perry PhD, MD
Differentiation of Relationships

Relationships are like a bank account:

• One cannot withdrawal from a youth until deposits have been made

• Once one has made sufficient deposits into the relationship, one can skillfully withdrawal for a variety of purposes
Relationship Rule

Know youths’ motivations and triggers.

Am I the best person to be de-escalating the youth?

• What support system is in place?

Know and follow any plan* that is already in place.
One response does not fit all

- When we engage, we need to consider:
  - Proactive
  - Holistic
  - Immediately effective
One response does not fit all

The intervention must meet the needs of our youth

We must constantly reflect respect on the youth

The safety of everyone in the environment is our highest priority
Unplug the power struggle

- Only engage when you and the youth are in a place to connect appropriately
- Assess yourself in the situation
  - Be open to input from your team
- Work on meeting the youth’s need vs requiring compliance
## Shifting focus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Short-term focus</th>
<th>Long-term focus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intervention</td>
<td>Prevention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reaction</td>
<td>Know now what to prevent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seek shifting relationship</td>
<td>Build lasting relationship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety resolution (not problem resolution)</td>
<td>Problem resolution</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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To shift focus we need to understand…
Behavior is communication

- What is the function of the behavior?
- What is the youth trying to gain?
- What is the youth trying to avoid?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To gain</th>
<th>To escape/ avoid</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attention (peers or adults)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Something tangible (time on the iPad)</td>
<td>Something tangible (work)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sensory*</td>
<td>Sensory*</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Sensory* indicates sensory input or output.
Pathway Chart: How Additional Stress and Challenges can Compound Behavior

Setting Events
Increase likelihood the trigger will provoke behavior

Trigger
What happens right before the behaviour which provokes it

Problem Behavior
Main behavior of concern that are maintained by the same consequence

Maintaining Consequences
The function or purpose of the problem behavior
Examples of Setting Events

- FIGHT AT HOME
- POOR SLEEP
- NOT EATING ENOUGH IN THE MORNING
- ACES AND TRAUMA
Examples of Triggers

- Loud noises
- Unfamiliar adults
- Smells
- Losing
- Undesired lunch options
- Challenging work
- Being last
- A change in routine
- Being unable to communicate what they really want
Preventative Strategies

Prevention is the dominant paradigm in behavior management
Escape or Avoid Task or Environment

Adjust difficulty of the task

- Offer Choice
- Increase youth interest in the activity
- Alter the length of the task
- Modify the mode of task completion
- Increase predictability
- Modify instructional delivery
- Provide non-contingent escape
Provide alternative sensory reinforcement

Enrich environment

Gain Sensory Reinforcement
Schedule a preferred transitional activity

Increase accessibility to preferred item/activity

Provide desired item or activity contingent on an alternative appropriate response, or only when challenging behavior is not present.
<table>
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<th>Schedule attention</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increase proximity to youth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide preferred activity when attention is not available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide attention contingent on acceptable behavior or the non-occurrence of the challenging behavior</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Tips In The Moment

- Be Empathetic, Non-Judgmental
  - When someone says or does something you perceive as weird or irrational, try not to judge or discount their feelings. Whether or not you think those feelings are justified, they’re real to the other person. Pay attention to them.
Tips In The Moment

- **Respect Personal Space**
  - If possible, stand 1.5 to 3 feet away from a person who’s escalating. Allowing personal space tends to decrease a person’s anxiety and can help you prevent acting-out behavior.
Use Nonthreatening Non-verbals

The more a person loses control, the less they hear your words—and the more they react to your nonverbal communication. Be mindful of your gestures, facial expressions, movements, and tone of voice.
Paralanguage
Tips In The Moment

► Avoid Overreacting
  ► Remain calm, rational, and professional. While you can’t control the person’s behavior, how you respond to their behavior will have a direct effect on whether the situation escalates or defuses.
Tips In The Moment

▶ Focus on Feelings
  ▶ Facts are important, but how a person feels is the heart of the matter. Some youths have trouble identifying how they feel about what’s happening to them. Watch and listen carefully for their real message.
    ▶ I see you are really upset about this.
    ▶ I hear your frustration. Talk to me about it.
  ▶ VALIDATION IS CRITICAL
Tips In The Moment

- Ignore Challenging Questions
  - Answering challenging questions often results in a power struggle. When a person challenges your authority, redirect their attention to the issue at hand.
Set Limits

If a person's behavior is belligerent, defensive, or disruptive, give them clear, simple, and enforceable limits. Offer concise and respectful choices and consequences.
Tips In The Moment

Choose Wisely What You Insist Upon
It’s important to be thoughtful in deciding which rules are negotiable and which are not

Choice needs to be reflective of what the youth wants
Tips In The Moment

- Allow Silence for Reflection

  While it may seem counterintuitive to let moments of silence occur, sometimes it’s the best choice. It can give a person a chance to reflect on what’s happening, and how he or she needs to proceed.
Tips In The Moment

► Allow Time for Decisions
  ► When a person is upset, they may not be able to think clearly. Give them a few moments to think through what you’ve said.
Thank You!

For more support: tovah@innovativebehaviors.org

www.innovativebehaviors.org
QUESTIONS?
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Website: Innovativebehaviors.org

In Association with:
Puget Sound Workers’ Compensation Trust and the Puget Sound Educational Service District
September 1, 2022
Upcoming Training Opportunities

**Mold In Schools I: Fact Vs. Fiction**
- Presenter: Dr. Pyam Fallah, PhD, Idehl Laboratories
- Date: June 2, 2022
- Time: 10:00AM - 12:00PM
- Location: Teams Webinar
- Register Here

**Mold In Schools II: Handling Mold Exposure Claims**
- Presenter: Tim Reeve, Attorney, Reeve Law Firm
- Date: July 14, 2022
- Time: 10:00AM - 12:00PM
- Location: Teams Webinar
- Register Here

**Mold In Schools III: Mold And Water Remediation**
- Presenter: Michelle David, Sr. Industrial Hygienist, Wood, Plc
- Date: August 4, 2022
- Time: 10:00AM - 12:00PM
- Location: Teams Webinar
- Register Here

**Fall Educational Workshop (In Person/Hybrid)**
- Presenter: Nancy Bernard, WA State DOH
- Date: October 26, 2022
- Time: 8:00AM - 3:00PM
- Location: Teams Webinar
- Register Here

**Mold In Schools I: Fact Vs. Fiction**
- Presenter: WCT/UP Loss Control Team
- Date: September 29, 2022
- Time: 10:00AM - 11:00AM
- Location: Teams Webinar
- Register Here

**Student Aggression Awareness I: Emotional Intelligence for Classroom Safety**
- Presenter: Reginald Reed; Principal, Relife School
- Kim Sanders; President, UKERU Systems & COO, Grafton Integrated Health Network
- Date: September 1, 2022
- Time: 10:00AM - 12:00PM
- Location: Teams Webinar
- Register Here

**Student Aggression Awareness II: Emotional Intelligence for Classroom Safety**
- Presenter: Tovah Denaro, Innovative Behavior Consulting, Tacoma WA Health Network
- Date: October 20, 2022
- Time: 10:00AM - 12:00PM
- Location: Teams Webinar
- Register Here

**Student Aggression Awareness III: Emotional Intelligence for Classroom Safety**
- Presenters: PSESD Student Support Services
- Date: November 3, 2022
- Time: 10:00AM - 12:00PM
- Location: Teams Webinar
- Register Here

**WA State DOH: School Environmental Health and Safety**
- Presenter: WCT/UP Loss Control Team
- Date: September 29, 2022
- Time: 10:00AM - 11:00AM
- Location: Teams Webinar
- Register Here
AVAILABLE MEMBER SERVICES

Worker Compensation Trust
- Claim Intake / Reviews / Investigation
- Compensability Determination
- Disability Management / Vocational Rehabilitation
- Exposure Analysis
- Incident Reporting
- Legacy Claims Management
- Industrial Hygiene
- Litigation Management
- Loss Control and Prevention
- Management Reporting
- Medical Cost Management
- Return-to-Work Planning

Unemployment Pool
- Claim Management
- Compliance Management
- Legislative Updates
- Management Reporting
- Review, Hearings, Appeals
- Training & Education
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We appreciate your time and participation!

We invite you to complete the post-event survey.

Your feedback will inform our efforts to continually enhance the value of these events!
Please complete our survey and share your thoughts on today's training.