Building Trauma Informed Schools and Communities
WHERE ARE WE NOW?

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Where have we been?

Trauma – Informed Schools
One of the most important things you can do for a traumatized child is provide a safe and caring relationship!
Senate Bill 638
Trauma informed schools initiative

- To consult with the departments of mental health and social services for assistance in fulfilling the requirements of this section (161.1050)
- To provide information regarding the trauma-informed approach to all school districts
- To offer training on the trauma-informed approach to all school districts
- To develop a website about the trauma-informed schools initiative that includes information for schools and parents regarding the trauma-informed approach and a guide for schools on how to become trauma informed schools
A workgroup of stakeholders and content experts regarding Youth Suicide Prevention and Awareness, Bullying and Trauma Informed Schools/Communities was convened to address Missouri House Bill 1583 and Senate Bill 638.

The Workgroup met in October 2016 and February 2017 with subcommittee work continuing as needed.
DESE Legislative Workgroup

Department of Mental Health
Missouri School Teacher Association
American Foundation for Suicide Prevention
Missouri Consultant for Education
Missouri National Educator Association
Missouri Kids First
Avery’s Angels Foundation
Missouri School Board Association
Missouri Center for Education Safety
Missouri Association of Elementary School Principals
Hook Center for Educational Research
Missouri Association of School Administrators
Missouri School counselor Association
Kids Under Twenty One
St. Louis Regional Health / Alive and Well STL
Department of Social Services
School Social Workers Association of Missouri
Missouri Association of Rural Education
Missouri Association of School Psychologists
CHADS Coalition for Mental Health
Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services
Missouri Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence
Truman Medical Center
Missouri Developmental Disabilities Council
Community Partnership of the Ozarks
St. Louis Mental Health Board
Character Plus
Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
Legislative Workgroup

- Met two times as a whole group
- Divided in to three subgroups
  - Trauma-Informed
  - Bullying
  - Youth Suicide Prevention and Awareness
Pursuant to Missouri Senate Bill 638, Section 161.1050
Website

Each school district shall provide the address of the website to all parents of the students in its district before October first of each school year.

Motraumaschools.com
The implementation of a trauma-informed approach is an ongoing organizational change process. A “trauma-informed approach” is not a program model that can be implemented and then simply monitored by a fidelity checklist. Rather, it is a profound paradigm shift in knowledge, perspective, attitudes and skills that continues to deepen and unfold over time. Some leaders in the field are beginning to talk about a “continuum” of implementation, where organizations move through stages. The continuum begins with becoming trauma aware and moves to trauma sensitive to responsive to being fully trauma informed.

**Purpose:** To ensure that agencies do no harm; to assess the implementation of basic principle of trauma-informed approaches in various organizational settings; to develop a common language and framework for discussion; and to help increase the effectiveness of services, wherever and whatever they are, by increasing awareness of trauma.
Missouri Student Survey
https://dmh.mo.gov/ada/rpts/survey.html

Youth Risk Behavior Survey
https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/data/yrbs/index.htm

DMH Status Report on Mental Health
https://dmh.mo.gov/ada/rpts/status.html

Know the culture and climate of your school and community. Trauma is pervasive across all communities.
Missouri Trend Data

Suicide Deaths: Missouri Residents, 2000-2015

Alcohol Induced Deaths: Missouri Residents, 2000-2015

Drug Induced Deaths: Missouri Residents, 2000-2015
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavior: Last 30 Days (% reflects &quot;1+&quot; answer)</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>County</th>
<th>MO data</th>
<th>'14 County</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Missed whole day(s) of school because you skipped or cut</td>
<td>17.5%</td>
<td>29.0%</td>
<td>24.5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not go to school because you felt you would be unsafe at school or on your way to or from school</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carried a weapon such as a gun, knife or club on school property</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rode with someone who was drinking alcohol</td>
<td>10.8%</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>12.4%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavior: Last 3 Months (% reflects &quot;1+&quot; answer)</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>County</th>
<th>MO data</th>
<th>'14 County</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spread mean rumors or lies about other kids at school</td>
<td>19.2%</td>
<td>22.9%</td>
<td>23.5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posted something online or sent a text that might embarrass or hurt another student</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
<td>16.5%</td>
<td>15.6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Made fun of other people</td>
<td>42.4%</td>
<td>54.1%</td>
<td>48.2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hit, shoved, or pushed another student and was not fooling around</td>
<td>13.7%</td>
<td>15.5%</td>
<td>14.4%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavior: Last 12 Months (% reflects &quot;1+&quot; answer)</td>
<td>'16 County</td>
<td>MO</td>
<td>'14 County</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
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<td>------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Been bullied on school property</td>
<td>32.1%</td>
<td>28.8%</td>
<td>37.6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Were in a physical fight</td>
<td>14.5%</td>
<td>17.3%</td>
<td>17.3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Been threatened or injured with a weapon such as a gun, knife or club on school property</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
<td>7.4%</td>
<td>6.4%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Considered suicide</td>
<td>14.7%</td>
<td>13.9%</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planned suicide</td>
<td>10.5%</td>
<td>9.9%</td>
<td>8.1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attempted suicide</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Depression: Past Month (% reflects often + always)</th>
<th>'16 County</th>
<th>MO</th>
<th>'14 County</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Was very sad</td>
<td>24.2%</td>
<td>22.7%</td>
<td>21.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Was grouchy or irritable, or in a bad mood</td>
<td>30.7%</td>
<td>33.6%</td>
<td>20.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felt hopeless about the future</td>
<td>14.4%</td>
<td>13.5%</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felt like not eating or eating more than usual</td>
<td>21.8%</td>
<td>21.7%</td>
<td>16.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felt like sleeping a lot more or a lot less than usual</td>
<td>23.1%</td>
<td>24.8%</td>
<td>17.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had difficulty concentrating on school work</td>
<td>23.2%</td>
<td>29.6%</td>
<td>19.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Community Resources

Community Mental Health Center

- MU Extension
- Hospitals
- Law Enforcement
- Business Leaders
- Ministerial Alliances
- United Way

**Schools cannot do this alone**
Where are we now? Trauma – Informed Schools
School Guidance for the Missouri Model (Trauma Informed)

- Initial Review by the Missouri Trauma Roundtable August 2018
- Review by educational leaders from Missouri September 2018
- Review of changes by Missouri Trauma Roundtable October 2018
- Collaboration of DESE, DMH, and Missouri Trauma Roundtable for soft rollout January 2019
A trauma-informed school is not simply a school where staff know about trauma, or a school where there is a therapeutic classroom or additional counseling staff. A trauma-informed school fundamentally has changed the way it works to promote healthy, resilient learners capable of disrupting the cycle of trauma in their lives and communities and creating more equitable outcomes.
Trauma-Informed Schools

Schools working to become trauma informed must address all aspects of their work, including:

- Student discipline
- Employee wellbeing
- Building environment
- Parental engagement
- Community partnerships
- Racism and inequity
- Curriculum design

- Decision-making strategies
- Assessment and measurement
- Transportation
- Food service
- And many, many more...
Moving Towards Trauma Informed

• Step 1: Universal Trauma Training
• Step 2: Creation of a Trauma Team
• Step 3: Ongoing practice, culture, policy, and systems change
Role of Leadership

• Building and district leadership is what makes the difference in the trauma-informed process
• Building and district leaders should be the leaders of their trauma teams
• Leaders must model trauma-informed practices and principles in their behavior and supervision
Step 1 - Universal Trauma Training

• In order to build a common vocabulary and build readiness in the staff, it is important to provide an introductory training to ALL staff including support staff and administration. (Trauma Aware)
An introductory training should include:

1. Defining trauma
2. Community and historical trauma
3. Stress Response System (Fight, flight or freeze)
4. Prevalence
5. Adverse Childhood Experience Study
6. Effect of trauma on the developing brain and body
7. Long term impacts on health, behavior and learning
8. Impact of trauma through the lifespan
9. The potential for healing and power of resilience
10. Changing the question from “What is wrong with you” to “What happened to you”
Step 2 - Create a Trauma Team

- Becoming trauma informed requires the buy-in and investment of people in your school. A core team of 5-10 individuals should analyze the existing practices and policies, create action plans and implement change. The team should present a diverse set of viewpoints. School leadership MUST be a member of the team. (Trauma Sensitive)
Sample Trauma Team

1. Principal
2. Instructional Coordinator
3. School Counselor/Social Worker
4. Classroom teacher
5. Other teaching or support staff (including office staff, food service, custodial staff and other support roles)
6. Parent and/or student
7. School Nurse
8. Community Partner

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Step 3 - Ongoing Change (program, practice and policy)

• It is important to understand the starting point of your school. No two schools are alike so no two journeys will be the same.
• Success is a process and not a destination.
• Start with changes in knowledge → changes in practice → changes in culture → changes in policy → changes in systems.
• (Trauma Responsive – Trauma Informed)
The journey to becoming trauma informed is not a linear one, and there is no single roadmap or checklist to complete. The goal of the indicators is to help school leaders understand the process.

Indicators are listed with rubrics:

Stage 0: Pre-trauma Aware
Stage 1: Trauma Aware
Stage 2: Trauma Sensitive
Stage 3: Trauma Responsive
Stage 4: Trauma Informed
School leadership and staff demonstrate an understanding of the impact and prevalence of trauma in daily practice.

An equity lens is applied to all programs and policies to address bias and the impact of historical trauma and systemic oppression.

Students are given age-appropriate information about stress, trauma, and emotional/behavioral regulation and opportunities to develop new coping tools.

Staff have access to needed supports, including coaching, consultation, and meaningful professional development: benefits that support their health and well-being, necessary materials and resources; and administrative support in prioritizing self-care.
Schools actively, appropriately, and meaningfully engage parents and caregivers in relevant educational opportunities and decision making at all levels.

Discipline practices and policies support restoring and repairing community, addressing the unmet, underlying needs driving behavior, exercising compassion, and supporting a culture of accountability.

Students are given meaningful and developmentally appropriate leadership and decision-making opportunities, particularly around issues that directly impact their experiences and education.

Staff have access to meaningful leadership opportunities and are supported in trying new and innovative techniques to support students.
Indicators

- Schools actively, appropriately, and meaningfully partner with community organizations to meet the needs of students and staff.
- Curriculum design across grade levels and subject areas supports the trauma-informed process.
- Human resources and supervision practices, including hiring, performance management, and employment transitions reflect the principles of trauma-informed care.
- Schools have a system in place to continually evaluate and improve practices and policies.
Universal trauma training – baseline training with all staff

Community building practices – morning meetings, community circles, intentional culture building

Prioritizing staff needs – quiet/cool down space, teacher breaks, EAPs

Changing discipline – restorative practices, reducing suspensions, changing ISS to focus on reflection and social and behavioral skill building

Creating space to regulate – sensory, calming and cool-down spaces for students

Connecting community – provide with education about trauma and self-care, involving them in decision-making processes, and positive relationship building.