

Trauma Informed Culture and School Absenteeism

Crittenton Children's Center

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Addressing Chronic School Absenteeism



- Trauma informed culture where students and staff feel safe and supported
- Collaborative communication with parents, children and staff to understand and address the underlying factors contributing to absenteeism
- Track early warning signs and address quickly with emphasis on at risk children by age 5

What is Trauma

- “An event, series of events or set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or life threatening and that has lasting adverse effects on the individual’s functioning and mental, physical, social, emotional or spiritual well-being (SAMHSA).”

Trauma and How the Brain Works



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Impact and Prevalence

- Adverse childhood experience scores are highly correlated with high school non-completion, unemployment, and poverty in adulthood.
- Estimated 26% of healthy children experience a trauma event by age 4
- Of the 309, three to five year old children who received Crittenton Trauma Smart® therapy in 2015-16, 68% had experienced 3 or more traumatic incidents.
- According to the 2016 Childhood Trust Events Surveys completed for all 3rd and 4th graders enrolled in one KC elementary school, 96% experienced at least one traumatic event and 74% experienced four or more.

Trauma & Toxic Stress in Johnson County

- 22,497 on Medicaid each month
- 19,625 receiving food assistance monthly
- 7,986 reports made to the child abuse and neglect hotline
- 562 children in foster care
- SafeHome received 4,487 hotline calls related to domestic violence/assault



Benefits Experienced by Trauma Informed Schools

- Decreased Suspensions and expulsions
- Improved attendance
- Improved academic performance
- More effective help for children, families and staff members overcoming adversity
- Evidence also suggest addressing adversity early impacts health and life opportunities that resonate across generations

Trauma Informed Care Approach

Schools undertake a paradigm shift at the staff and organizational level to recognize, understand and address the learning needs of children impacted by trauma.

Schools are committed to shaping school culture, practice and policies based on five guiding principles.

Missouri Model Principles of Trauma-Informed Care

- **Safety:** physical and emotional safety, recognizing and responding to how racial, ethnic, religious, gender and sexual identity may impact safety
- **Trustworthiness:** genuine relationships and practices that build trust
- **Choice:** maximize choice, addressing how privilege, power and historic relationships impact both perceptions and ability to act upon choice.
- **Collaboration:** transparency and self-determination to efforts to minimize impact inherent in power differentials
- **Empowerment:** encouraging self-efficacy, identify strengths and skills that lead to individual pathways to healing and thriving

Trauma Continuum

Trauma Aware

Trauma Sensitive

Trauma Responsive

Trauma Informed



Trauma Smart[®] in Action

Trauma Informed Care Leadership Efforts

Guided Process including organizational assessment, goal setting, planning, monitoring and evaluation

Staff Training

20 hours of training for all staff

Refresher training for all staff in subsequent years

Coaching/Consultation

Coaching support for all agency staff as they implement concepts from the training in their classroom or work

Parent/Primary Caregiver Education

Educational workshops designed to assist parents in implementing Trauma Smart[®] concepts with their children at home

Therapy for Children In Need

On-site assessment and therapy services for identified children and psycho-education for their parents provided by licensed clinician



PANEL QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION