

YES WE MUST COALITION
COLLEGE SUCCESS FOR ALL

Strategies for Creating Trauma Responsive Institutions

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The Why Question First

- ▶ Are we “catering to students” and not helping them develop independence?

Simple answer: NO!

- ▶ More than educators should care about trauma’s impact: workplaces, healthcare providers, mental health urgent care clinics.

Reasons: Academic, physical, psycho–social success

Here are some data points:

22% of children in the US (15.6 million young people) have had at least two adverse events that will have a negative impact on their well-being.

Almost 50% of all children in the US have had one adverse event, which translates into 34.8 million individuals.

Levels of childhood trauma vary significantly among the states. For example, 23% of children in New Jersey have experienced two or more adverse events while that number rises to 44% on Arizona.

70% of adults have experienced at least one traumatic event in their lives, which translates into 223.4 million people.

What is Trauma? On this we do not agree!

Many different definitions, which makes
remediation difficult.

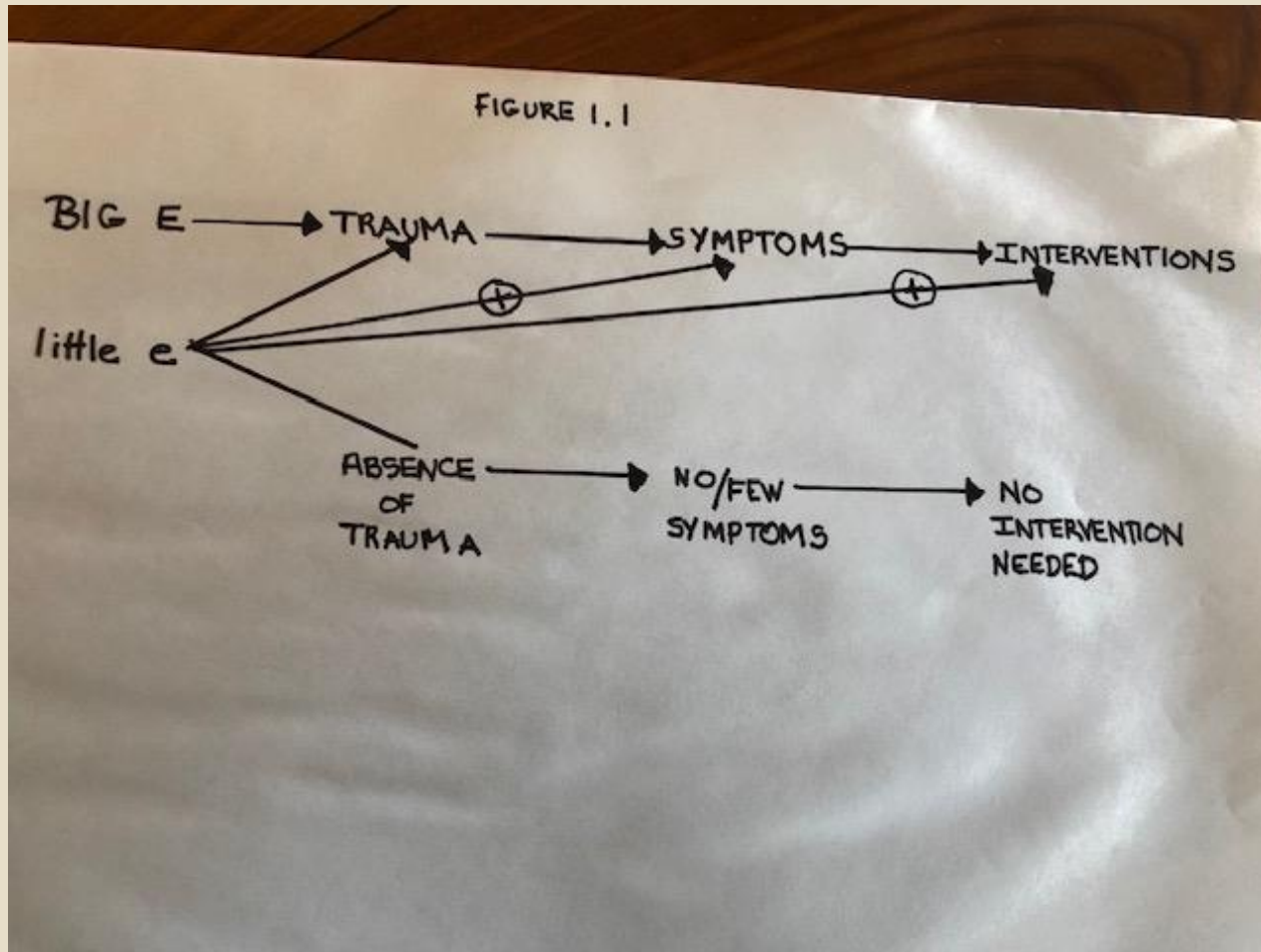
Definition of Trauma

- ▶ *Trauma is any significant psychologically distressing experiences, including acts of omission and commission and regardless of whether these experiences are recognized by those who encounter them, occurring at any point or points in the life of a person that have the probability of disrupting his or her success and quality outcomes in an ongoing manner throughout the person's life.*

Big T/Little t/ Big E/Little e

- ▶ We have created a distinction between Big T and little t trauma. It doesn't seem satisfactory; it does not add to our understanding.
- ▶ Instead, we would do better to focus on Big E and little e, with the E/e standing for the word "events."

Big E/little e

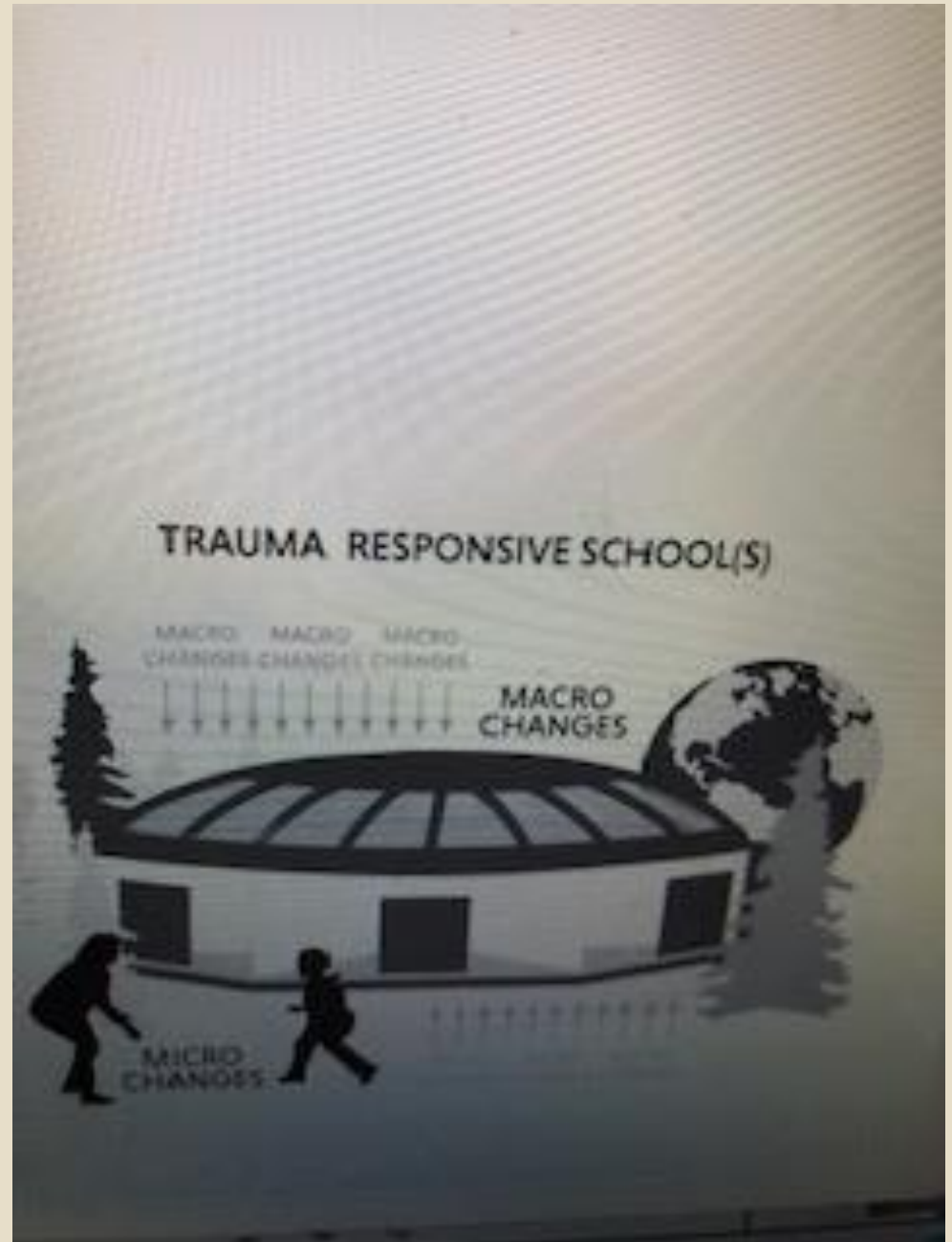


How Change Happens

- ▶ Change is hard; becoming a trauma responsive institution is hard but doable.
- ▶ Change options are: top down; bottom up; both top down and bottom up.
- ▶ Think about the 3 A's: Actions, Activities and Approaches

Effect of Macro and Micro Change

Need both. One
without the other
is incomplete



The Three A's

- ▶ Approaches
- ▶ Actions
- ▶ Activities

Ten Strategies for Creating Trauma Responsiveness in an Institution

- ▶ 1. Recognizing trauma symptomology and its impact. It is tri-phasic: dysregulation; separation (isolation); overregulation.

Approach

- ▶ 2. Think about new employees and how they are oriented. Where are mission and values shared?

Approach and Action

Wearing a Trauma Lens

- ▶ Look at Poemotion books and what they represent.
- ▶ What we see/name can change.
- ▶ The value of “trauma” perspective is palpable.

Consider this image from a medical setting and its message. How/where can this be replicated in education?



Continued....

- ▶ 3. Messaging from leadership: meet and greet; open door; free access; elimination of punitive approaches to mistakes made; central space that's safe

Approaches; Action

- ▶ 4. Operating from strength position (of institution) not weakness; what we do right and well, not where we fail.

Approach

Continued....

- ▶ 5. What does space say? How does it message? What is on the walls? What is in the halls? What is in the stairwells?

Approach; Action

- ▶ 6. Strategies for space: collaboration; installations; unique colors; play tables – Playmobil article

Activities

- ▶ 7. Consider floors (chalking); consider halls and messages; consider doorways; bells; drills

Activities



Continued....

- ▶ 8. Personalization; cards and caring; calls; walk the halls; ask questions; gift giving culture

Activities

- ▶ 9. Vicarious and Secondary Trauma Impacts

Activities

Look at this image



Try this one



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Continued....

- ▶ 10. Connections; engagement; reciprocity

Approach; Activity

Case Study

- ▶ Benefits
- ▶ Trigger Warning
- ▶ Individual and Group engagement
- ▶ Learn by doing
- ▶ All perspectives matter
- ▶ Link theory and practice

Bottom Line: What we need to do:

- ▶ Name
- ▶ Tame
- ▶ Frame

THIS IS:

- ▶ Doable
- ▶ Short term
- ▶ Reflective and revisionary

Bibliography

- ▶ https://www.wilder.org/sites/default/files/imports/VOA_TraumaReport_1-17.pdf
- ▶ Destroying Sanctuary by Sandra L. Bloom et al. (Oxford 2010) Note there is a series on a sanctuary model that can be deployed in organizations, including creating and restoring sanctuary.
- ▶ Trauma Doesn't Stop at the School Door by Karen Gross (Columbia TC Press June 2020) Pre-order now available and code for free shipping is: TCP2020
- ▶ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK207191/>
- ▶ <https://medium.com/age-of-awareness/playmobil-workplaces-and-trauma-ae86241a1079>
- ▶ <https://medium.com/age-of-awareness/missing-pieces-and-filling-holes-finding-solutions-to-enable-student-success-a31f0475592d>

Thank You

- ▶ Reach out if you have questions or want to contact me.

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