

Trauma-Informed Education:

*Establishing a Culture of Care for
Students Impacted by the Foster
Care System*

Meet Your Presenters



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- Education
- Housing
- Economic Mobility



Training Goals

Understand **trauma** and its impact on student development

Employ **effective educational practices** for students impacted by foster care and trauma

Obtain knowledge and tools to create environments that promote **student success and wellbeing**



JOHN BURTON
Advocates
for Youth

The Opportunity Before Us

- **Commitment to deeper learning** for positive, meaningful culture change for all
- **Designing structures, practices and policies** that are trauma-informed and student-centered
- **Creating impactful engagement and spaces** to establish a culture of care and belonging

"Create a comprehensive support ecosystem for foster youth."

-CO Memo December 2022



"[The CO] strongly encourages colleges to take a **student-centered approach** in the implementation by focusing on **shifting [the] burden** of navigation, application and coordination from students to institutions, ensuring students' receipt of **necessary services and support**, and strengthening students' sense of **unconditional belonging** within our institutions."

"[The CO] strongly recommends that the districts and colleges design local implementation with a bias towards **increasing access** and **removing student friction points**."

"Develop, mature and **redesign student interactions** in ways that **shift burdens from students to institutions** and **strengthen unconditional belonging**."

Foster Care Experiences

Abuse and/or neglect

Removal from home

Separation from family/siblings

Instability: multiple placements

Frequent changes in school

Taneil on Early Life Experiences



Trauma

The National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN) defines trauma as:

An intense, recurring, and/or prolonged event or events that threatens or causes harm to an individual's emotional and/or physical well-being



What Roles Does Trauma Play?

1

It is estimated that 90% of youth in foster care have experienced at least one traumatic event.

2

Abuse and/or neglect inflicted by a primary caregiver has a pervasive impact on attachment, identity formation, and the ability to think, learn, and concentrate.

3

Experiencing trauma initiates the stress response cycle (aka “fight, flight, or freeze”). With repeated traumatic exposure, this response can be stuck “on.”

Chronic Exposure to Traumatic Events



Taneil on College Experiences



Disproportionate Impact: What Makes Foster Youth Students Different?

Developmental trauma & mental health

Academic & relationship disruptions

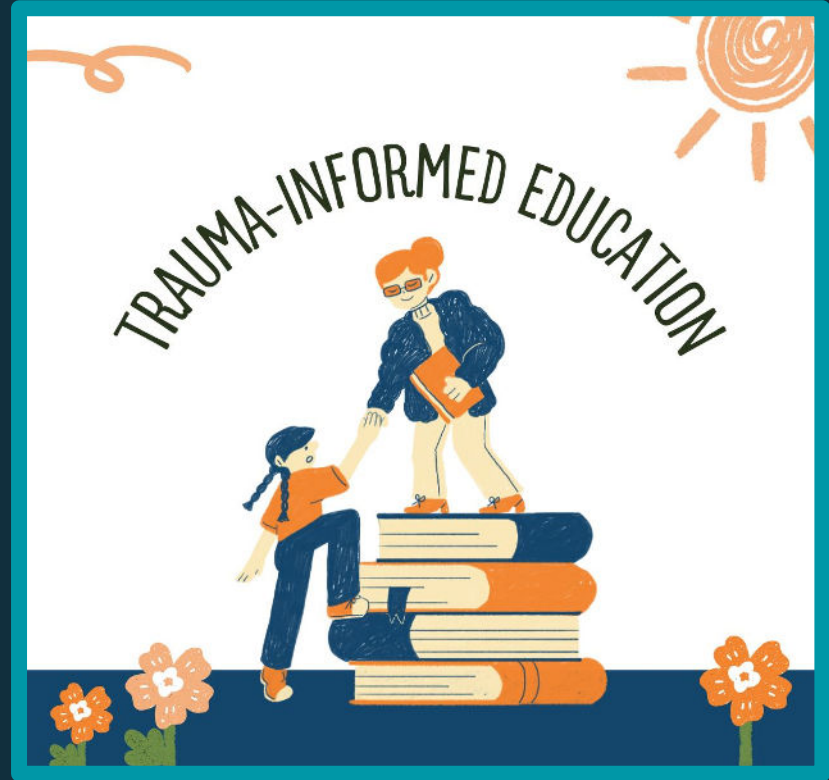
Institutionalization

Family privilege and skill gaps

Food and housing insecurity

Intersectionality

What do we do?



Trauma Informed Care

- Recognize trauma and understand its impact
- Create safe environments (and relationships!) to support learning
- Practice effective self-management
- Support programmatic and institutional efforts



5 Principles for a Trauma Informed Environment



Safety



Choice



Empowerment



Collaboration



Trustworthiness

Relationship-Based Practices

Power Sharing

- **Respect me:** Take students' perspectives and ideas seriously
- **Include me:** Involve students in decisions that impact them
- **Collaborate with me:** Work with students to solve problems and reach goals
- **Create opportunities for me to lead:** Offer support and encouragement

Transparent Communication

- Share information on the **what, how, and why** to improve students' understanding



Relationship-Based Practices

Unconditional Positive Regard

- Treat students as innately worthy of respect
- Understand they're more than their behavior
- Accept they're doing their best, without judgment

Safety/Trust

- Show care for students' well-being
- Respect boundaries
- Be mindful of nonverbal cues
- Empower students to make decisions



Behaviors that Transform



Start with students being heard



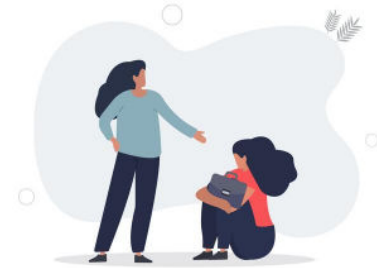
Involves persistence over time



Requires you to be real



Involve challenging your students



Work with and through crisis

Taneil on Relationship-Based Practices



Connection

“The energy that exists between people when they feel **seen**, **heard**, and **valued**; when they can give and receive **without judgment**; and when they derive sustenance and strength from the **relationship**.” –Brené Brown

Schlossberg's Transition Theory

- **Transition:** any event, or non event that results in changed relationships, routines, assumptions and roles.
- **3 types of transitions to consider:** Anticipated, Unanticipated, and Non-event transitions.
- **4 S's:** factors that influence a person's ability to cope with a transition
 - Situation, Self, Support, and Strategies

4S's of Student Support

Situation

What is happening?
What is the student's
perception of the
change (positive,
negative, or neutral)?

Strategies

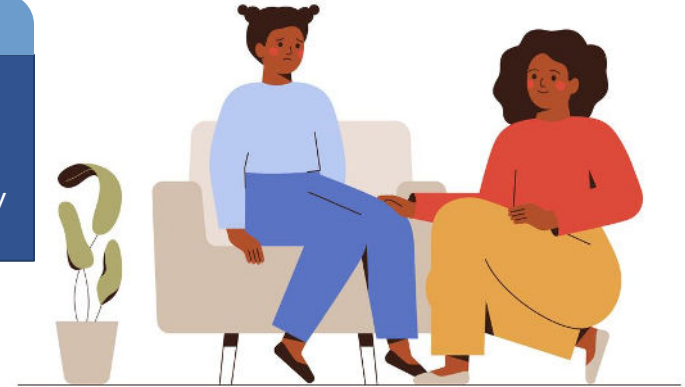
What coping
mechanisms and
behaviors does the
student use to manage
their transition?

Self

Who the student is
(Identity)? What is their
optimism level? How do
they deal with ambiguity
and adversity?

Support

Who are the people and
what are the assets that
strengthen and encourage
the student?



Paradigm Shifting

1. Create welcoming environments that meet students' needs and validates their experiences
2. Think beyond institutions of higher learning and focusing on deeper learning
3. Build intentional relationships with students and campus stakeholders
4. Develop trauma-informed policies and practices to better support students and their access to resources



“Changing how we
see people
changes people.”

–Robyn Gobbel

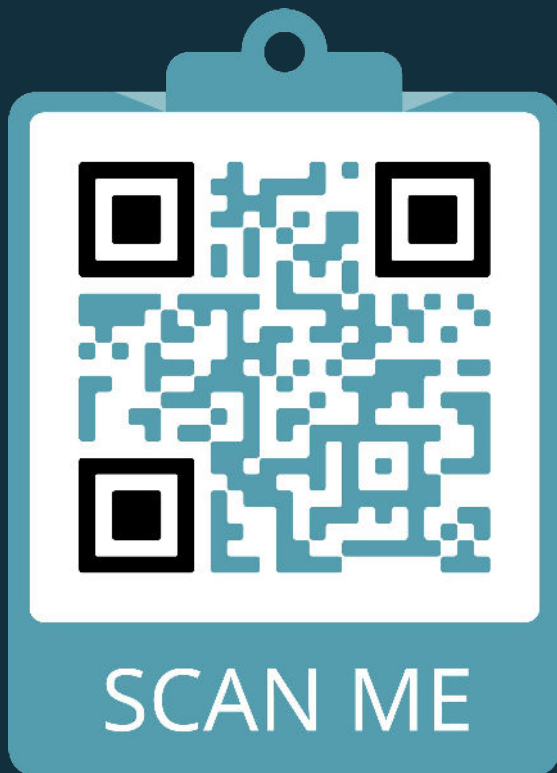
Pledge to Scholars

I pledge to...

- Take a student-centered approach
- Listen with sensitivity and understanding
- Prioritize connection and support
- Create opportunities for leadership
- Be a safe person they can trust
- Strengthen unconditional belonging
- Practice relentless hope
- Measure success by every healing interaction



Resources & References



Contact Us:

For more information on the training or resources, please contact info@JBAY.org



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THANK YOU

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