Sandra L. Bloom, M.D.
Dornsife School of Public Health, Drexel University

But you are participating in a movement much broader than this...

A cross-sector effort to address childhood trauma, access to primary care and family engagement.
Integrating education, health, and community to support the whole child.

WHAT YOU ARE ALL DOING IS HUMAN RIGHTS WORK

WHAT HISTORY TELLS US

Denial

Defense mechanism of the immature mind, because it conflicts with the ability to learn from and cope with reality.

It’s important that you know what you are up against...

It’s hard to accept the truth when the lies were exactly what you wanted to hear.
DEADLY DENIAL

Denial of fact
Denial of cycle/pattern
Denial of responsibility
Denial of impact
Denial of awareness
Denial of denial

WHEN WAS THE LAST NATIONAL TELETHON TO RAISE MONEY FOR KIDS / FAMILIES WITH HIGH ACES????
HOW ABOUT FOR KIDS WHO HAVE BEEN SHOT OR LOST A FAMILY MEMBER/FRIEND TO GUN VIOLENCE????

WHEN WAS THE LAST NATIONAL TELETHON TO RAISE MONEY FOR KIDS / FAMILIES WITH HIGH ACES????
HOW ABOUT FOR KIDS WHO HAVE BEEN SHOT OR LOST A FAMILY MEMBER/FRIEND TO GUN VIOLENCE????

BREAKING THROUGH DENIAL

WHAT ALL THIS STUFF ABOUT TRAUMA IS REALLY ABOUT

STRESS, ADVERSITY AND TRAUMA TOUCHES EVERYONE’S LIFE

The more it happens....
The longer it lasts.....
The earlier it starts.....
The more trust is betrayed....
The more it’s at the hands of other people....
The more challenging its effects

WE ARE POISONING OUR CHILDREN:

If you water a seedling with poisoned water....
It may not die, but it will not thrive....
And it will be vulnerable to many future problems.
As will the health and well-being of its offspring

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BEHAVIOR PROBLEMS
ACROSS THE LIFESPAN

WHAT WE PAY ATTENTION TO
WHAT WE PAY FOR

TRAUMA AND LOSS
CHRONIC HYPERAROUSAL
CHRONIC INFLAMMATION
CHILDHOOD ADVERSITY
FAMILY DYSFUNCTION
SOCIAL DYSFUNCTION
STRUCTURAL VIOLENCE
HISTORICAL TRAUMA

PARTNERSHIP FOR RESILIENCE
An interconnected, complex, adaptive, living world

FILLED WITH PEOPLE WHO HAVE HAD ADVERSE INDIVIDUAL, GROUP AND INTERGENERATIONAL TRAUMA AND ADVERSITY

Children
Adults
Families

Lack of basic safety/trust
Loss of emotional management
Problems with cognition
Problems with authority and the use of power
Confused sense of justice and social responsibility
Inability to grieve and anticipate future

TRAUMA-ORGANIZED

Trauma as a central organizing principle of human thought, feeling, belief, and behavior that is largely overlooked in existing explanations of and responses to human behavior.

It’s not “What’s wrong with you?”
It’s “What happened to you?”

Foderaro, 1991

WHO IS SUPPOSED TO CREATE AND SUPPLY THESE COMPLEX STRATEGIES?

Parents and families
Teachers
Other Caregivers
Mental health workers
Child welfare workers
Corrections officers, probation, parole, law enforcement
Healthcare providers

PARTNERSHIP FOR RESILIENCE
DENIAL OF WHAT IS REQUIRED?

- Secure, reasonably healthy adults,
- With good emotional management skills,
- With intellectual and emotional intelligence,
- Able to actively teach and be a role model,
- Are consistently empathetic and patient,
- Able to endure intense emotional labor,
- Are self-disciplined, self-controlled and never abuse power.

And how are the teachers doing?

- Inadequate preparation
- Lack of funding and support in most stressed districts
- Burn-out as a major problem

SYSTEMS UNDER STRESS

- Historical trauma
- Loss of industry
- Social splitting
- Poor communication
- Too much to do
- Poor funding

WORKPLACE STRESS

- Inefficient
- Too much to do
- Poor communication
- Demands
- Poor policies

AND THEN THERE IS PAST ADVERSITY

AN INFORMAL SURVEY: Out of 350 people working in social services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Psychological abuse (Parents)</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical abuse (parents)</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexually abused</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional neglect</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical neglect</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substance abuser in household</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separated from one/both parents</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Witnessed DV</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imprisoned household member</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

- On average, 1.7 million workers are injured each year
- 48% of all nonfatal injuries from occupational assaults and violent acts occurred in health care and social services.
- After law enforcement, persons employed in the mental health sector have the highest rates of all occupations of being victimized while at work or on duty.
In 2014, there were about 486,400 nonfatal violent victimizations at school among students 12 to 18 years of age. Approximately 9% of teachers report that they have been threatened with injury by a student from their school; 5% of school teachers reported that they had been physically attacked by a student from their school. A growing proportion of the U.S. workforce will have been raised in disadvantaged environments that are associated with relatively high proportions of individuals with diminished cognitive and social skills. Knudsen, Heckman et al. (2006) Proceedings of the National Academy of Science

To be a community must include EVERYONE: A Whole Culture Approach

All with exposure to:
- Adverse Childhood Experiences
- Relentless stress
- Traumatic past or present experience

Organizations, like individuals, are living, complex, adaptive systems and that being alive, they are vulnerable to stress, particularly chronic and repetitive stress. Organizations, like individuals, can be traumatized and the result of traumatic experience can be as devastating for organizations as it is for individuals.
ORGANIZATIONAL HYPERAROUSAL

WHEN EVERYTHING IS A CRISIS

LACK OF SAFETY AND BASIC TRUST

COMMUNICATION BREAKS DOWN
FEEDBACK LOOPS ERODE
RISK INCREASES

LOSS OF EMOTIONAL MANAGEMENT

INTERPERSONAL CONFLICT INCREASES
TASK CONFLICT DECREASES
ORGANIZATIONAL DISSOCIATION

- Difficulties with learning under stress
- Failure to integrate important information
- Tacit knowledge not replaced; explicit knowledge falsified
- Labeling that restricts new formulations
- Self-fulfilling prophecies
- Filtering out trauma
- Deterioration of memory
- Reenactment of failed strategies

SILOS INCREASE

ORGANIZATIONAL LEARNING DISABILITIES

ORGANIZATIONAL AMNESIA

- Loss of memory

ORGANIZATIONAL REENACTMENT

- Leaders become more authoritarian
- Withdraw from staff
- Know increasingly less about what is going on below them
- Become more punitive
- Participatory leaders may be replaced by petty tyrants

LOSS OF PARTICIPATION INCREASED TURNOVER

- How to get away?
**LOSS OF COMPLEX THINKING SKILLS**

- Silencing of dissent
- Authoritarianism
- HOSTILE WORKPLACE
- Increased aggression
- Bullying as norm

**DEMORALIZATION**

**SYSTEM COLLAPSE**

**TRAUMA-ORGANIZED SYSTEM**

When two or more systems – whether these consist of individuals, groups, or organizations – have significant relationships with one another, they tend to develop similar thoughts, feelings and behaviors.

K. K. Smith et al. 1989

**LEARNED HELPLESSNESS**
PARTNERSHIP FOR RESILIENCE

PUBLIC HEALTH APPROACH TO LIVING SYSTEMS

PRIMARY: Trauma-informed
- Universal knowledge about trauma, adversity and its effects on all living systems

SECONDARY: Trauma-responsive
- Policies and practices in place to minimize damage and maximize opportunities for healthy growth and development in all populations at risk.
- Context for healing and recovery

TERTIARY: Trauma-specific
- Free up energy, integrate full biographical narrative, safe exploration of new modes of being

CREATE, MAINTAIN, PRESERVE A SAFETY CULTURE

PHYSICAL
MORAL
PSYCHOLOGICAL
SOCIAL

SCHOOL CLIMATE

Research has demonstrated that improving school climate is an effective, if not the most effective method for reducing and preventing school violence.

Accumulated Wisdom
Largely unconscious
Organizational Culture

FUNDAMENTAL DILEMMAS FOR CHANGING CULTURE IN LIVING SYSTEMS

Failure to understand the nature of living systems
Flawed understanding of the nature of change
Failure to recognize that all change involves RISK and COST

KEY STARTING POINT

pattern of shared basic assumptions that a group has learned as it solved its problems, and that has worked well enough to be considered valid and taught to new members

How we do things around here

Changes in Organizational Culture are achieved by changing patterns of ideas, and ways of thinking of the accumulated wisdom of a group. The process of change requires a willingness to relinquish old assumptions and a readiness to adopt new ones.
PARTNERSHIP FOR RESILIENCE

KRIS GUTIERREZ 2018

ATTRACTION TO GREATER HEALTH

A state of optimum regulation and adaptive functioning of body, mind and relationships that depends on the integration of function.

A HEALTHY SYSTEM

Has a clear and obtainable mission that is driven by a shared, well-articulated vision.

MISSION DRIVEN, TRAUMA-RESPONSIVE ORGANIZATION

An organization that counteracts the short-term and long-term effects of stress, adversity and trauma on its administrators, staff, and the people it serves while staying true to its mission, expanding social justice and improving the health and well-being of all organizational stakeholders.

A HEALTHY SYSTEM

- Is driven by a coherent, practiced, shared value system.
- The values are modeled by leadership.
- The values can be seen in routine daily behavior.
- The values are embedded in the public presentation of the organization.

TRAUMA-RESPONSIVE VALUES

Sanctuary Commitments
Apply to everyone and all decisions
At the heart of creating trauma-responsive systems
PARTNERSHIP FOR RESILIENCE

A HEALTHY SYSTEM

Has authoritative leaders
Do their best to model system values with integrity
Count on others’ input for decisions
Know who and when to include in decisions
Try to lead consensus whenever possible
Set high expectations and reward good performance
Do not play favorites

A HEALTHY SYSTEM

Leaders assume responsibility, acknowledge others’ accomplishments.
Leaders value the power of organizational culture.
Leaders who want to work with decentralized authority and distributed power and can also make decisions.
Leaders who promote the self-organizing properties of organizations.
Recognize their own system as a living system.

TRAUMA-RESPONSIVE ORGANIZATION

Leadership makes long-term commitment to trauma-informed change.
Leadership commits human and nonhuman practical resource
Leadership solicits and organizes a representative implementation team that includes service recipients, people-with-lived-experience

TRAUMA-RESPONSIVE ORGANIZATION

Leadership team begins an internal self-assessment – would you want to receive services here?; would you want to work here if you knew what it was really like?

• Visual: informative, orderly, clean, comfortable, beauty, inviting
• Interviews: phone and in-person
• Surveys (i.e. ARTIC and others)

A HEALTHY SYSTEM

HAS PERIODIC CHECKUPS

PHYSICAL

MORAL

STRUCTURAL

SOCIAL

VISUAL

PHYSICAL
PARTNERSHIP FOR RESILIENCE

**TRAUMA-RESPONSIVE ORGANIZATION**
Decides what metrics make sense consistent with trauma-informed knowledge and established goals
Uses that knowledge to inform objectives and change process
Regularly reviews metrics to assess sustained change.

**A HEALTHY SYSTEM**
Has a healthy social immune system.
The social body's ability to recognize and respond to threats to its well-being.
Recognizes that all types of violence are threats to that well-being.

**TRAUMA-RESPONSIVE ORGANIZATION**
Is a safe and trustworthy organization for all stakeholders
Everyone has a safety plan
Works on restoring safety and trust when there has been a breach
Has resources available to build, maintain and restore trust

**A HEALTHY SYSTEM**

**TRAUMA-RESPONSIVE ORGANIZATION**
Has a healthy social immune system.
A safety culture encompasses all four domains of safety
Team assessment of where the “social immune system” needs repair
Team begins to define what changes may need to occur to create and maintain a safety culture.
Respectful boundaries support safety.

**COMMITMENT TO NONVIOLENCE**

**TRAUMA-RESPONSIVE ORGANIZATION**
Community has a clear, practical value system in constant use
New members are carefully oriented and adequately trained
Group identifies values, norms and rules to be established
Creates mechanism to familiarize all members with the norms

**COMMITMENT TO NONVIOLENCE**

**TRAUMA-RESPONSIVE ORGANIZATION**
Guards its perimeters with clear, firm, flexible and safe boundaries.
Responds to every level of violence with nonviolent, conflict resolution measures immediately.
Mounts levels of protection commensurate with the threat.
Processes any emergence of violence as a problem for the entire culture.

**COMMITMENT TO NONVIOLENCE**

**TRAUMA-RESPONSIVE ORGANIZATION**

**COMMITMENT TO NONVIOLENCE**

**TRAUMA-RESPONSIVE ORGANIZATION**

**COMMITMENT TO NONVIOLENCE**
PARTNERSHIP FOR RESILIENCE

A HEALTHY SYSTEM

- Has well-regulated emotions
- Is emotionally intelligent
- Recognizes patterns
- Understands individual and group dynamics

COMMITMENT TO NONVIOLENCE

- Rapid response to any violation of:
  - Physical space
  - Psychological space
  - Social space
  - Moral space
- Response should be proportionate to degree of danger
  - Goldilocks rule: Not too big, not too small, just right

COMMITMENT TO EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

- Recognition of emotional dysregulation as primary sign of exposure to trauma/adversity.
- Has tools in place that help promote emotional regulation for everyone.
- Emotions are honored but do not rule
- There is recognition that emotions are contagious and become collective.

COMMITMENT TO DEMOCRACY

- Recognizes that all trauma is about the abusive use of power.
- To avoid retraumatization, the constructive use of power – individual and collective – must be understood throughout the organization.
- Democratic, participatory structures are the best protection against abuse of power.
All parts of the body are part of the social immune system.

Best method for nonviolence is democracy.

The greater the frequency of democratic decision-making, the greater the resistance to violence.

Commitment to Democracy

Higher levels of democratic school climate were associated with higher levels of adolescent civic responsibility; the association was fully mediated by civic discussions and perceived fairness at school. Adolescents’ civic responsibility, then, was positively associated with a stronger intention to participate in the civic domain in the future.


Requires process and patience
Emotional management skills and impulse control
Words as substitute for action
Shared decision making
Shared problem-solving
Social skills development
Minimizes abusive use of power
Empowerment of the oppressed
Universal participation as a responsibility
Demonstrable fair play, restorative justice
Trust-building
Negotiation, concession, compromise

Can Democratic Schools Be an Antidote to Trauma?

Team develops a communication plan to inform everyone in the organization.

Team develops materials to inform internal and external stakeholders.

Commitment to Open Communication

A Healthy System

Is committed to open, honest and frequent communication

Retains ....
Draws upon ....
Learns from ....
Uses .....
Memory resides within the organization and within individual members.

Memory is captured and stored and passed on to new members.

Painful memories are not dissociated and therefore become available for new learning.

Commitment to open communication:

Recovering memory:
- Founding vision
- History of trauma
- History of loss
- Failures
- Adaptations
- Successes

A healthy system is a learning organization.

In a learning organization, leaders are designers, stewards, and teachers. They are responsible for building organizations where people continually expand their capabilities to understand complexity, clarify vision, and improve shared mental models — that is, they are responsible for learning.

— Peter Drucker

Everyone in organization is educated in:

- Trauma theory
- Developmental neuroscience
- Group dynamics
- Social determinants
- Spiritual neuroscience

Commitment to social learning:

Has routine conflict management strategies.

Uses all kinds of conflict as opportunities for new learning.

Seeks creative, integrative solutions to challenging problems.
TRAUMA-RESPONSIVE ORGANIZATION

Learns from experience and adapts to change
Learning is distributed throughout entire body
Able to use the learning to improve subsequent responses

COMMITMENT TO SOCIAL LEARNING

TRAUMA-RESPONSIVE ORGANIZATION

Members of the community come to believe that human behavior is understandable if we understand the full context of individual experience
“Hurt people, hurt people” - Violence to self and others is a symptom of pain.
Community goal is to minimize pain and make amends before the need to retaliate is acted upon.

COMMITMENT TO SOCIAL LEARNING

TRAUMA-RESPONSIVE ORGANIZATION

Not everyone is good at everything – specialists are available for special needs
Group must decide best and most fair strategy for addressing dangers
All specialists are on the same page, have the same knowledge base, speak the same language, aim at the same goals

COMMITMENT TO SOCIAL LEARNING

TRAUMA-RESPONSIVE ORGANIZATION

• What should we keep?
• What should we eliminate?
• What should we do that is new?

KEY QUESTIONS

COMMITMENT TO SOCIAL LEARNING

TRAUMA-RESPONSIVE ORGANIZATION

Standard operating procedures, policies and procedures are reviewed for consistency with organizational mission and values.
Trauma-informed values incorporated into interviewing, hiring orientation, and all human resource practices.

COMMITMENT TO SOCIAL LEARNING

A HEALTHY SYSTEM

Knows how to unlearn
A HEALTHY SYSTEM
Cares about social justice and does its best to “walk the talk”

TRAUMA-RESPONSIVE ORGANIZATION
Is about the human rights of everyone, including children.
The personal IS political
Recognizes that trauma exposure can cause the loss of meaning and purpose.
Finds a way to strike a balance between the needs of the individual and the needs of a group.

COMMITMENT TO SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

TRAUMA-RESPONSIVE ORGANIZATION
Simple enough language for all to understand.
Conveys indispensable ideas about healing from trauma and adversity.
Becomes an effective problem-organizing and problem-solving tool

COMMITMENT TO GROWTH AND CHANGE

TRAUMA-RESPONSIVE ORGANIZATION
A way of organizing CHAOS
There is no specific order so you can use it the way that you think
Phases you move in and out of, not stages you climb

COMMITMENT TO GROWTH AND CHANGE

TRAUMA-RESPONSIVE ORGANIZATION
Gets everyone on the same page
Very dynamic
Applicable to children, families, staff and organization

COMMITMENT TO GROWTH AND CHANGE
PARTNERSHIP FOR RESILIENCE

TRAUMA-RESPONSIVE ORGANIZATION

Assessing child functioning
Planning for behavioral interventions
Responding to problems in the classroom
Evaluating classroom functioning
Managing expected and unexpected changes

COMMITMENT TO GROWTH AND CHANGE

TRAUMA-RESPONSIVE ORGANIZATION

What are the Safety issues for this person?

- Physical, psychological, social, moral

What are the Emotional management issues?

- Mad, Sad, Glad, Scared, Shamed

What are the Loss issues?

- What losses has person already had?
- What will he/she have to lose to change?

What are the Future issues?

- Why change?
- What is the goal(s)

COMMITMENT TO GROWTH AND CHANGE

TRAUMA-RESPONSIVE ORGANIZATION

Trauma = Loss
Recognizes resistance to change as resistance to loss.
Honors loss
Expects adaptive change

COMMITMENT TO GROWTH AND CHANGE

TRAUMA-RESPONSIVE ORGANIZATION

Team organizes a system-wide celebratory kick-off
Routinely looks for, finds, and celebrates even small successes
Orients itself toward a better future
Values laughter, fun, playfulness as the best medicine

COMMITMENT TO GROWTH AND CHANGE

A HEALTHY SYSTEM

Knows how to party!
PARTNERSHIP FOR RESILIENCE

**TRAUMA-INFORMED VALUES ....**

- **NONVIOLENCE:**
  - we need to feel safe in all life dimensions to think complexly

- **EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE:**
  - we need to understand individual/group consciousness and unconsciousness

- **SOCIAL LEARNING:**
  - we learn through trial-and-error in context of mutual trust

- **OPEN COMMUNICATION:**
  - we need to keep information honest, open, and flowing – secrets make us sick

- **DEMOCRACY:**
  - we need to avoid abuse of power and have wide participation to deal with complex problems

- **SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY:**
  - we need to balance our individual needs and desires with those of the collective good

- **GROWTH & CHANGE:**
  - we need to change and all change requires loss and will not happen without vision

**BECOMING TRAUMA-RESPONSIVE AND HEALING ONE’S ORGANIZATION IS NOT FOR THE FAINT OF HEART**

**“In a time of universal deceit, telling the truth becomes a revolutionary act.”**
- George Orwell, 1984

**SPEAK THE TRUTH, EVEN IF YOUR VOICE SHAKES.**

**THESE ARE THOSE TIMES**

**First they ignore you, then laugh at you, then they fight you, then you win.**

- Mahatma Gandhi
  - (2 October 1869 – 30 January 1948)
In the field of mental health, most attention has been given to psychotherapy, some to mental hygiene, but very little as yet, to the design of a whole culture which will foster healthy personalities.

Maxwell Jones, M.D.
The Therapeutic Community, 1953