Incorporating a Trauma Informed Approach to Social Emotional Learning in Diverse Community Settings

Presenters:
Erin Fairchild, MSW, Defending Childhood Initiative Coordinator, Multnomah County DV Coordination Office
Victor Jose Santana, Training Manager, Boston Defending Childhood Initiative, Division of Violence Prevention Boston Public Health Commission
Sojourner Rivers, Social Emotional Learning Initiative Coordinator, Division of Violence Prevention Boston Public Health Commission
Barrett Wilkinson, MPP, Portland Defending Childhood Prevention Coordinator, Portland, Maine Public Health Division

Moderators:
Jennifer Rose, Consultant with Futures Without Violence

Welcome to the Webinar
We will begin at 11:00am (PT) / 2:00pm (ET).

A recording will be available after the webinar. Your line will be muted to cut down on background interference so please use the chat box to share your name, your organization, your location and any questions you have for our featured speakers.
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Incorporating a Trauma Informed Approach to Social Emotional Learning in Diverse Community Settings.

October 30, 2014

Presenters:

Erin Fairchild, MSW,
Sojourner A. Rivers,
Victor Jose Santana, and
Barrett Wilkinson, MPP
Objectives

- Raise awareness of Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) and Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS)
- Understand of how SEL and PBIS are trauma-informed
- Learn from projects using these strategies to support early childhood development
- Discuss connection between SEL and the prevention of violence
What is SEL?

“Social and emotional learning (SEL) involves the processes through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions.”

The Collaborative for Academic Social and Emotional Learning

www.casel.org
“The Missing Piece”

- Self-awareness- knowing your strengths and limitations
- Self-management- ability to stay in control and persevere through challenges
- Social awareness- understanding and empathy
- Relationship skills- ability to work in teams and resolve conflicts
- Responsible decision-making- making ethical and safe choices

SEL Outcomes

**SEL Approaches**
- Explicit SEL Skills Instruction
- Integration with Academic Curriculum Areas
- Teacher Instructional Practices

**SEL Skill Acquisition:**
- Five Competence Areas
- Improved Attitudes about Self, Others, and Schools

**Outcomes:**
- Positive Social Behavior
- Fewer Conduct Problems
- Less Emotional Distress
- Academic Success

SEL = necessary skills for learning and life.
SEL & Trauma

Trauma can negatively impact a child's core beliefs about the world, adults, and oneself. SEL can help counteract some of those messages and build resilience.

- Helps children develop skills to identify, talk about and regulate feelings.

- Helps build and enhance communication and social skills.

- Aids in the development of healthy coping skills to manage strong feelings and stress.

- Helps break down barriers to talking about difficult topics and advocate for needs.

- SEL helps promote safety skills in children that can act as primary prevention or buffer the experience of future trauma.

K. Barrett Wilkinson, MPP
Portland Defending Childhood
What is Early Childhood PBIS?

Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports

…a framework for teaching and reinforcing prosocial behavior and preventing and responding to negative, unfriendly or unsafe behaviors. EC PBIS is a framework for adults that helps them promote SEL in early childhood settings.

Ashley Lawrence & Erin Fairchild, MSW
PBIS Pyramid

- Building Positive Relationships
- Designing Supportive Environments
- Social Emotional Teaching Strategies
- Individualized Intensive Interventions
PBIS core values

• We need a systems-level approach

• Behavior is communication

• Children use challenging behavior when they don’t have other skills – they aren’t willfully “bad”

• Adults must understand that behavior persisting over time is a child’s attempt to meet a need

• Adults need to focus on TEACHING children what TO DO (replace the behavior with a skill to meet the need)
Designing Supportive Environments

Building Positive Relationships

Social Emotional Teaching Strategies

Individualized Intensive Interventions

Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning
Chronic, or ongoing stress may lead to what researchers call “toxic stress”

Toxic stress can:

- Impair the connection of brain circuits
- Impact our threshold for stress
- Increase levels of stress hormones
- Effects can continue into adulthood

Behavior has a Message

- I am scared!
- I am sad!
- You hurt my feelings!
- I’m confused!
- I don’t want people near me!
- I need extra attention!
Challenging Behavior…

…happens when children don’t have the social or communication skills they need to engage in more appropriate interactions.
Trauma Informed=
An organization or system that:

• Realizes the widespread impact of trauma and potential paths for healing

• Recognizes the signs/symptoms of trauma in staff, clients

• Fully integrates knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, practices, and settings

Core Values in Trauma Informed Practice

- Culture is healing & builds resiliency
- Children/youth are not willfully bad; they do well when they can
- Universal precaution & universal supports
## Trauma Informed Care + PBIS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The “Old Way”</th>
<th>PBIS in many schools</th>
<th>Trauma Informed PBIS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Focus on behavior reduction</td>
<td>Focus on teaching new skills</td>
<td>Focus on teaching new skills <em>and healing</em></td>
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</table>
## Trauma Informed Care + PBIS

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<tr>
<td>Quick fix</td>
<td>Focus on long term academic, social and health outcomes</td>
<td>Focus on long term academic, social and health <em>and</em> mental health outcomes</td>
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### Trauma Informed Care + PBIS

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<td>General intervention for all behavior problems</td>
<td>Intervention matched to purpose of the behavior</td>
<td>Intervention matched to purpose of the behavior <em>and adults recognize that today’s challenging behavior may be rooted in skills that have previously kept them emotionally and/or physically safe in unhealthy and unsafe situations.</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Healing happens in relationships.

Ashley Lawrence & Erin Fairchild, MSW
Early Childhood PBIS for Domestic Violence Shelters: How Environments Can Heal

Erin Fairchild, MSW
Defending Childhood Initiative Coordinator
Multnomah County Domestic Violence Coordination Office
Erin.fairchild@multco.us
503-988-4995
Why PBIS?

- It’s not new.
  - It’s based on decades of research

- It’s not just us.
  - It’s used nationally with children of all ages, in diverse settings

- It’s about time.
  - Shelters across the county are looking to shift their practices to be more child focused.
¼ of shelter residents are <5
We visited local shelters
We convened a team and adapted EC PBIS for DV shelters

Adapted from CSEFEL Preschool Training Module 1 by:

• Tim Andrews
• Julie Dilorio
• Erin Fairchild
• Emiko Goka-Dubose
• Ashley Lindberg Lawrence
• Marisa Moon
• Lindsey Vold

Erin Fairchild, MSW
We Funded Services

2 FTE Mental Health Consultants from a community based early childhood mental health organization:

• Provide community and home based mental health interventions to families impacted by domestic violence

• Provide mental health consultation and training to domestic violence shelter and other program staff (capacity building)

• Provide coaching and support around the implementation of EC PBIS in DV shelters

Erin Fairchild, MSW
Agenda For Full Training

Day 1:

• What is PBIS
• Why does it matter in shelter?
• Building relationships

Day 2:

• Designing the physical environment
• Routines, expectations, attitude
Describe the relationship between development and behavior

Describe how exposure to violence effects development and behavior

Describe how behavior serves a function

Identify strategies to:
- Build relationships with children, families and colleagues
- Help children, families and staff build more positive relationships with each other
- Design environments, schedules, routines and transitions
- Help children learn rules and routines
What Do We Mean by *Environment*?

- lights
- color
- noise
- music
- clutter
- decorations
- TV on
- furniture
- schedules
- rules
- expectations
- attitudes
- posters
- organized
Shelter Creates Environmental Challenges

• Shared living space

• Regular coming and going

• Staff presence makes some feel “under the microscope”

• Children and adults get triggered

• Rules are different from those they have had at home

• Different staff may give different messages about rules
How Can Environments:

- Empower families to make their own decisions?
- Contribute to a family’s sense of dignity?
- Create a sense of security?
- Support families to reconnect with others adults?
- Strengthen family relationships through play and supervision?
- Minimize the need for enforcing rules?
- Minimize conflict?


Erin Fairchild, MSW
Computer room

BEFORE

AFTER

Erin Fairchild, MSW
Front door phone

BEFORE

AFTER
PLAYROOM

BEFORE

AFTER
Relationships Are Part of the Environment

Erin Fairchild, MSW
As the brain develops upward and outward, emotional regulation skills become more complex, IF we have learned basic emotion regulation.

Basic emotional regulation happens here, & is developed by our experience.
Managing Personal Stress: Thought Control

Upsetting Thought:
“These kids never listen to me! Where’s their mom?”

Calming Thought:
“I can support this child by making my expectations clear”
Building Positive Relationships

- Empathy
- Time & Attention
- Play
- Share
Ideas for Making Deposits

• Greet every child by name.

• Be at eye level.

• Talk to a child’s parent in front of them to say one thing they’ve accomplished or worked hard at.

• Check-in after a difficult time and say, “I’m sorry we had a tough time. We can try again. This is a place that’s safe to practice.”

• Give high fives and thumbs up.
More Information:

Video of the full training for shelter staff is online here:

**Early Childhood PBIS Training Video Modules**

The training powerpoint is available here:

**PDF of powerpoint slide set**

Please contact [erin.fairchild@multco.us](mailto:erin.fairchild@multco.us) to learn more or implement in your own program.
Portland Defending Childhood: Violence Prevention Curriculum & SEL
Portland Defending Childhood (PDC)

- One of eight Defending Childhood Initiative sites working to address the issue of childhood exposure to violence.

- PDC focuses on promoting safe and thriving communities by offering information, support and evidence-based treatments.

- A collaborative effort, PDC is also aimed at building a coordinated information and referral network of violence prevention, intervention and treatment resources.
PDC & Schools: Goals

- Implementation of curriculum addressing healthy relationships and violence prevention universally - Pre-K through 12th grade.
- Prevention education made available for all children/youth not just those “at risk”.
- Utilization of an age-appropriate, but consistent and comprehensive approach to violence prevention.
Core Concepts for Violence Prevention Curriculum

1. Understand and exhibit healthy expression of emotions
2. Demonstrate peaceful conflict resolution
3. Analyze the causes of violence
4. Understand healthy and unhealthy relationships
5. Identify and provide support
PDC & Schools

• Conducted pilot project in 6 classrooms during 2013-14 school year (pre-K and elementary primarily.)

• Pilot was successful - teachers saw rewards & students liked it.

• Involved teachers from pilot in the process - helped spread use of the curriculum.

"The kids and I are loving the program and find it to be authentic and helpful. I'm glad I'm piloting it!"

~4th Grade Teacher
Pre-K & Elementary SEL

• Educators/administrators were interested in developing social and emotional competency in student body.

• Via pilot implementation, educators saw the benefit to their classroom environment when kids had ability to talk about feelings, identify problems, etc.

• SEL curriculum helps teachers and schools address and prioritize social and emotional development.
PDC & Schools

- After one year pilot, over 70 classrooms are using the recommended curriculum.
- Additional schools continue to join project.
- School-wide implementations
  - Comprehensive approach to prevention & social and emotional development
Boston Defending Childhood Initiative: Engaging Families and Communities in Social Emotional Learning

Boston Public Health Commission
Our Framework and SEL

- Overlapping principles for Trauma Informed work and Social Emotional Learning:
  - Positive relationships
  - Understanding Trauma and Its Impact
  - Culture of Self-Care
  - Promoting safety
  - Voice and Choice
  - Access to Resources
  - Culture Competence & Promotion of Equity
  - Positive Youth Development
  - Social Emotional Learning
Social Emotional Learning Initiative

Sojourner Rivers
Social Emotional Learning Manager
Boston Public Health Commission
5 Key Social-Emotional Skills Areas

What is the Open Circle Program?

- 15-20 minute classroom meetings led by teachers twice per week
- These interactive meetings include group discussions, role-playing, reading, and activities
- Students learn skills such as cooperating, speaking up, calming down and expressing anger appropriately,
- These lessons are further reinforced throughout the school day, as all staff promote these skills
Where do we work?

• With the support of a grant in 2011 from Partners Healthcare our work consists of working:

With Open Circle in 22 BPS elementary schools: support in training logistics and implementation fidelity

At the community level: working with schools and their family programs

With the research and evaluation team: data collection and monitoring
Why is SEL promotion for parent important for violence prevention?

Serves as a primary prevention against violence as protective factor:

– Caregivers building their learning about SEL will expand their language to support their child’s social emotional development, reinforce concepts being taught in school, develop a social network for parents, support their modeling of SEL skills in the home

– Outcomes for children: strong relationship skills, improved school climate for safe learning environment, and better academic outcomes
SEL and Families

• Workshops at district-wide Parent University
• 1.5 hour overviews for families at partner schools
• Parent Program Leader Training of the Trainer:
  – Family outreach coordinator or school counselor trained in leading a six module parenting group that explores Social Emotional Learning
Lessons Learned

• **Successes**
  – Bilingual SEL parent groups help to reach and engage non-English speaking families
  – Partnering with school district has allowed an increased reach to families

• **Challenges**
  – Partnering with school district may increase challenge of reaching families who are alienated by school system
  – Schools vary in connections with families
  – Identity silent: How to incorporate cultural and community context into curriculum so that is relevant to families’ daily lives and acknowledges identity in a meaningful way
Trauma & Resilience Training Institute for Youth Workers

Victor Jose Santana
Boston Public Health Commission
Goals

• To prevent and reduce the impact of exposure to violence in homes, schools and communities for children

• To increase knowledge, skills, strategies and approaches for engaging and supporting Children Exposed to Violence for Youth Workers
The Process

- Research
- Focus Groups
- Themes
- Community Advisory Committee
- Learning Objectives
- Curriculum Development
- Pilots
Focus Groups

• 20 plus community partners
  – Interviews
• Four Focus Groups
  – 15 young people
  – 30 youth workers
• Questions Skills, Knowledge, Approaches
• Perspective from agency leadership and frontline workers
• Reviewed national and local curriculums
Themes

• Resiliency

• Trauma Awareness & Support

• Tools & Strategies

• Assets & Needs
Community Advisory

- Provided Feedback on
  - Learning Objectives
  - Definitions
  - Activities
  - Framework

- Recommendations
  - All Modules connect to the Learning Objectives
  - Acknowledge Gender, Race & Culture
  - Spirituality

- Assisted
  - Recruitment
  - Resources
  - References
Learning Objectives

• Increase youth workers ability to identify and use strategies for enhancing resiliency

• Increase youth workers knowledge of how race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and other various identities can impact their own and youth’s responses to trauma.

• Increase youth workers knowledge of youth development, traumatic stress, and resiliency

• Increase youth worker’s self-awareness of their personal beliefs, strengths, and biases around working with youth, trauma, and self-care
Curriculum Development

• Collaborated with BARCC
• Integrated Focus Group Data
• Incorporate AC Feedback
• Revised Learning Objectives
• Training Development
  – 3 Days a week apart
Pilot Training

• **Day 1**
  – Adolescent Development
    • Identity
  – Trauma 101
    • Impact of Trauma on Youth and on Us

• **Day 2**
  – Building Resilient Youth
    • Crisis Response Skills
    • Boundaries

• **Day 3**
  – Trauma-Informed Programs & Interactions
    • Trauma Informed Conversations
    • Trauma Informed Accountability
    • Assessments & Action Plans
Training

• 75 Participants in Institute
• 725 Participants in shorter workshops based on modules from pilot
• Trauma Informed Structure
  – Routines & Rituals to Open & Close Day
  – Trigger warnings
  – Breaks!
  – Grounding
  – Tool Kits
  – Activities, Activities, Activities!
  – Resources
  – Connections & Networking
• Evaluation
  – Pre and Post
  – Each Section & Activity
  – Action Plan (4 month follow up)
Lessons Learned

• **Successes**
  – Youth Workers are using some of the tools and strategies provided in the training
  – Increased understanding of trauma, its impact and how it manifest in their work
  – Addressing issues of gender, race and identity

• **Challenges**
  – No formal Youth Worker training, additional trainings are necessary
  – Self-care for youth workers
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THANK YOU FOR JOINING US!

Please take a moment to take this short survey regarding today’s webinar and future webinars.

https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/3XH96ZW

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