



Iron Fist in a Velvet Glove



Dr. Creighton Helms
Principal, GES

Mr. Geraldo “Jerry” Jimenez
School Counselor, GES

UP students witness Oregon's crisis of disruptive learning

By Collette Clark | March 21, 2019 10:15am

physical, placating

Disruptive students rattle Medford schools

by Kaylee Tornay | Tuesday, June 19th 2018

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Empirically Derived Profiles of Teacher Stress, Burnout, Self-Efficacy, and Coping and Associated Student Outcomes

Keith C. Herman, PhD, Jal'et Hickmon-Rosa, BA, Wendy M. Reinke, PhD

First Published October 6, 2017 | Research Article | Check for updates

<https://doi.org/10.1177/1098300717732066>

Article information ▾

Altmetric

133



Abstract

Understanding how teacher stress, burnout, coping, and self-efficacy are interrelated can

Article

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- **Teachers in the high stress, high burnout, and low coping skills were associated with the poorest student outcomes.**
- **In a major study, ~40% of new teachers don't feel adequately prepared to handle classroom management or discipline issues, and both new and experienced teachers identified classroom management as "the top problem" they struggle with.**



Us



**Our
Discipline**



Our Students

Agenda

- 1. How neuroscience informs educators on the practical applications of trauma-informed practices (Helms).**
- 2. Leading-edge research on the early learning impact of adverse childhood experiences (Helms/Jimenez).**
- 3. How that information can better empower assistant principals to architect effective social-emotional programs for their students (Jimenez).**
- 4. (Time Permitting) Q&A**

But First, About GES...

~400 students, K-5

70% Hispanic/Latino (55%+ ELL)

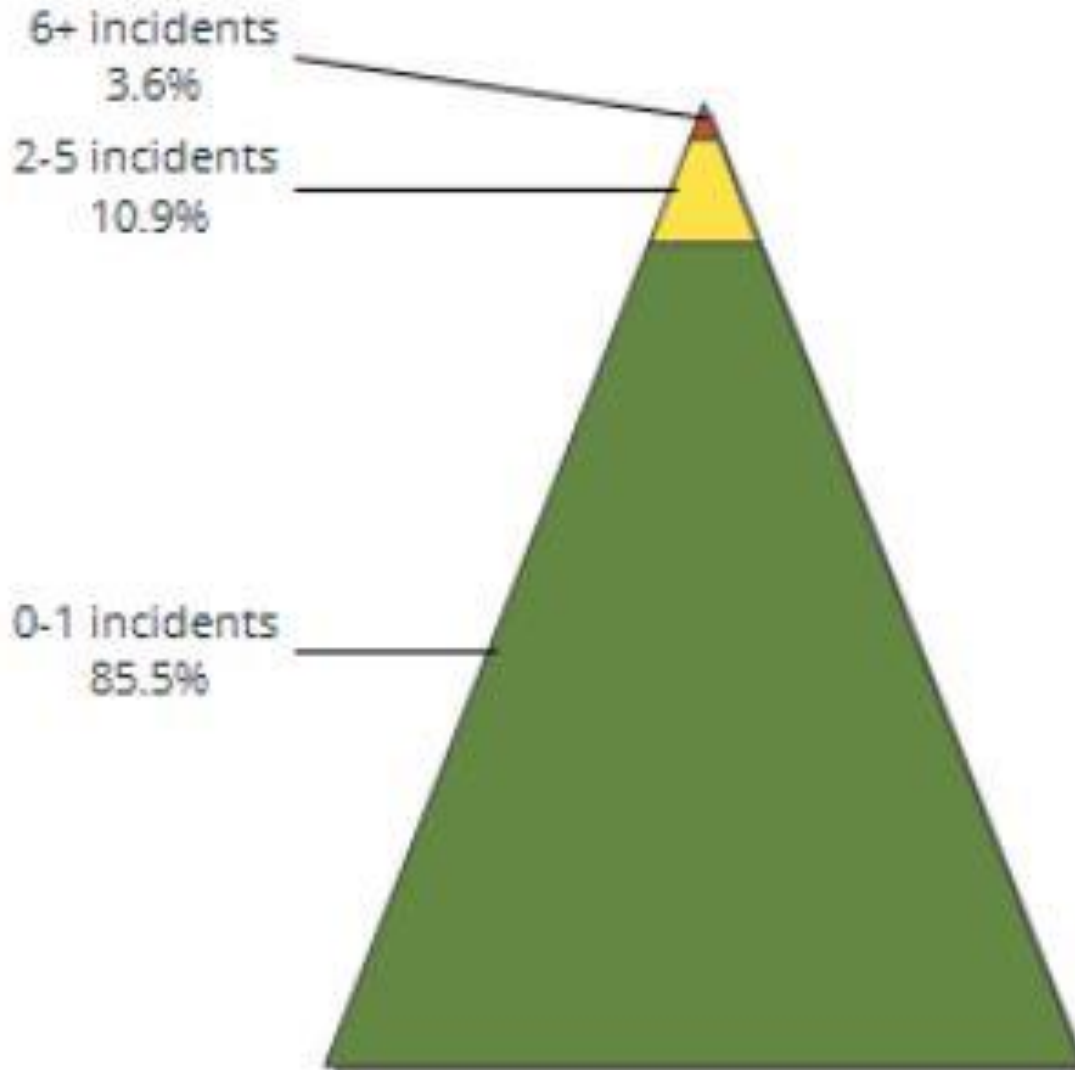
100% Free/Reduced Lunch

'18-'19 was first year for:

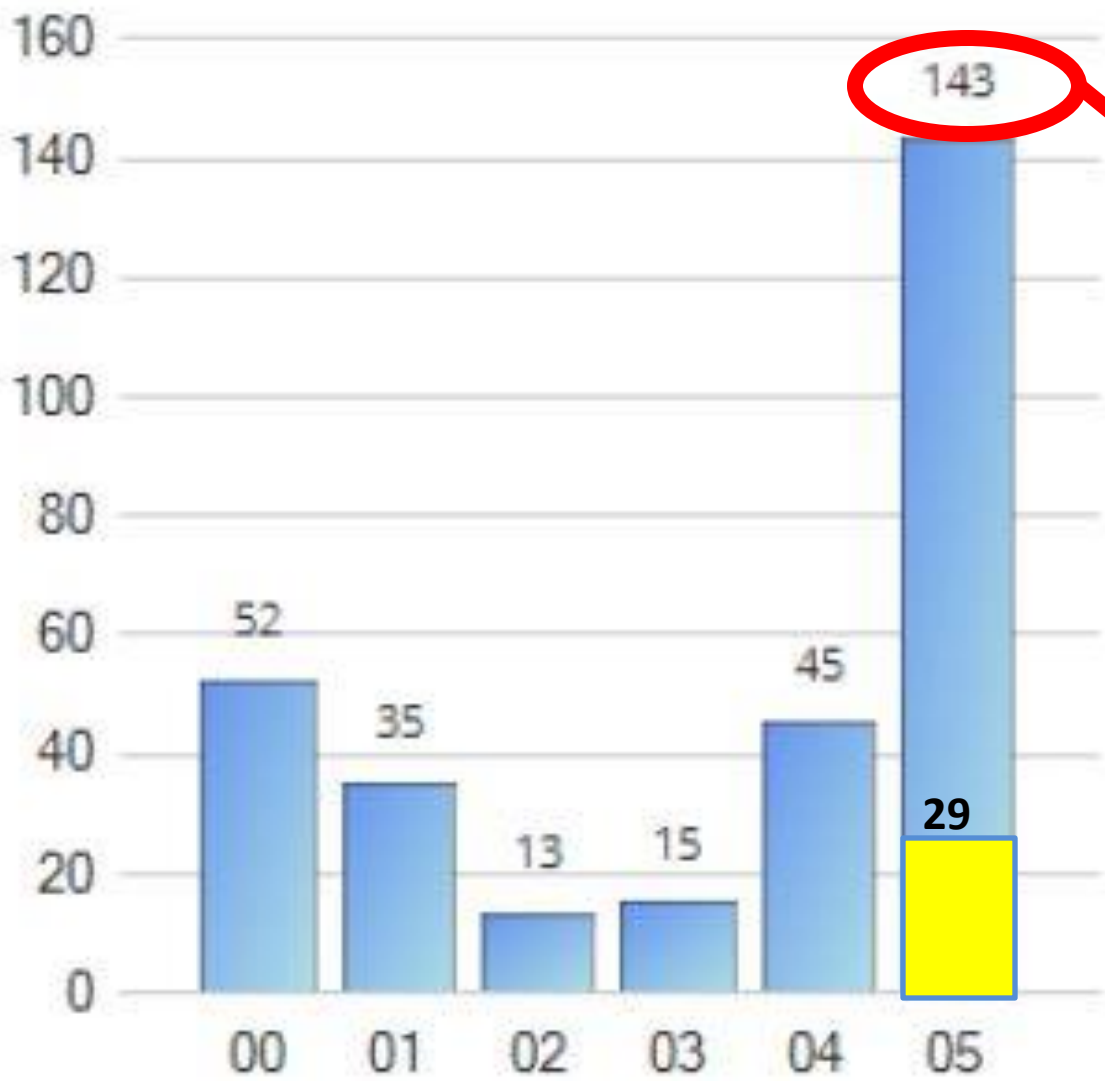
- Full time councilor (in 4+ years)
- SEL Curriculum (ever)



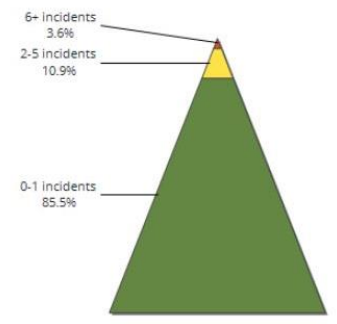
'18-'19 Behavior Incident Distribution



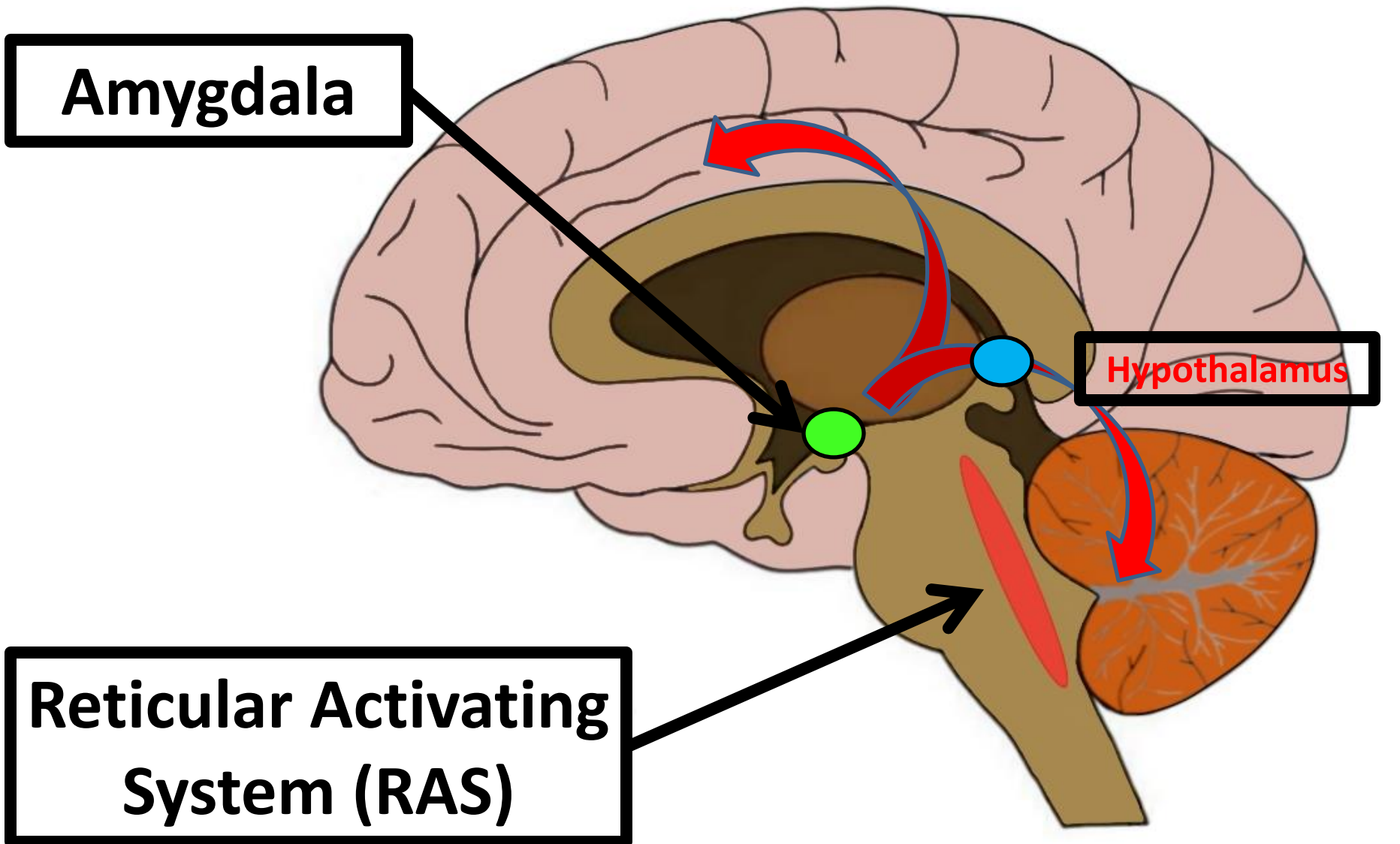
'18-'19 Behavior Incident by Grade Level



80% of these incidents came from four students



How neuroscience informs educators on the practical applications of trauma-informed practices



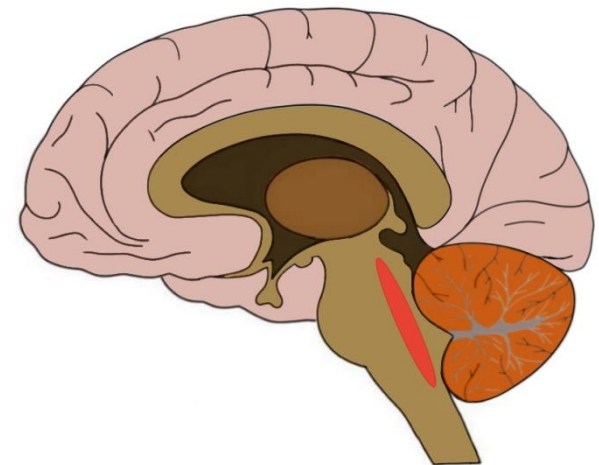
Amygdala

Hypothalamus

Reticular Activating System (RAS)

How neuroscience informs educators on the practical applications of trauma-informed practices

1. Even though the amygdala is fully formed at birth, it remains “plastic,” and can be modified by irregular levels of neuro-chemicals.
2. When the young brain experiences stress, it releases specific hormones (macro group = glucocorticoid; example = cortisol), which can trigger the “**fight/flight/freeze**” response.



How neuroscience informs educators on the practical applications of trauma-informed practices

3. The amygdala has a very high receptor density for glucocorticoids (receptors = parking spaces; hormones = cars. High density means more cars can park at the same time).

4. This makes sense, right? Example: mouse.

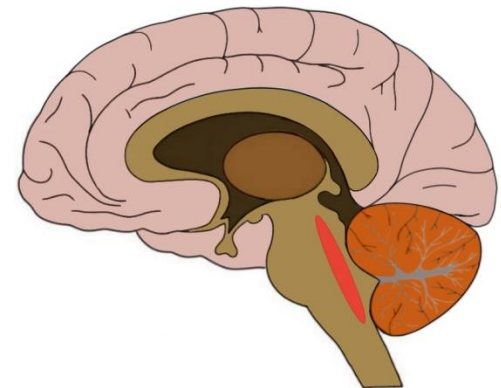


How neuroscience informs educators on the practical applications of trauma-informed practices

5. Too much glucocorticoid too early in life will cause abnormal amygdala size (epigenetics), which in turn is associated with increased dysregulation.

So...

- RAS pushes sensory info to amygdala.
- If a child has experienced “too much” childhood trauma, their abnormal amygdala is more likely to kick start the hypothalamus, rather than the cortex.
- This means **fight/flight/freeze** will dominate over rational thought.

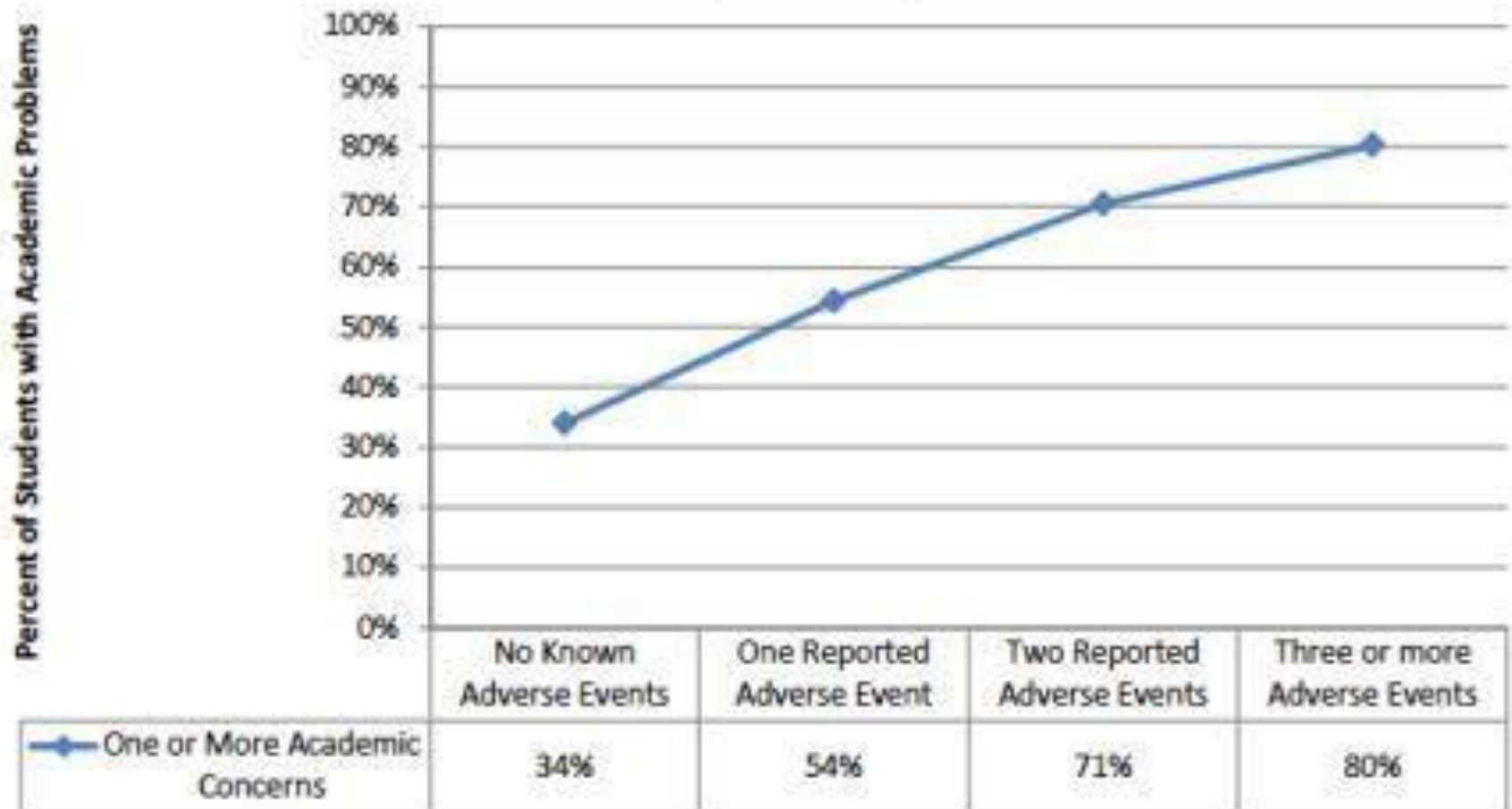


How neuroscience informs educators on the practical applications of trauma-informed practices



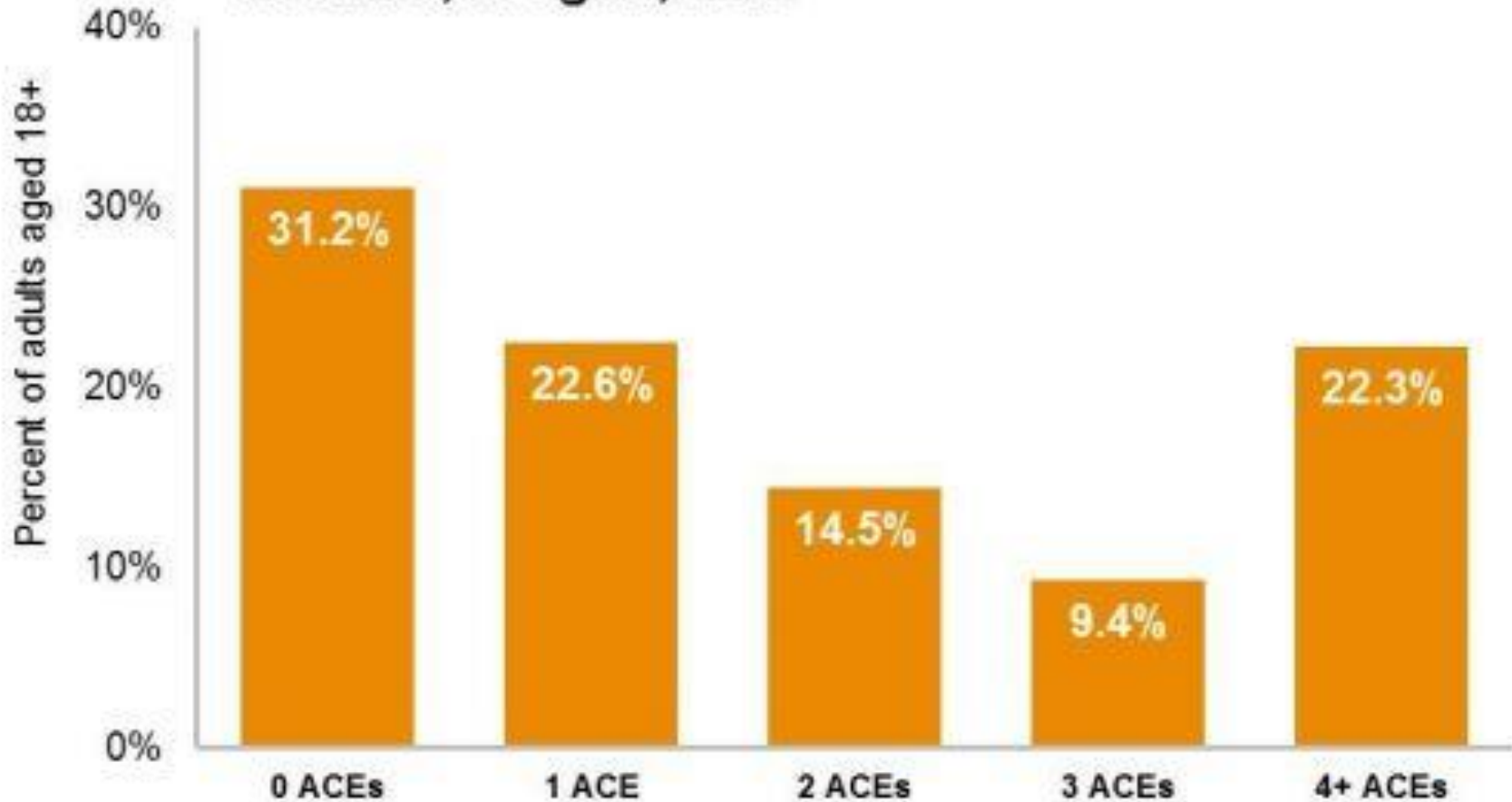
Leading-edge research on the early learning impact of adverse childhood experiences

Percent of Students with One or More Academic Concerns by ACE Exposure



Leading-edge research on the early learning impact of adverse childhood experiences

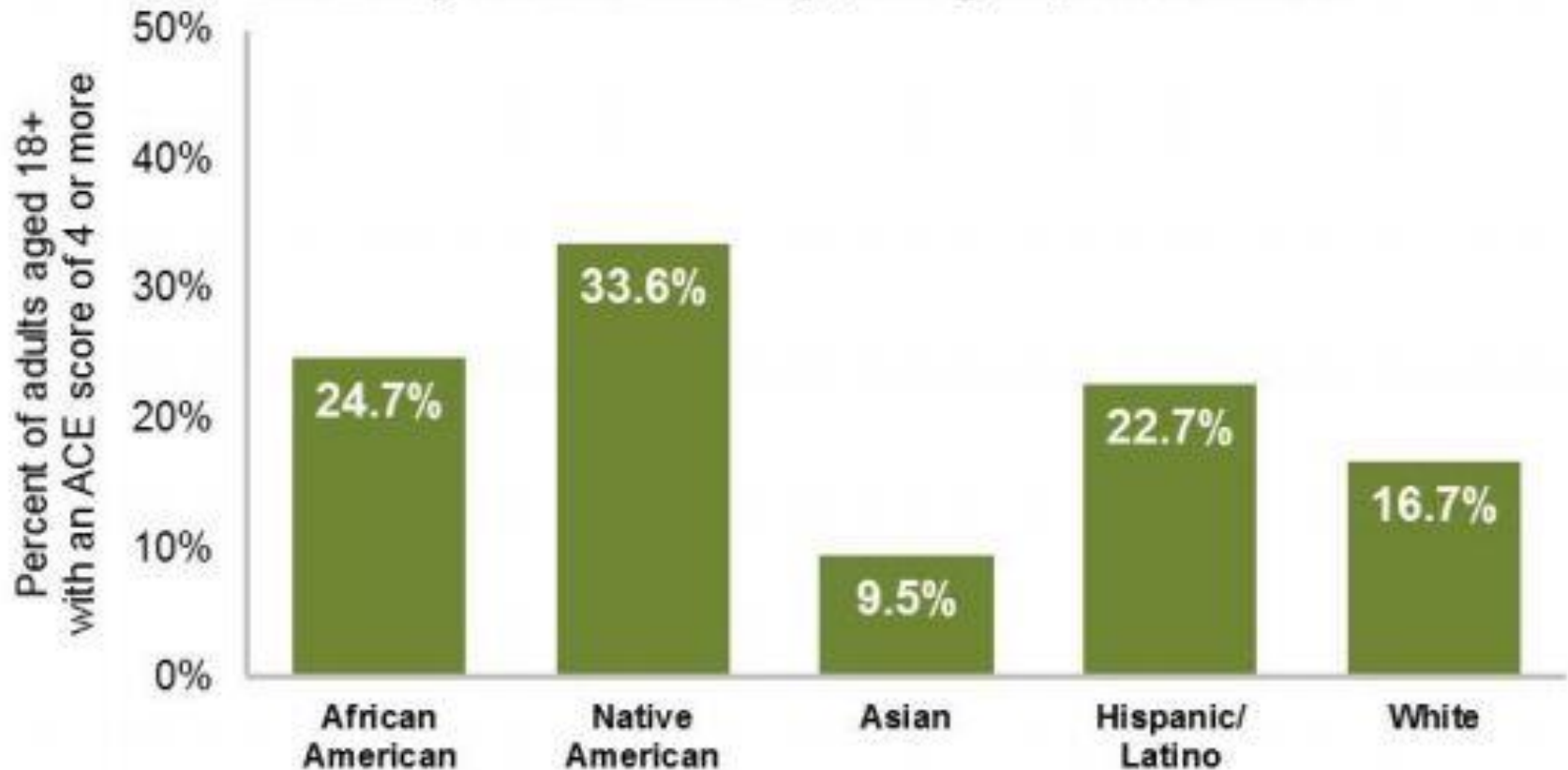
Number of ACEs among adults aged 18 years or older, Oregon, 2016



Source: Oregon Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS)

Leading-edge research on the early learning impact of adverse childhood experiences

High ACE score (4+) among adults aged 18 or older by race/ethnicity, Oregon, 2013-2016

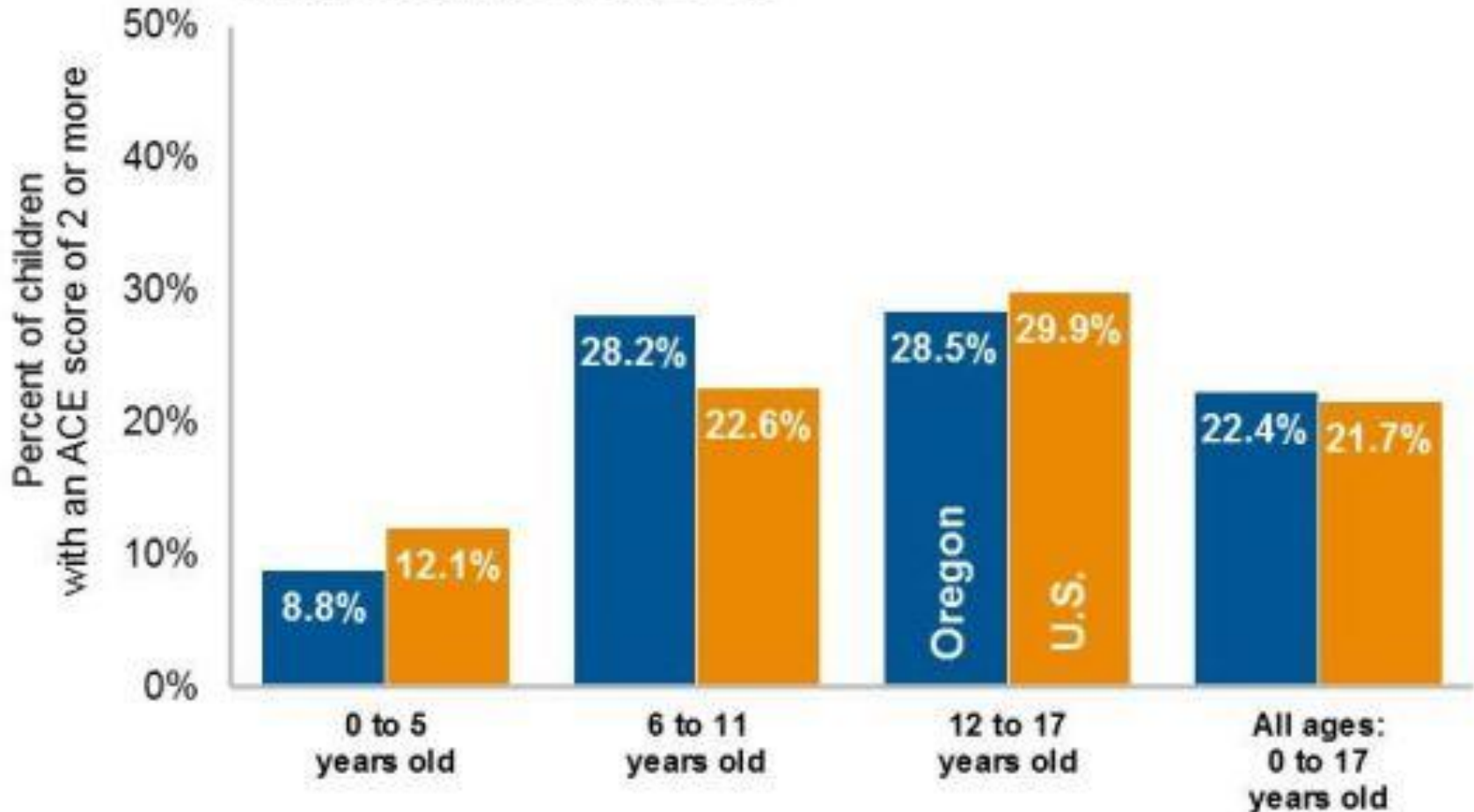


Note: All other groups exclude Hispanic ethnicity

Source: Oregon Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS)

Leading-edge research on the early learning impact of adverse childhood experiences

High ACE score (2+) among children by age, Oregon and U.S., 2016



Source: National Survey of Children's Health (NSCH)

So, Let's Put This Together...

(and prepare ourselves for Mr. Jimenez)

1 (of 3). Adolescents who experience excessive trauma are likely to experience neurological changes that promote **fight/flight/freeze** over calm, logical, rational thought.

It is likely that the child is not intentionally choosing **fight/flight/freeze** .



So, Let's Put This Together...

(and prepare ourselves for Mr. Jimenez)

2 (of 3). Objectively, nearly 70% of your students have 1+ ACES, which is a metric associated with over 50% of students with academic problems.

Furthermore, nearly 1:3 elementary students have 2+ ACES, and if the student is of color, there is a 1:4 chance they have 4+ ACES (the tipping point)



So, Let's Put This Together...

(and prepare ourselves for Mr. Jimenez)

3 (of 3). Traditional, heavy-handed, top-down student management practices that *appear* to lack empathy, patience, love, kindness, forgiveness, restoration, etc....

...will *likely* trigger **fight/flight/freeze**... the opposite response of what you want from them. And because (a) their response is *likely* subconscious, and (b) you have the ability to anticipate their response, it is on you, more than it is on them, to not have students associate you (and your student management practices) with the need to **fight, flight, freeze.**





Trauma Informed Schools

Mr. Jimenez, MSW, CSWA
Gervais School District

ACE's: Adverse Childhood Experiences

- Traumatic and Stress producing experiences occurring in childhood.
- Impacts at school: learning difficulties, externalizing and internalizing behavior problems, delayed cognitive and social development, impaired social attachments
- Mental Health impacts

Adverse Childhood Experiences

Traumatic events that can have negative, lasting effects on health and wellbeing



People with 6+ ACEs can die

20 yrs


earlier than those who have none




1/8 of the population have more than 4 ACEs

4 or more ACEs

3x the levels of lung disease and adult smoking 

11x the level of intravenous drug abuse 

14x the number of suicide attempts 

4x as likely to have begun intercourse by age 15 

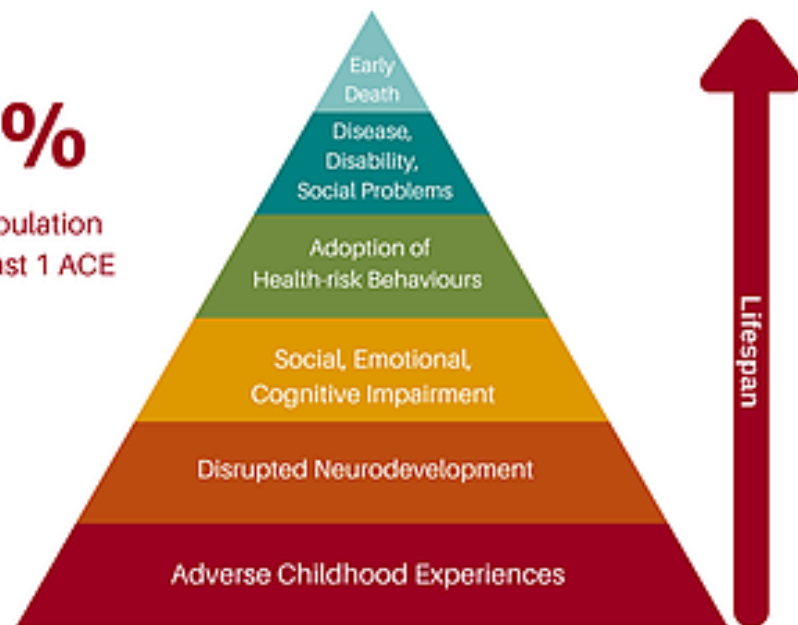
4.5x more likely to develop depression 

2x the level of liver disease 

“ Adverse childhood experiences are the single greatest unaddressed public health threat facing our nation today ”

Dr. Robert Block, the former President of the American Academy of Pediatrics

67%
of the population have at least 1 ACE



The Window of Stress Tolerance

The window of tolerance

HYPER-AROUSAL

Hyper-arousal **Fight or flight response**

Survivors experience extreme awareness and vigilance against perceived fear or threat. Overwhelming feelings, high levels of anxiety and emotional outbursts of anger and rage. Rush of adrenaline is exhausting, addictive and unsustainable long term.

COMFORT ZONE

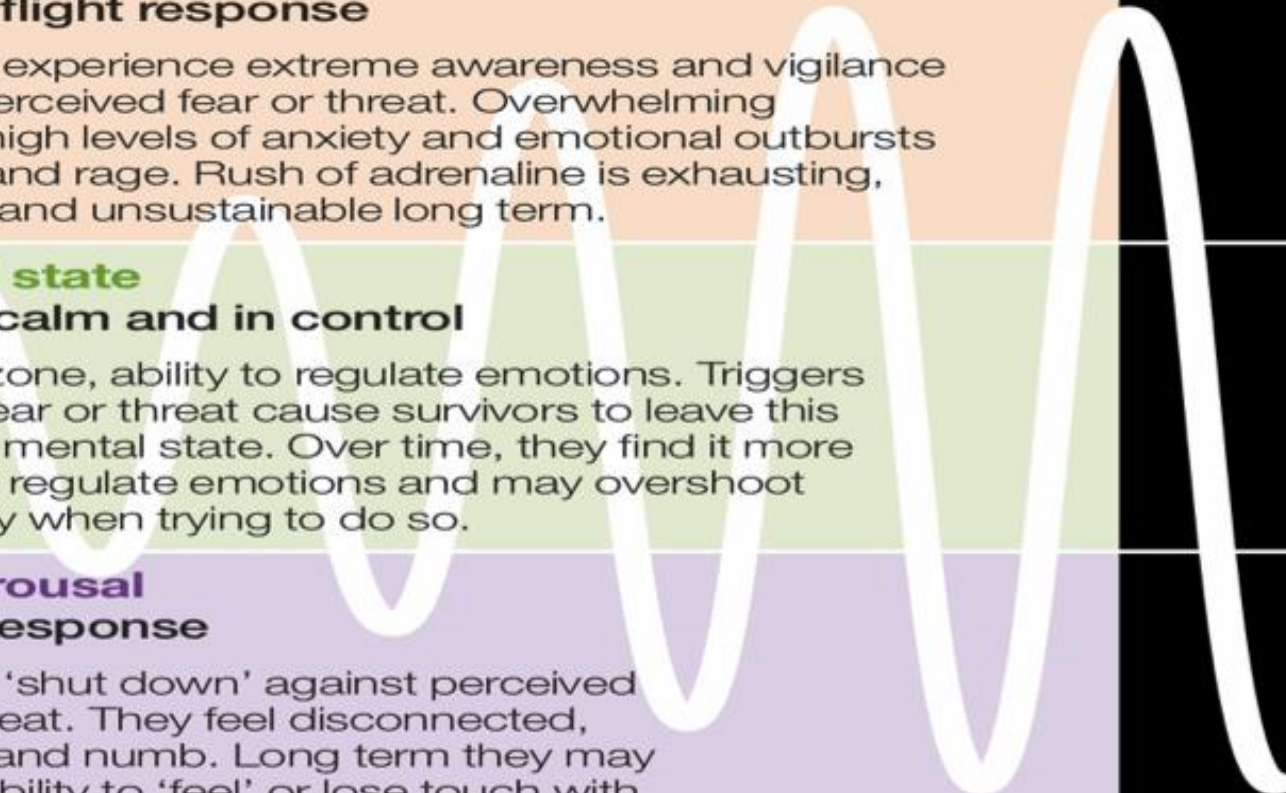
Optimal state **Feeling calm and in control**

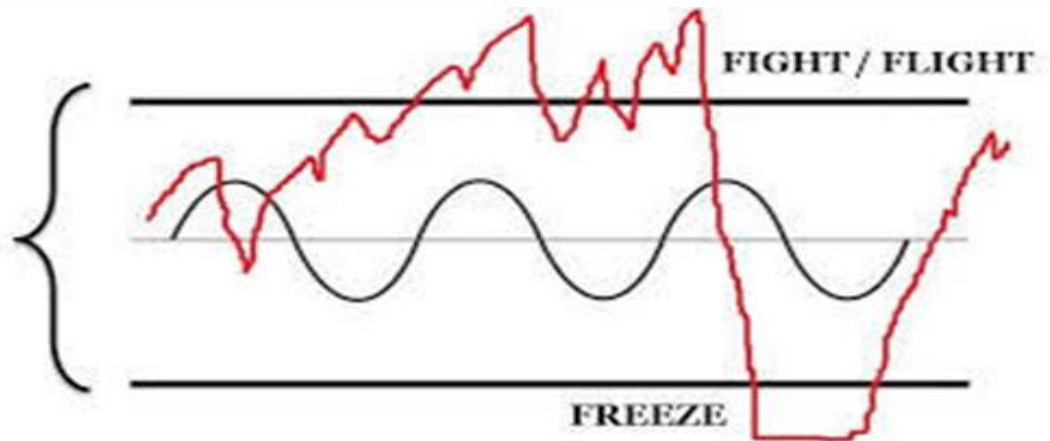
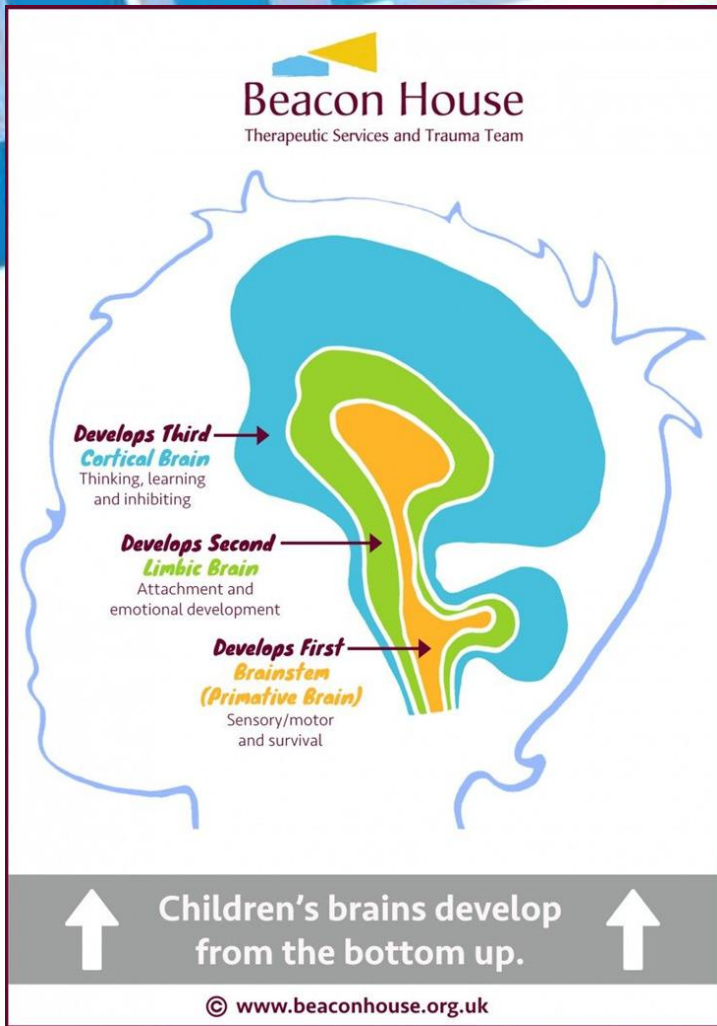
Comfort zone, ability to regulate emotions. Triggers such as fear or threat cause survivors to leave this balanced mental state. Over time, they find it more difficult to regulate emotions and may overshoot repeatedly when trying to do so.

HYPO-AROUSAL

Hypo-arousal **Freeze response**

Survivors 'shut down' against perceived fear or threat. They feel disconnected, unaware and numb. Long term they may lose the ability to 'feel' or lose touch with reality.





Sensory based experiences target healing in lower levels of the brain and have even been described as the primal language used in therapy (Malchiodi Crenshaw, Gaskill, & Perry, 2015).

Their story is their world

Let's not ask:

What is wrong with this child?

Let's instead ask:

what has happened to this child?

“The Children who need love the most will always ask for it in the most unloving ways”

- Russel Barkley

Different Perspective: Trauma Informed Classroom Practices

Relationship building is key!

- Provide a safe space “Calming zones”
- Model staying regulated
- Unconditional positive regard
- Congruent communication
- Play is how children present their language
- Consistent and respectful boundaries

ACT: Limit Setting

Setting limits by reflecting the student's intentions and feelings.

- **A**cknowledge Feelings
- **C**ommunicate Limit
- **T**arget an alternative

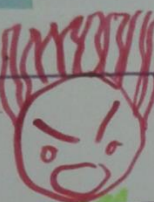

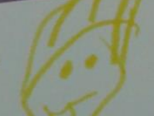
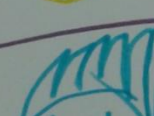
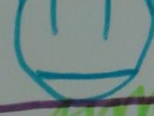
6 Principals to Building Resiliency

- 1. Always empower never disempower
- 2. Provide unconditional positive regard
- 3. Maintain high expectations
- 4. Check assumptions. Observe. Question
- 5. Be a relationship coach
- 6. Provide guided opportunities for helpful participation

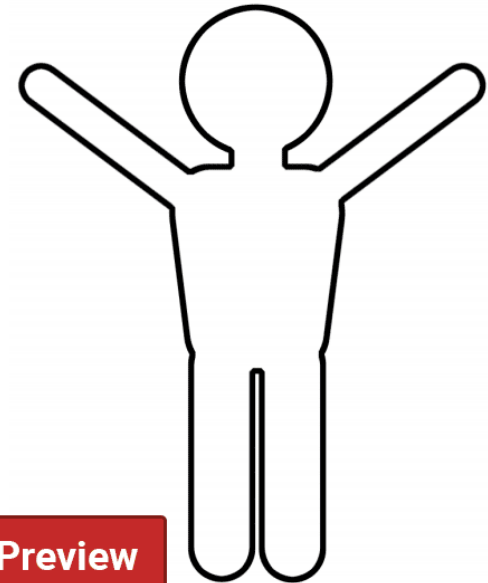
Activities for Building Resiliency

- Building Awareness: For younger students; Body outline “Where do you feel?”. For older youth; Rating scales such as the feelings thermometer and social stories.
- Self-Management: Regulating Emotions through Mindfulness activities and breathing techniques using bubbles, pinwheels and visuals.
- Positive self-image development: Simple toys and materials such as playdough, crayons and blocks can be manipulated easily for a feeling of accomplishment.

Self Management

How Am I...	Feeling?	what can I Do?
5	 Out of control	• Stop, Think and Take a break.
4	 losing it	• Talk to a teacher
3	 Im upset	• Draw a picture • get help
2	 i'm feeling OK	do your work
1	 Im Happy	have good de

Where Do I Feel?
We can recognize emotions by feeling them in our body. Color in where you feel each emotion.



Preview

Color:

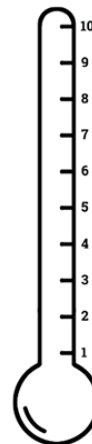
Sadness	Happiness	Fear	Anger	Love
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Anger Thermometer

Record your anger symptoms on this 10-point scale, where a "10" represents your maximum anger level (the angriest you have ever been, or can imagine being), and a "1" represents no anger at all. Give specific examples of symptoms you have at each point on the scale, as your anger escalates. Symptoms can include thoughts, feelings, and behaviors.



Preview

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Other Approaches for Resiliency

- Trauma informed descriptive messages "I am Wondering..."
- Art, Music and Movement
- Sand trays
- Story Telling
- Sensory Toys



Leading with a Vision

- Organizing unifying themes, values and visions for your schools
- Implement skill building opportunities infused into classroom learning and core subjects
- Collaboration and community building to foster learning of behavior management and discipline practices from a restorative justice approach i.e peer mediation

THANK YOU FOR LISTENING!



ANY QUESTIONS?