

**STRONG
RESILIENT
YOUTH**

Training Workbook

Supporting Children and Youth Experiencing
Trauma



Welcome

Welcome to the workbook for the *Supporting Children and Youth Experiencing Trauma* training.

This workbook contains:

- A review of key terms and concepts explored in the course
- Space where you can record reflections, notes, and responses to questions

This workbook covers the entirety of this training and is organized into sections, by session.

Please make your own copy of this workbook before continuing. Instructions for doing so are on the "[Before You Begin](#)" page of this workbook.

Keep this workbook after the training is over, as you can use it over time to review key terms and concepts, as well as to revisit your reflections.

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Before You Begin

Please make your own copy of this workbook.

The copy you are viewing via the training series link is an editable version that can be used both digitally and in print.

Steps for using the workbook digitally:

- 1 Save this file to your computer in a convenient location.
- 2 Open the workbook in Adobe Acrobat (preferred), another PDF-enabled software, or your Internet browser.
- 3 Type responses directly into the editable text fields as you complete the Reflect and Respond and In Your Classroom exercises.
- 4 Save your workbook file regularly to preserve your responses.

Steps for printing a paper copy of the workbook:

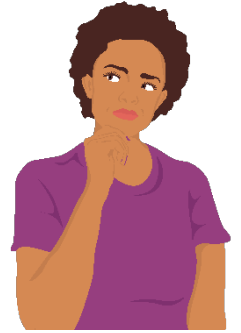
- 1 Navigate to the “Print” button in Adobe Acrobat, another PDF-enabled software, or your Internet browser.
- 2 Print the document according to your preferred specifications (e.g., color or black-and-white).
- 3 Record your responses directly in the printed workbook using a pen or pencil.



Learning Objectives

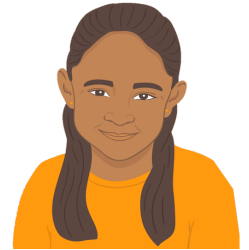
Session 1: The Trauma-Informed Educators and Supportive Adults We Want to Be

- Explain what trauma is and how it presents itself in children and youth
- Describe your role as a trauma-informed educator or supportive adult and how you can use the 4 R's of a Trauma-Informed Approach
- Recognize your mindset when faced with challenges
- Reframe your mindset using the Awareness, Pause, Reframe technique



Session 2: Foundations of Trauma and Resilience

- Recognize when and how Adverse Childhood Experiences and other potentially traumatic events affect a child's ability to learn and engage
- Understand what it means to be a trauma-informed mandated reporter
- Recognize the impact that implicit biases can have on building supportive relationships with children and youth
- Identify a child's strengths and protective factors
- Practice an approach to forging stronger relationships with all children and youth and support them in building resilience and positive coping strategies



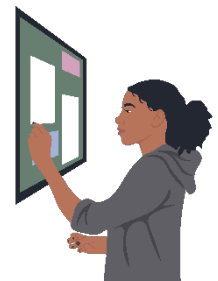
Session 3: Addressing Collective Traumatic Events with Children and Youth

- Identify how trauma manifests in groups of people and why people of color, certain ethnic groups, and indigenous populations are disproportionately affected
- Recognize how implicit bias can impact perceptions of what trauma is and who may need help
- Apply the 4 R's of a Trauma-Informed Approach in the context of collective traumatic events, both with individual children and youth and in a broader setting
- Tailor specific teaching strategies to different contexts and avoid re-traumatization



Session 4: Addressing Trauma with Children, Families, and Caregivers in One-on-One Settings

- Apply the 4 R's of a Trauma-Informed Approach to support children and youth who have experienced trauma
- Apply the 4 R's of a Trauma-Informed Approach to facilitate conversations with families and caregivers



Addressing Trauma in the Context of Conflict and Displacement

- Explain what trauma is and understand how conflict and displacement can affect individuals physically, emotionally, and socially
- Understand the lived experiences of displaced persons
- Apply the 4 R's of a Trauma-Informed Approach framework to the context of conflict and displacement
- Describe how the experience of conflict and displacement impacts youth and the family system
- Describe how to engage in self-care and build personal resilience
- Recognize the role that supportive adults can play in supporting youth and families who have experienced conflict and displacement



Session 1:

The Trauma-Informed Educators and Supportive Adults We Want to Be





Key Terms and Concepts

Session 1 The Trauma-Informed Educators and Supportive Adults We Want to Be

Lesson 1 What It Means to Be a Trauma-Informed Educator or Supportive Adult

Trauma results from an event, series of events, or set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or life-threatening and that has lasting adverse effects on the individual's functioning and mental, physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being.

Certain behaviors or symptoms may result from trauma, including:



Physical: complaints of stomachaches, headaches or not feeling well overall; frequent absences from school; disruptions in sleep and eating patterns



Cognitive: limited attention or difficulties with concentration, difficulties processing and remembering information, problems with planning and responding to a learning task



Emotional: hyper-vigilance and nervousness about potential threats or triggers, heightened reactivity

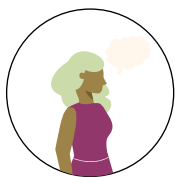


Behavioral: decreased capacity for impulse control, hyperactivity, preference for control, lower self-esteem, lack of confidence and beliefs in one's abilities

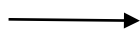


Relational: lack of trust in others, reluctance to engage in relationships, preoccupation with connection to an adult

The 4 R's of a Trauma-Informed Approach enable educators and supportive adults to respond to trauma more effectively:



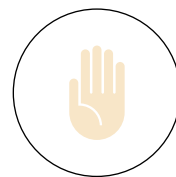
Realize the prevalence and impact of trauma



Recognize the signs and symptoms of trauma



Respond by integrating trauma-informed principles to create a safe and nurturing environment



Resist re-traumatization



Reflect and Respond

Session 1 The Trauma-Informed Educators and Supportive Adults We Want to Be

Lesson 1 What It Means to Be a Trauma-Informed Educator or Supportive Adult

Consider where you are in your own learning journey as you begin this training series.

1 Overall, how are you feeling as you begin this journey? Is there anything that you are particularly eager to learn more about?

2 One of the key concepts that will be further explored in this training series is the **4 R's of a Trauma-Informed Approach**. Mark how confident you currently feel in applying each of the 4 R's in your role.

The 4 R's



Realize the prevalence and impact of trauma



Recognize the signs and symptoms of trauma



Respond by integrating trauma-informed principles to create a safe and nurturing environment



Resist re-traumatization

Not very confident

Very confident

Realizing the prevalence and impact of trauma

Recognizing the signs and symptoms of trauma

Responding by integrating trauma-informed principles

Resisting re-traumatization



In Your Workplace

Session 1 The Trauma-Informed Educators and Supportive Adults We Want to Be

Lesson 3 The Power of Mindsets

Think back to a particularly tough week at work in the last three months and the reasons why it was especially difficult (e.g., personal life, work, friendships). Then, take a few minutes to answer the questions below.



1 How would you describe the mindset you had that week?

2 What did you do to move beyond that tough week? Feel free to describe or sketch your response.

3 How did your mindset help or hinder you from moving beyond that tough week?

4 What is another mindset you could have had? How would a different mindset have affected your actions or emotions during that week?



Key Terms and Concepts

Session 1 The Trauma-Informed Educators and Supportive Adults We Want to Be

Lesson 3 The Power of Mindsets

Our mindsets are beliefs that shape how we see and respond to the people around us. Mindsets can affect our mood and behavior in conscious and unconscious ways. Some mindsets are self-limiting and cause doubt or resentment. Other mindsets improve our resilience and sense of fulfillment, and we are better able to act in ways that make children and youth feel seen and safe.

The Awareness, Pause, Reframe technique enables you to shift your mindset when you encounter a challenging situation, such as when a child exhibits behaviors that might result from having experienced a traumatic event. The three steps of the technique are:



Awareness: Become aware of your mindset in that moment, and how it could affect your response to the child's behavior



Pause: Take a moment to pause and think about how you are feeling, why you are feeling that way, and what sort of mindset you would need to respond to the situation effectively



Reframe: Purposefully shift your mindset into one that will serve you better in this moment as you respond to the child's behavior



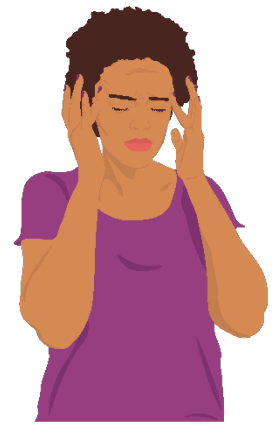
Reflect and Respond

Session 1 The Trauma-Informed Educators and Supportive Adults We Want to Be

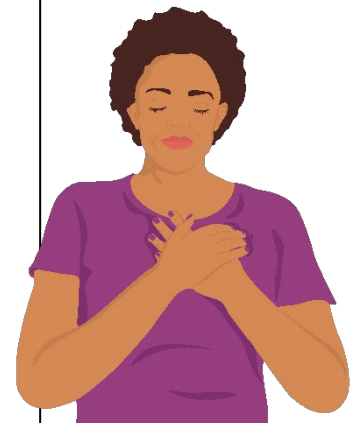
Lesson 4 Practice It: Shifting Your Mindset

After reading the case study, consider how you would have reacted. Then, take a few minutes to respond to the questions below.

1 What would you have thought if you were the educator?



2 If you were the educator, how might you have reacted differently using the Awareness, Pause, Reframe technique and the 4 R's?





In Your Workplace

Session 1 The Trauma-Informed Educators and Supportive Adults We Want to Be

Lesson 4 Practice It: Shifting Your Mindset

Think of a specific instance over the last few months when you had your own version of this educator's morning.



1 What happened? As you think through it, focus on your own mindset and actions.

2 How were your mindset and your actions linked? Would you have done anything differently if you were in a different mindset?

3 Was there a moment when you could have used Awareness, Pause, Reframe or another technique to support yourself in changing your mindset? If so, how might the outcome have changed?

4 What is one strategy you want to commit to trying—whether Awareness, Pause, Reframe or another technique—during your interactions with youth next week?

Session 2:

Foundations of Trauma and Resilience



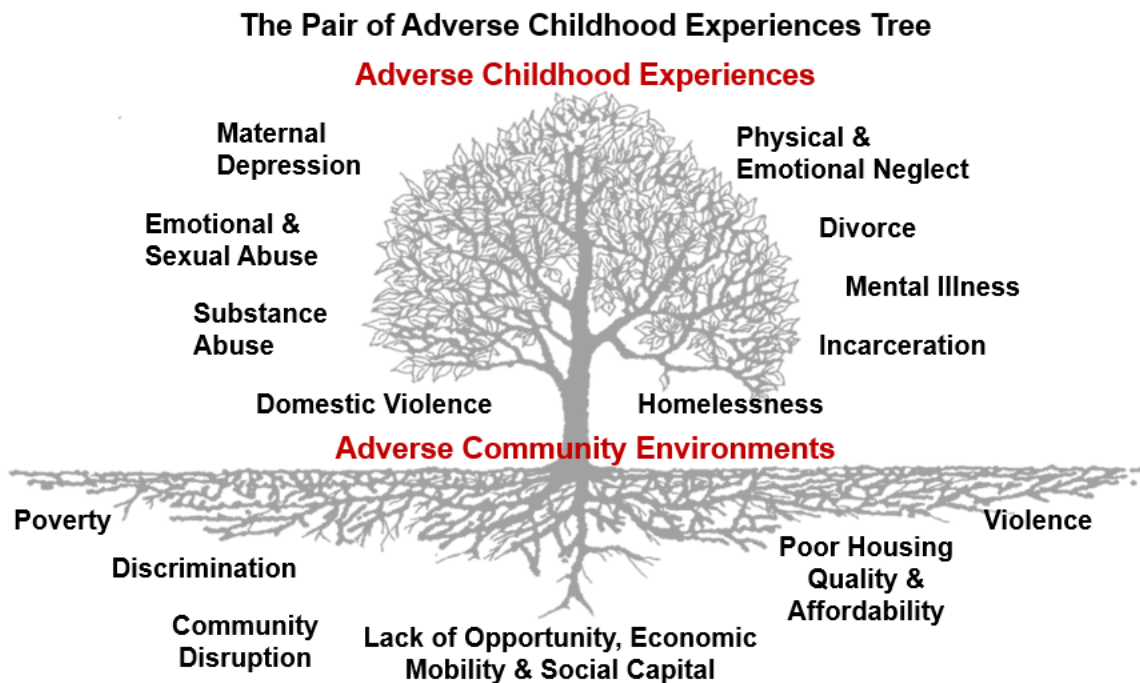


Key Terms and Concepts

Session 2 Foundations of Trauma and Resilience
Lesson 1 Understanding Trauma

Adverse Childhood Experiences are potentially traumatic events that occur before age 18 and may activate the body's stress response. Early adversity can have a lasting impact, and the more Adverse Childhood Experiences experienced, the greater the risk of negative outcomes in adulthood.

The Pair of Adverse Childhood Experiences Tree framework, reproduced below, was developed by the Milken Institute School of Public Health at George Washington University in recognition of the relationship between the original ten Adverse Childhood Experiences and their root causes.



Ellis W, Dietz WH, Chen KD. Community Resilience: A Dynamic Model for Public Health 3.0. J Public Health Manag Pract. 2022 Jan-Feb 01;28(Suppl 1):S18-S26. doi: 10.1097/PHH.0000000000001413. PMID: 34797257.

1. Ellis W, Dietz WH, Chen KD. Community Resilience: A Dynamic Model for Public Health 3.0. J Public Health Manag Pract. 2022 Jan-Feb 01;28(Suppl 1):S18-S26. doi: 10.1097/PHH.0000000000001413. PMID: 34797257.



In Your Workplace

Session 2 Foundations of Trauma and Resilience

Lesson 1 Understanding Trauma

Think about three children or youth you work with who may be struggling with trauma.



- 1 Pick one of the three children or youth to focus on for this exercise. Why do you suspect or know this child is struggling with trauma?

- 2 How might this child's experience with trauma be impacting their ability to learn?



Key Terms and Concepts

Session 2 Foundations of Trauma and Resilience

Lesson 2 Being a Trauma-Informed Mandated Reporter

A **mandated reporter** is a person required by law to report instances of child maltreatment or suspected maltreatment. Each country and locality has its own policies and procedures that should be followed. If you are unfamiliar with your country's mandated reporting laws for your profession, consult your supervisor. Fulfilling the duty of a mandated reporter ensures that the appropriate actions are taken to protect the child or youth from harmful or unsafe circumstances.

A trauma-informed approach to mandated reporting involves:

- 1 **Realizing** that trauma, including abuse, is common
- 2 **Recognizing** that the child or youth may be feeling scared, guilty, ashamed, or confused when traumatized
- 3 **Responding** by letting the child or youth know that you care about them, that you believe what they are telling you, and that you may need to share this information with other people whose job it is to keep them safe
- 4 **Resisting re-traumatization** by letting the child or youth know that you are always there to talk, but not forcing them to talk if they do not want to.

There are some key principles to keep in mind when an educator or supportive adult receives a disclosure or suspects that a child or youth may be experiencing abuse or neglect:



It is not your duty to investigate. You should try to gather enough information to be able to make the report, but should not probe the child or lead them in any way to gather more information. It is still worth making the call to report even if you do not have all the information needed.



You should not call the parent or caregiver to inform them of your concern or to attempt to validate what a student has disclosed to you.



If you believe a situation will expose the child to further abuse when school ends, you should call your country's governmental agency that investigates and protects children from abuse and neglect.



Reflect and Respond

Session 2 Foundations of Trauma and Resilience

Lesson 2 Being a Trauma-Informed Mandated Reporter

After reading the case study, consider how you would have responded. Then, take a few minutes to answer the questions below.

- 1 What are the signs and symptoms of trauma that the educator should recognize?
What is the disclosure from the child that the educator should act on as a mandated reporter?

- 2 Using the 4 R's, how can the educator address the child's situation?





In Your Workplace

Session 2 Foundations of Trauma and Resilience

Lesson 3 Relationship-Building and the Role of Implicit Bias

Return to the child that you focused on in [Session 2, Lesson 1](#).

Recall that **implicit biases** are attitudes or stereotypes that unconsciously affect our understanding, actions, and decisions. Implicit biases can hinder us from forming trusting, positive relationships with children and youth.



1 What is the primary reason you chose this child to focus on?

2 Now spend a few minutes thinking: How are you similar to or different from the child you chose? How may those factors have influenced your choice to focus on this child?

Before answering the question below, think through the following example characteristics:

- Interests (e.g., books, sports)
- Race/ethnicity
- Sexual orientation
- Socio-economic status
- Gender
- Lived experience (e.g., grew up in foster care)
- Neighborhood
- Religion

3 What role might your own experiences and beliefs have played in your ability to build a relationship with this child?

4 What actions can you incorporate into your routines and teaching to support you in identifying and addressing your own implicit biases?



Key Terms and Concepts

Session 2 Foundations of Trauma and Resilience

Lesson 4 Helping Children and Youth Build Resilience

Protective factors are characteristics, conditions, or behaviors—such as coping strategies—that reduce the negative effects of stressful events and promote social and emotional competence. The more protective factors children and youth have, the more likely they will be resilient when encountering stressful or traumatic events. Examples of strategies to promote protective factors include:

- Facilitating supportive adult-child relationships
 - Being a supportive, attentive listener
 - Telling children and youth you are happy to see them
 - Showing children and youth that you see them every day by waving or calling out to them
 - Checking in with children and youth regularly—as a group or individually—to give them opportunities to share what is on their mind
- Building a sense of self-efficacy and perceived control
 - Breaking down large, sometimes intimidating goals by setting smaller but attainable goals
 - Allowing children and youth to define their own goals
 - Providing children and youth with options that give them a choice
- Building children’s problem-solving and self-regulation skills by helping find solutions or ways to cope
 - Teaching children and youth steps to take before they become overwhelmed by the big picture
- Using school and classroom resources to support children and youth
 - Creating a support network for children and youth by bringing in tutors or mentors, social workers, and school counselors

Coping strategies are tools that a child can employ to adapt successfully after experiencing a stressful or traumatic event.





Key Terms and Concepts

Session 2 Foundations of Trauma and Resilience

Lesson 5 Practice It: Building Resilience

It is important to build resilience and positive coping strategies among all children and youth. The strategies outlined here apply to all children and youth, including those who do not have experience with traumatic events.

Example coping strategies to build and reinforce resilience

- **Talk about problems.** Guide children and youth through a structured process to constructively talk about their problems. For example, they can:
 - Take a deep breath and acknowledge how they are feeling.
 - Ask themselves why they feel that way. What is the issue to be worked through?
 - Ask themselves what strengths they can use to get through the concern or “solve” the problem.
 - Reflect on what is in their control.
- **Seek out support from trusted adults.** Help children and youth identify trusted adults in their neighborhoods, in the family, and at school. A trusted adult may be different for each child. Discuss with children and youth what qualities are needed to be a trusted adult.
 - Often, a trusted adult is someone the child feels comfortable talking to about anything.
 - The adult may be someone who has helped them in the past.Depending on the situation, the child may go to different adults. Helping children and youth identify adults they trust outside their home can help them feel safe during stressful events. Try to get them to see that options exist, even if they do not feel they have a trusted adult in their lives.
- **Recognize when to take a break or distract themselves from a situation.** This is about the mind–body connection. Ask children and youth to identify where they feel things in their bodies—for example, clenched fists, racing heart, tight jaw. “How do our bodies tell us we need a break, or sense stress?”
- **Turn to culture or other traditions as a source of hope.** Have children and youth share their traditions, culture, and faith. Share your own culture and traditions with them. Together, share stories that promote hope, and identify people in history who demonstrate resilience and perseverance.
- **Reframe situations to consider positive elements.** Help children and youth to think about challenges they are facing and reflect on any positive aspects of those challenges, such as helping them to become stronger or wiser. Talk about examples of other individuals who faced great challenges that eventually helped them to develop the skills or attributes they were ultimately recognized for.
- **Recognize inherent strengths.** When you see it, say it. Create a “strength language” to build a culture of strengths. Name children’s strengths and explain why you admire those strengths. Ask children and youth to spot peers’ strengths and share appreciation for those strengths.






Reflect and Respond

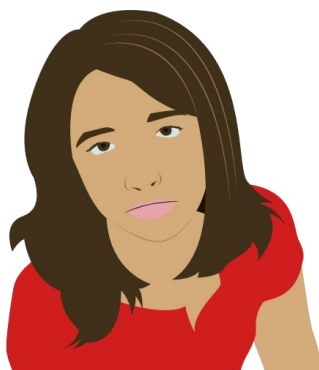
Session 2 Foundations of Trauma and Resilience
Lesson 5 Building Resilience

After reading the case scenario about the example child you selected, answer the following questions.

- 1 What Adverse Childhood Experiences or other traumatic experiences do you see in this case example?
 Is there any reason to believe the child may be experiencing abuse or neglect?

- 2 What protective factors does this child have in place?

- 3 How would you coach this child to develop or strengthen their positive coping strategies by drawing on their protective factors?





In Your Workplace

Session 2 Foundations of Trauma and Resilience

Lesson 5 Practice it: Building Resilience

Return to the three children that you thought of at the beginning of this session who may be struggling with trauma ([Session 2, Lesson 1](#)).



1 What activities or approaches can you try with them and others you work with to build resilience and positive coping strategies?

2 What specific activity or approach do you commit to trying next week?

Session 3:

Addressing Collective Traumatic Events with Children and Youth





Key Terms and Concepts

Session 3 Addressing Collective Traumatic Events with Children and Youth

Lesson 1 How Collective Traumatic Events Impact Children and Youth

Collective traumatic events can shape a child's sense of safety, support, and hope, as well as their overall outlook on life. Types of collective traumas include:

Racial trauma: the stressful impact or emotional pain of experiencing racism and discrimination

- Examples include acts of aggression towards people of color by other individuals or groups of people, such as the authorities. Children and youth may experience or witness these acts firsthand or may be exposed to coverage in the media.

Historical trauma: trauma experienced by specific cultural, racial, or ethnic groups, often stemming from significant events in history involving oppression of a particular group of people

- Examples include slavery, the Holocaust, forced migration, violent colonization of indigenous populations around the world, and failure to acknowledge genocide.

Systemic trauma: social, economic, and institutional structures and policies that prevent specific groups of people in a specific group or neighborhood from meeting their basic needs

- Examples include concentrated poverty in areas of the city, lack of access to high-quality childcare for inner-city or rural populations, lack of access to convenient public transportation systems through certain neighborhoods, and governmental policies restricting access to safety-net benefits.

Catastrophic events: brief traumatic events that impact a group of people

- Examples include terrorist attacks, such as bombings and mass shootings, and natural disasters like earthquakes, floods, fires, mudslides, avalanches, tornados, tsunamis, or droughts. In addition to exposure to the event itself, the level of response following the trauma often contributes to existing racial and ethnic inequities.





In Your Workplace

Session 3 Addressing Collective Traumatic Events with Children and Youth

Lesson 1 How Collective Traumatic Events Impact Children and Youth

Reflect on the types of collective traumatic events that may occur, and consider the role of racial trauma, historical trauma, systemic trauma, and catastrophic events.



- 1 How have different types of collective traumatic events presented in your workplace? In what ways have those events affected you and the children and youth you work with?

- 2 How confident do you feel in addressing these types of traumatic events with children and youth? What approaches have you tried?



Key Terms and Concepts

Session 3 Addressing Collective Traumatic Events with Children and Youth

Lesson 2 Building Safe and Brave Environments

Safe and brave spaces provide a learning environment in which all children and youth can thrive—no matter who they are, where they live, what they have experienced, or how much money their family makes.

Safe spaces:

- Are devoid of judgment based on identity or experiences
- Allow children and youth to express their thoughts without fear of consequence

Brave spaces:

- Inspire children and youth to speak honestly
- Respect views based on experience
- Encourage listening and being heard

Actions to build a trauma-informed culture



Create an inclusive environment



Establish and maintain authentic relationships with children and youth



Develop positive behavioral interventions that avoid re-traumatizing children and youth



Educate yourself and children you work with about racism



Empower children and youth to affect change

Explore strategies you might consider using in Building a Trauma-Informed Culture, linked in [Additional Resources](#).



In Your Workplace

Session 3 Addressing Collective Traumatic Events with Children and Youth

Lesson 2 Building Safe and Brave Environments

Reflect on different approaches to building a safe and brave environment that can support children and youth through collective traumatic events.



- 1 Building on your experience, the advice shared in this lesson, and tips from your peers, what are three new approaches you would like to try in building a safe and brave environment?

- 2 What steps can you take next week to support your efforts to try out the new approaches identified in your answer above?



In Your Workplace

Session 3 Addressing Collective Traumatic Events with Children and Youth

Lesson 3 How Implicit Bias Affects Our Responses to Trauma

Reflect on implicit bias and how it might impact your perception of trauma and how you respond to children and youth.



- 1 How might implicit bias shape your perception of who has experienced trauma and who may need help?

- 2 What are some effective strategies you have used or seen a peer use to address implicit bias? Consider how you might use the Awareness, Pause, Reframe technique to recognize assumptions you have made that may be based on implicit bias.



Reflect and Respond

Session 3 Addressing Collective Traumatic Events with Children and Youth

Lesson 4 Practice it: Addressing Collective Traumatic Events Using the 4 R's of a Trauma-Informed Approach

After reading the case scenario, think about how an educator or supportive adult might apply the 4 R's to address collective traumatic events.

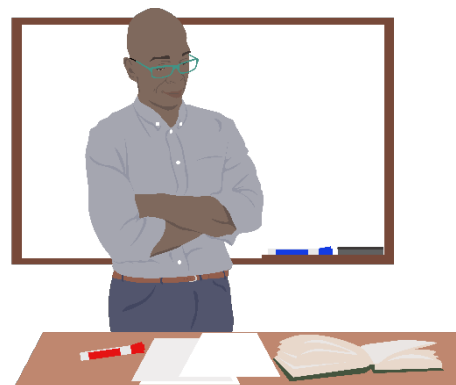
- 1 What should the educator or supportive adult do? Reflect on your own experience and the 4 R's as you think through a trauma-informed approach.

Realize
that...

Recognize
that...

Respond
by...

Resist re-traumatization
by...





Reflect and Respond

Session 3 Addressing Collective Traumatic Events with Children and Youth

Lesson 4 Practice it: Addressing Collective Traumatic Events Using the 4 R's of Trauma-Informed Approach

After reading the trauma-informed approach to the case scenario, think about what you have learned.

1 What did you like about the way they handled the situation?

2 What would you suggest they do differently?



Session 4:

Addressing Trauma with Children, Families, and Caregivers in One-on- One Settings





Reflect and Respond

Session 4 Addressing Trauma with Children, Families, and Caregivers in One-on-One Settings

Lesson 2 Practice It: Supporting Individual Children and Youth

After reading the case scenario, consider how an educator or supportive adult might apply the 4 R's to address the child's response.

- 1 What should the educator or supportive adult do? Reflect on your own experience and the 4 R's as you think through a trauma-informed approach.

Realize
that...

Recognize
that...

Respond
by...

**Resist
re-traumatization**
by...





Reflect and Respond

Session 4 Addressing Trauma with Children, Families, and Caregivers in One-on-One Settings

Lesson 2 Practice It: Supporting Individual Children and Youth

After reading the trauma-informed approach to the case scenario, think about what you have learned.

1 What did you like about the way they handled the situation?

2 What would you suggest they do differently?





Reflect and Respond

Session 4 Addressing Trauma with Children, Families, and Caregivers
in One-on-One Settings

Lesson 3 Practice It: Engaging with Families and Caregivers

After reading the case scenario, consider how you might approach a conversation with the child's mother as a trauma-informed educator or supportive adult.

- 1 How would you start the conversation with the child's mother? Remember to consider the 4 R's as you think through your plan.

Realize
that...

Recognize
that...

Respond
by...

Resist
re-traumatization
by...





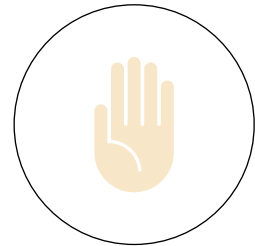
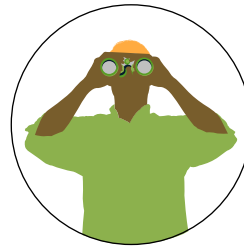
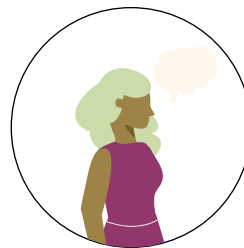
Key Terms and Concepts

Session 4 Addressing Trauma with Children, Families, and Caregivers in One-on-One Settings

Lesson 3 Practice It: Engaging with Families and Caregivers

There are several principles to consider when **approaching a conversation with a family member or caregiver in a trauma-informed way**:

- Talk to the family or caregiver at a time that works for them.
- Ease into the conversation.
- Be clear about the purpose of the conversation.
- **Realize** when trauma might be playing a role.
- **Resist re-traumatization** when describing the situation.
- **Recognize** the signs of trauma and share your observations.
- **Respond** in a trauma-informed way.





Reflect and Respond

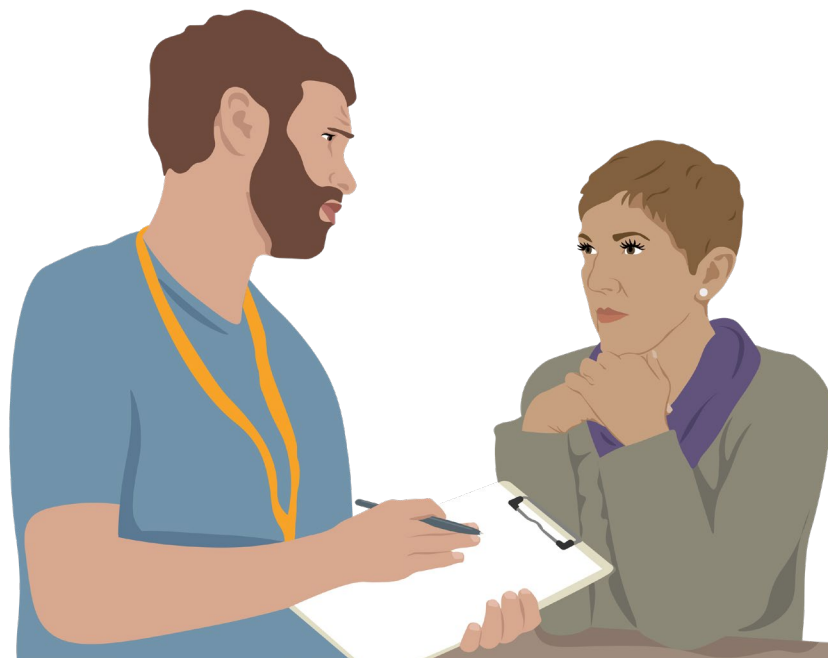
Session 4 Addressing Trauma with Children, Families, and Caregivers in One-on-One Settings

Lesson 3 Practice It: Engaging with Families and Caregivers

As you reflect on your conversation with the child's mother, consider the trauma-informed approach you used during the conversation.

1 What did you like about the way you handled the situation?

2 What would you like to try or use when you engage with parents and caregivers in the future?





In Your Workplace

Session 4 Addressing Trauma with Children, Families, and Caregivers in One-on-One Settings

Lesson 4 Creating a Trauma-Informed Purpose Statement

A purpose statement can help us define our goals and plan how to achieve them. Now, take a few moments to reflect on what you have learned so far in this training. As you continue your journey to become a trauma-informed educator or supportive adult, what purpose statement will you set for yourself to guide your path forward?



1 My purpose in being a trauma-informed educator or supportive adult is to...

By...

Addressing Trauma in the Context of Conflict and Displacement





Key Terms and Concepts

Addressing Trauma in the Context of Conflict and Displacement

Lesson 1 Understanding Trauma in the Context of Conflict and Displacement

People who have been displaced are forced to leave their home country or residence, often because of war, persecution, or natural disasters. Persecution refers to hostility and ill-treatment, especially based on ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or political beliefs.

Refugees are people who have been displaced and crossed an international border, whereas internally displaced persons have not crossed an international border but have fled their homes and relocated within their home country.

When children experience **trauma due to conflict and displacement**, their behavior may be impacted in a variety of ways. Potential reactions to trauma by age group are listed in the table below. In all youth, trauma may also manifest as physical complaints, like stomachaches or headaches.

Age group	Common reactions to trauma
<i>Children (Under Age 2)</i>	<i>Excessive crying, difficulty being consoled, or having low weight, poor appetite, or digestive problems</i>
<i>Toddlers (Under Age 5)</i>	<i>Acting younger than their age, having difficulties with peer and family relationships, being socially withdrawn, aggressive, or clingy</i>
<i>Elementary School Children (Ages 5-12)</i>	<i>Avoidance of or reactivity to reminders of the traumatic events, learning problems, and interpersonal challenges (e.g., aggression or mistrust)</i>
<i>Teens (Ages 13-18)</i>	<i>Engaging in risky behaviors, having intense emotions, isolating, having increased conflict with family members</i>

Children living in the context of **conflict and war** may experience unique mental and physical trauma that can impact their well-being and development. Trauma in this context can include the loss of one's social fabric, support system, loved ones, and sense of place and home.



Reflect and Respond

Addressing Trauma in the Context of Conflict and Displacement

Lesson 1 Understanding Trauma in the Context of Conflict and Displacement

ENTER AN AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM: Pick one of the scenarios to focus on for this exercise. After reading the case scenario, think about how the adult supporting the after-school program might use the 4 R's to support the individual experiencing trauma due to conflict and displacement.



- 1 What might the adult supporting the after-school program **realize** about the prevalence and impact of trauma on youth who have experienced conflict or displacement?

- 2 What symptoms or reactions to trauma might the adult supporting the after-school program **recognize**?

- 3 How might the adult supporting the after-school program **respond** by using trauma-informed principles and strategies?

- 4 How can the adult supporting the after-school program **resist re-traumatization**?



Key Terms and Concepts

Addressing Trauma in the Context of Conflict and Displacement

Lesson 2 The Impact of Trauma on the Family System

Both adults and children are impacted by trauma in the context of conflict and displacement:

- Family routines may be disrupted (e.g., mealtime, bedtime)
- Family rituals like holidays and traditions are often lost, at least temporarily
- Relationships and roles between parents and children may shift, with youth often taking on more adult roles

Grief is a natural response to loss and is often experienced by people during conflict and displacement. Grief can include feelings of shock, anger, disbelief, guilt, and profound sadness.

As families experience the loss of routines and rituals that are critical for family cohesion and meaning, these losses may compound grief by interfering with the family's healing supports.





Reflect and Respond

Addressing Trauma in the Context of Conflict and Displacement

Lesson 2 The Impact of Trauma on the Family System

Let's return to the scenario in the after-school program from the previous lesson. Please refer to the case scenario you chose previously and complete the exercises below.



1 What do you notice about the parent in this situation?

2 How has trauma impacted their experience and the way they support their child in this context?

3 How can the adult at the after-school program offer support to the parent in the situation?



Key Terms and Concepts

Addressing Trauma in the Context of Conflict and Displacement

Lesson 3 Trauma-Informed Strategies for Supportive Adults

Mindfulness can be a helpful way to foster personal resilience. By focusing on one's breathing and being present in the moment, people can bring about rest and relaxation in their bodies and a state of self-compassion and acceptance. A few mindfulness exercises to consider are included below:



- **Five-Finger Breathing:** Starting with your thumb, use your other hand to trace up and down each finger. Slowly breathe in as you go up, and out as you go down.
- **Sensory Grounding:** Ground your senses by naming 5 things you can see, 4 things you can touch, 3 things you can hear, 2 things you can smell, 1 thing you can taste.
- **Self-Compassion Letter:** Write a letter to yourself with a message of acceptance of who you are and the emotions you experience. Write as if you were talking to a close friend.
- **Circle of Support:** Draw yourself in the center of a blank sheet of paper. Next, surround yourself with the names of those you go to for support. Ask yourself: Who do you go to when you are sad? When you are happy? When you need advice? Make a plan to reach out to your circle of support.
- **Kindness Phrases:** Sit comfortably and approach yourself with compassion and kindness. Choose phrases to repeat to yourself such as: *May I be peaceful. May I accept myself as I am. May I be strong. May I be patient.*



Key Terms and Concepts

Addressing Trauma in the Context of Conflict and Displacement

Lesson 3 Trauma-Informed Strategies for Supportive Adults

Positive Childhood Experiences (PCEs) can reduce mental and relational health problems in the future, even as they happen alongside adverse childhood experiences (ACEs). PCEs include feeling safe enough to talk about emotions that are hard and feeling supported during difficult times. Family members and other supportive adults can contribute to a child's PCEs by demonstrating empathy, understanding, and openness to discussing challenging feelings and events, as well as by creating opportunities for belonging and connection (e.g., at home, school, clubs, neighborhood).

Protective factors buffer children against stress and promote healthy development. These protective factors can be fostered by supportive adults and include:

- **Individual Factors:** Individually, young people with particular character strengths and traits are more protected and resilient in the face of stress. These traits include intelligence, agreeable temperament, optimistic outlook, self-esteem, self-efficacy, emotional flexibility, autonomy, and empathy, among others. All of these individual traits can be modeled and fostered by supportive adults.
- **Social and Family Factors:** Socially and within one's family, secure attachment to a caregiver, meaningful friendships, prosocial bonding to a supportive adult, and cooperative learning skills are relational characteristics that promote resilience in youth. Supportive adults can foster resilience in children who have experienced trauma by engaging in and promoting positive relationships that are characterized by warmth, support, and cooperation.
- **Environmental Factors:** Aspects of a young person's context and environment can promote resilience and buffer against the negative impacts of trauma. Protective environmental factors include safe neighborhoods, community closeness, access to after-school programs, supportive extended family, and meaningful mentorship. While these may seem challenging to build for youth, even exposure to one of these factors can positively impact youth development.

Re-establishing structure, routines, and rituals

in the family and community can be an important part of healing and resilience-building.

Encouraging children to perform age-appropriate chores and to return to regular eating and sleeping patterns can also be helpful in coping with trauma.



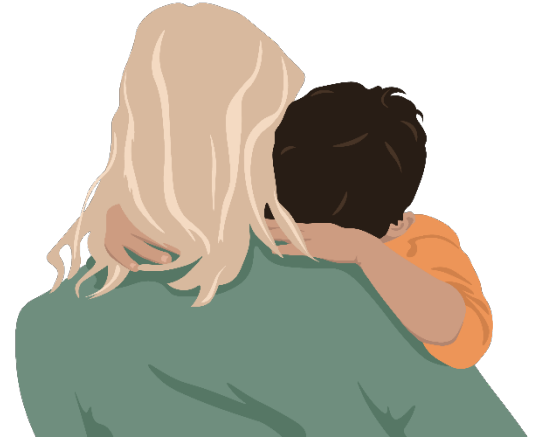


Reflect and Respond

Addressing Trauma in the Context of Conflict and Displacement

Lesson 3 Trauma-Informed Strategies for Supportive Adults

Consider how you can support children and families in building **protective factors** in the context of conflict and displacement.



- 1 How can you support children and families in building **protective factors** (e.g., intelligence, agreeable temperament, optimistic outlook, self-esteem, self-efficacy, emotional flexibility, autonomy, and empathy) in the context of conflict and displacement?

- 2 How can you support children and families with building **social and family protective factors** (e.g., secure attachment to a caregiver, meaningful friendships, bonding with a supportive adult, cooperative learning skills) in the context of conflict and displacement?

- 3 How can you support children and families in building **environmental protective factors** (e.g., safe neighborhoods, community closeness, access to after-school programs, supportive extended family, meaningful mentorship) in the context of conflict and displacement?



Reflect and Respond

Addressing Trauma in the Context of Conflict and Displacement

Lesson 3 Trauma-Informed Strategies for Supportive Adults

Consider how conflict and displacement might disrupt family rituals and routines and how you can support those impacted.



1 What family rituals and routines have been disrupted in the context of conflict and displacement?

2 What steps can you take to support the return to rituals and routines?



Reflect and Respond

Addressing Trauma in the Context of Conflict and Displacement

Lesson 3 Trauma-Informed Strategies for Supportive Adults

Take a moment to reflect on when to seek additional support.



1 How do you know that you may need additional support (e.g., I struggle with sleeping)?

2 What individuals and community supports can you reach out to if you need additional support?



Reflect and Respond

Addressing Trauma in the Context of Conflict and Displacement

Practice It: Putting Everything Together

Let's return to the scenario in the after-school program and reflect on how each of these tools are relevant in your selected example. Please refer to the case scenario you chose previously.

In this case, how might you...



1 Continue to practice **the 4 R's**?

2 Build resilience through **self-care**?

3 Promote the child's **individual, social, family, and environmental protective factors**?

4 Support the child's family, including re-establishing **family routines and rituals**?



Additional Resources

[Child Trauma Toolkit for Educators](#)

This guide from the National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN) suggests ways in which educators can help children who have experienced trauma and describes the psychological and behavioral impact of trauma by age group.

[A Guide for Youth: Understanding Trauma](#)

This guide from Youth MOVE National is designed to help youths make a connection between stressful events and their potential lasting impacts. It provides a framework for talking about past experiences that can help youths process those experiences and ask for help.

[Mandated Reporting Resources](#)

Being a mandated reporter means being empowered to help keep students safe from harm. Consult this resource from the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) for guidance on how to engage with students and parents in acting upon your concerns.

[Tips for Educators Helping Youth After Traumatic Events in the Community](#)

This tip sheet from the NCTSN is designed for educators who wish to help students who have been affected by a traumatic event in their community.

[Addressing Race and Trauma in the Classroom](#)

This guidebook from NCTSN is designed to help educators understand how they might address the interplay of race and trauma and its effects on students in the classroom.

[Teacher Guidelines for Helping Students after Mass Violence](#)

These guidelines from NCTSN describe common reactions students may have after a mass-violence event and how teachers and school staff can help.

[Building a trauma-informed classroom culture](#)

This is a reference sheet with several example actions you can take to build a trauma-informed classroom culture.

[Implicit Association Test \(IAT\)](#)

This is a test prepared by Project Implicit at Harvard. It measures attitudes and beliefs that people may be unwilling or unable to report.

[Parent Conversation Guide](#)

This three-page resource from Joining Forces for Children provides guidance for educators who seek to engage in positive, productive conversations with parents/guardians.

[Tools and Resources to Take Action](#)

This is a guide from Trauma-Informed Programs and Practices (TIPPS) at the University of Michigan School of Social Work. The guide provides background on adversity, trauma, and the role of schools in taking a "system" approach to creating trauma-informed schools.



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