



Overcoming Adversity & Trauma

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EPAA School Mental Health Team

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Before we Begin

This presentation discusses sensitive content.
We want you to take care of yourself!

Trauma and stressful events can be hard to think
and talk about - it might bring up different
emotions.

If it gets to be too much, please press pause. Feel
free to take a break and mute the presentation.



Trauma and Stress

Everyone is affected by experiences of trauma at some point in their life.

Everyone also responds differently to stress and trauma.



Trauma

Individual 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.

Some types of trauma:

Community
Violence

Abuse

Domestic
Violence

Historical /
Racial
Trauma

Grief

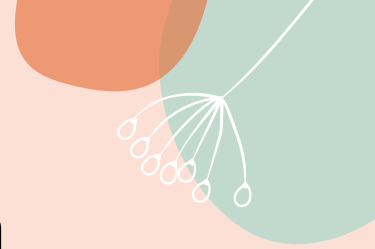


Carrying the Load

Our genetics, pasts, and current lives all impact how much of a load we are able to carry.

When the load gets too heavy, we may develop symptoms of a trauma or stressor related disorder.





How do experiences of stress and trauma impact....

An individual's or family's feelings?

An individual's actions and behaviors?

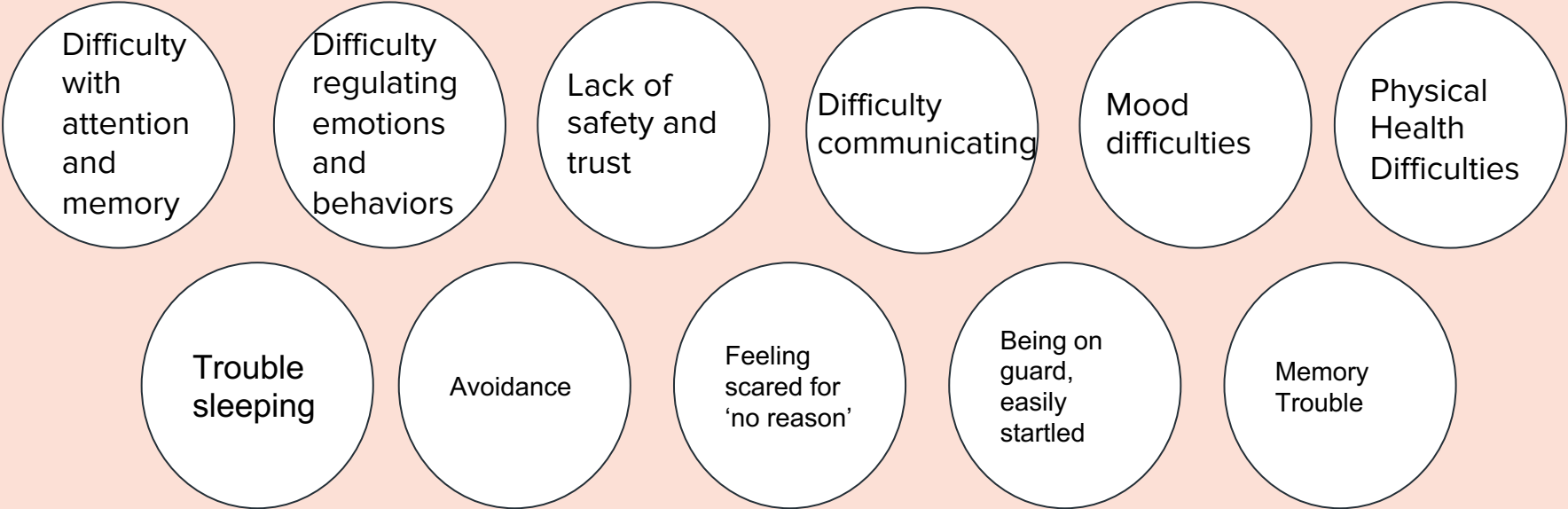
What kind of challenges might this create in school or the community?



Impact of Trauma

Trauma uses necessary resources for feelings of survival instead of growth and development.

Some possible impacts of Traumatic Stress.....



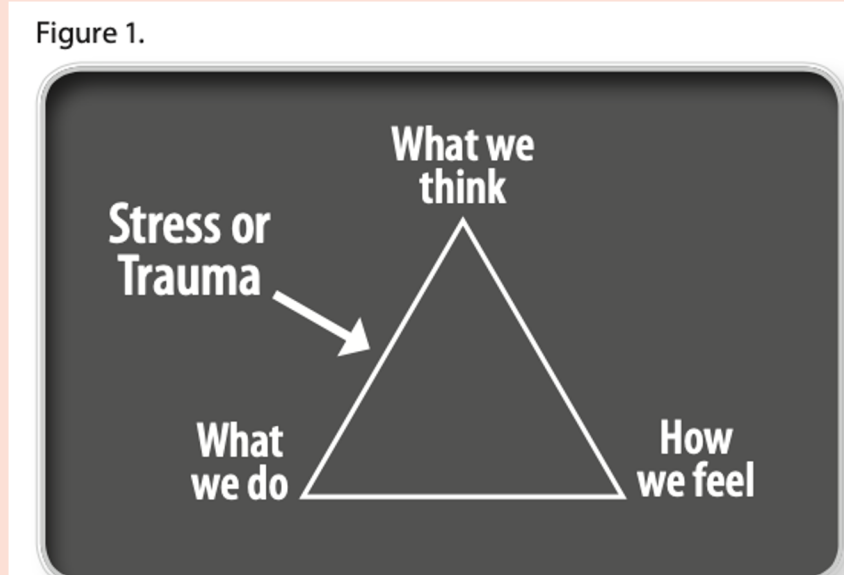


Common Feelings after Trauma

1. Anger
2. Shame
3. Guilt
4. Sadness
5. Grief
6. Fear

How can Trauma Impact Us?

Figure 1.



The Brain and Stress

Trauma affects what is happening in our brain! When we are under stress or have experienced trauma, we operate more in a fight / flight reaction. It impacts everything we do!



How does trauma show up differently?

Preschool

- Bed wetting
- Thumb sucking
- Acting younger than their age
- Trouble separating from their parents
- Temper tantrums
- Aggressive behavior like hitting, kicking, throwing things, or biting
- Not playing with other kids their age
- Repetitive playing out of events related to trauma exposure

Elementary School

- Changes in their behavior such as aggression, anger, irritability, withdrawal from others, and sadness
- Trouble at school
- Trouble with peers
- Fear of separation from parents
- Fear of something bad happening

Middle / High School

- A sense of responsibility or guilt for the bad things that have happened
- Feelings of shame or embarrassment
- Feelings of helplessness
- Changes in how they think about the world
- Loss of faith
- Problems in relationships including peers, family, and teachers
- Conduct problems

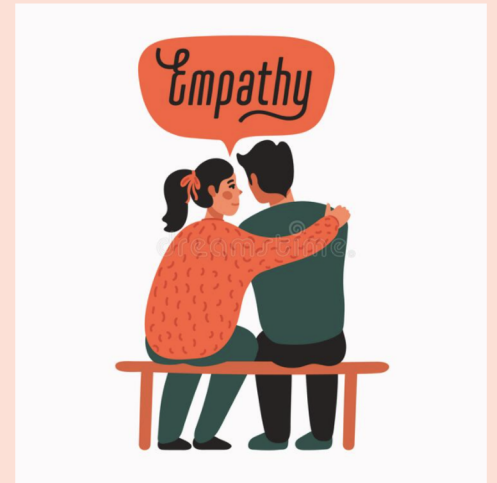
Trauma can change the conversation.

Instead of asking.....

“What is wrong with you?”

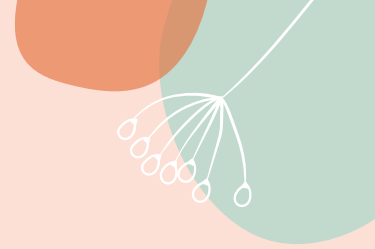
we can ask

“What is happening here?”



What helps for coping with
trauma?





Some skills that can help:

Three primary skills can help children and teens cope with trauma:

How to IDENTIFY emotions.

How to EXPRESS emotions.

How to REGULATE emotions.

What are some ways you feel you could help your child after a stressful or traumatic event?



How can WE lighten the load?

Make your child feel safe.

Act calm (if possible).

Listen and hear your child's honesty.

Stick to routines (if possible).

Help your child find / experience joy.

It's OKAY to answer 'I don't know.'

Youth are RESILIENT!



Not all children are impacted the same way by trauma and stress.

What Strengths do you see in your kids and/or community?

¿Necesito ayuda para mi salud mental?

Primero, determine hasta qué punto sus síntomas interfieren en su vida diaria.



¿Tengo síntomas leves que han durado menos de dos semanas?

- Se siente un poco decaído.
- Se siente decaído, pero aún puede trabajar, hacer tareas escolares o realizar labores domésticas.
- Tiene cierta dificultad para dormir.
- Se siente decaído, pero aún puede cuidarse a sí mismo o a otros.



Si es así, las siguientes son algunas actividades de autocuidado que pueden ayudarle:

- Hacer ejercicios (por ejemplo, aeróbicos o yoga).
- Participar en actividades que incluyan contacto social (ya sea virtuales o en persona).
- Dormir de forma adecuada, manteniendo un horario regular.
- Comer saludablemente.
- Hablar con un amigo o pariente en quien confía.
- Practicar actividades de meditación, relajación y contemplación.

Si los síntomas anteriores no mejoran o parece que están empeorando, a pesar de los esfuerzos de autocuidado, hable con su proveedor de atención médica.



¿Tengo síntomas graves que han durado dos semanas o más?

- Tiene dificultad para dormir.
- Hay cambios en su apetito que originan cambios no deseados en su peso.
- Tiene dificultad en las mañanas para levantarse de la cama debido a su estado de ánimo.
- Tiene dificultad para concentrarse.
- Ha perdido interés en cosas que por lo general le son divertidas.
- No puede realizar sus actividades y funciones diarias.
- Tiene pensamientos sobre la muerte o de hacerse daño.



Busque ayuda profesional:

- psicoterapia (terapia de diálogo), ya sea virtual o en persona, individual, grupal o familiar;
- medicamentos;
- terapias de estimulación cerebral.

Para ayudarle a encontrar tratamientos, visite la página de ayuda para enfermedades mentales: www.nimh.nih.gov/busqueayuda.

Si está en crisis, llame a la Red Nacional de Prevención del Suicidio al teléfono gratuito en español 1-888-628-9454, o bien, envíe un mensaje que diga "HELLO" a la línea de crisis para mensajes de texto en inglés al 747474.



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My Mental Health: Do I Need Help?

First, determine how much your symptoms interfere with your daily life.



Do I have mild symptoms that have lasted for less than 2 weeks?

- Feeling a little down
- Feeling down, but still able to do job, schoolwork, or housework
- Some trouble sleeping
- Feeling down, but still able to take care of yourself or take care of others



If so, here are some self-care activities that can help:

- Exercising (e.g., aerobics, yoga)
- Engaging in social contact (virtual or in person)
- Getting adequate sleep on a regular schedule
- Eating healthy
- Talking to a trusted friend or family member
- Practicing meditation, relaxation, and mindfulness

If the symptoms above do not improve or seem to be worsening despite self-care efforts, talk to your health care provider.



Do I have severe symptoms that have lasted 2 weeks or more?

- Difficulty sleeping
- Appetite changes that result in unwanted weight changes
- Struggling to get out of bed in the morning because of mood
- Difficulty concentrating
- Loss of interest in things you usually find enjoyable
- Unable to perform usual daily functions and responsibilities
- Thoughts of death or self-harm



Seek professional help:

- Psychotherapy (talk therapy)—virtual or in person; individual, group, or family
- Medications
- Brain stimulation therapies

For help finding treatment, visit www.nimh.nih.gov/findhelp.

If you are in crisis, call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255), or text the Crisis Text Line (text HELLO to 747474).



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Additional Community Resources

San Mateo Crisis Hotline: (650) 579-0305

National Suicide Hotline: 1-800-273-TALK

Psychiatric Emergency Services: (650) 573-2662