

Trauma-Informed Teaching: A Whole Child Approach

Explore trauma-informed practices and teaching tools to create a supportive classroom environment.

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Understanding the Trauma-Informed Lens: See behaviors as survival strategies not willful disobedience

Acknowledge Toxic Stress

Recognize that toxic stress impacts students' ability to engage, learn, and retain information.

Beyond Appearances

Struggles with basic tasks or motivation may stem from underlying trauma, not disorganization or "laziness".

Not Clinical Diagnosis

Trauma-informed teaching is about understanding, not diagnosing or treating mental health conditions.

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Dispelling Myths: What It's NOT

Not a Free-for-All

Trauma-informed teaching requires structure and consistency to reduce stress and uncertainty.

Not Lowered Expectations

It creates space to challenge students academically, helping them relax into learning and reach their full potential.



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Shifting Perspective: What Happened?

Trauma-informed education is not about pathologizing students, but recognizing how trauma affects their presence in the classroom.

> Instead of asking what is wrong with this student, start thinking about what has happened to this student that is impacting their ability to thrive.

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Teaching Tools for Older Students

1

Welcoming Interactions

Start with a welcoming first interaction; consider a syllabus statement on care and well-being.

2

Consistency & Routine

Provide daily outlines or agendas to create a predictable environment.

3

Flexibility & Voice

Allow extensions and offer choices in learning with projects to empower students.

4

Transparency

Clearly communicate classroom norms and expectations (e.g., breaks, food).





Intentionally Prioritizing Well-being & Connection

Well-being Breaks

Incorporate stretching, deep breathing, or gratitude exercises into class time.

Relational Approach

Learn preferred names and listen with your eyes.

Safe Spaces

Designate areas where students can go for breaks or to regulate emotions.

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Teaching Tools for Younger Students

Basic Needs

Allow water and snacks; be mindful of sensory needs.

Movement & Greetings

Build in movement breaks and greet students daily with a positive tone.

Routines & Choices

Establish predictable routines and give students a voice in their learning.

Emotional Literacy

Teach and practice self-regulation skills; label emotions and coping strategies.



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The Power of Play and Praise

Play is a crucial tool to disarm the fear response and foster a sense of safety and engagement.

Be intentional with your praise. Praise students’ behavior and follow it up with a character praise

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Trauma-Informed Education: Beyond a Trend

Disrupting Systems

Challenges systems that prioritize knowing over caring, competition over collaboration.

Restoration & Healing

Aims for restoration and healing past injustices at individual and community levels.

Revealing Humanity

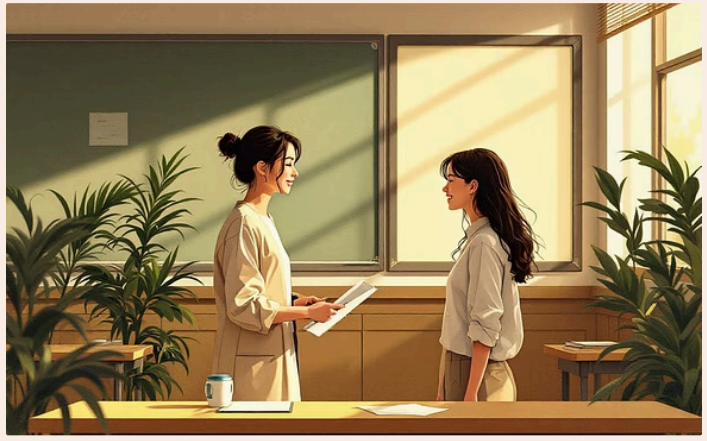
Shows students that educators are on their side, we see them, and they matter.



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Our Commitment to Students

Trauma-informed education is about creating an environment where every student feels seen, supported, and empowered to thrive.









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