



pennsylvania
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Center for Rural PA- Slides to Support PDE testimony

Dr. Dana Milakovic, Mental Wellness & Trauma Specialist

Learning Outcomes

- Participants will be able to:
 - Operationally define equity, types of trauma, and trauma informed approaches.
 - Identify how trauma informed approaches and equitable practices are interconnected.
 - Identify how equity and trauma informed approaches inform database decision-making.
 - Identify how implicit bias can affect decision making in the school setting

Why do we have to talk about equity in education?

Educational Inequities

- Societal Inequity
- Socioeconomic Inequity
- Cultural Inequity
- Familial Inequity
- Programmatic Inequity
- Staffing Inequity
- Instructional Inequity
- Assessment Inequity
- Linguistic Inequity



National: Inequity in Access

Approximately 25% of all K-12 public school students did **not** have access to an Internet connection or an adequate device to access online materials at home, during the pandemic.

Source: Kelly & Sisneros, 2020



PENNSYLVANIA TEACHERS
ADVISORY COMMITTEE

What is your personal definition of "equity?"



Combined Survey Results: Urban, Suburban, Rural
PA Teachers, April-May 2021

*Marks categories reflected only in suburban teacher responses

**Marks categories reflected only in urban teacher responses

Equity

Every student has access to the educational resources and rigor they need at the right moment in their education across race, gender, ethnicity, language, disability, sexual orientation, family background and/or family income.

www.aspeninstitute.org/education; www.ccsso.org

Inclusion

Engagement within a community where the equal worth and inherent dignity of each person is honored.

Inclusion Efforts

- Identity diversity and Cognitive diversity are important for inclusion.
- Diversity is **not** enough.
- There is a difference between diversity and inclusion.

Source: Belonging Through a Culture of Dignity, Cobb & Krownapple, 2019

Belonging

Experiencing **appreciation, validation, acceptance, and fair treatment** within an environment

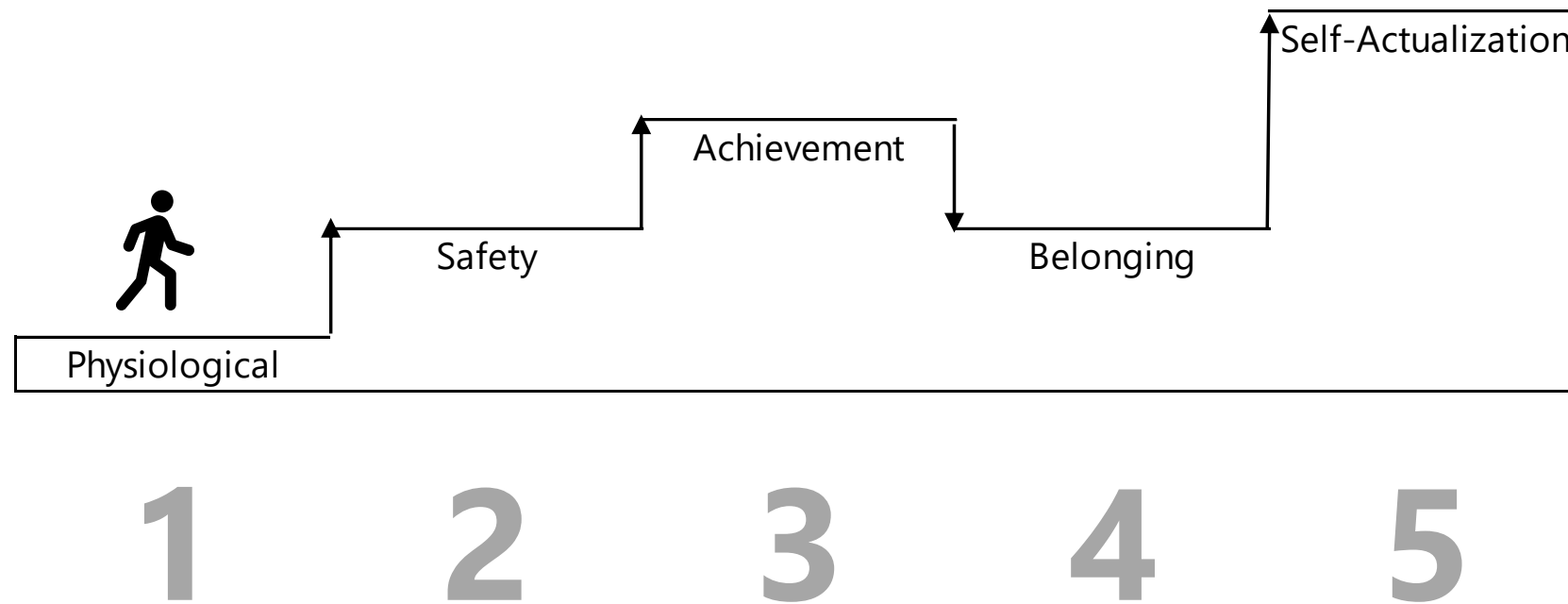


"Many students are willing to trade access for belonging due to the pressure to fit in (conform, assimilate) within an integrative environment."

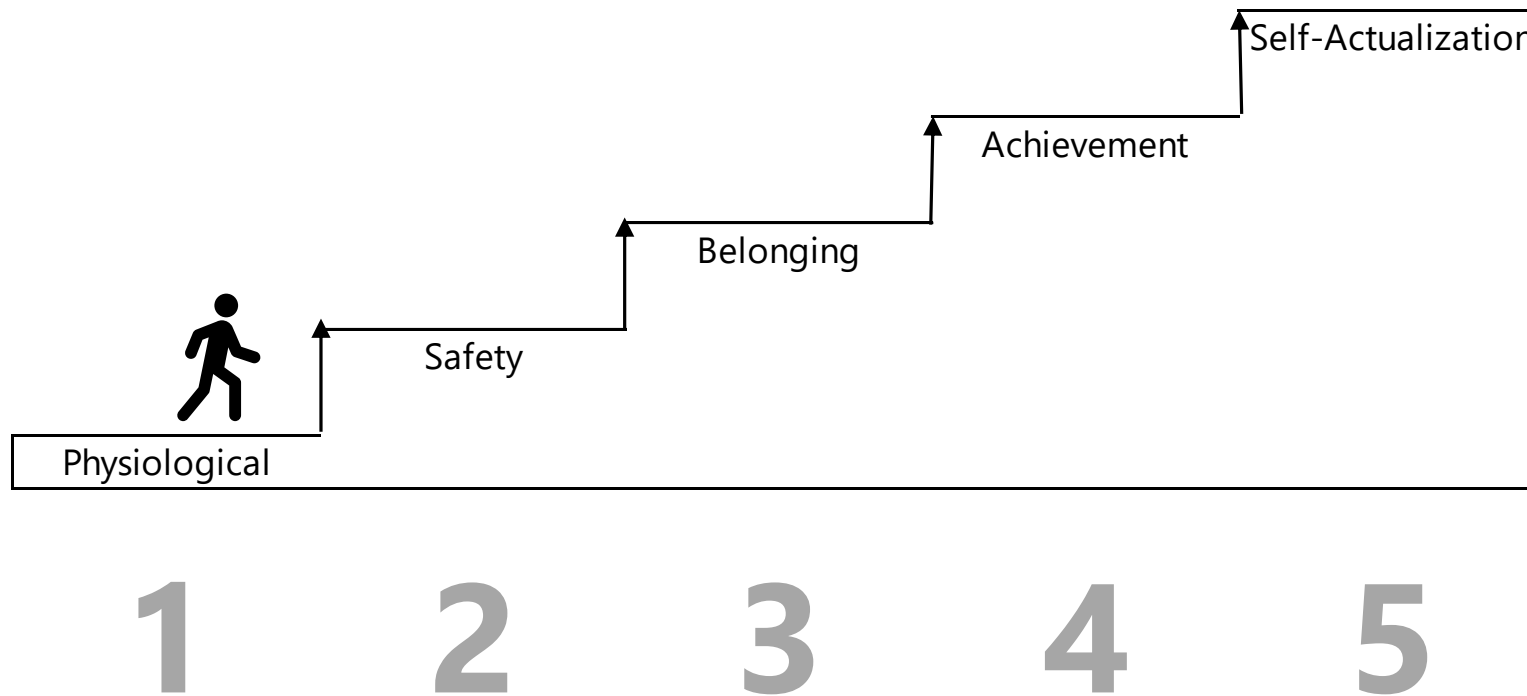
– F. Cobb & J. Krownapple

Source: *Belonging Through a Culture of Dignity*, Cobb & Krownapple, 2019

Sacrificing Belonging for Access



Putting Belonging Where It Belongs



Types Of Trauma

- **Community violence:** Robberies, shootings, assault, gang-related violence, hate crimes, group trauma affecting a particular community
- **Family trauma:** Abuse, neglect, experiencing or witnessing domestic violence, incarceration of family members, family substance abuse, family mental health needs, family medical needs
- **Grief and Loss:** The death of a loved one, classmate/teacher, or someone the child knows, including pets
- **Human-caused disasters:** Accidents, wars, environmental disasters, acts of terrorism

Types Of Trauma

Racial trauma: Potentially traumatic experiences resulting from direct experiences of racial harassment, witnessing racial violence toward others, and experiencing discrimination and institutional racism. Racial trauma can include direct exposure of racial harassment, witnessing racial violence toward others, and experiencing discrimination and institutional racism

Racial Trauma Factors

- **Explicit Bias:** Explicit bias refers to the attitudes and beliefs we have about a person or group on a conscious level. Much of the time, these biases and their expression arise as the direct result of a perceived threat. When people feel threatened, they are more likely to draw group boundaries to distinguish themselves from others.
- **Hostile Environment:** Conduct that is sufficiently serious to deny or limit a student's ability to participate in or benefit from education programs or activities.

Trauma Definition: Act 18 of 2019

1. Exposure to an event, series of events or set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as physically or emotional harmful or threatening.
2. Lasting adverse effects
3. Creates significant difficulty in cognitive functioning and physical, social, emotional, mental or spiritual well-being.

Types Of Trauma

Historical trauma: The cumulative emotional and psychological wounding across generations, including the lifespan, which emanates from massive group trauma . Historical trauma may be used interchangeably with generational trauma. This would include the emerging research on epigenetics.

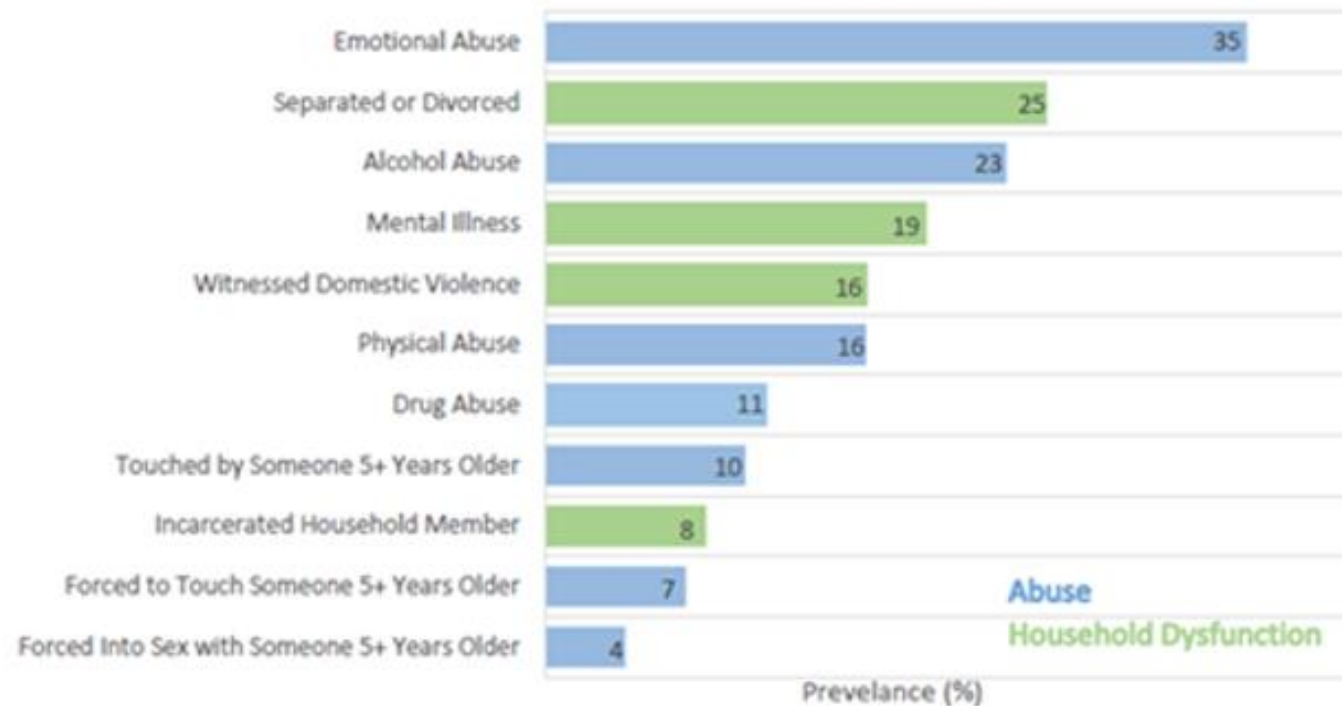
Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs):

- Abuse and Neglect
 - Emotional abuse or neglect
 - Physical abuse or neglect
 - Sexual abuse
- Household Challenges
 - Mother treated violently
 - Substance abuse
 - Mental illness
 - Separation/divorce
 - Incarcerated family member

Prevalence of ACEs

Figure 1: Prevalence (%) Estimates (N=5,705) of Individual ACEs in Pennsylvania, 2016

Prevalence of Individual ACEs, 2016



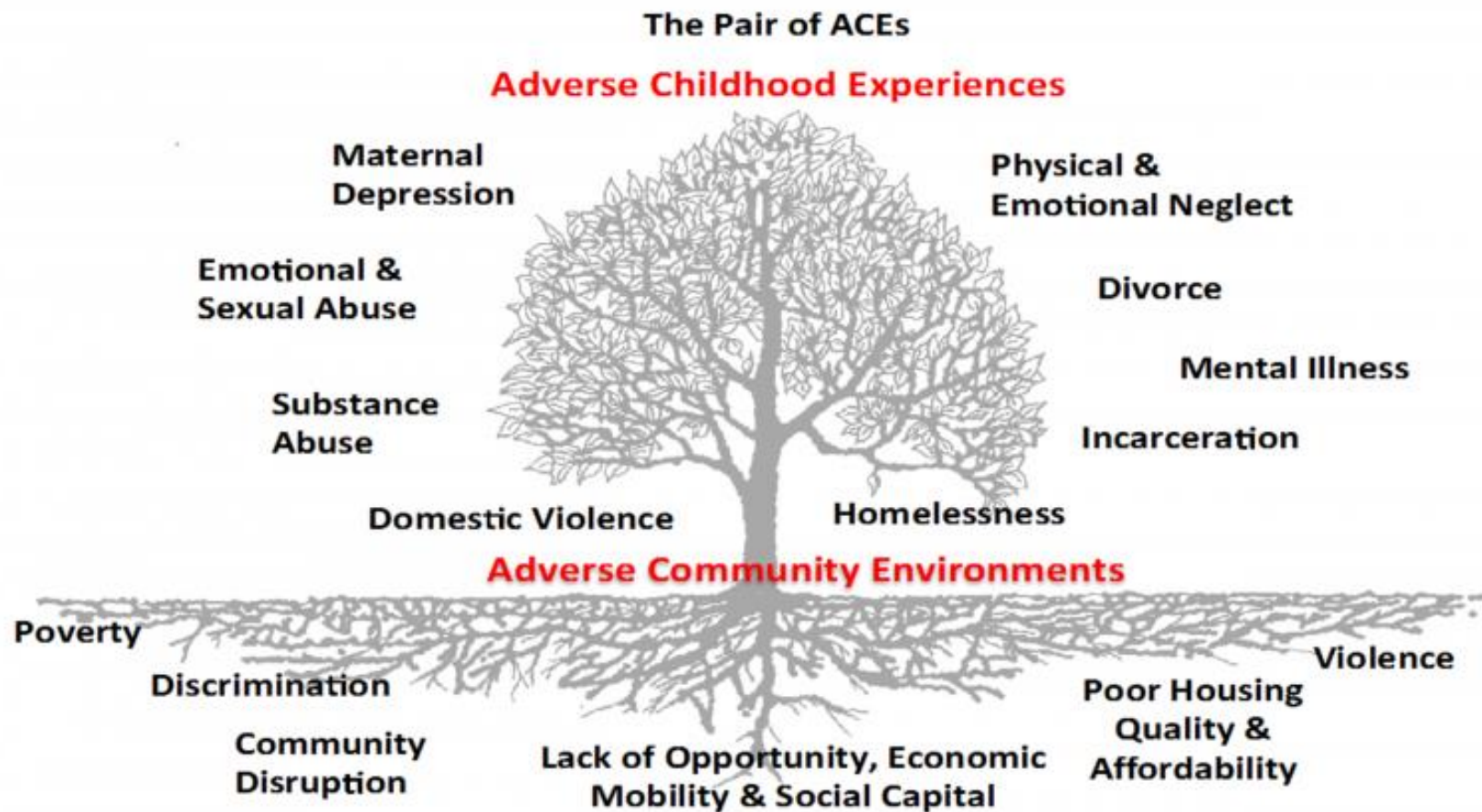
Prevalence of Childhood Trauma

Groups at increased risk of exposure to trauma:

- Youth of color ages 12 to 19
- African American youth living in urban, low-income communities
- American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) children and youth
- Children and youth with disabilities
- Refugees
- Children and youth who are homeless and living in poverty
- LGBTQ children and youth

Community Level Adversity

Witness Violence- 40.5%	How often, if every, did you see or hear someone being beat up, stabbed, or shot in real life?
Felt Discrimination – 34.5%	While you were growing up...How often did you feel that you were treated badly or unfairly because of your race or ethnicity?
Adverse Neighborhood Experience -27.3%	Did you feel safe in your neighborhood? Did you feel people in your neighborhood looked out for each other, stood up for each other, and could be trusted?
Bullied- 7.9%	How often were you bullied by a peer or classmate?
Lived in Foster Care- 2.5%	Were you ever in foster care?



Ellis, W., Dietz, W. (2017) A New Framework for Addressing Adverse Childhood and Community Experiences: The Building Community Resilience (BCR) Model. *Academic Pediatrics*. 17 (2017) pp. S86-S93. DOI information: 10.1016/j.acap.2016.12.011

Impact of Trauma on Students

- Difficulty paying attention and learning
- More time out of the classroom
- Increased isolation
- School absences
- More suspensions or expulsions
- Higher referral rates to special education
- Poor test scores and an increased risk of failing grades

Impact of Trauma on Parents/Guardians

- Difficulty managing emotions and controlling behaviors when interacting with school staff
- Difficulty forming relationships
- Increased risk for substance abuse, depression, and PTSD that negatively impact parenting
- Trouble managing stress related to their child's difficult behaviors
- Feelings of embarrassment, shame, fear, or guilt about their child's behaviors or needs
- Difficulty helping their children cope

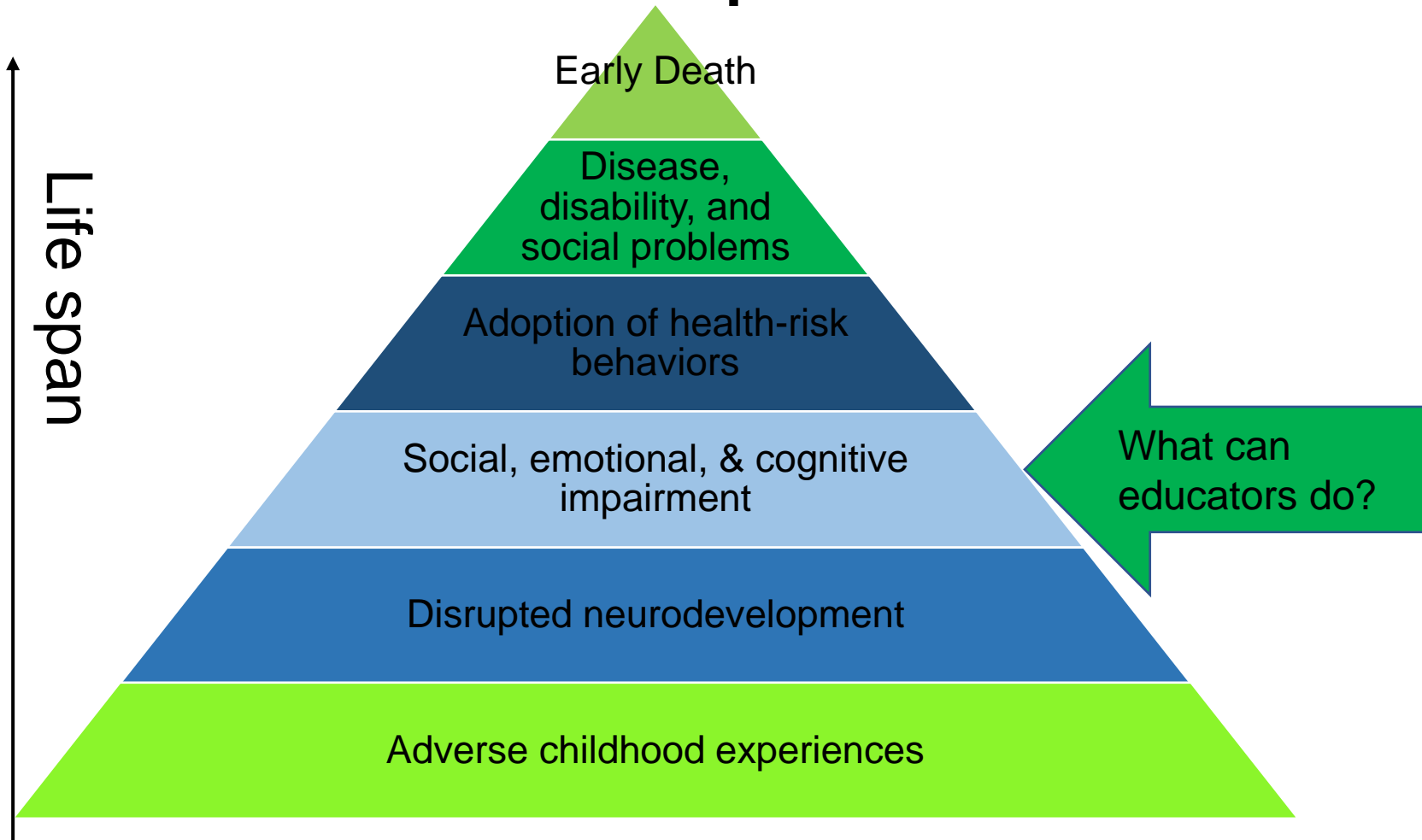
Impact of Trauma on Staff

- Increased anxiety
- Reduced energy and focus
- Trouble regulating emotions
- Difficulty managing responses to students and parents
- Diminished capacity to maintain positive teacher-student and teacher-parent relationships
- Poor attendance or work performance

Impact Of Trauma On Schools

- Students more likely to escalate
- Adults more reactive, controlling, and punitive
- Negative impact on school safety and culture
- Increased risk for harm
- Decrease in academic achievement

ACEs Over the Life Span



What is a Trauma-Informed Approach?

1. Includes a school-wide approach to education and a classroom-based approach to student learning
2. Recognizes the signs and symptoms of trauma
3. Responds by fully integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, professional learning, procedures and practices
4. Purposes of recognizing the presence and onset of trauma, resisting the reoccurrence of trauma and promoting resiliency tailored to a school entity's culture, climate and demographics and the community as a whole.

Trauma-Informed Physical School Environment

Supports all students impacted by trauma and toxic stress by:

- Designing all physical aspects of the school to set a tone for positive learning environments by being physically welcoming, comfortable, and safe
- Including the signage and messaging, visual look of all areas
- Reminding all about the importance of each member of the community and how to interact

Trauma-Informed Care Values



Emotional Safety

Emotional safety is being able to share feelings both positive and negative in an atmosphere of trust without repercussions.

[PA Career Ready Skills](#)

Career Ready Skills

← Educating for Employability →

The Pennsylvania Career Ready Skills (PA CRS) are aligned to Pennsylvania's Career Education and Work (CEW) Standards and are consistent with the intent of the Future Ready PA Index. The PA CRS are learning progressions to support the development of student competence in the following three domains: self-awareness and self-management, establishing and maintaining relationships, and social problem solving-skills. These domains clarify the types of employability skills a well-prepared workforce needs to demonstrate.



Self-Awareness and Self-Management

The ability to accurately recognize and regulate one's emotions and thoughts in different situations. This includes managing stress, controlling impulses, motivating oneself, and setting and working toward achieving personal and academic goals.



Establishing and Maintaining Relationships

The ability to establish and maintain healthy, mutually rewarding relationships with diverse individuals. This includes communicating clearly, listening actively, cooperating, resisting inappropriate social pressure, negotiating conflict constructively, and seeking and offering help when needed.



Social Problem Solving-Skills

The ability to demonstrate empathy and understand the perspective of others from diverse backgrounds and cultures. The ability to make constructive and respectful choices about personal behavior and social interactions based on a realistic evaluation of the consequences of various actions, including the well-being of self and others.

Source: Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL.org)

Physiological Safety

“Anything that has an impact on kids’ bodies can ultimately translate to the emotional climate of the classroom.”

- Bluestein



Social Safety

Social safety is about belonging and one's interpersonal competence.

Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging

Educational communities are seeking clarity around the purpose, intention, and need for equity, inclusion, and belonging in educational spaces. This information is provided by the Pennsylvania Department of Education to help define equitable practice terms in education.

1. Equity Equity in education is defined as every learner having access to the resources and rigor they need at the right moment in their education across race, gender, ethnicity, language, disability, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, family background and/or family income. *(Adapted from www.ccsso.org)*

2. Inclusion Inclusion is defined as engagement within a community where the equal worth and inherent dignity of each person is honored. An inclusive community promotes and sustains a sense of belonging. *(Adapted from Cobb & Krownapple, 2019)*

3. Belonging Belonging is defined as experiencing appreciation, validation, acceptance, and fair treatment within an environment. *(Adapted from Cobb & Krownapple, 2019)*

Resilience

An individual's ability to overcome adversity and continue his or her normal development. In the context of exposure to significant adversity, resilience is both the capacity of individuals to navigate their way to the psychological, social, cultural, and physical resources that sustain their well-being, and their capacity individually and collectively to negotiate for these resources to be provided in culturally meaningful ways.

“The most important thing educators can do is form trusting relationships with students.”

[PDE, 2020](#)

Factors Supporting Resiliency

- Key factors that support resilience in the face of adversity include the following:
 - The availability of at least one stable, caring, and supportive relationship with an adult
 - A sense of mastery over life circumstances
 - Strong executive function and self-regulation skills
 - Safe and supportive environments, including schools and communities
 - Affirming faith or cultural traditions

Promote Positive Childhood Experiences

- Able to talk to family about feelings
- Felt family stood by them during difficult times
- Felt safe and protected by adults in the home
- Felt supported by friends
- Felt a sense of belonging at high school
- Enjoyed participating in community traditions

Relationship Focused Strategies

- Level power differences
- Provide opportunities for youth voice
- Shared decision making
- Teach behavioral expectations in each setting
- Start and end day with positive interactions
- Strength focused
- Respectfully communicate while considering background, language, culture, experiences

Gestures that Can Heal

- Celebrate
- Comfort
- Listen
- Collaborate
- Inspire

Academic Safety

Academic safety is about the adult's willingness to stimulate and encourage students by accepting them where they are without ridicule.

“Real education should consist of drawing the goodness and the best out of our own students.”

- Cesar Chavez



Behavioral Safety

- Behavioral safety exists when the relationship between the student and adult is not power-based
- Safe and acceptable behaviors are taught
- Punishment is not used to change behaviors



Create a trustworthy space

1. Listen
2. Model
3. Protect
4. **Take care of yourself**

