

Community Conversation
Trauma-informed care
January 23, 2019

Guest: Sarah Buffie

In trauma-informed care, we do less of the doing, and more of the being.

How can we understand? What can we do about it?

It's not just what happens to you, but how you experience it.

There are two lenses. The first is ACEs....we talked about that at the last meeting. The second is the hand-brain. (Detailed explanation followed.)

We can help kids with what they experience. When they walk in the room, the fear is center first. If they feel safe, then we can work together. If they don't feel safe, then it's fight or flight.

We have to connect before we correct.

It's the opposite of "Calm down, then we'll talk about it."

The interventions are aimed toward felt safety. Then we can work toward the problem.

Many things we experience affect us, but they're not about us.

The regulated brain has the power and capacity to regulate the dysregulated brain.

It really takes six months (to make the full connection). Kids can come in with a lot. Finally in February and March they're getting it. It makes me start to think about looping.

It comes around the six-month mark. I don't know what changed, but things are better.

How does knowing this affect how you view everyday things you're involved in?

Importance of continuity

Child has different teachers even within the year

Sometimes what we do when we care about the other, in error. We sell the kids short, think they can't be in harm's way, or can't build new relationships.

Might be hard, but can do it. As parents we jump in too quick sometimes. They learn they can't do it by themselves.

Adult self-care. Recognizing things in yourself that will help you make the right response to a kid.

I think we're going to get pushback. We've taught educators they have to have control. They have to have consequences. How do we unteach that? A kid just cussed me out. How do I get back control?

You're not saying there are no consequences. We're saying when you have felt safety then you can get back online.

It's not a new framework. What are small shifts in the moment to achieve felt safety? Then talk about consequences.

When we breathe from the abdominal region, it sends a rest and digest message to the brain.

If I can control you, I can control my life. It doesn't work

When a kid freaks out, you can react to that, or respond to that.

We teach belly breathing in the second grade. Pretend like you're smelling something you really enjoy.

When we're offline, asking and answering questions can be terrifying.

Reflect -- honor -- connect

It's a muscle we have to build

Need to reflect the emotion of what we're seeing. Usually we reflect the content. What is the emotion right above it?

Honor – honor what someone is doing in that moment

“You're feeling pretty upset. Thanks for letting me know how you're feeling. Let's find a safer way to communicate that.”

What about protecting the rest of the class? There were a 100 moments before the chair-throwing moment. Practice when it's low risk

HOW CAN I HELP YOU FEEL SAFE?

In a physical crisis – keep everyone safe. Then in reflection – what moments led to it?

Where could this make a difference in student's lives?

Would make teachers happier

Not fighting all the time

More satisfaction

“The Courage to Teach” book

Ohio just came through with social-emotional learning standards. This overlaps really well with that.

Probably everyone here tonight heard something they personally related to.

At East, students said we need more empathy. More discussion in class of difficult issues.

We need to get the pressure off the kids a little bit.

As a parent I would like to see more continuity within district, across buildings and grade levels.

How do we bring this to staff?

Teacher perspective – what are you already doing and how you can lean in to this?

Five resilience factors:

Voice/choice/control

Self-esteem

Sense of belonging

External supports

Positive safe relationships with positive, caring adults

www.soulbirdconsulting.info

Sarah Buffie

(YouTube)