Agenda

- De-escalation and self-reflection
- Trauma and Alarm Reactions
- Self Care (Light)
- Behavior as Communication
- De-escalation tips in the moment

Objectives

Learn to remain in control
Learn to react to the wrong response which can make the situation worse.
Learn to support anyone, anywhere, with any issue.
Learn specific strategies to walk away with today to support youth and yourself at all levels of the escalation.

Our Brain

- Thinking brain
- Brain that controls emotions
- Survival brain
- **Basic Needs**
To begin...

UNDERSTANDING TRAUMA AND BRAIN DEVELOPMENT

A Youth's Challenging Behavior: The Tip of the Iceberg!

Easier to recognize but less important to long term change

- Observed Behavior
  - Language
  - Physical Appearance
  - Academic Performance

Harder to recognize but more important to address for long term change

- Physical State
- Past Experiences
- Traumatic Events
- Emotional
- Memory
- Irrational Beliefs
- Thoughts
- Feelings
- Fear of Failure
- Hopes and Dreams

Alarm Reactions

- Fight
- Flight
- Freeze
- Fawn
**Flipping Our Lid!**

- As the intensity of our emotions increases:
  - The “rational” control of our behavior decreases.
  - Our ability to process language decreases.
  - Our memory becomes distorted.

What does this mean to adults as we implement proactive strategies?

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**The Three Areas of the Brain**

- Cortex: 
- Thalamus: 
- Limbic System: 

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**The Limbic System and Amygdala**

- The emotional part of the brain
- Formed after birth, fully developed during puberty
- Is in charge of our evaluative functions: it assigns meaning to what our body is perceiving
- Works closely with the brainstem, creating our emotions and driven the physical responses to the them
- Vital in creating memories
- Learn emotions thru attachments – when not attaching, not learning emotions (empathy too)
The Prefrontal Cortex

- This frontmost part of the brain, which is just behind the eyes, has been discussed in cognitive neuroscience studies with processes like:
- Regulating the body and emotions
- Attunifying to other people
- Being flexible
- Having empathy & self-awareness
- Being in touch with your intuition & morality
- Losing your fear
  - *Distressed by trauma have difficulty accessing prefrontal cortex*

Trauma Changes the Brain

Trauma or adverse childhood experiences hyperactivates the brain’s alarm system—

*The physiological communications through chemical and electrical activity of neurons*:

- When the prefrontal cortex is activated (in other stimuli or non-adaptation regulation), the hippocampus continues to hyperactivate, functionally closing down.

The brain becomes “impaired” or “fused” with cortisol and the fight/flight system reactivates the emotion.
Breaking it Down

- Amygdala says, “I’m afraid, I need help” and reaches out to the Hippocampus - which releases Cortisol - a little cortisol is calming - too much has reactive affect - too much cortisol/in Frontal Lobe so can’t regulate tears
- When this happens, need to increase serotonin and decrease cortisol
- Deep Breathing for 3 minutes
- Fun and safe, and calming environment reduces Cortisol levels by 50% within 7-14 days
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cognitive Distortion</th>
<th>Thinking Patterns</th>
<th>Behavior Result</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Victim mindset</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Attack leadership</td>
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- **Thinking Patterns**
  - Victim mindset: All about me, Personal attacks, Poor me, Why do things keep happening to me
  - Perfectionism: Nothing's ever good enough, nothing meets your standards

- **Behavior Result**
  - Allow cries to occur
  - Self-hating prophecy
  - Blaming
  - Denial
  - Always think you are right
  - Step on other's toes
  - Attack leadership

**Inside-out change**

Changing your way of thinking and responding in order to make a difference in the situation at hand.
Individuals who maintain a high level of wellness can cope more effectively with crisis.

In the chat...
WHAT DO YOU DO FOR SELF CARE?

“There is no better intervention than that of a healthy adult.”
- Dr. Adam Saenz, author of “The Power of a Teacher: Restoring Hope and Well-Being to Change Lives”
Compassion Fatigue

“Compassion fatigue is a state experienced by those helping people in distress: it is an extreme state of tension and preoccupation with the suffering of those being helped to the degree that it can create a secondary traumatic stress for the helper.”

Dr. Charles Figley
Professor and Harry Grynspan Distinguished Chair
Creator, Trauma Studies Institute
Tulane University, New Orleans, LA

ONE DOES NOT SIMPLY

AVOID COMPASSION FATIGUE

Why Do We Need to Talk About This?

1. “The body keeps the score...”
2. Allostatic Load: The body’s ability to maintain balance (homeostasis) under stress
3. Consistent fight/flight/freeze mode means our allostatic load is too high
4. High Allostatic Load = Body functions less effectively
What is Impacting Us?

- It's not just work. There's so much more at play that is compounding what we are feeling right now...

Social Issues

Business Issues

Political

Educational

Hot Topples

Feeling helpless and hopeless

A sense that one can never do enough

Hypervigilance (compounded by recent trauma)

Diminished creativity

Inability to embrace complexity

What's the Difference?

- Compassion Fatigue (CF) refers to the profound emotional and physical distress that occurs when helpers are unable to reload and rejuvenate.

- Trauma course (TC) was coined by Pearlman & Silverstein (1995) to describe the profound distress clinicians experience in helping professions when they work with clients who have experienced injury, violence, or other profound risks to life or health, and are repeatedly exposed to traumatic material.

- Burnout is a term that has been used since the early 1970s to describe the physical and emotional exhaustion that workers experience, especially in jobs that involve contact with sick, hurting, or troubled people. It is characterized by emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment.
Avoiding these Stress Responses

- Building a relationship with each student is the precursor for building classroom community.
- "...the foundation of culturally responsive instruction is not technocratic but relational. It’s about authentic caring," Zanotta Hammond.
- "There is no more effective neurobiological intervention than that of a safe relationship," Dr. Bruce Perry PhD, MD.
Differentiation of Relationships

Relationships are like a bank account:

- One cannot withdraw from a youth until deposits have been made.
- Once one has made sufficient deposits into the relationship, one can skillfully withdraw for a variety of purposes.

Relationship Rule

Know youths' motivations and triggers.

Am I the best person to be de-escalating the youth?
- What support system is in place?

Know and follow any plan that is already in place.
One response does not fit all

- When we engage, we need to consider:
  - Proactive
  - Politic
  - Immediately effective

The intervention must meet the needs of our youth

We must constantly reflect respect on the youth

The safety of everyone in the environment is our highest priority

Unplug the power struggle

- Only engage when you and the youth are in a place to connect appropriately
- Assess yourself in the situation
  - Be open to input from your team
  - Work on meeting the youth's needs via requiring compliance
# Shifting focus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Short-term focus</th>
<th>Long-term focus</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intervention</td>
<td>Prevention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reaction</td>
<td>Know how what to prevent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seek shifting</td>
<td>Build lasting relationship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>relationship</td>
<td>Problem resolution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety resolution</td>
<td>(not problem resolution)</td>
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## To shift focus we need to understand...

- **Behavior**

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## Behavior is communication

- What is the function of the behavior?
- What is the youth trying to gain?
- What is the youth trying to avoid?
Examples of Triggers

- Loud noises
- Unfamiliar adults
- Smells
- Being alone
- Challenging work
- Being tall
- A change in routine
- Being unable to choose what you want

Preventative Strategies

PREVENTION IS THE DOMINANT PARADIGM IN BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

Adjust difficulty of the task

- Offer choice
- Increase youth interest in the activity
- Alter the length of the task
- Modify the mode of task completion
- Increase predictability
- Modify instructional delivery
- Provide non-contingent escape

Escape or Avoid Task or Environment
Provide alternative sensory reinforcement
Enrich environment

Schedule a preferred transitional activity
- Increase accessibility to preferred item/activity
- Provide desired item or activity contingent on an alternative appropriate response, or only when challenging behavior is not present.

Schedule attention
- Increase proximity to youth
- Provide preferred activity when attention is not available
- Provide attention contingent on acceptable behavior or the non-occurrence of the challenging behavior
Communication Strategies

- Supportive nonverbal expressions, posture & gestures
  - Sits facing youth (not with their back to them)
  - Make eye contact with them

- Be empathetic, nonjudgmental & emotionally present while helping the youth calm down

- Listen to youth (not talking)
  - Nonjudgmental and remain supportive
  - Briefly restate youth's thoughts and check for understanding with youth
  - Create psychosocial space for the youth to share more

- Summarize youth behavior & avoid summarizing or blaming

- Active listening with empathy
  - Validate: link thoughts, feelings and behaviors for youth
  - Place behavior and situation in context
  - Show compassion and communications support (yes this is a challenge but we can help you with it)
  - Follow-up: support, reconnect youth to others involved

Tips in the Moment

- Be Empathetic, Nonjudgmental
  - When someone says or does something you perceive as weird or irrational, try not to judge or discount their feelings. Whether or not you think those feelings are justified, they're real to the other person, pay attention to them.
Tips In The Moment

- Respect Personal Space
  - If possible, stand 1.5 to 3 feet away from a person who's escalating. Allowing personal space tends to decrease a person's anxiety and can help you prevent acting-out behavior.

- Use Nonthreatening Non-verbal
  - The more a person loses control, the less they hear your words—and the more they react to your nonverbal communication. Be mindful of your gestures, facial expressions, movements, and tone of voice.
Tips In The Moment

- Avoid Overreacting
  - Remain calm, rational, and professional. While you can't control the person's behavior, how you respond to their behavior will have a direct effect on whether the situation escalates or defuses.

Tips In The Moment

- Focus on Feelings
  - Facts are important, but how we feel is the heart of the matter. Since you're having trouble identifying how they feel about what's happening, listen carefully for their nonverbal cues.
  - Take your time: Validate their feelings.
  - Hug them: Let them know you care.

Tips In The Moment

- Ignore Challenging Questions
  - Answering challenging questions often results in power struggles. When a person challenges your authority, redirect the conversation to the stated topic.
Tips In The Moment

1. Set Limits
   - If a person's behavior is bulling, defensive, or disruptive, give them clear, simple, and enforceable limits. Offer concise and respectful choices and consequences.

Tips In The Moment

Choose Wisely What You Intend to Do

It's important to be thoughtful in deciding which rules are reasonable and worth the cost.

Choice needs to be reflective of what the youth wants.

Tips In The Moment

Allow Silence for Reflection

While it may seem counterintuitive to let moments of silence occur, sometimes it's the best choice. It can give a person a chance to reflect on what's happening and how he or she needs to proceed.
Tips In The Moment

- Allow Time for Decisions
  - When a person is upset, they may not be able to think clearly. Give them a few moments to think through what you've said.

Remember, during conflicts or crisis:

- Act like a thermostat, not like a thermometer!
- Set the temperature!
Thank You!

For more support: tovah@innovativebehaviors.org
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Questions?

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In Association with
Pajaro Sound Workers' Cooperative, Inc and the Pajaro Sound
Educational Service District
April 13, 2013
Reasonable assurance training cancelled???????
Thank You!

We appreciate your time and participation!
We invite you to complete the post-event survey.
Your feedback will inform our efforts to continually enhance the value of these events.

Please complete our survey and share your thoughts on today's training.