ELEMENTARY SCHOOL WELLNESS CENTERS: A TIER I TRAUMA INFORMED INTERVENTION

Jennifer Caldwell, LCSW, PPSC
Trauma Focused School Social Worker

Gabrielle Theobald-Anderson, MSW, PPSC
School Social Worker / Community School Coordinator
WHO IS IN THE ROOM?

ONLY ALAN WAS PREPARED TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE ELEPHANT IN THE ROOM.
OBJECTIVES

• Participants will be able to describe the purpose and key components of an Elementary Wellness Center and it’s alignment with Trauma Informed Practices

• Participants will be able to assess a school’s readiness for implementation

• Participants will be able to discuss best practices for implementation of an Elementary Wellness Center
AGENDA

- School Social Work in SFUSD
- Trauma Informed Practices in SFUSD
- The Journey to Elementary Wellness Centers
- Assessing School Readiness
- Avoiding Pitfalls
SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK IN SFUSD
FRAMING A UNIQUE MODEL!

VISION
All SFUSD students are safe, healthy, and ready to learn.

MISSION
School Social Workers address barriers to student success, enhancing the social and emotional growth and academic outcomes for all students.

TIER III
- School-focused case management for individual students and families
  - Individual and school-wide crisis response

TIER II
- Small group counseling utilizing evidence based practices
  - Individual short-term goal-oriented supports

TIER I
- Coordination and facilitation of Student Assistance Program
  - Trauma informed teacher consultation for positive classroom climate and student support

EQUITY CENTERED • TRAUMA INFORMED • RESTORATIVE APPROACH • WHOLE CHILD FOCUSED

ACCESS AND EQUITY:
INCREASE ACCESS TO SCHOOL BASED AND COMMUNITY BASED MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORTS AND SERVICES
As measured by, number of students receiving individual and/or group mental health supports at school
As measured by, number of students referred to community based mental health supports

ACHIEVEMENT:
IMPROVE STUDENT ATTENDANCE
As measured by, improved attendance for students receiving social work support compared to similarly matched students
As measured by, percent of students with chronic absenteeism receiving social work support

ACCOUNTABILITY:
INCREASE STUDENTS' FEELING OF SCHOOL CONNECTEDNESS AND SAFETY
As measured by, number of students who agree or strongly agree to feelings of school connectedness
As measured by, number of students who agree or strongly agree to feeling safe at school
FRAMING A UNIQUE MODEL!

GOALS

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LENS

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All SFUSD students are safe, healthy, and ready to learn. School Social Workers address barriers to student success, enhancing the social and emotional growth and academic outcomes for all students.
WHY TRAUMA INFORMED PRACTICES?
Trauma = Event, Experience, & Effect

Event: Actual or extreme threat of harm

Experience: “Fight, flight or freeze” + Helpless to escape

Overwhelms brain and body

Effect: Dis-integration → Dysregulation

Lasting adverse effects

(Herman, 1997; Van der Kolk, 2005; DSM-IV-TR; SAMHSA; Siegel, 2012; Bloom, 2013)

J. Dorado (2015)
PREVALENCE OF CHILDHOOD TRAUMA

2 of 3 children & youth were exposed to violence in the past year

Of these, 50% report more than 1 form of victimization | 1 in 6 report 6 or more exposures to violence

physical assault, witnessing violence, and maltreatment are common

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Physical Assault</th>
<th>Witness Violence</th>
<th>Maltreatment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14-17</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-13</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-9</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-5</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-1</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Lifetime exposure

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study

1 in 5 adults report 3 or more adverse experiences as children

Adverse experiences include:
- Physical abuse, emotional abuse, and sexual abuse
- Emotional and physical neglect
- Household substance abuse
- Household mental illness
- A mother treated violently
- Parent separation or divorce
- Incarcerated household member

As rates of adverse childhood experiences go up, so does high risk behavior, illness, and early death


(Guarino and Chagnon, 2018)
Trauma “Wears a Groove” in the Brain

“The Fear Song”

J. Dorado (2015)
Survival Mode: Fight/Flight/Freeze

(Ford, 2009, Van der Kolk)
IT ALSO IMPACTS STAFF AND SCHOOL CLIMATE...

Trauma impacted students

+ 

Trauma impacted school staff

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

(Guarino and Chagnon, 2018)
OUR JOURNEY TO BUILDING ELEMENTARY WELLNESS CENTERS
SFUSD AND TRAUMA INFORMED PRACTICES

2006/2007 Grant for onsite therapy at 1 school site

2008 UCSF HEARTS collaborates with 3 SFUSD schools

2009 SFUSD rolls out RP

2011-12 District wide trainings mandatory for SSWs

2013 El Dorado Wellness Center opens

2014 SFUSD receives Project Prevent Grant

2014 Hillcrest Wellness Center opens
OUR JOURNEY

Hillcrest ES:
- 480 students
- 2 bilingual strands
- 80-90% FRL
- 42% Latino, 20% Asian, 9% African American

El Dorado ES:
- 207 students
- 80-90% FRL
- 43.5% Latino, 19.3% African American, 10.1% Filipino
Transforming Our Organizations

TRAUMA-ORGANIZED
- No felt safety
- Fragmented
- Overwhelmed
- Fear-driven
- Rigid
- Numb

TRAUMA-INFORMED
- Realize
- Recognize
- Respond
- Resist re-traumatization

HEALING
- Integrated
- Reflective
- Relationship-centered
- Wellness-focused
- Learning-oriented
- Creative

Modified from San Francisco Dept. of Public Health Trauma Informed Systems Initiative, 2017
WHAT IS AN ELEMENTARY WELLNESS CENTER?

✧ A Wellness Center is a highly structured space (usually a classroom) where students can participated in directed time limited, non-punitive self regulation, restorative practices and conflict resolution.

✧ Often, the Wellness Center also is the “hub” of mental health and Wellness services for the school community.

✧ One part of trauma informed school’s framework
LET'S SEE IT IN ACTION!
EL DORADO’S WELLNESS CENTER
OUR JOURNEY – CURRENTLY

Hillcrest ES:
• 5th year of WC
• 1500-1700 visits per year
• 12-15 min average duration
• 2-4 WC staff

El Dorado ES:
• 6th year of WC
• 541-1836 visits per year
• 2-4 WC staff
Wellness Centers in SFUSD

- Wellness Centers have been rolled out in 10 elementary schools
- Creating a manual with Wellness Center best practices under Project Prevent
- Goal of technical support for implementation around the district
ASSESSING SCHOOL READINESS
ASSESSING SCHOOL READINESS

- Clear behavior expectations/PBIS systems
- Full staff training in TIP/RP
- Peace Corners in all classrooms
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS

Wellness Center!

- Space Requirements
- Staffing Requirements
- Staff and Student Training
DATA COLLECTION AND USE
# DATA COLLECTION AND USE

## ClassDojo

- **Wellness Center Exit Form**
  - Please read this and welcome your student back to class.
  - **Date:**__
  - **Time In:**__
  - **Name:**
  - **Wellness Staff:**
  - **How I felt when I came in:**
  - **What I did there:**__G__ain it down __T__alk it out
  - **How am I feeling now:**
  - **Does Wellness Staff need to loop back with teacher:**__Y__es __N__o
  - **Notes:**
  - **Time Exited:**__

## Hillcrest Wellness Center Sign In

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time-In</th>
<th>Mood at Time-In</th>
<th>Time-out</th>
<th>Mood at Time-out</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
AVOIDING PITFALLS
AVOIDING PITFALLS

- Equity Issues
- Overutilization
- Inconsistent structures and procedures
QUESTIONS?
San Francisco Unified School District

Wellness Center Manual

Elementary Wellness Centers: A Tier 1 Trauma Informed Intervention

Jennifer Caldwell LCSW, PPSC and Gabrielle Theobald-Anderson ASW, PPSC
with
Andi Hilinski LSCW, PPSC and Thea Anderson MSW, MPH, PPSC

The Finished Product!
HOW TO CONTACT US

GABRIELLE THEOBALD-ANDERSON, MSW, PPSC
andersong@sfusd.edu

JENNIFER CALDWELL, LCSW, PPSC
caldwellj@sfusd.edu