



Healing through School-Based Trauma-Informed Practices: Two Case Studies with Students of Color in California

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About California School-Based Health Alliance

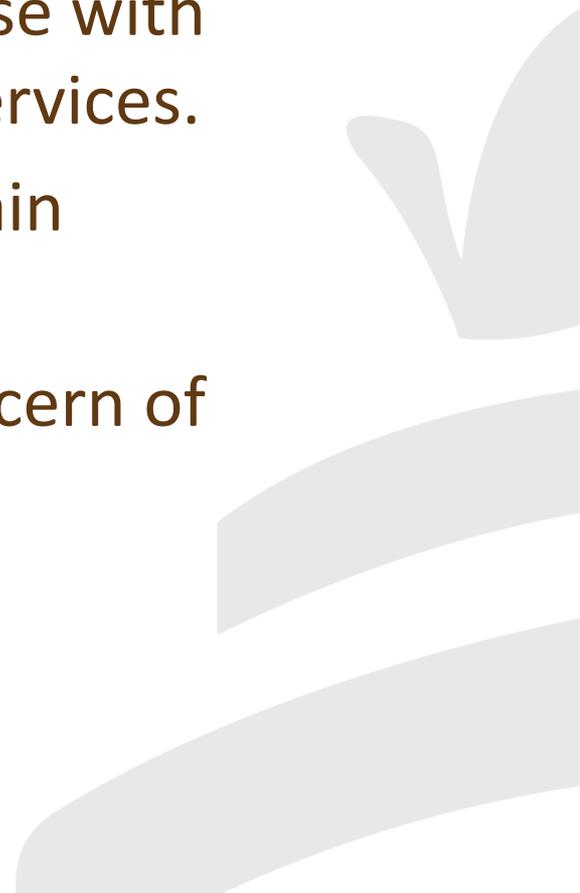
The California School-Based Health Alliance is the statewide non-profit organization dedicated to improving the health and academic success of children and youth by advancing health services in schools.

Our work is based on two basic concepts:

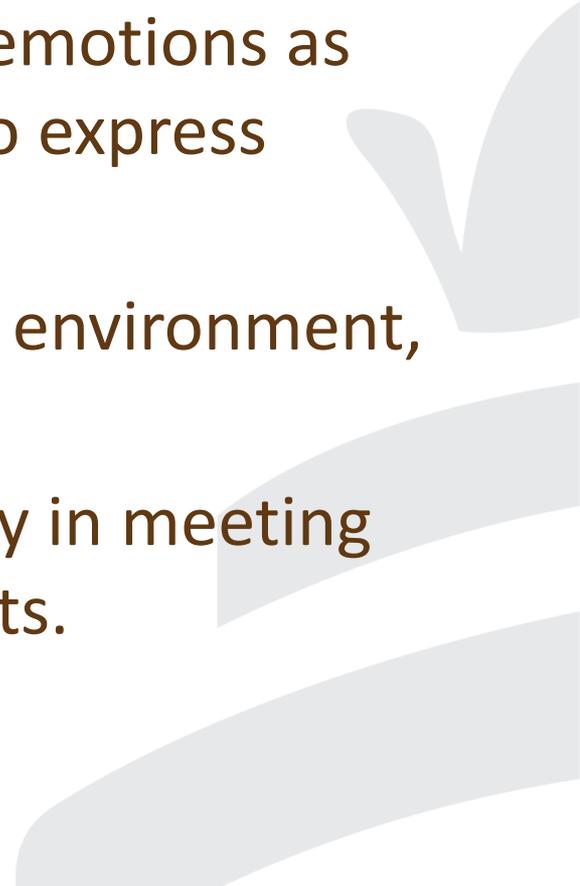
- Health care should be accessible and *where kids are*, and
- Schools should have the services needed to ensure that poor health is not a barrier to learning

Mental Health and Young People

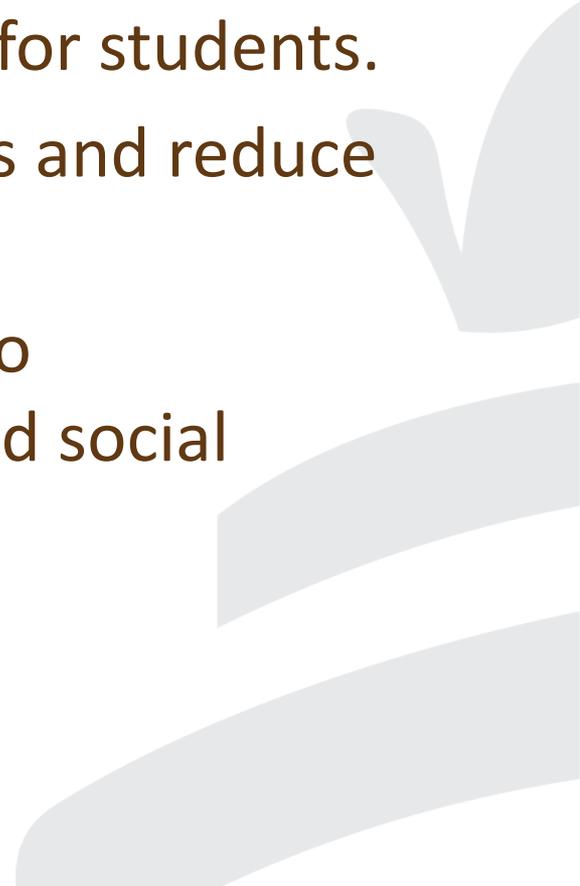
- Everyone has mental health.
- Mental health challenges are common.
- Most children and youth, even those with insurance, do not have access to services.
- Mental health challenges affect brain development and learning.
- Behavioral symptoms are a big concern of teachers and schools.



A Note About Trauma

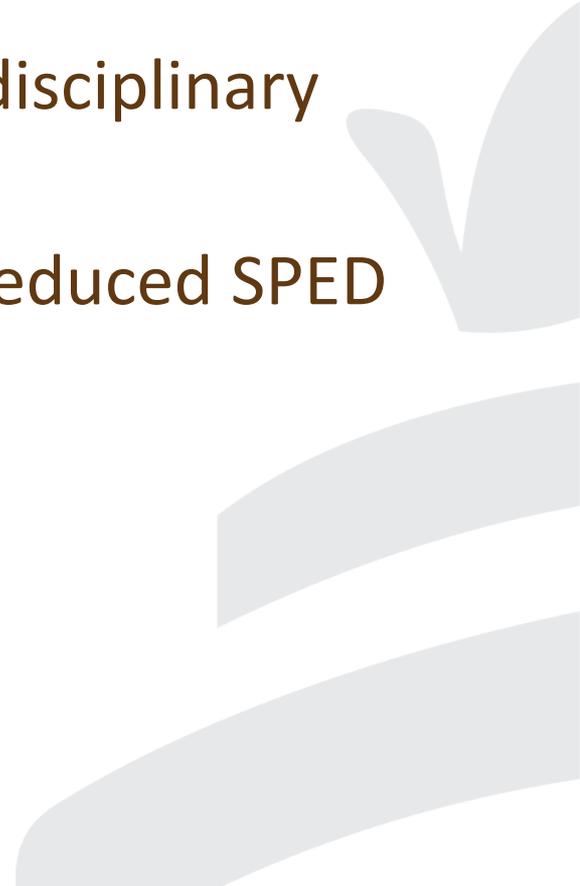
- Trauma is prevalent in the lives of children.
 - Trauma affects learning and school performance, and causes physical and emotional distress.
 - Children/teens experience the same emotions as adults, but may not have the words to express them.
 - Some behaviors are protective in one environment, but problematic in another.
 - Schools have an important role to play in meeting the social/emotional needs of students.
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Services in Schools

- Most children and youth who receive services get them at school.
 - Individual and group counseling in schools are linked to more developmental assets for students.
 - School-based services increase access and reduce stigma.
 - Improvement in mental health links to improvement in behavior, learning, and social skills.
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Mental Health Services and Outcomes

School Mental Health services are linked with...

- Increase in service accessibility, especially for youth of color
 - Improved behavior and decreased disciplinary actions
 - Improved academic performance, reduced SPED referrals, higher graduation rates
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What is the Young Men's Empowerment Collaborative (YMEC)?

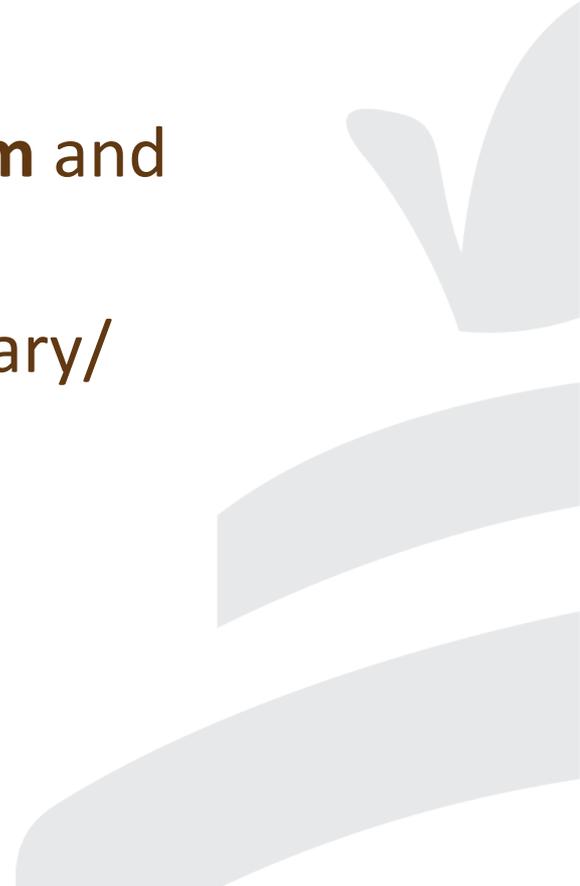
- YMEC promotes justice and healing among boys and young men of color in West Contra Costa County who have been victims of violence. YMEC scales up evidence-based, trauma-informed practices across schools in this community.



YMEC Goals

1. Create a supportive school climate for young male survivors of violence
 2. Increase the portion of young male survivors of violence who are identified and served
 3. Create an effective response to violence for young men of color
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How do we accomplish these goals?

- Initial **needs assessment** via a **listening session** with a community partner
 - Develop and utilize **key local partnerships** in the community
 - Identify **culturally relevant curriculum** and activities
 - **Support our team** to prevent secondary/vicarious trauma
 - Conversations around **sustainability**
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YMEC Specific Focus Group

- By the numbers:

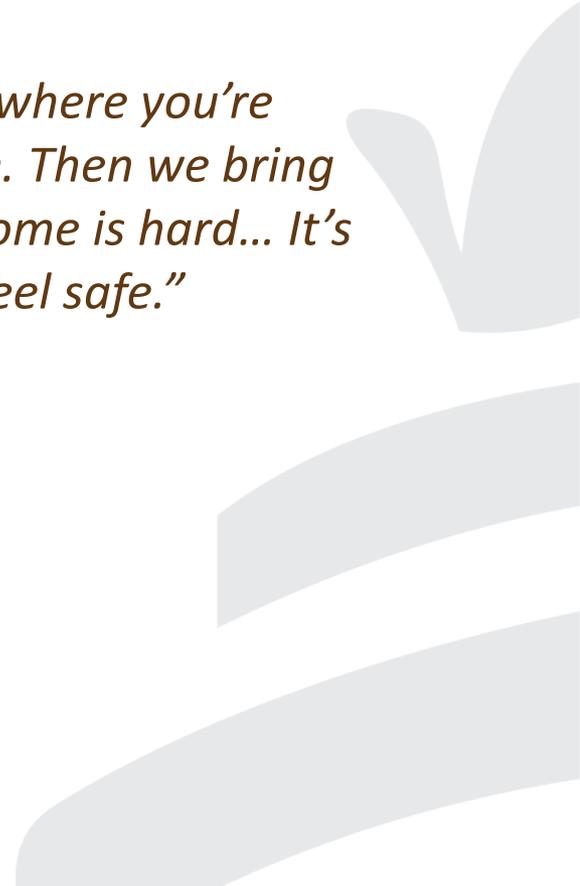
- 68 youth from eight schools from West Contra Costa Unified School District in Richmond, CA
- Eight one-hour focus groups
- Facilitated by University of California, San Francisco (UCSF).
Five of the eight were co-facilitated by male counselors and/or educators at the schools

- Goals/Guiding Questions:

- Understand how exposure to violence affects young men of color
- Gather their feedback on the best ways to provide health services to young men who have witnessed or been exposed to violence
- Learn how the school and school-based health centers (SBHC) at their schools could better support them

YMEC Lessons Learned: Violence

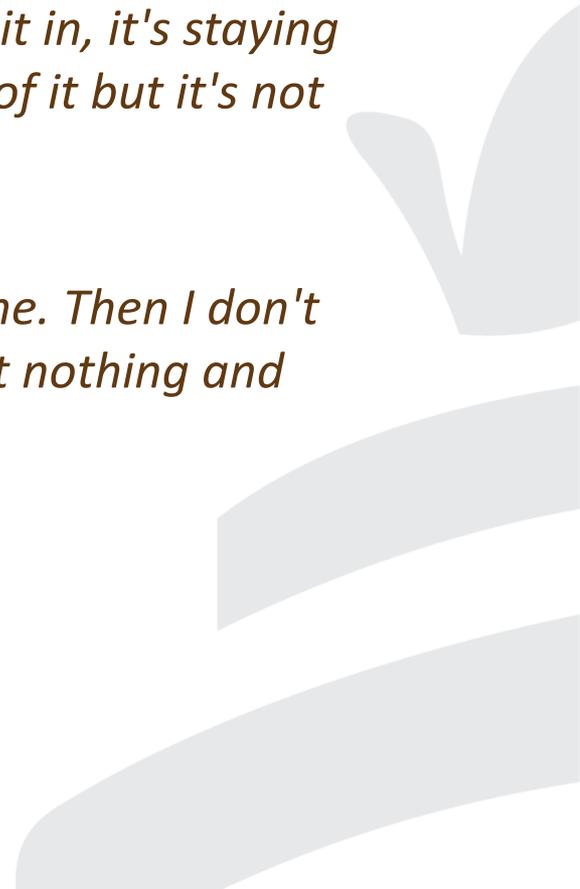
“When you have people fighting at home, there’s where you’re supposed to feel safe, but it makes you want to leave. Then we bring our anger and frustration on others. Fighting in the home is hard... It’s hard for people that don’t have a place they feel safe.”



YMEC Lessons Learned: Impact

“No matter how much they try to push it out or keep it in, it's staying there. You can try to talk about it to relieve yourself of it but it's not going anywhere.”

“My feelings left me, when I lost someone close to me. Then I don't care no more, about what anyone got to say about nothing and nobody's feelings.”



YMEC Lessons Learned: Impact

“You just realize it happens all the time and it could happen any moment. You just never know. Sometimes I think I won't make it that far.”

“It's hard to shake a lot of hard stuff. Like police just be looking at you even if you don't be doing anything. Like I get looked at a lot because I'm black, and I'm big and like a lot of people think I'm grown, so I just try to stay under the radar as much as I can.”

YMEC Lessons Learned: Impact

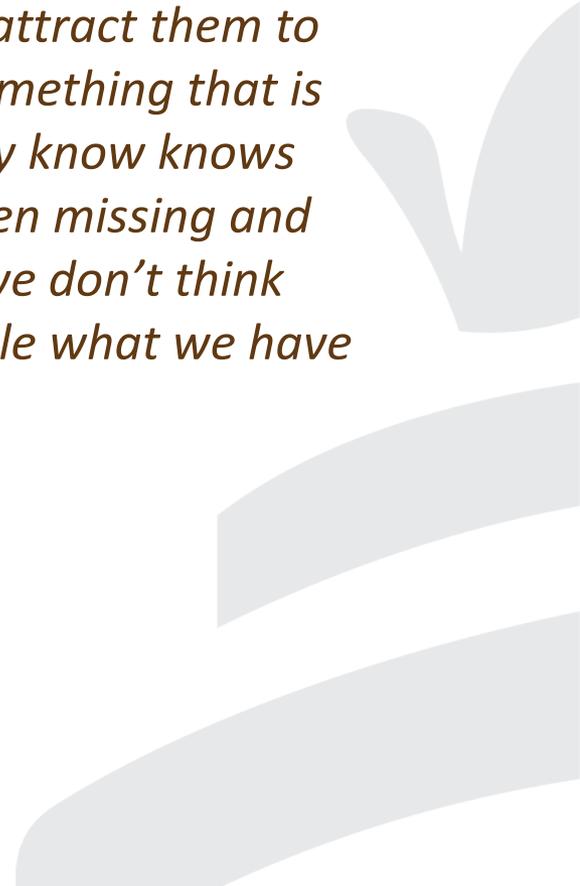
“For some, this [school] is like a safe haven.”

“It’s safe on campus, but once you step outside the gate, everything changes.”



YMEC Lessons Learned: Strategies

“I think there has to be some kind of connection to attract them to want to come there because they want to feel something that is real. Someone who’s on the same level that they know knows where you coming from. I think that’s what’s been missing and why we turn down so much services. Because we don’t think anyone is going to comprehend or be able to handle what we have to say.”



Key Local Partnerships

- West Contra Costa Unified School District
- YMCA of the East Bay
- Bay Area Community Resources (BACR)
- RYSE Center
- University of California, San Francisco



Culturally Relevant Curriculum

- Partnered with Center for Restorative Solutions (C4RS) and University of Illinois, Chicago's Urban Youth Trauma Center (UYTC)
- Grounded in hip hop and rap culture
- Utilizes a restorative practices format



Culturally Relevant Curriculum

- “Hip Hop HEALS” topics included:
 - Resilience
 - Self Identity
 - Community violence
 - Historical trauma
 - Academic success
 - Goal setting



Supporting our Team

- On site

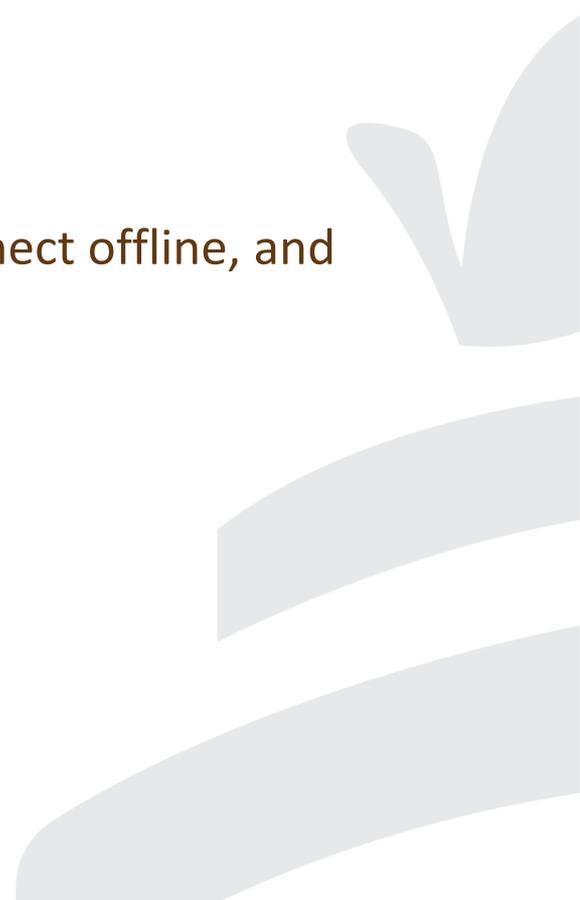
- Site-based supervision and support
- Committees/teams at school sites

- By CSHA

- Regular curriculum consultation check-ins
- Regular TA calls by site/age group
- Regular convenings for group facilitators to connect offline, and create community
- Support for trainings, learning opportunities
- Individual check-ins as needed
- Additional TA around playfulness, self-care

- For CSHA

- TA Provider for CSHA



A psychologist walked around a room while teaching stress management to an audience. As she raised a glass of water, everyone expected they'd be asked the "half empty or half full" question. Instead, with a smile on her face, she inquired:

"How heavy is this glass of water?"

Answers called out ranged from 8 oz. to 20 oz.

She replied, "The absolute weight doesn't matter. It depends on how long I hold it. If I hold it for a minute, it's not a problem. If I hold it for an hour, I'll have an ache in my arm. If I hold it for a day, my arm will feel numb and paralyzed. In each case, the weight of the glass doesn't change, but the longer I hold it, the heavier it becomes."

She continued, "The stresses and worries in life are like that glass of water. Think about them for a while and nothing happens. Think about them a bit longer and they begin to hurt. And if you think about them all day long, you will feel paralyzed – incapable of doing anything."

Remember to put the glass down.



What does this process look like for a young man joining YMEC?



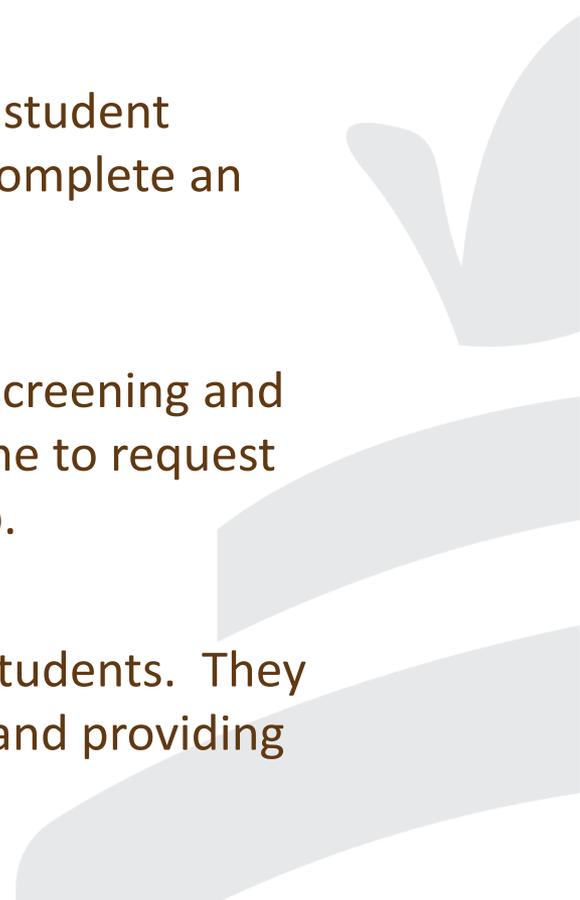
YMEC Process

Referral: Each SBHC has a comprehensive referral process which allows a parent, teacher, staff, or student to self-refer, for a number of different indicators of trauma. Once a referral is submitted to the Health Center the team will call the student in for a check-in and assessment.

Screening: Each student that has been identified as a student whom would benefit from YMEC will be required to complete an ACE's survey which evaluates their level of trauma.

Consent: Once the student has completed both, the screening and one-on-one meeting, a consent form will be sent home to request permission for the student to participate in the group.

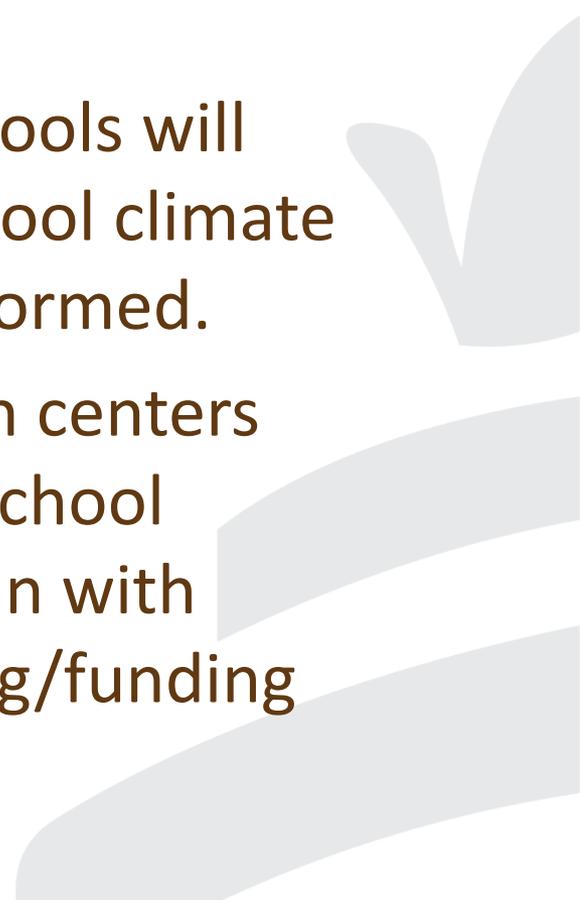
Groups: Each group will consist of approximately 10 students. They will spend time; building trust, reviewing curriculum and providing space for participants to be heard.



What is the Oakland Opportunity Fund (OOF)?

- OOF is a grant-making initiative within The San Francisco Foundation.
 - We received funding for 2015-2017, and were invited to reapply for 2018-2020 (and received that second round of funding).
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OOF Goals

1. Ten school-based health centers (SBHCs) serving 13 Oakland middle schools will reach over 6,000 middle school students with trauma-informed interventions.
 2. Each of the 13 Oakland middle schools will launch efforts to improve their school climate and culture to be more trauma-informed.
 3. The three federally qualified health centers that sponsor the Oakland middle school SBHCs will have a sustainability plan with three or more new identified billing/funding strategies.
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How do we accomplish these goals?

- Initial **conversations with lead agencies**
 - Brainstorm **strategies that fit their community**
 - Develop and create **plans** that will help us track progress
 - Provide **technical assistance** throughout the process
 - Conversations around **sustainability**
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Lead agencies

- La Clinica de la Raza
- Lifelong Medical
- Native American Health Centers
- Fred Finch Youth Center
- East Bay Agency for Children



Conversations with lead agencies

- How are things working?
- What can you improve upon?
- Who do you need in the room to make it happen?
- How does this subgrant funding support your goals for the SBHC?



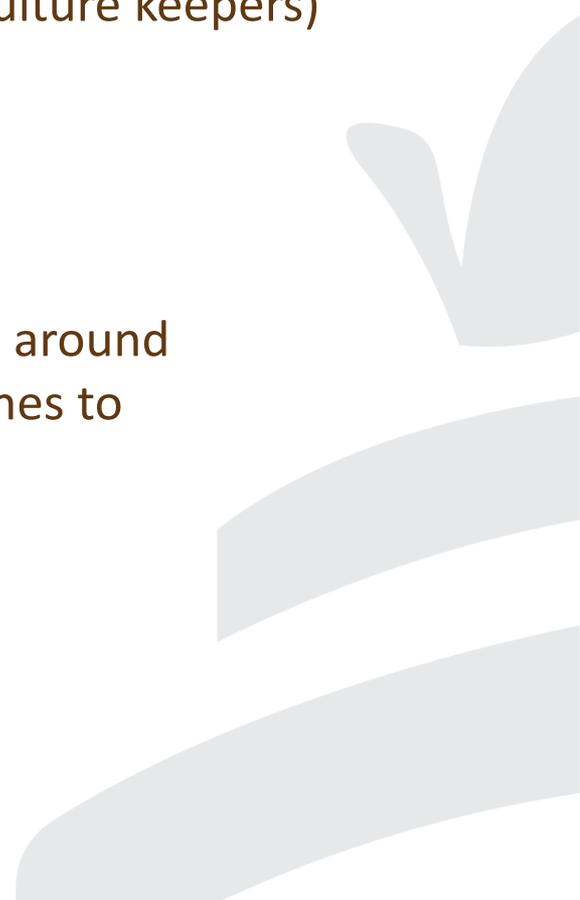
Strategies, Plans, Technical Assistance

•Outcome 1

- Hire ASW, CHW, to support clinical staff with triage, Tier 1-2 groups
- Begin peer-led strategies (peer health leaders, culture keepers)
- Introduce a new curriculum for trauma groups

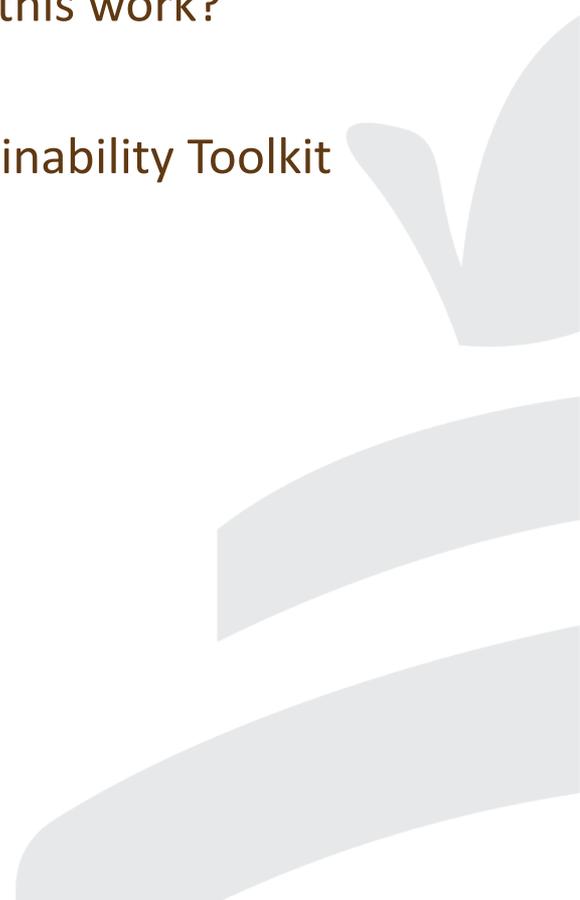
•Outcome 2

- Staff wellness groups
- Consultations with principals and administration around trauma-informed and healing-centered approaches to supporting staff
- Peer-led strategies



Strategies, Plans, Technical Assistance

•Outcome 3

- Connect with billing expert (California Primary Care Association) to provide consultation to three FQHCs
 - How can we maximize Medical billing to sustain this work?
 - Identify new funding strategies
 - Collect lessons learned, best practices into Sustainability Toolkit for Trauma-Based Work
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Self-Care Is Critical

“It is not uncommon for school professionals who have a classroom with one or more students struggling from the effects of trauma , to experience symptoms very much like those their students are exhibiting.”

The Heart of Learning and Teaching: Compassion, Resilience, and Academic Success



Questions?



Thank you.

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