Reflections on Trauma-Informed Transformation: 18 years later

Joshua Kaufman, LCSW
Kezia Miller, LCSW
School Mental Health
Los Angeles Unified School District
CSMH Conference
October 2017
Welcome to LAUSD

- 640,000 Students
- 60,000 employees
- 94 languages
- 710 miles
- 900+ K-12 schools
- 26 cities
- 6 Geographic Service Areas

LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
LOCAL DISTRICTS

Administrative Site
LAUSD School Mental Health

- Division of Health & Human Services
- 360 PSWs, 4 Child Psychiatrists & Many MAs.
- Four Major Program Areas
  - School-Based
  - Clinic & Wellness
  - Special Education Counseling
  - Crisis Counseling & Intervention Services
School Mental Health
Historical Context

1990’s
- Minimum research
- Minimum goals/objectives
- “Eclectic Approach”

Partnership with UCLA & RAND
- Trauma informed
- CBITS
- 2004 MHSA
  - DMH
  - Economic shift to EBP

2000

2010

Comprehensive Road to Wellness & Resiliency
- Universal
- Targeted
- Intensive
# Becoming Trauma and Resiliency-Informed: 4 Stages of Development

## Principles
- Safety
- Trust and transparency
- Peer support
- Collaboration and mutuality
- Voice, choice, and self-agency
- Culturally, historically, and gender-identity appropriate

## Stage 1: Recognizing
In this first stage of work, senior leaders and others are:
- Becoming aware of the research on trauma and resiliency, and its relevance to people served by the system and staff.
- Recognizing that addressing trauma and promoting resiliency are vital to improve the results for the people served by the system.

## Stage 2: Planning • Testing
In this next stage, systems begin:
- Testing first applications—e.g., evidence-based practices in particular programs.
- Identifying and supporting champions for the work.
- Developing plans to integrate the guiding principles across all implementation domains.

## Stage 3: Committing
Senior leaders formally commit to, and the organization undertakes, ongoing change work, including:
- Integrating the guiding principles across all implementation domains.
- Regularly assessing progress on becoming trauma and resiliency-informed and the impact of this work on system results.

## Stage 4: Nurturing • Adapting
At this stage, staff and partners at all levels of the system are:
- Engaging in ongoing adaptation to live the principles across all implementation domains;
- Nurturing a trauma and resiliency-informed culture; and
- Supporting partners to make progress along this change continuum.

## Domains
- Leadership and governance
- Training and workforce development
- Screening, assessment, and services
- Progress and results monitoring
- Engagement and involvement
- Physical environment
- Cross-system collaboration
- Media and marketing
- Policies and procedures
- Financing
## Trauma Informed Care Development at LAUSD

### 1999-200

- Partnership with UCLA Clinical Scholars program leads to
- First school-based PTSD screening data
- Development of CBITS
- NCTSN Established. LAUSD receives first Community Treatment Center Grant

### 2005-11

- NCTSN Treatment & Service Adaptation Center grant
- Taper Foundation grant
- Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Caring Across Communities grant
- Development of Reflective Learning Groups as an implementation Driver
Early Activity: Planting Seeds

- Early Trauma Awareness Presentations (2005-2011)
- PFA-LPC developed by Schreiber, Gurwitch & Wong (2006)
- Students & Trauma DVD (2007)
Multi-Tiered Interventions
Adopted/Developed following CBITS

Universal Services

CBITS Trauma Screening & Initial SDQ data pilots (2009).

Intensive service development
Lessons Learned

Crucial Roles of
- Research Partners
- NCTSN Grants
- Other Implementation Grants & Supports

Importance of Understanding
- Implementation Science
- Service Adoption Timelines

Role of Internal Capacity Building

Political Context
- LA Unrest 1992
- Oklahoma 1995
- Columbine 1999
- New York 2001
- Katrina & Rita 2005
- Virginia Tech 2007
Multi-Tiered Trauma Informed Care

**Intensive**
- TF-CBT
- MAP
- Focus: Family Resiliency Model
- Triple P
- Seeking Safety
- PCIT

**Targeted**
- Trauma Screening and Supports (TSS)
- CBITS
- Student Success Progress Monitoring (SSPT)
- FOCUS
- Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports (PBIS)

**Universal**
- FOCUS Skill Building Groups in the Classroom
- More than Sad, Erika’s Lighthouse, Teen Intervene
- Trauma Informed Education & Awareness
- Psychological First Aid
- Empowering Staff and Parents with Mental Health Promotion, Education, Awareness
Trauma Screening & Supports

UNIVERSAL: Resilience Check-in, FOCUS Resilience Curriculum, Teacher PD; FOCUS Parent Groups; Erika's Lighthouse; More Than Sad

TARGETED: Wellness Checkup; Cognitive Behavioral Intervention for Trauma in Schools (CBITS); Seeking Safety

INTENSIVE: Triage, Referral & Linkage; Targeted Case Management

CRISIS: Risk Assessment & Support Planning
Resilience factors and primary prevention can prevent or reverse the damaging effects of trauma.
PTSD Risk at Baseline (n=2125)

- Low PTSD Risk: 51.6%
- Moderate PTSD Risk: 21.8%
- High PTSD Risk: 26.5%
Percentage of Students Who Don’t Feel Supported by an Adult or Teacher (N=1944)

No one listens when I have something to say

- Elementary School (Grades 3-5): 25.7%
- Middle School (Grades 6-8): 21.2%
- High School (Grades 9-12): 30.7%

No one notices when I'm not there

- Elementary School (Grades 3-5): 30.0%
- Middle School (Grades 6-8): 26.6%
- High School (Grades 9-12): 37.4%

No one cares about me

- Elementary School (Grades 3-5): 22.0%
- Middle School (Grades 6-8): 27.2%
- High School (Grades 9-12): 34.1%
Feeling Safe at School by School Type

(N=1944)

67.4%  
52.4%  
59.7%  

Elementary School (Grades 3-5)  Middle School (Grades 6-8)  High School (Grades 9-12)
Cross Discipline & Division Collaboration and Local District Integration

- Trauma-Awareness Presentations to School Staff & Local District Leadership
- Division of Instruction - Health Education/Social Emotional Learning
- Division of Special Education/Behavior Support Services
Local/National Contextual Drivers of Change

Mental Health Services Act, CA 2011
Sandy Hook – 2012
National MH in Schools – 2013
Compton USD lawsuit - 2015
Collaboration with Division of Special Education

CBITS modification for students with low literacy.
- Training of all School Psychologists (2006-07)

Collaboration with Office of Behavior Support
- Co Training
- Ongoing dialogue and participation in Workgroups

SMH Provision of Educationally Related Intensive, Counseling Services (ERICS)
- Services funded via Special Ed
- Wellness Check-up
  - Data regularly shared with Division
  - Data useful to determine readiness to step-down (Least Restrictive Services)
Universal Screening for Students Receiving Intensive Special Education Counseling

The Wellness Check Up is a multi-instrument clinical tool designed to measure:

- Violence Exposure
- PTSD Symptoms
- Generalized Anxiety
- Depression
- Substance Abuse
- Suicidality

LAUSD Data Baseline (N=837)

- 86% endorsed 3+ Life Events (potentially traumatic)
- 45% endorsed PTSD
- 21% endorsed Anxiety
- 21% endorsed Depression
Strategic Alignment Across the School District

Support the Whole Child
Key Initiative 3 - Serve the Whole Child

ACTION STEPS - SUPPORT STUDENTS PHYSICAL, EMOTIONAL AND MENTAL HEALTH

Trauma Informed Care Awareness Campaign

Implement a Trauma Informed Care awareness campaign to increase the District’s capacity to understand the impact of trauma on a student’s learning, relationships and behavior. The campaign will:

• Provide trauma informed training for Leadership, Local District Administrators, Certificated School site staff and select Classified staff. Topics will include:
  • Social-emotional development of children and the effects of trauma on readiness to learn
  • Identifying and linking at-risk students to appropriate supports
  • Promote wellness and resilience for educators and school personnel
• Deliver a train-the-trainer presentation to Parent, Community and Student Services Branch staff who will in turn provide trauma informed trainings to school communities for parents
SMH collaborative impact on other areas of Strategic Plan

- School Mental Health Clinics
- Tired Behavioral Supports and Resources - collaboration with LAUSD Divisions (Instruction, School Operations, Special Education, Health and Human Services, and Educational Services)
- Student Support Progress Teams to Identify Student Needs
- School-Based Wellness Centers
- Restorative Justice Practices
- School Site Emergency Preparedness
- School-wide Positive Behavior Intervention and Support Implementation
This figure is adapted from SAMHSA’s *Concept of Trauma and Guidance for a Trauma-Informed Approach*. HHS Publication No. (SMA) 14-4884. Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2014.
Lessons Learned Summary (Key Take-Aways)

- External Partnerships
- Concurrent Crisis Response & Management Protocols
- Importance of school-site buy-in
- Implementation Science-informed Strategies
- Local, State and National Conditions
- Internal Capacity Building & Leadership Development
Trauma Informed Care for All

Students

Families

School Administrators and Staff

School District
If we don’t look for or acknowledge trauma in the lives of children and adolescents, we end up chasing behaviors and limiting the possibilities for change.

Suarez, Flores & Zamarelli, 2007
NCTSN Training Materials
Thank You

Contact Information

Joshua Kaufman, LCSW
SMH Coordinator, LAUSD
Joshua.kaufman@lausd.net

Kezia Miller, LCSW
SMH Coordinator, LAUSD
kezia.miller@lausd.net