



# Reflections on Trauma-Informed Transformation: 18 years later

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Los Angeles Unified School District

CSMH Conference

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# Welcome to LAUSD

640,000  
Students

60,000  
employees

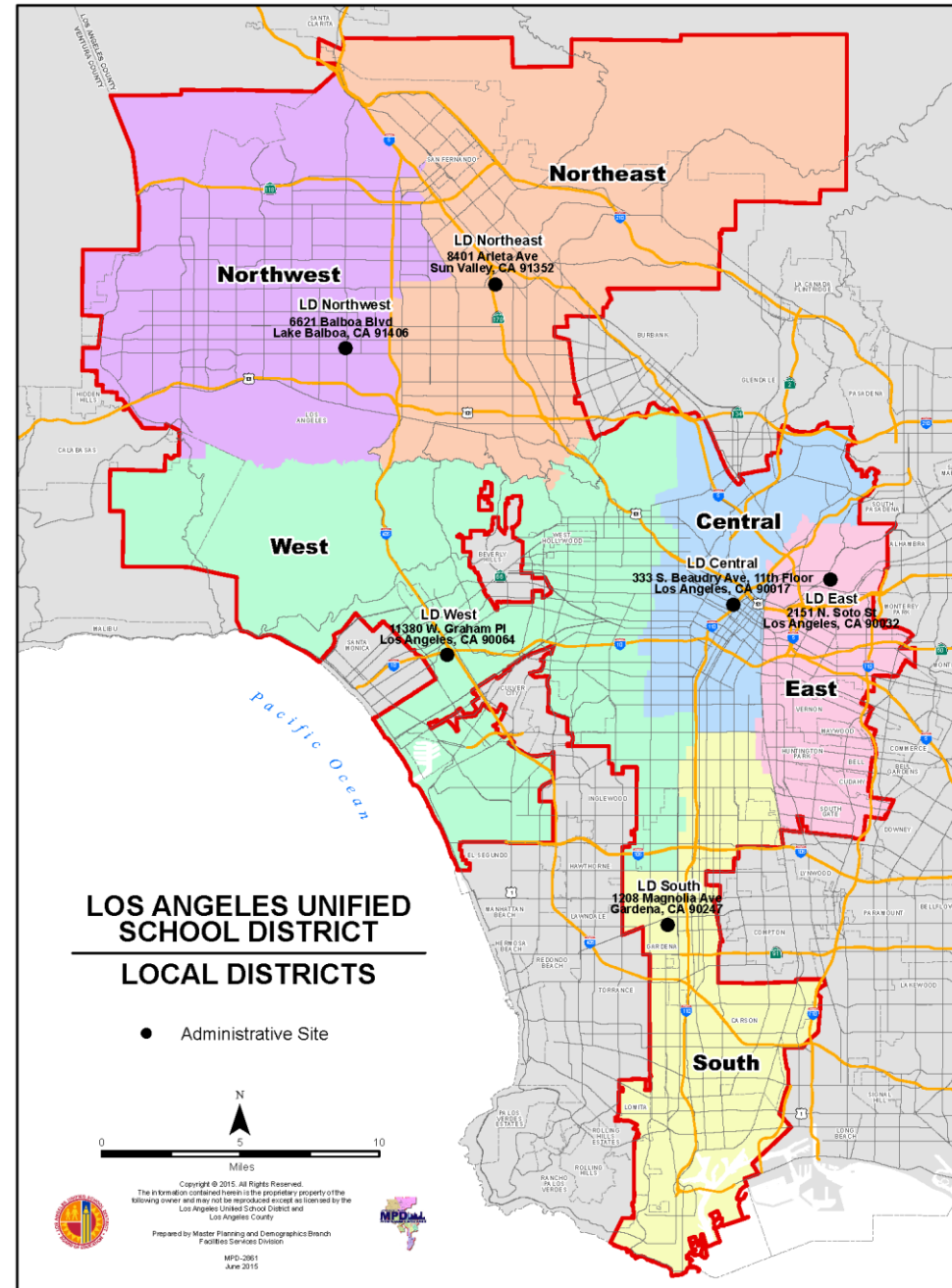
94 languages

710 miles

900+ K-12  
schools

26 cities

6 Geographic  
Service Areas



# LAUSD School Mental Health

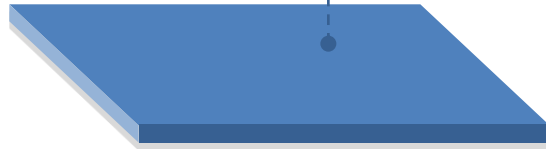
## School Mental Health

- *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”



2000



## Partnership with UCLA & RAND

- Trauma informed
- CBITS
- 2004 MHSA
  - DMH
  - Economic shift to EBP



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



```
graph TD; A[Universal Services] --> B[CBITS Trauma Screening & Initial SDQ data pilots (2009).]; B --> C[Intensive service development];
```

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

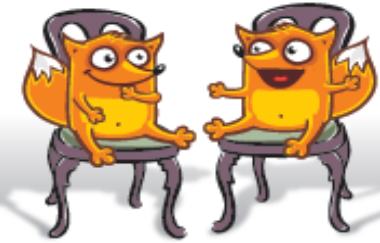
## Managing Feelings:

Naming how you feel and calming yourself down



## Communication:

Saying what you think, feel, and need and using good listening skills when someone talks to you



## Goal Setting:

Making a plan to achieve something that you want to do



## Problem Solving:

Identifying problems and creating solutions to them



## Coping with Reminders:

Learning how to manage challenging thoughts and experiences

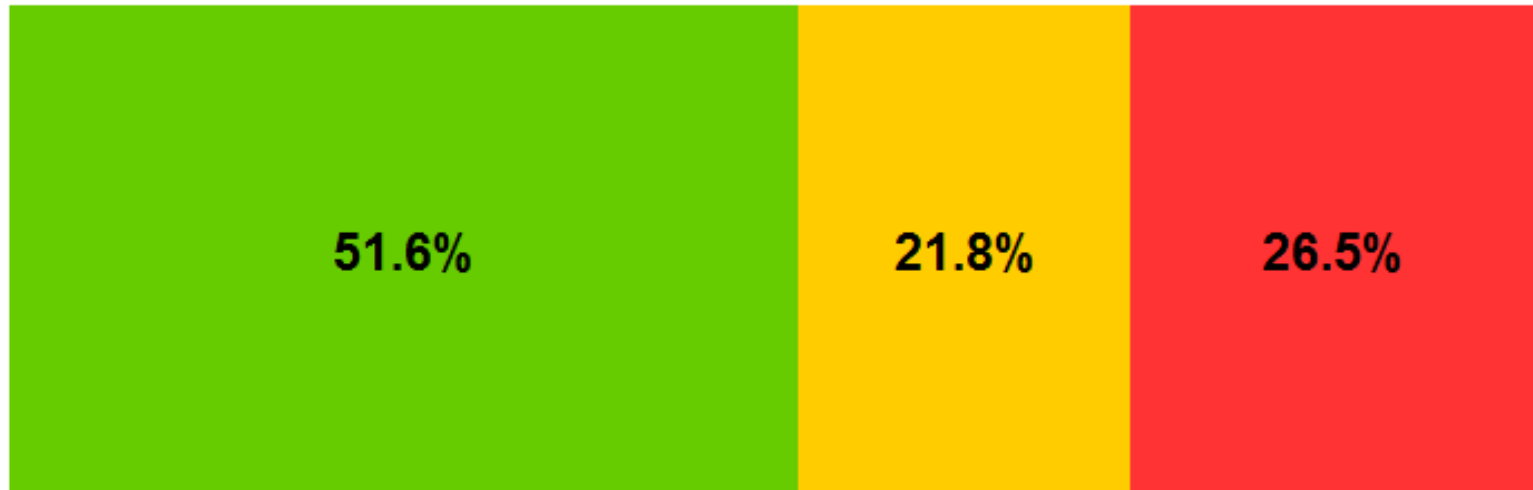


**F•O•C•U•S**

**Resilience factors and primary prevention can prevent or reverse the damaging effects of trauma**

# Importance of Data

## PTSD Risk at Baseline (n=2125)

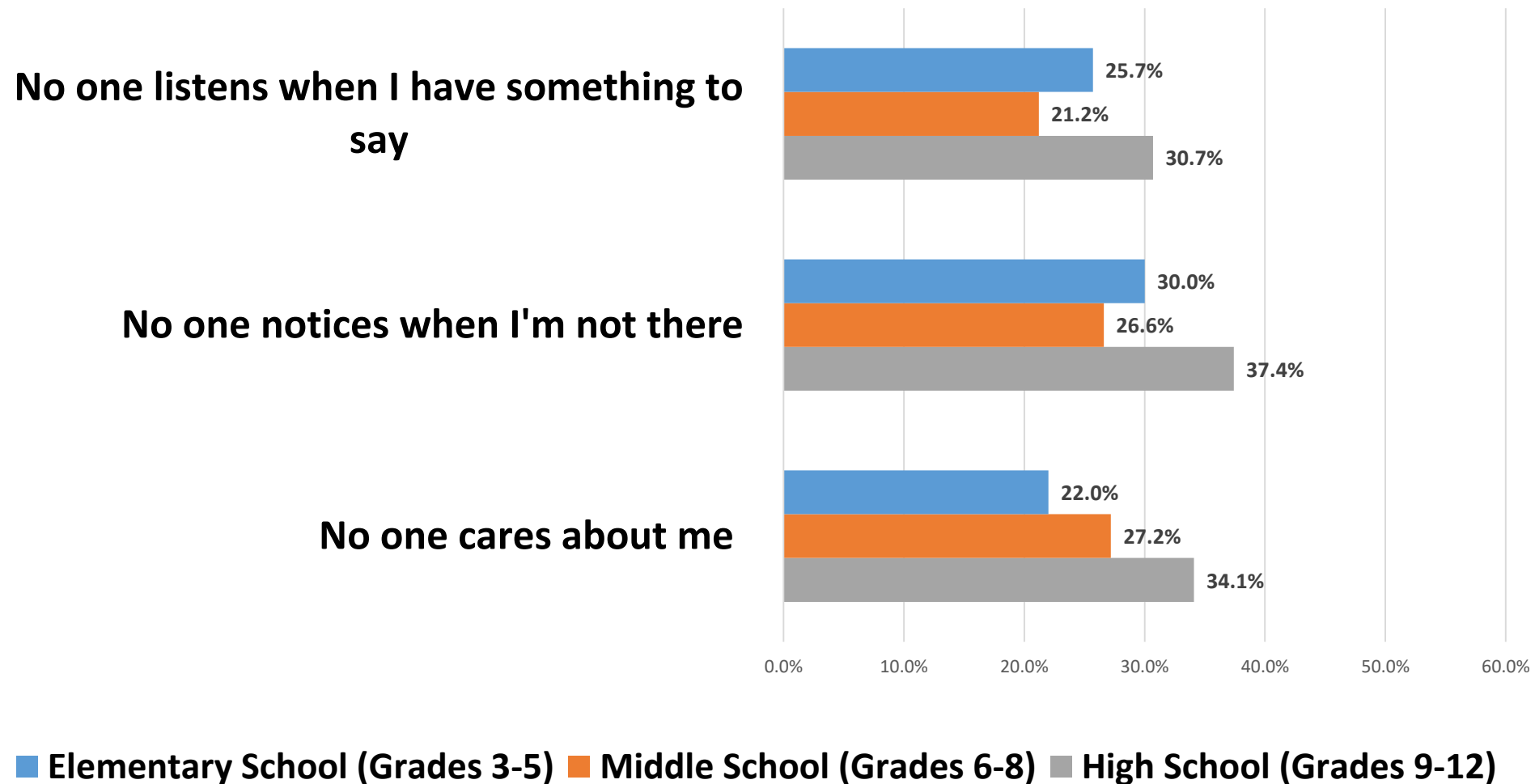


■ Low PTSD Risk

■ Moderate PTSD Risk

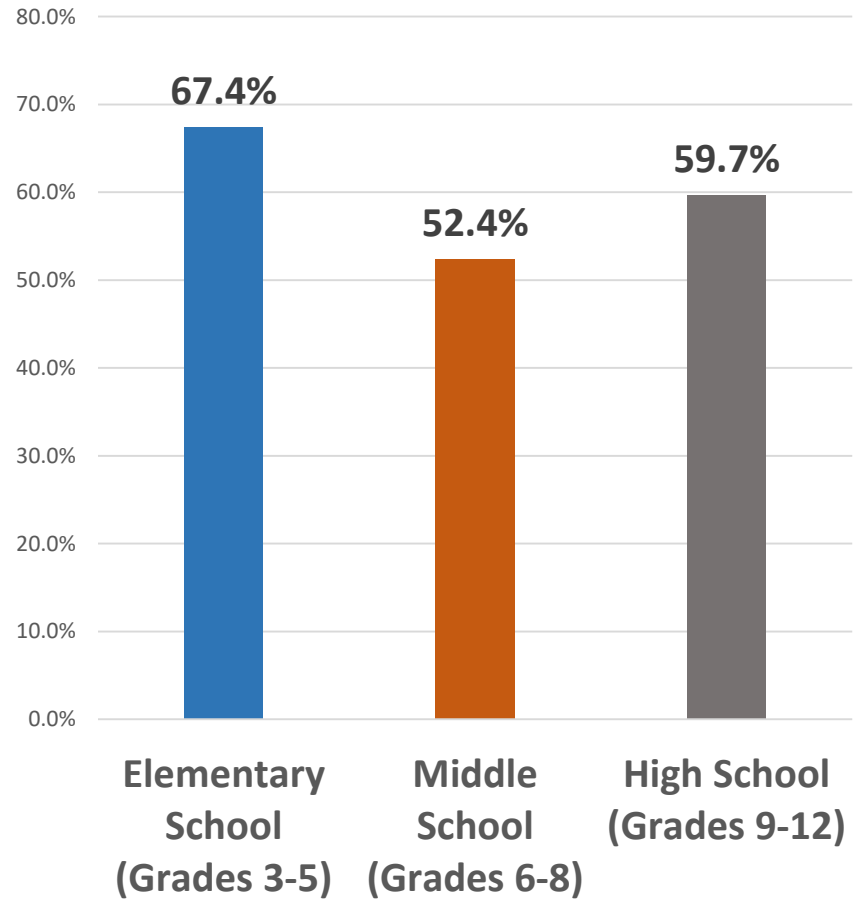
■ High PTSD Risk

# Percentage of Students Who Don't Feel Supported by an Adult or Teacher (N=1944)



# Feeling Safe at School by School Type

(N=1944)



# 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**

**ACES – School Specific Data –  
Washington State – Blodgett, et al.  
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:

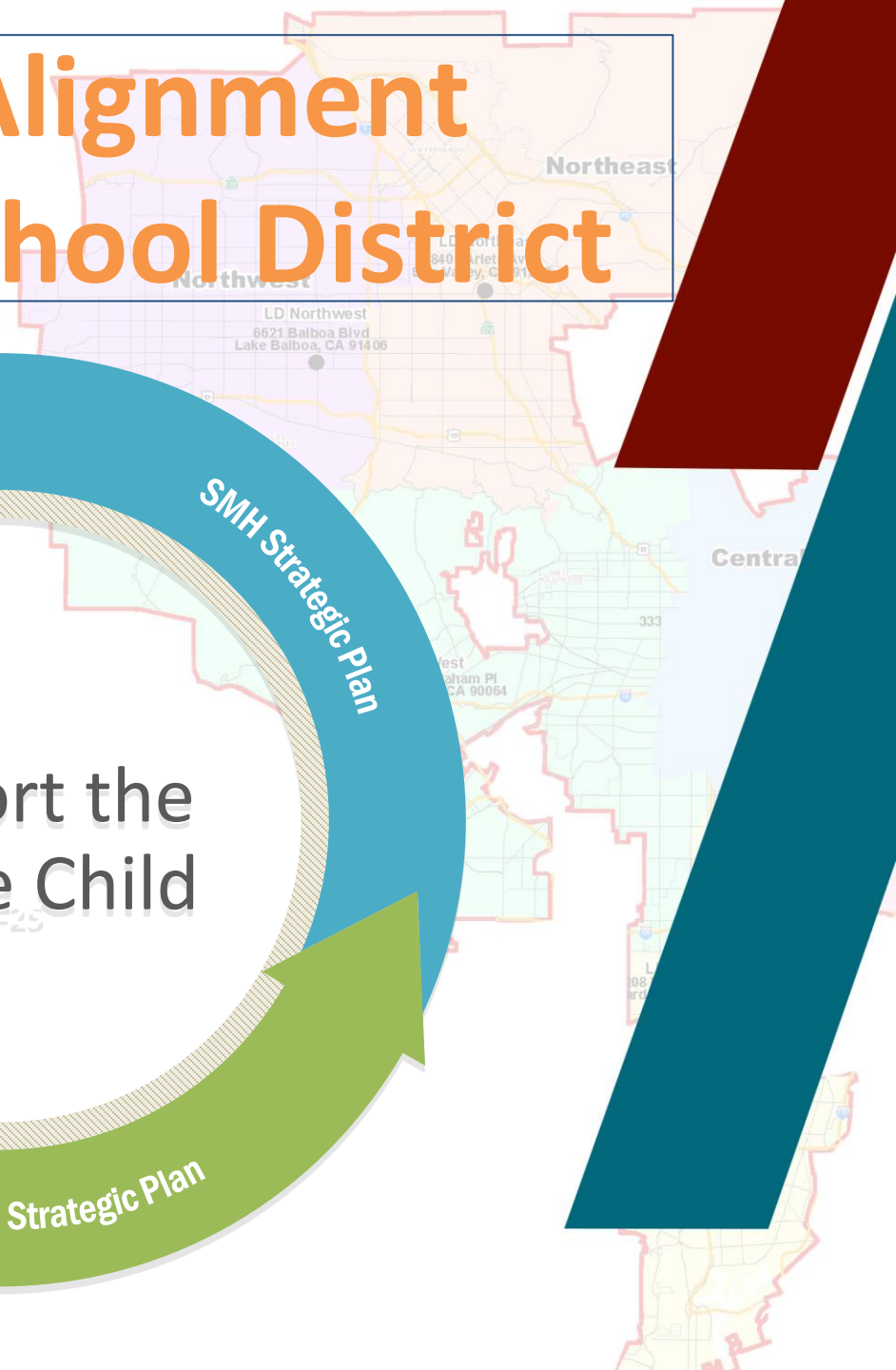
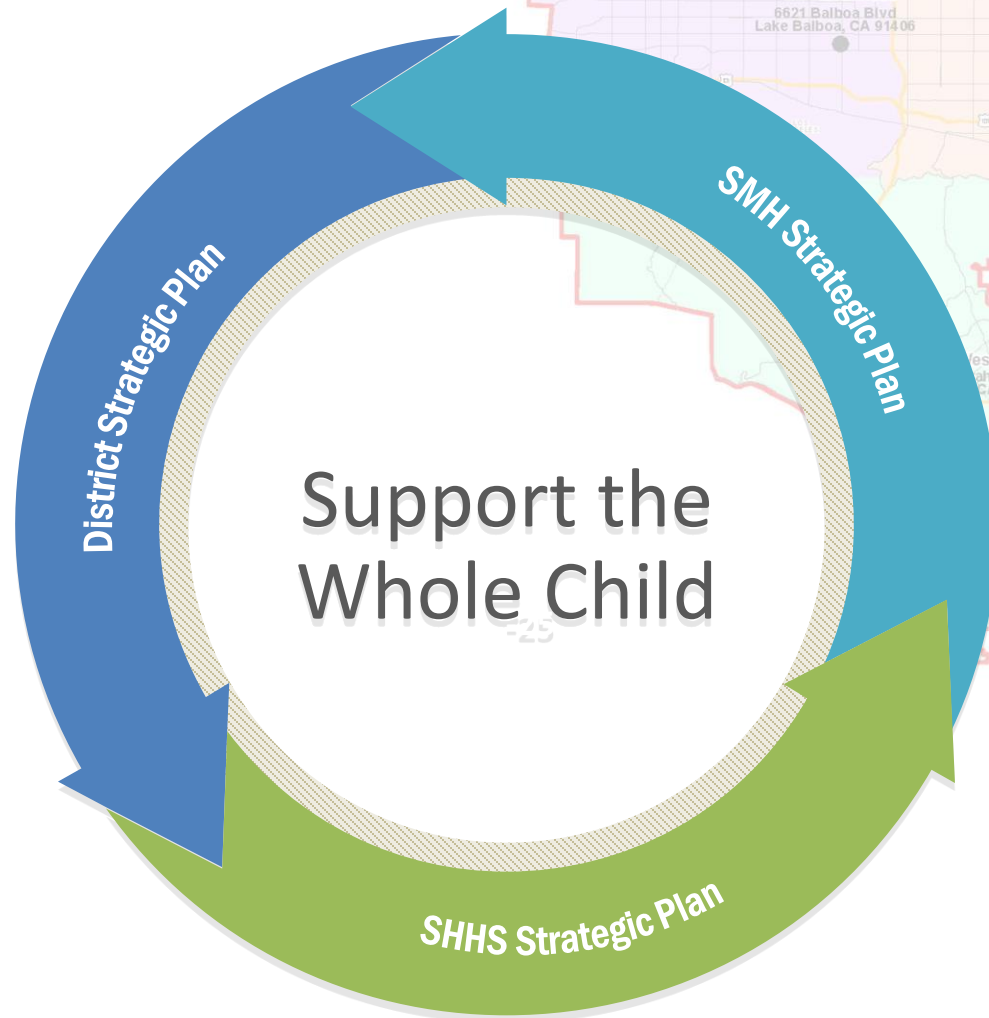
- Violence Exposure
- PTSD Symptoms
- Generalized Anxiety
- Depression
- Substance Abuse
- Suicidality

## 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





## **Key Initiative 3 - Serve the Whole Child**

**ACTION STEPS - SUPPORT STUDENTS PHYSICAL, EMOTIONAL AND MENTAL HEALTH**

### **Trauma Informed Care Awareness Campaign**

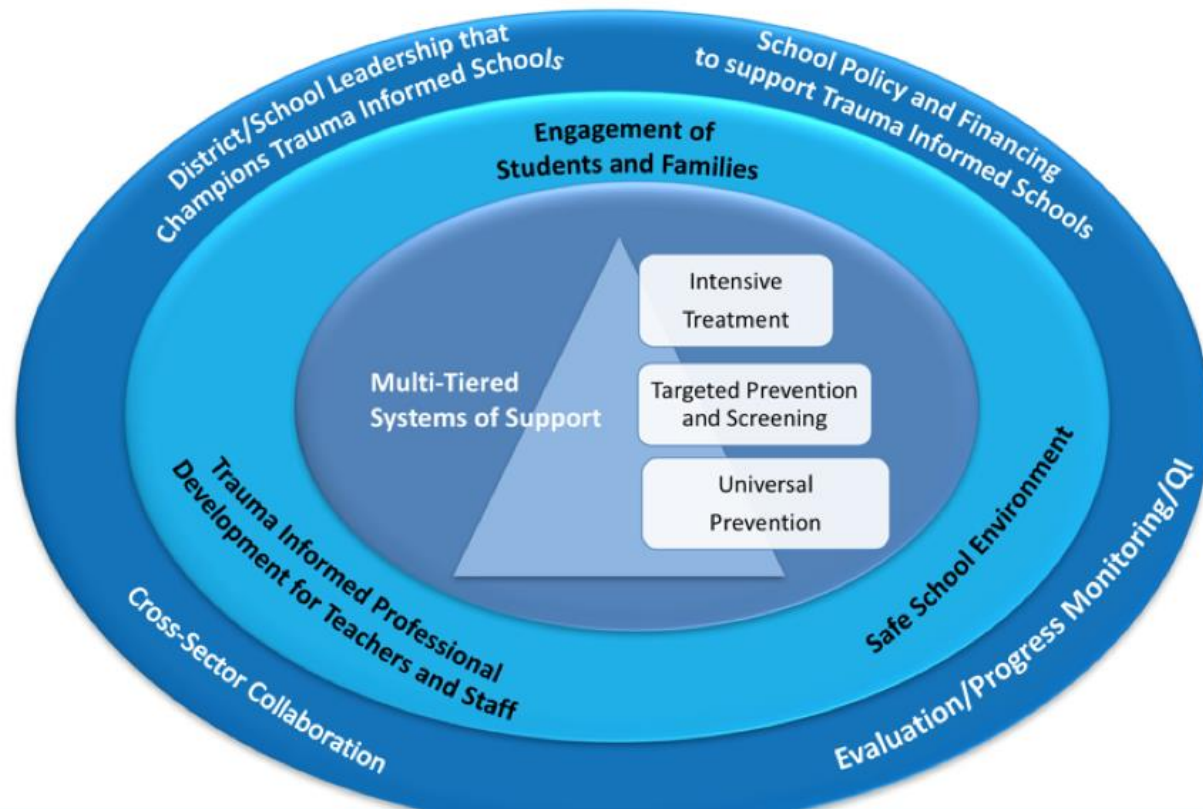
Implement a Trauma Informed Care awareness campaign to increase the District's capacity to understand the impact of trauma on a student's learning, relationships and behavior. The campaign will:

- 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**

# Trauma Informed School Systems



**TRAUMA-INFORMED PRINCIPLES:**  
SAFETY, TRUST, PEER SUPPORT, COLLABORATION, EMPOWERMENT, CULTURAL SENSITIVITY

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



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