Recovery, Reunification, and Building Resiliency
Recovery
Recovery

The process of restoring the social and emotional equilibrium of the school community.

Resource: The National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSW)
www.nctsnet.org
Restoring Stability

Restoring the social and emotional equilibrium of the school community by promoting positive coping skills and resilience in students and adults.

The rate of recovery will vary from person to person, depending upon factors such as age, gender, degree of direct exposure to violence, death or injury of a friend or family member, previous traumatic life experiences, and pre-existing history of anxiety and depression.
Most students and staff do recover with the support and assistance of caring educators and mental health professionals.

The process of recovery is aided when students and staff can anticipate the stages of recovery and prepare for the normal changes in behavior, thinking, emotion, and spirit that occur over time.

Resource: www.nctsnet.org
Maintaining Routines

In all phases of recovery, schools provide the greatest degree of support when their routines and social activities are maintained.

Routines and activities provide natural places where experiences can be shared and preserves the sense of belonging and solidarity so crucial to students and staff after a crisis.

Resource: www.nctssnet.org
Community Support

Community groups can contribute to school-based recovery programs by supporting students who are motivated to find long-term community solutions to the current and pre-existing problems of community violence.

The involvement of law enforcement, emergency service personnel, faith-based organizations, community service organizations, and others during the long-term phase of recovery helps to rebuild a safer community that will promote individual well-being.

Resource: www.nctsn.org
Given that the number of violent incidents on or near school campuses has been increasing in recent years, expert consensus in the field offers the following recommendations:

- Trauma recovery services should be available to students, staff, and families after a school-related violent event
- Teachers, while serving a crucial, front line role, should not be required to provide treatment
- Community agencies should work in partnership with school administrators and staff
- Mental health services should be available for those in need through all phases of recovery
- All stakeholders should be involved in planning for and responding to a school-related violent event

Resource: www.nctsn.org
Helping Youth Cope with Trauma

Psychological First Aid for Schools
http://www.nctsn.org/content/psychological-first-aid-schoolspfa

Psychological First Aid for Principals and Administrators – quick reference
http://www.nctsn.org/sites/default/files/assets/pdfs/pfa_for_schools_appendix_a_principals_and_administrators.pdf
CORE ACTIONS

Contact & Engagement

Safety & Comfort

REMEMBER:

- Work within a team.
- Protect survivors from harm.
- Be calm and compassionate.
- Listen and be flexible.
- Respect culture and diversity.
- Give clear and reliable information.
- Know local available resources.
- Help survivors help themselves.
- Know your limits.
- Take care of yourself.

PSYCHOLOGICAL FIRST AID

Are you ready to respond?

GET P REPARED
GET F OCUSED
GET I NTER A CTIVE

PFA Mobile™ can be downloaded on mobile Apple and Android devices

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Illustrations by Dr. Bob Seaver

www.NCTSN.org
learn.nctsn.org
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Self-Care Checklist

Six Skills for Psychological Recovery

1. Gathering Information and Prioritizing Assistance
2. Building Problem-Solving Skills
3. Promoting Positive Activities
4. Managing Reactions
5. Promoting Helpful Thinking
6. Rebuilding Healthy Social Connections

http://www.nctsn.org/content/skills-psychological-recovery-spr
One out of every 4 children attending school has been exposed to a traumatic event that can affect learning and/or behavior. Help is available. Hope is possible!

http://www.nctsn.org/resources/audiences/school-personnel
Reunification
An essential component of school crisis response is the reunification of students with their primary caregivers. This process is crucial as the reestablishment of social supports is often the only mental health crisis intervention needed and is especially important for younger children. The sooner students are reunited with their caregivers, the less likely they are to exhibit traumatic stress. In addition, schools must be accountable for maintaining the chain of custody for every student during and after a crisis. A predetermined and practiced reunification process helps to ensure that reunification will not add to the anxiety and trauma of the crisis.

Resource: National Association of School Psychologists (NASP)
www.nasponline.org
What happens after?
Compassion Fatigue

- The experience of short-term exhaustion and traumatic stress reactions associated with exposure to the suffering of one’s clients. (Boscarino, Figley, & Adams 2004)
- The weariness that comes from caring. (Johnson, 1997)
Who is Vulnerable to Compassion Fatigue?

Those who have experienced some painful or traumatic event(s) in their own lives which are unresolved, and in turn, activated by similar reports of pain or trauma in others.

Those who work directly with children and listen to their painful or traumatic experiences.

Those who are empathetic.

Those who help others and often neglect or are unaware of their own feelings and needs.
### Overall Signs of Compassion Fatigue

- Intense connection with those you help
- Increased irritability
- Pushing yourself too much
- Feelings of inadequacy or low self-esteem or feelings of grandiosity
- Problems with concentration
- Increased physical complaints
- Reactions similar to post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
Impact of Compassion Fatigue on School Personnel

- Problems with concentration
- Problems with sleep and appetite
- Difficulties managing intense emotions
- Challenges maintaining high-level of teaching excellence
- Irritability with students and co-workers (and family)
- Shame or guilt about “not doing enough”

Listening to “stories” from students, families, staff, and others takes a toll on emotions
Compassion Satisfaction

The perceived joys derived from experiencing the suffering of others and succeeding in helping relieve it in some way. (Figley, 2002)
Helping Children

COPE WITH DISASTER AND TRAUMATIC EVENTS
Children tend to react to disaster and traumatic events based on their past experiences and what they know of the current situation. Children with disabilities may require extra support from an adult to help them cope with disaster or traumatic events.
What Can You Do?

Tips to help reduce stress before, during, and after a disaster or traumatic event.
All children need to know that they are going to be safe and that they can find a safe place in an emergency.

Review safety plans before a disaster or emergency happens. Having a plan will increase the child’s confidence and help them feel under control (plans should include needed medications or assistance devices).
During

- Stay calm and reassure the child.
- Talk to children about what is happening in a way that they can understand.
  - Keep it simple and consider the child’s age and disability, if applicable.
Provide children with opportunities to talk about what they went through or what they think about it. Encourage them to share concerns and ask questions.

Children who have serious emotional and behavioral problems are at high risk for severe stress after a disaster or traumatic event. Maintain as much of a normal routine and environment as possible.

It is difficult to predict how some children will respond to disasters and traumatic events. It is essential that parents, teachers, and other adults work together to share information about how the child is coping after a traumatic event.

www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/disabilityandsafety/trauma.html
Tips for Talking With and Helping Children and Youth Cope After a Disaster or Traumatic Event

“Adult support and reassurance is the key to helping children through a traumatic time.”

https://search.usa.gov/search/docs?affiliate=samhsa-store&dc=1415&query=tips+for+talking+with+and+helping+children+and+youth+cope+after+a+disaster
Good news is that children and youth are usually very resilient. With the right support from the adults around them, they can thrive and recover. The most important ways to help are to make sure children feel connected, cared about, and loved.
Be Observant!!!
The Power of Resiliency
Discussion:

- How would you describe someone who is resilient?

- How do individuals develop resilient qualities?
“The world breaks everyone and afterward many are strong at the broken places.”

Ernest Hemingway
A pattern of positive adaptation in the context of past or present adversity (Wright & Masten, 2005).

A set of inner resources, social competencies, and cultural strategies that permit individuals to not only survive, but recover, or even thrive after stressful events, but also to draw from the experience to enhance subsequent functioning (Stanton-Salazar & Spina, 2000).
How Does Resiliency Work?

- How do people “make it”?
  - Risks
  - Protective Factors
  - Assets
Resiliency Model

- Stressors
  - Adversity
  - Risks

- Individual & Environmental Protective Factors

- Disruption

- Reintegration to Comfort Zone (Homeostasis)

- Reintegration with Loss (Maladaptation)

- Dysfunctional Reintegration

Adapted from Richardson, Neiger, Jensen & Kumpfer, 1990
Key Points in Resiliency Model

- When individuals experience adversity, they also experience protective factors.
- These internal and external protective factors buffer the effects of adversity.
- Without protective factors, some individuals experience maladaptive coping mechanisms such as substance abuse, loss of self-worth, or an increase in risky behaviors.
Resiliency Model Messages

- Adversity can lead to a variety of outcomes
- Both internal and external factors in the environment are critical for building resiliency
What Makes a Difference?

“Shifting the balance or tipping the scales from vulnerability to resilience may happen as a result of one person or one opportunity.” - F. Benard
Any Questions?
The End

Thank you for Attending!
Resources for Teachers

- Websites
  - www.search-institute.org
  - www.cdl.org

- Free Newsletters from the Search Institute
  - YouthSense: a resource for people who work with children and teens
  - The Asset Champion: inspiring stories from community initiatives around the world
  - Insights and Evidence: latest research findings
REMS Resources for Alabama

Resilience Strategies for Educators:
Techniques for Self-Care and Peer Support
Train-the-Trainer

Local Resources

Mental Health Centers
http://www.mh.alabama.gov/ID/RegionalOffices.aspx

Public Health Areas
http://www.adph.org/administration/assets/publichealthareas.pdf

Community Action Agency
http://www.caaalabama.org/

Mental Health Counseling
http://www.ameliacenter.org/

Parenting Assistance Line
http://pal.ua.edu/index2.php

If you have questions or need additional assistance, please contact the REMS TA Center at 1 (855) 781-7367 or via e-mail at info@remstacenter.org.
Power of Relationships

“Resilience rests, fundamentally, on relationships.”
-Luthar, 2006

“The importance of relationships for human resilience has been noted in every major review of resilience...”
-Masten & Obradovic, 2008