It’s Not About You

Trauma Informed Strategies for the Physical Education Classroom

Matthew Bristol
@PutneyPhysEd

2019 SHAPE Vermont Conference
Thursday October 24th, 2019
Instant Activity Options

1) Jog Laps
2) Select an object - Play pass with a friend
3) Jump Rope
4) Hula Hoop
Learning Objectives

- Develop an understanding of trauma and its effects on the developing brain.

- Learn strategies for approaching and teaching trauma sensitive students in the classroom or school environment.

- Model and learn activities for teaching social-emotional outcomes.
As Educators How Can We...

Develop a welcoming, safe and trusting learning environment?
As Educators How Can We...

Build Relationships with students?
As Educators How Can We...

Excite, Engage, and Empower students
As Educators How Can We...

Foster the development of social and emotional regulation skills?
As Educators How Can We...

Provide opportunities for student voice & choice?
Assign Roles

1) Equipment Managers
2) Water Fountain Manager
3) Kindness Captains

What other roles can you assign in your physical education class?
Please, Thank You, & You’re Welcome Tag

Objective: To practice manners while playing a fun tag game.

Equipment: Each student starts with three items (popsicle sticks)

- Every student starts with three popsicle sticks.
- If you tag someone, you ask “can I please have a popsicle stick”
- An exchange of “thank you” and “you are welcome” between the tagger and tagee occur.
- If you run out of popsicle sticks, take a knee and wait for a generous peer to give you a popsicle stick.
- If you tag someone at the same time, you both exchange sticks.
- If someone forgets to say “please” - remind them with “try again”
Greetings & Partners

Why are greetings important?

Remember who your partners are, we will be using them throughout the session.
Turkey Partner

Introduce yourself!

Share:

What grades do you teach?
Heart Partner Partner

Introduce yourself!

Share:

What does Trauma or Trauma Informed mean to you?
Handshake Partner

Introduce yourself!

**Make up a Handshake!**

Share:

How can you incorporate teacher-student and student-student greetings in your class?
What is Trauma?

1) a deeply distressing or disturbing experience.

2) an experience or series of experiences that creates overwhelming toxic stress on the brain, leading to inability to regulate emotions and an increased risk for health issues
Facts About Trauma

1. Trauma is real.
Facts About Trauma

2. Trauma is prevalent.
3.

Trauma is toxic to the brain and can affect learning and development in a variety of ways.
Facts About Trauma

4.

Schools need to be prepared to support students who have experienced trauma.
Facts About Trauma

5. Children are resilient, and within positive learning environments they can grow, learn, and succeed.
Target Areas

- Building Relationships
- Responding to Students
- Fostering Social Emotional Outcomes.
Teaching About the Brain and How it Works?

The Flipped Lid Scenario

Triggers & Emotional Regulation Toolbox
Upstairs & Downstairs Brain

Upstairs Brain = Prefrontal Cortex

planning complex cognitive behavior, personality expression, decision making, and moderating social behavior.

Downstairs Brain = Amygdala

a roughly almond-shaped mass of gray matter inside each cerebral hemisphere, involved with the experiencing of emotions.
Breathing Exercises

- Finger Breathing
- Belly Breathing
- Buddy Breathing
- Bunny Ear Breathing
- Snow Angel Breathing

- What Are your Favorites???
Flipped Lid Tag

Objectives:

1. Students will elevate their heart rate through physically active game.
2. Students will learn and practice emotion regulation skills.
3. Students will discuss the main themes in the activity and how they can be translated to the everyday life.
Reflection - Triggers

1) Find your Lumberjack Partner

2) What are your Triggers as a Teacher?

3) What are some your Students’ Triggers?
Hands On - Reaction Action

1) Incorporate greeting & peer discussion
2) Integrates anatomy
3) Listening & Reaction Skills
4) Friendly competition - incorporate fair play & positive attitude
5) Ends with a handshake and “good game - have a great day”
“Hands On” - Reaction Action - Round 1

1) Turkey Partner
2) Greet
3) Play
4) Discuss:
   a) What routines can you, or do you, use to create a predictable and reliable environment.
5) Play
6) Farewell - “Good game - have a great day”
“Hands On” - Reaction Action - Round 2

1) Heart Partner
2) Greet
3) Play
4) Discuss:
   a) How do you best build relationships with your students?
5) Play
6) Farewell - “Good game - have a great day”
Colors & Emotions

1) Select a paint chip card
2) Find a partner - This will be your LUMBERJACK Partner
3) Think about the following questions
   a) Do you like your color?
   b) What does the color remind you of?
   c) Does your color resonate with how you are feeling today?
   d) How are you feeling today?
4) Partner A responds, Partner B Listens - Partner B repeats what Partner A said.
5) Swap roles
“Hands On” - Reaction Action - Round 3

1) Find your Handshake Partner - Greet them
2) Group up with another pair, making a group of 4
3) Play
4) Play
5) Farewell - “Good game - have a great day”
Raging Bull / Wildfire

1) Make a circle and hold hands.
2) Don’t let the Bull / Wildfire touch or get outside the group circle.
3) If approaching a wall, the group must communicate “change direction” and the bull/wildfire must change directions.
“Incredible change happens in your life when you decide to take control of what you do have power over instead of craving control over what you don’t.”

Steve Maraboli
Life, the True, and Being Free

(Chapter 6, p. 76)
Architects & Contractors

Objective: To use communication skills to successfully build an identical structure or shape, while back to back with your partner.

Equipment: 7 - 11 items per student (i.e 9 popsicle sticks per student).

Extension: The contractor can’t talk, the architect can’t use shapes to describe building.
Thank you!

mbristol@wsesdvt.org

@PutneyPhysEd
Additional Information & Videos
Key Words

❖ Resilience
❖ Empathy
❖ Community
❖ Sense of Belonging
❖ Comfortable / Safe
❖ Listen
❖ Communication
❖ Roles & Routines
❖ Student Choice
❖ Flexible options / pathways
❖ Predictable & Reliable Environment
Toxic Stress

Toxic stress is any form of stress that the individual perceives as associated with being relentless, out of control, and fills that person with hopelessness and helplessness.

Our minds determine the difference between what is simple, manageable, and toxic stress.
Impact of Toxic Stress on Student Development

**POSITIVE**
Brief increases in heart rate, mild elevations in stress hormone levels.

**TOLERABLE**
Serious, temporary stress responses, buffered by supportive relationships.

**TOXIC**
Prolonged activation of stress response systems in the absence of protective relationships.
Minimizing Toxic Stress
Responding to Students

Respond with:

- Grace
- Empathy
- Kindness
- Compassion

“Don’t let them see you sweat”

“There is no better exercise for the heart than reaching down and lifting people up.”
6 Steps of Communication

1. Listen
2. Reassure
3. Validate
4. Respond
5. Repair
6. Resolve
Toolbox for Emotion Regulation

Identifying Emotions: Teaching about the brain

- Upstairs & Downstairs Brain
- Zones of Regulation
- Superflex & the Thinkables
- Growth Mindset

Mindfulness Activities:

- 7-11 Breathing
- Hand Breathing
- Bunny Ear Breathing

Brain Breaks:

- Tabata
- Go Noodle

Social Activities:

- Talk to a friend or trusted adult.
- Do something fun with a friend that you both enjoy.
Conflict Corner & “Calm Corner”

Daniel @superdanpe · Feb 12
Replying to @bdevore7 @SHAPE_America and @OPENPhysEd
Love @calm Individual students use it in the calm corner. I also often use this app at the end of PE during our “Mindful Minute.” #JustBreathe #Mindfulness @tatescreekes
Self-Care

Fostering a trauma-sensitive classroom & school

“Self-care is never a selfish act — it is simply good stewardship of the only gift I have, the gift I was put on earth to offer to others.”

— Parker Palmer, Center for Courage and Renewal
Secondary Traumatic Stress

Stress or trauma symptoms that a professional may experience as a result of working with children and families who themselves have been traumatized. It is also referred to as secondary trauma or vicarious trauma.
Symptoms May Include

- Hypervigilance
- Hopelessness
- Inability to listen or avoidance of students
- Anger
- Sleeplessness
- Fear
- Chronic exhaustion
- Physical ailments
- Guilt
Self-Care Plan

A self care plan is a personal plan for professionals designed to maintain a work-life balance.

Self-care plans may include:

- Exercise and nutrition
- Wellness & Mental health (i.e. meditation, therapy)
- Sleep schedule
- Participating in old or new hobbies.
- Socializing
- Vacations
Wrapping it up

- Trauma is real and surrounds us, even if we can’t see it.
- Toxic stress has lasting negative effects on the child brain.
- Children can triumph through traumatic experiences.
- It is up to US to provide students with a safe and caring environment where they feel encouraged, empowered, and excited to learn and grow.