Race-Centered Trauma-Responsive Schools Approach: Pathway to Racial Healing

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Lehigh University
Alberti Center Colloquium Series
State University of New York @ Buffalo

Aims

To provide:

(1) An overview of our work on developing race-centered trauma-responsive schools; and
(2) Share our learnings and future directions.

Lenape

Image from: https://www.nlltribalnation.org/

Seneca

Image from: https://sni.org

Introduction/Positionality

* Parents emigrated from HK to US in 60s.

* Laborers in garment and shoe factories.

* 2nd Generation Chinese American Man.

* Partner and parent.

* Comfortably "middle-class."

Acknowledgements

Dr. King's Address to APA

"You who are in the field of psychology have given us a great word. It is the word maladjusted. This word is probably used more than any other word in psychology….

Dr. Martin Luther King (Address to the American Psychological Association, 1967)

"I am sure that we will recognize that there are some things in our society, some things in our world, to which we should never be adjusted. There are some things concerning which we must always be maladjusted if we are to be people of good will. We must never adjust ourselves to racial discrimination and racial segregation…."

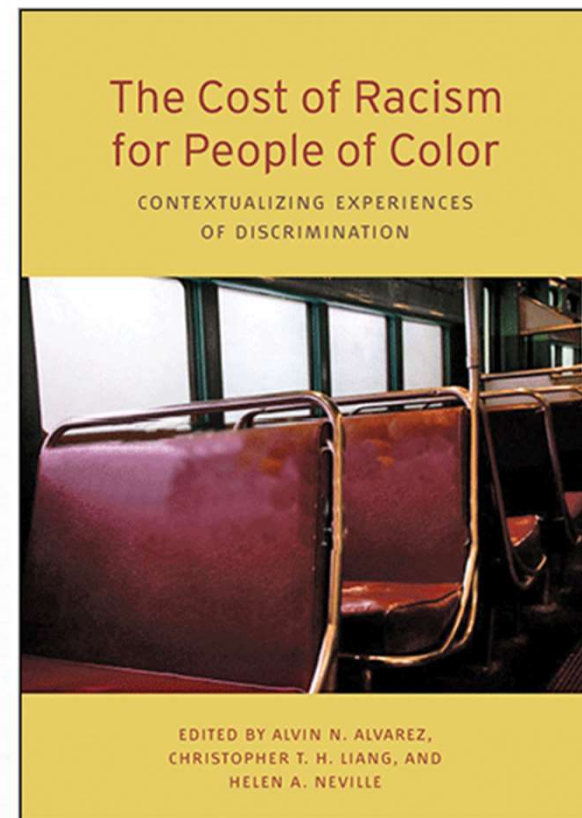Dr. Martin Luther King (Address to the American Psychological Association, 1967)

Dr. King's Call

Dr. King's hoped for a psychology that could

(1) be reflective of its own biases,

(2) move beyond self-interest, and

(3) actively address social determinants of health.

Centering Costs of Racism Experiences

Racial Disparities in Psychological and Physical Health

Entry into Schools and School-based Research

-A Decision to Move Upstream to Engage in Prevention

-Diversity Work in Schools to Trauma and Diversity

-Intentional Focus on Addressing Strengths as well as Systems for Resilience (Environment + Individual Skills)

https://resilientlehighvalley.org/
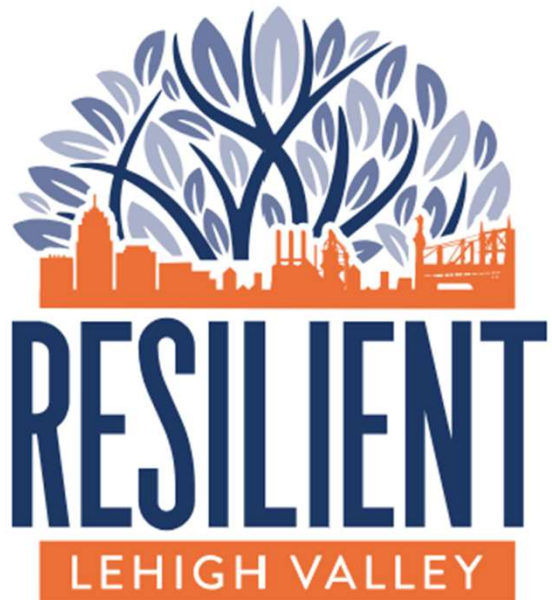
In-Service/PD: What We Do

Basics of Trauma, the Brain, and Attributions we make;

Address How Occupational Stress, Secondary Trauma, and Implicit Biases Intersect;

Center Race by Normalizing Human Processes; and

Focus on the School/Teachers

Essentially, We Build the Connective Tissue

ACEs - Household AND Community

Felitti, Anda, et al. (1990s)

Cronholm et al. (2015)

Figure 1 TYPES OF ACEs

SOURCE:
The Adverse Childhood Experiences Study
and the Philadelphia Expanded ACE Study

"What must it be like to wake up every morning knowing that the world hates you"?
-David Stovall

Invisibility and Centering of Whiteness

Monocultural ethnocentrism -

"the invisible veil of a worldview that keeps White Euro Americans from recognizing the ethnocentric basis of their beliefs, values, and assumptions (Sue et al., 1999; Sue & Sue, 2003). Because of its lack of visibility, it is a worldview that is imposed on all culturally diverse groups in this society."

Sue, D. W. (2004). Whiteness and ethnocentric monoculturalism: making the" invisible" visible. *American Psychologist*, *59*(8), 761.

White Cultural Logic

The use of values and beliefs associated with White norms to understand problems, behaviors, actions, and feelings. In unconsciously centering Whiteness, people from the global majority are more likely to be seen from a deficit-oriented perspective and receive treatment in kind.

Liang et al. (in press). Building race-centered trauma-responsive schools: One path toward Justice in Education. In S. Hage (Ed.) *An Ounce of prevention*. (pp. 130 - 152). Cambridge University Press

The Assumptions People Make

What We Find with In-Service/PD

Differences in trauma understanding and self-reported behavior.

Participants of in-service TIC PD coupled with ongoing consultation on TIC efforts have better understanding of trauma and aligned self-reported behavioral responses to trauma than schools with no PD.

School with PD + ongoing consultation had better understanding of trauma, but no differences in self-reported behavioral responses, when compared with teachers in the school with PD.

Trauma-Informed Care Training for Educators: Some Preliminary Evidence

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and Teresa Rosenberger[1]

Abstract
A report of the findings of two studies conducted on the training of educators on trauma-informed care (TIC) is presented in this article. With one sample (N = 552), Study 1 results indicated that both full-day and half-day training resulted in improved scores on attitudes regarding TIC. There were no significant differences in pre-training and post-training scores across those who received half-day and full-day training. With a second sample (N = 159), Study 2 examined whether four middle schools within one school district with varying amounts of prior TIC training would differ in scores on the Attitudes Related to Trauma-Informed Care (ARTIC-35) scale before receiving this TIC training. A one-way ANOVA indicated significantly higher scores on the ARTIC-35 in schools that had received prior TIC training compared with those that had not. Overall, the results of both studies advance the understanding of TIC in schools.

Sustaining Transformation: Leadership Teams

Forming Them

Sustaining Them

Creating and Maintaining Safety To Discuss Challenges and To Openly Discuss Racial Attitudes

Focus on Systems-Level Change, with Acknowledgement of Skill Deficits (in teachers and students)

Attend to Desire to Problematize Family and Community

The formation and functions of school-based trauma-leadership teams: A preliminary qualitative study

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Abstract
Studies suggest that among children, adverse childhood experiences increase the risk of developing behavioral challenges in and out of the school environment. Rooted in distributed leadership, trauma-leadership teams (TLTs) are a novel systems-based intervention in which a team of educators deepens knowledge and works to implement trauma-responsive policies and practices within the school community. The current study used a consensual qualitative research design to (a) understand the ways TLTs are created, (b) describe educators' perceived benefits and outcomes of these teams, and (c) describe how TLTs are applied in schools to improve trauma-informed care practices. Additionally, the study highlights growth areas for TLT implementation. Domains from interviews include (1) *Formation of TLTs*; (2) *Benefits and Outcomes of TLTs*; (3) *Trauma-Responsive Competency*; and (4) *Growth Areas of TLT*. Results suggest that TLT members view TLTs positively, offer insight into how TLTs are formed, and see benefits from TLTs within their school communities. Results also suggest areas for growth for TLTs.

Some Outcomes of the Teams

Reduction in Chronic Absenteeism

Decrease in Disciplinary Referrals and Suspensions (increase in referrals for Peace Rooms)

Greater focus on implementation fidelity of existing programs (e.g., SWPBIS; SoC, RJP)

Feeling supported and having direction.

Development of Educator Wellness/Peace rooms

Reenvisioning Family/Community Outreach
to be bidirectional and strengths-based

Beneficial Outcome of TLT

Professional development, whether it be articles or videos or books that we were reading and then having time to reflect with each other is very valuable. And then they also just think the ability to reflect on what we're seeing in our building during that time and share those conversations is really important

Beneficial Outcome of TLT

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We get a lot of different people talking and how (TRP) work for them and how different ideas work for them"

We were making a difference... working with our colleagues."

Beneficial Outcome of TLT

When you have that difficult student to think about some of those things like, you know, "Did they have a rough morning?" Just kind of realizing like they're not just being bad to be bad, you know. There's some meaning behind the behavior and that you can sometimes help to effect change by, you know, not just going to discipline [or] just looking to kind of get them out of there [but] by trying to respond to that in a sensitive manner

I was just how I was. I didn't know that [that] is being trauma informed and everything about students, putting them first. And the biggest thing - don't take it personally... I've been doing this since 1990 when I first started teaching... I've seen a big improvement from two years ago

Beneficial Outcome of TLT

When I first started learning about what trauma informed and ACEs are, and how all these things impact kids. I was like, 'Wow.' We have a lot of these kids that kind of fit the behaviors and the emotionality ...and, you know dots just weren't connecting as to why you know we were seeing some of these things. And that was like a light bulb for me is like, 'Oh my gosh. This makes so much sense.' And then you know, I feel like knowledge is power

Teacher Account of Peace Corner

I had a boy in seventh period a couple weeks ago who was like, "I can't deal with you anymore I'm going to the Peace Chair," and the two boys next to him were like "oh, you're going to let him ..." ... I actually laughed about it. That's exactly what the Peace Chair is for, to take five minutes from me now. And then he ended up being great after that. So it worked. It was good, like mitigating our damage too. He separated from me, and I got to walk away from him for a couple minutes ...

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Abstract

Teaching youth how to self-regulate is a focus of a trauma-informed school approach. Peace Spaces, including Peace Corners and Peace Rooms, are a trauma-informed intervention used to teach self-regulation skills to students. The current study used a Consensual Qualitative Research design to identify and describe the thoughts, concerns, and experiences of teachers who implemented Peace Spaces within a middle school in a small urban center of Pennsylvania. Results of qualitative data analyses provided insight into teachers' perceptions of strengths and challenges to the implementation of Peace Rooms. Additionally, using the school's archival data, the study examined how students were using the Peace Room. Domains from interviews with teachers included: (1) How Peace Spaces are Used; (2) Reasons for Using Peace Spaces; (3) Benefits of Peace Spaces; (4) Peace Space Strategies; (5) Challenges of Peace Spaces; (6) Attitudes about Peace Spaces; and (7) Future Directions. Themes from analysis of archival data indicated that students used the Peace Room for one or a combination of five stressors, with Peer-Related Stressors and Mental Health as the top reasons. Collectively, these results suggested Peace Rooms were useful to students who needed a space to self-regulate and/or talk through their problems

Next Steps

Increased Focus on Developing Parent Networks

(Challenge is High rate of Mobility)

Continuing to Work with Teams to Sustain Efforts

Developing Radical Mindfulness Curriculum to increase protective factors of (1) racial and cultural pride and (2) self-awareness and compassion.

Parent Outreach

Focused on …

developing parent networks where caregivers needs and knowledge of trauma are addressed.

developing better communication between schools and community.

Radical Mindfulness

Working with a community partner to modify their evidence-based mindfulness curriculum to be culturally-responsive and race-centered.

A shift away from race-neutrality where control and self-regulation are the only outcomes.

Final Points - Takeaways

Racism is a from of trauma but not the only one.

Trauma influences educators wellbeing, and their behaviors (including TSRs, and responses to bullying), which could negatively affect BIPOC youth.

Professional development is important but sustained, systems-level, efforts through TLTs is needed.

Focus on system before addressing youth behaviors and family contexts.

LEHIGH UNIVERSITY

College of Education

Resources

Thank you!

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