

Building Community Resilience: Pottstown School District

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Start Early. Reach Higher.



Yale SCHOOL OF MEDICINE
SCATTERGOOD
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Goals for Today's Session

- Provide overview of school leadership in trauma-informed practices
- Identify the roles the families can play in a partnership
- Focused planning for implementation in your community

How we build resilience...

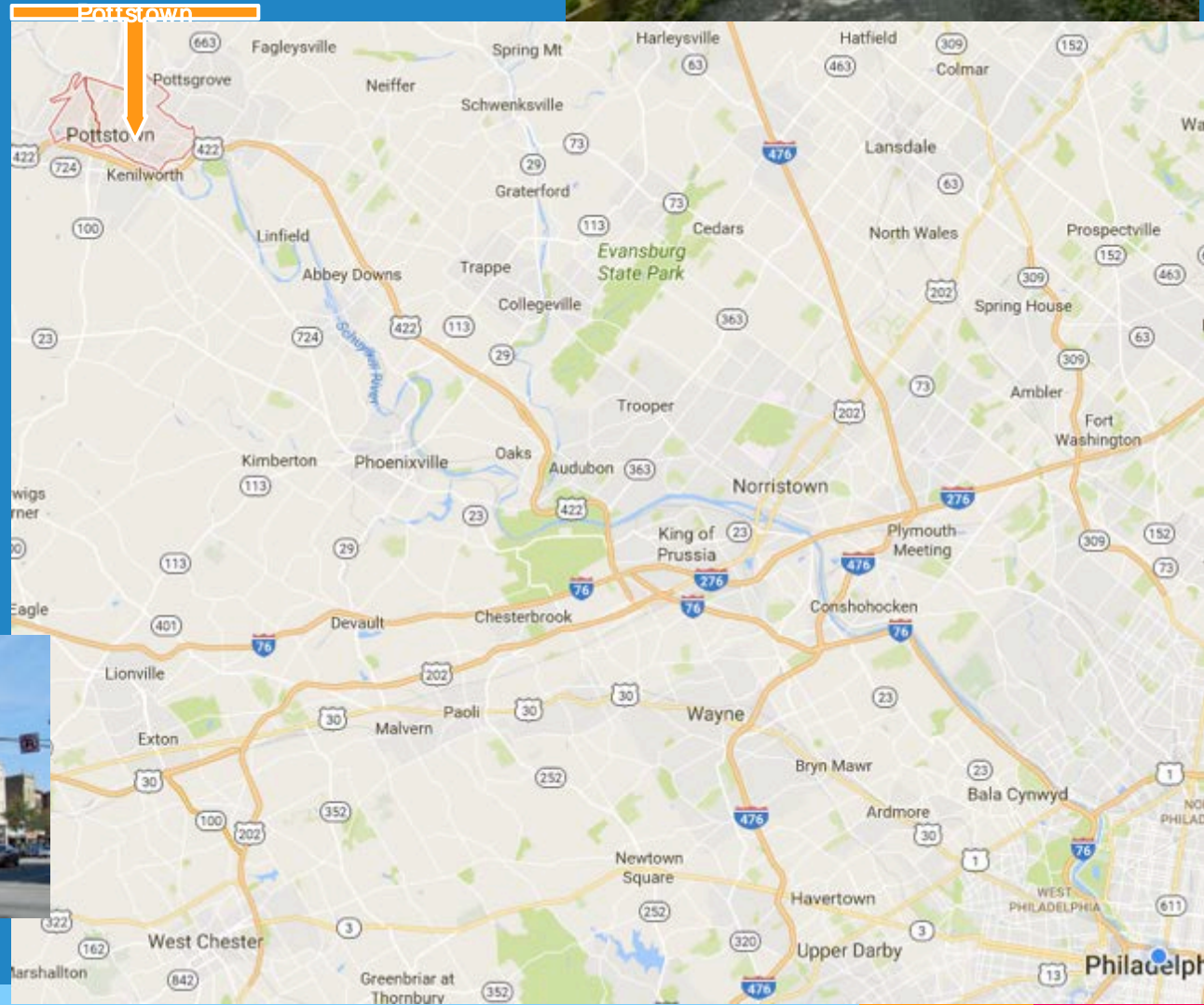
- ▷ Emphasis on the school-readiness initiative through family and community engagement
- ▷ Development of a community-based coalition led by a school district to address Adverse Child Experiences (ACEs)

Pottstown, PA

Population:
22,377

Small urban community
(5 square miles) 40
miles northwest of
Philadelphia on the
Schuylkill River in
Montgomery County

Once a center for iron
and steel manufacturing



Pottstown School District



- ▷ 3,300 Students
- ▷ 6 schools, pre-k to 12th grade
- ▷ 100% free and reduced lunch
- ▷ Transiency rate of 21% in and out of school district each year
- ▷ PEAK is a school readiness and community engagement initiative of Pottstown School District, serving 264 children (ages 3 & 4) and their families.



Start Early. Reach Higher.

Pottstown Early Action for Kindergarten Readiness (PEAK)

- Community Outreach
- Family Engagement
- Quality Improvement
- Health & Wellness
- Kindergarten Transition

Our Challenges

➤ Increasing issues with behavior and social and emotional development at all levels

Data sources: PA Youth Survey, teacher observations, family concerns

➤ Families facing many issues related to poverty and social disruption

Data sources: Census data, family self-report, PK Counts, Head Start enrollments, referrals

Discussion

What are our community's major challenges related to children and families? And how do you know?

ACEs Matter . . . Why?

ACEs are prevalent, across all populations-- leading to a national public health crisis.

ACEs may cause poor social, economic and health outcomes including:

- Inability to thrive in early childhood
- Truancy & poor school performance
- Missed work & lost wages
- Poor physical & mental health outcomes

ACE Study Population is not Representative of Urban Populations

Demographics	ACE Study	Philadelphia
Mean age	56	34
Race/ethnicity	79% White 5% African American 5% Hispanic	41% White 43% African American 12% Hispanic
High school graduates	94%	36%
College graduates	43%	13%
Percent below FPL	Not measured	25%

Expanded ACES Study - Dr. Roy Wade

- Witnessing Violence
- Living in Unsafe Neighborhoods
- Experiencing Racism
- Living in Foster Care
- Experiencing Bullying

Discussion

- How does this information on Adverse Childhood Experiences relate to your community's needs?
- What is your community's level of understanding on ACEs and the developing child?

Nadine Burke Harris explains the effects of trauma on a developing mind:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=95ovIJ3dsNk>

Creating the Community Partnership

- Small leadership team
- Forming the steering committee
- Theory of Change
- Logic Model

Development of a Coalition

- ▷ Used PEAK partner meetings as a platform to introduce effects of childhood trauma
- ▷ Grant awards to support our work
- ▷ Development of a community steering committee to develop a plan of action
- ▷ Partner with an evaluation consultation team



Sandy Bloom, MD



Roy Wade, Jr., MD, PhD, MPH, MSHP



Steering Committee Members

- ▷ 14 Organizations - 27 Members - Monthly meetings



Broad Representation In Steering Committee

- ▷ Pottstown School District
- ▷ Consultation Center at Yale
- ▷ Creative Health Services
- ▷ Lakeside Educational Network
- ▷ Montgomery Early Learning Centers
- ▷ Penn Project for Civic Engagement
- ▷ Pottstown Area Health & Wellness Foundation
- ▷ Pottstown Cluster of Religious Communities
- ▷ Pottstown Family Center
- ▷ Pottstown Mercury Fit for Life
- ▷ Pottstown Police Department
- ▷ Scattergood Foundation
- ▷ The Salvation Army
- ▷ United Way of Greater Philadelphia and Southern New Jersey

Discussion

- Who are potential partners or who is missing from the room?
- Are there particular sectors that we want to target?
- What are potential resources?

Development of Logic Model

- ▷ Developed in collaboration with the steering committee over the course of three months
- ▷ Developed a common vision
- ▷ Focused activities and tracking
- ▷ Identified outcomes at individual, community, and system levels

Logic Model: Pottstown Trauma-Informed Community Initiative

Activities



Outputs



Outcomes

Problem:

- There is a lack of understanding that trauma in early childhood affects behaviors and health outcomes in the present and later in life. This lack of understanding results in inappropriate or ineffective responses to children and youth who have had traumatic or adverse child experiences (ACEs).
- Barriers to addressing ACEs include lack of knowledge about, access to, and use of community resources. These barriers are cultural, practical (e.g., costs, transportation, location, childcare), and related to a challenge itself (e.g., stigma).

Resources:

- Pottstown School District & relationships with the community
- Pottstown Trauma-Informed Steering Committee
- Pottstown families and caregivers
- Established community partnerships & connections
- Pottstown Early Action for Kindergarten Program
- Police Department and Community Health Services Collaborative
- Tri County Health Council (Community Health Services, Community Health and Death Care, Pottstown Area Health & Wellness Foundation, & Hospital)
- Cluster of Religious Organizations
- Salvation Army & SA Homeless Shelter
- Family Advisory Committee
- Institute For Family Professionals
- Montgomery Early Learning Center Professional Development Dimensions
- Funders: W.K.Ka. Legg Foundation Community Innovation Zone Grant, Pottstown Health and Wellness Foundation, Unlco Way GPBWNJ, United Way Montgomery County
- Strong Kids In Pottstown
- Pottstown Family Center (Bilingual Outreach Specialists)
- The Library

Objective:

- To create a culture of safety, understanding, and care in the community that addresses the short and long-term impact of ACEs.
- To establish a comprehensive network that includes learning communities, communities, and a network of providers that offer education and supports to address the barriers to effective responses to ACEs.
- The network should include first responders, professionals that spend time with children, family members, providers and resource networks, and general community members.

Building a System of Trauma-Informed Networks

- Identify opportunities for collaboration and involvement with existing networks (as identified in the resources)
- Complete a community needs and resource assessment of community members, providers, barriers, & interventions
- Identify opportunities for leveraging key Pottstown stakeholders using the Steering Committee to increase and improve resources
- Develop a process for updating key Pottstown stakeholders on activities
- Develop a community-wide "referral" protocol/resource hub
- Provide supports to promote self-awareness and self-reflection in order to build a trauma-informed community

Establishing a Trauma-Informed Learning Community

- Provide in-depth training on trauma and its effects to members of the Steering Committee/Task Force to ensure that members have a common knowledge base
- Provide Institute for Family Professionals Trauma 101 training to the Early Childhood Education network and the Pottstown School District
- Provide Institute for Family Professionals Trauma 101 training to agency partners and community stakeholders to develop buy-in and promote collaboration
- Provide in-depth training on trauma and its effects to those interested after completing the Trauma 101 training
- Provide topic-specific parenting classes to families and caregivers that have ACFs and trauma as a case of information (with childcare and transportation provided)

Building Effective Communications

- Create a general message about ACFs and exposure to early trauma that will help to drive specific messages for target populations
- Identify target populations, including: human service professionals, school personnel, and families
- Develop messages for each of the target populations
- Identify existing relationships as outlets for a campaign, including newspapers, television and radio, and current social media
- Disseminate messages for each of the target audiences (human service professionals, school personnel, and families)

Building a System of Trauma-Informed Networks

- Number of linkages/ties with the Network, including with specific groups (e.g., Steering Committee)
- Strength of Network linkages/ties, including within specific groups
- Number of public information events held for key Pottstown stakeholder groups
- Development of a community-wide referral protocol in Pottstown that is used by Pottstown human services professionals, school personnel, and other groups
- Number of referrals made within Pottstown that use a common referral protocol

Establishing a Trauma-Informed Learning Community

- Number of Trauma 101 trainings provided to: family members/caregivers, steering committee members, agency partners/providers, community stakeholders, Pottstown School District, and early childhood educators
- Number of Trauma 101 attendees from the following groups: family members/caregivers, steering committee members, agency partners/providers, community stakeholders, Pottstown School District, and early childhood educators
- Number of "other sponsored," trauma-related topic-specific trainings provided to: family members/caregivers, steering committee members, agency partners/providers, community stakeholders, Pottstown School District, and early childhood educators
- Number of family members/caregivers, steering committee members, agency partners/providers, community stakeholders, Pottstown School District, and early childhood educators who attend "other sponsored" trauma-related, topic-specific trainings
- Number of in-depth (ex. 15hrs Institute for Family Professionals), trauma courses provided to: steering committee members, agency partners/providers, community stakeholders, Pottstown School District, and early childhood educators
- Number of steering committee members, agency partners/providers, community stakeholders, Pottstown School District, and early childhood educators who attend in-depth trauma course
- Number of trained providers available as a resource to the learning community

Building Effective Communications

- Number of different target populations that will need a specific message about the initiative
- List of specific contacts that can be leveraged to assist in creating, disseminating, and marketing messages to targeted groups
- Number of different media to be used for messages for targeted groups
- Development of specific messages about the initiative to targeted groups
- Number of messages disseminated to specific groups

SHORT-TERM (within 1 year)

Individual

- Increased knowledge about ACEs and trauma in targeted groups
- Increased capacity of targeted providers to recognize trauma-related challenges in themselves
- Increased self-awareness, self-reflection, and adjustment in response to problematic behavior in targeted groups

Community (School and Family, ECE)

- Increased family engagement in schools
- Reduced disciplinary actions in schools

Systems

- Increased tracking of the use of trauma informed services (housing, behavioral health, physical health)

INTERMEDIATE-TERM (within 1-5 years)

Individual

- Reduced stigma about help seeking for ACEs and trauma
- Reduced judgment about behaviors that may be attributed to ACEs and trauma

Community (School and Family, ECE)

- Improved academic outcomes for children
- Reduced special education costs

Systems

- Increased utilization of appropriate trauma-informed services (housing, behavioral health, physical health)
- Improved trauma-informed continuum services

LONG-TERM (within 5-10 years)

Individual

- Increased effective communication among individuals
- Improved interaction among individuals

Community (School and Family, ECE)

- Reduced transiency for families with school-aged children
- Further reduced special education costs
- Reduced juvenile recidivism
- Reduced crime
- Reduced domestic violence

Systems

- Further increased utilization of appropriate trauma-informed services (housing, behavioral health, physical health)
- Further enhancements in the trauma-informed continuum services

Discussion

- How does your team work to stay focused on goals?
- What are 1-2 focus areas or goals that you can identify?

Development of workgroups

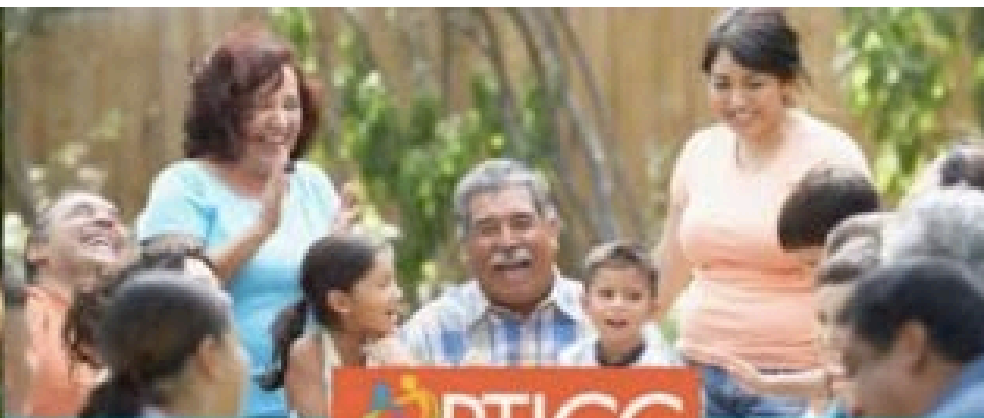


**Building
effective
communications**

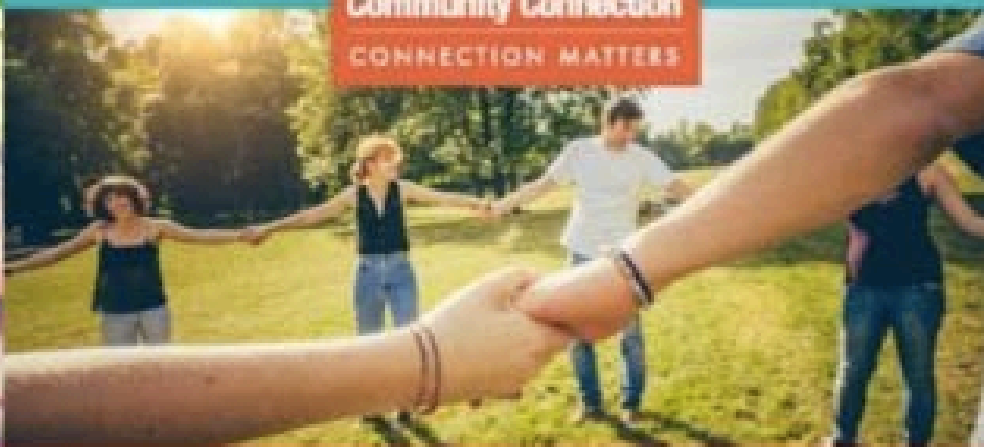
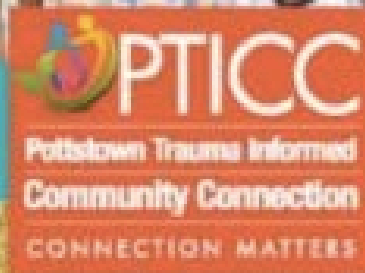
**Establish a
trauma-
informed
learning
community**

**Building a
system of
trauma-
informed
networks**

Build Effective Communications



In Pottstown...



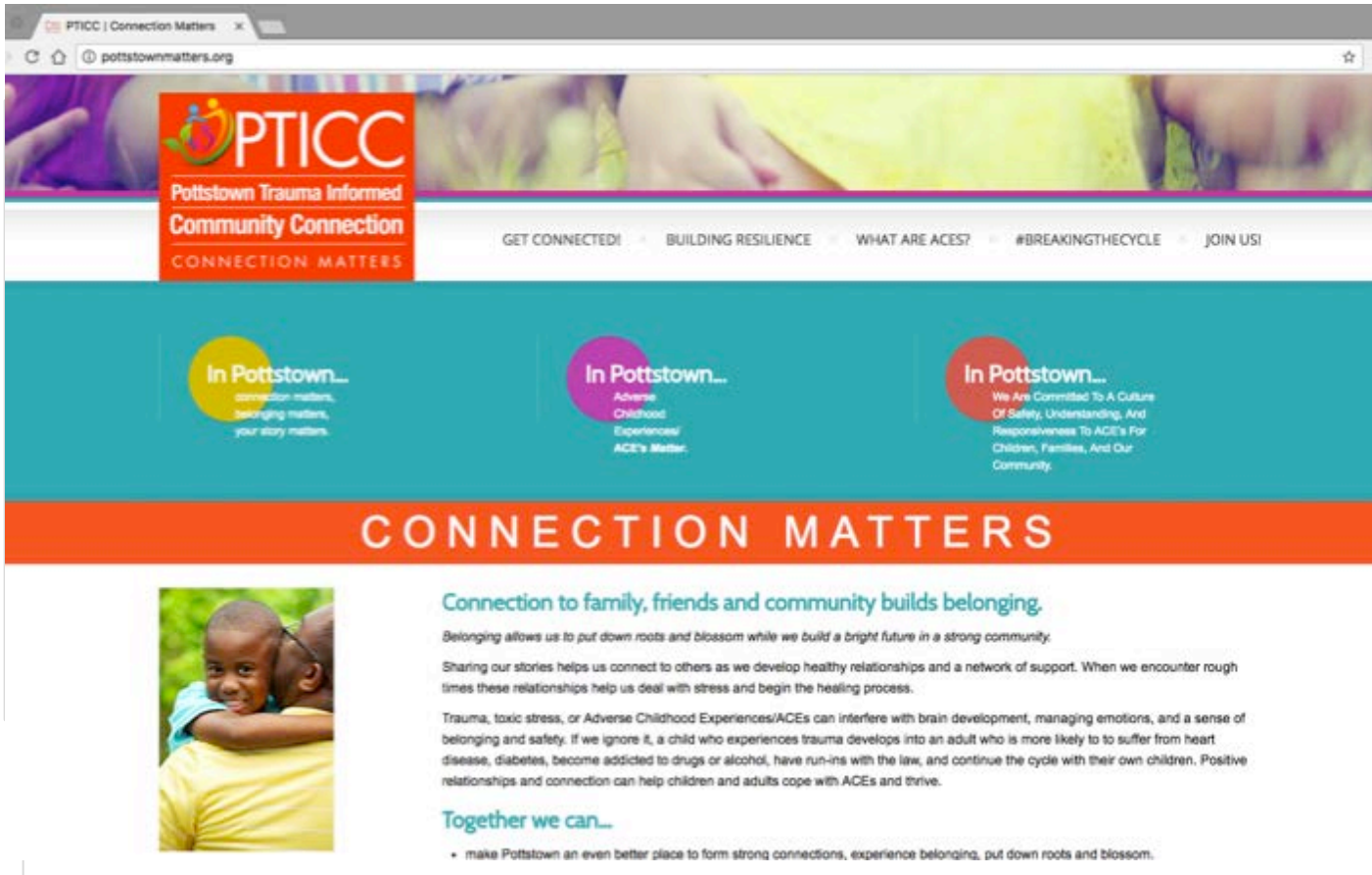
Connection matters.

www.pottstownmatters.org



PTICC Pottstown Trauma Informed
Community Connection

CONNECTION MATTERS



Pottstownmatters.or

g



@PTICC

ACES Connection Group

Childhood trauma in Pottstown can lead to future health challenges



Children touch animals during a petting zoo at the PEAK celebration of young children in April. PEAK is one of the organizations part of a Pottstown initiative to inform the community about the effects of traumatic childhood experiences such as neglect, divorced parents and mental illness in the home.

Michilea Patterson — Digital First Media File PHoto

By **Michilea Patterson**, *The Mercury*

POSTED: 07/02/16, 3:19 PM EDT

UPDATED: ON 07/02/2016

0 COMMENTS

Spreading
Awareness:
Local
Newspapers

Spreading Awareness: Pottstown Area Health & Wellness Foundation Mission Healthy Living



Pottstown Area Health & Wellness Foundation

January 30 · 🌐

The Foundation is proud to partner with [Pottstown Trauma Informed Community Connection \(PTICC\)](#) to bring you a four-part webisode series on trauma- [The Flourishing Child Through Building Resilience!](#)

Please enjoy Part 1 of the series, featuring an overview of the PTICC initiative with [PEAK Early Learning Coordinator Mary Rieck](#).

Stay tuned for more from the series over the next couple of weeks!



The Flourishing Child Webisode Series: An overview of PTICC

Pottstown Early Action for Kindergarten Readiness (PEAK) Coordinator, Mary Rieck, provides an overview of the Pottstown Trauma Informed Community Connection ...

[YOUTUBE.COM](#)



PEAK Early Learning

September 27, 2016 •

If you missed it, several of our Pre-K Counts teachers, PEAK staff, & Pottstown Trauma Informed Community Connection steering committee members are featured on Penn State Extension's Better Kid Care.

View the training module about ACEs & trauma resilience in Pottstown!

Spreading Awareness: Early Childhood Professional Development

Members of PTICC include the Pottstown school district, PEAK Coordinator, Creative Health Services, mayor's office, police department, Pottstown Area Health & Wellness Foundation, United Way, early childhood representatives, a food bank, homeless shelter and behavioral health services. Each of these groups have a vested interest in addressing trauma within the community.

Throughout this module, information about ACEs and trauma awareness will be shared through the lens of experience of the PTICC as they continue to build the capacity of their community to address this important issue. As you hear from experts and practitioners in ACEs and trauma awareness, consider how you will use this information to develop your own trauma awareness.

Be sure to open the notes page below to record your thoughts and reflections.

Notes page



ECE professionals who have been trained with trauma-informed practices can implement them within the classroom to help teach children important coping skills.

(photo of children writing on small individual slates in a classroom)

bkc.vmhost.psu.edu

BKC.VMHOST.PSU.EDU



This month's #connectionmatters theme is: share a handshake, hug, or hi-five. We encourage you to connect with those around you this month with these three "h's"!



Discussion:

How do you help people stay connected to the larger trauma-informed community?

Check out these websites:

<http://www.acesconnection.com/>

www.pottstownmatters.org

<http://www.pottstownfamilies.org/>

What else can you find?

Building Our Learning Community



Integration of Social and Emotional Learning

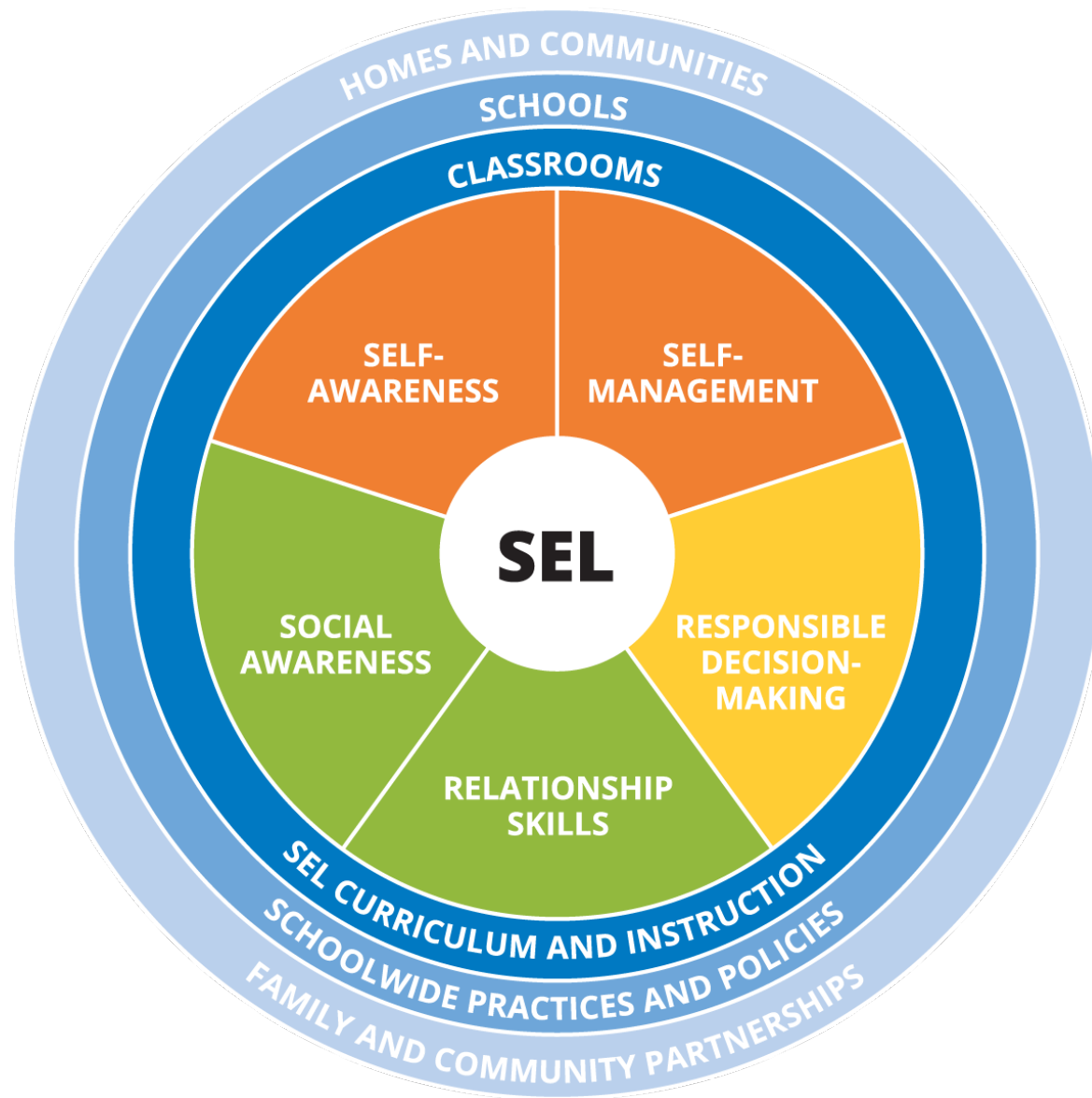
The diagram consists of four overlapping circles arranged in a diamond shape. The top-left circle is orange and contains the text 'Building effective communications'. The top-middle circle is light blue and contains 'Establish a trauma-informed learning community'. The top-right circle is pink and contains 'Building a system of trauma-informed networks'. The bottom circle is dark blue and contains 'Promoting social and emotional learning'. All circles overlap with each other, creating a central intersection.

Building effective communications

Establish a trauma-informed learning community

Building a system of trauma-informed networks

Promoting social and emotional learning



Research shows...

SEL can have a positive impact on school climate and promote a host of academic, social, and emotional benefits for students. Durlak, Weissberg et al.'s recent meta-analysis of **213 rigorous studies** of SEL in schools indicates that students receiving quality SEL instruction demonstrated:

- **reduced emotional distress:** fewer reports of student depression, anxiety, stress, and social withdrawal.
- **fewer negative behaviors:** decreased disruptive class behavior, noncompliance, aggression, delinquent acts, and disciplinary referrals;
- **improved attitudes and behaviors:** greater motivation to learn, deeper commitment to school, increased time devoted to schoolwork, and better classroom behavior; and
- **better academic performance:** achievement scores an average of 11 percentile points higher than students who did not receive SEL instruction.



Skills for Learning

- Children who can self-regulate are better able to participate in and benefit from learning.

Empathy

- Students with high levels of empathy tend to make better progress in school and be less aggressive, better liked, and more socially skilled.

Emotion Management

- Students who can recognize strong emotions and calm them down cope better and are less likely to be aggressive.

Problem Solving

- Students who can solve conflicts with peers are less likely to be impulsive or aggressive.
- Impulsive or aggressive behavior can affect their success in school and life.

Program Materials: K–3 Kits



Program Materials: 4–5 Kits

Posters

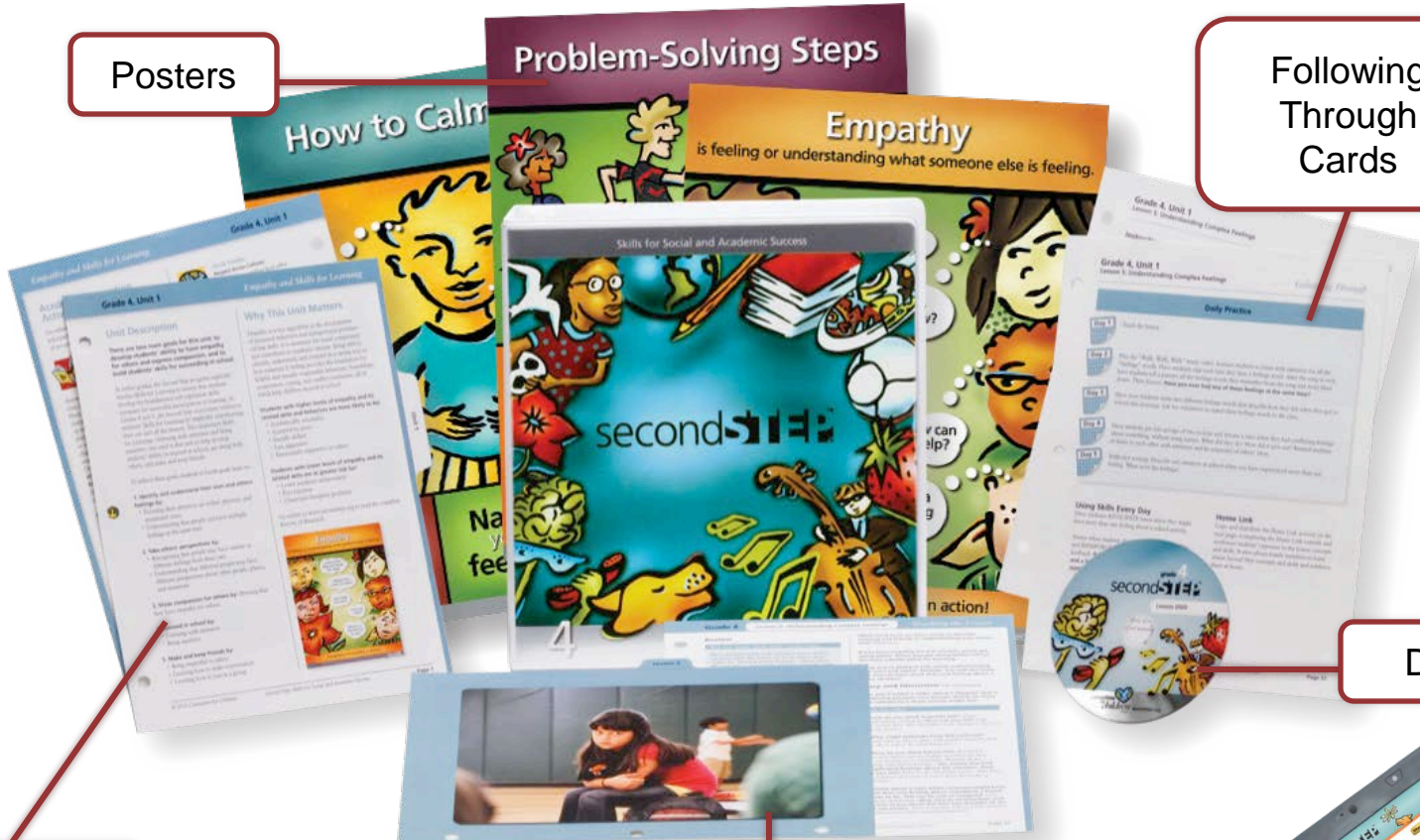
Problem-Solving Steps

How to Calm

Empathy

is feeling or understanding what someone else is feeling.

Following Through Cards



Unit Cards

Lesson Cards

DVD

Online Resources



Program Skills and Topics: K–3

Unit 1: Skills for Learning

- Listening
- Focusing attention
- Using self-talk
- Being assertive

Unit 2: Empathy

- Identifying one's own and others' feelings
- Taking others' perspectives
- Showing care and concern for others

Unit 3: Emotion Management

- Understanding strong feelings
- Identifying and managing strong feelings
- Calming down strong feelings

Unit 4: Friendship Skills and Problem Solving

- Making and keeping friends
- Calming down and using Problem-Solving Steps

Program Skills and Topics: 4–5

Unit 1: Empathy and Skills for Learning

- Using self-regulation skills to succeed in school
 - Developing the ability to have empathy
 - Expressing compassion

Unit 2: Emotion Management

- Identifying and managing strong feelings
- Using strategies to calm down strong feelings

Unit 3: Problem Solving

- Solving problems on one's own

Summary of 2016 – 2017 Pilot Year

- ▷ Pilot implementation at all schools by classroom teacher (63 participants PK-9)
- ▷ Community Partner's Meeting
- ▷ Integration of work into logic model
- ▷ Let's Talk Community Conversations with families
- ▷ Family Advisory Committee



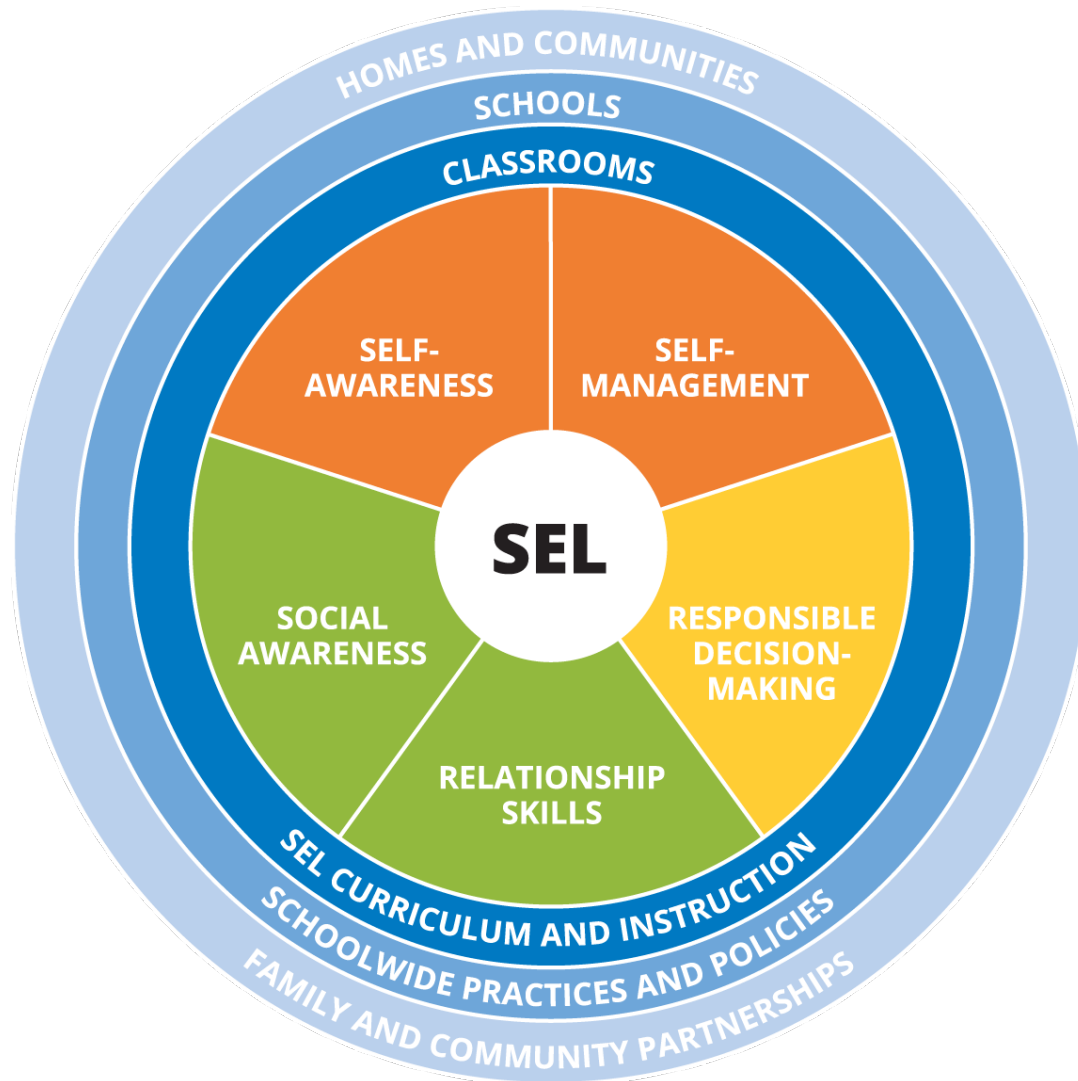
Plan for 2017-2018

- PK- 9 direct instruction for all students
- SEL Coaching and Support
- Evaluation Plan

Discussion

- › What is happening in your early education setting and the K-12 system related to social and emotional learning?
- › Check out the Collaborative for Academic and Social Emotional Learning (CASEL) www.case1.org for a comprehensive guide to SEL.

Family and School Partnership



Family Advisory Committee (est 2015)

Family-focused group to:

- ▷ Strengthen connection between parents and school
- ▷ Provide parent volunteers with leadership training
- ▷ Facilitate community discussions among families to affect change in the school district

Family Advisory Committee

Let's Talk Community Conversation



Monthly FAC Meeting with Dinner

Discussion

- What Family Engagement strategies do you utilize?
- How can you improve?
- What families can you identify as potential connectors and leaders who are not currently involved?

Building a System of Trauma Informed Networks

Introduction to Trauma

- ▷ 2015: 250 PK-12 teachers district-wide
- ▷ 2016: 164 School Support Staff and Community Organizations (3 Trainings)
- ▷ 2016: All of Pottstown Police Department (41)
- ▷ Modified trainings to Steering Committee and Family Advisory Committee
- ▷ 2017: New teachers & community organizations



Pottstown Trauma Informed Community Connection

Like This Page · July 20, 2016 · Edited ·

130 Pottstown community members and influencers are discussing what we can do to address trauma and adverse childhood experiences at our launch meeting.

Bridget Jo, Janet Mora Caputo, Maricruz Clem and 4 others like this.

Chronological ▾



August West Great meeting.

1 · July 20, 2016 at 7:42am

Discussion

- What kind of impact could you have for your community?
- What is one new thing that you will do as you move forward?

Summary

- ▷ Evaluation consultation with community coalitions can help build, evaluate, and sustain a coalition
- ▷ Development of logic model helped to build consensus, shape a plan of action and community-based evaluation strategy
- ▷ School district and community partnerships affect large scale change
- ▷ Families play an important role in all we do

Contact Us

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