

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DEALING WITH TRAUMA

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General guidelines:

Individual Strategies

- Maintain child's normal routine to the greatest extent possible
- Offer child ability to make choices
- Increase individualized supports as needed - referrals, accommodations
- Remain calm and open when faced with the crisis
- Focus on relationship building and emotional regulation rather than punishment for students who may be displaying behavioral issues

Classroom Strategies

- Reassure that they are safe
- Validate their feelings
- Make time to talk collectively - let them ask questions
- Keep explanations developmentally appropriate
- Teach self-regulation, reflection and relaxation strategies to students

Trauma-specific guidelines:

Dealing with Loss:

- Be as informed as possible about the circumstances of the child's loss
- Be sympathetic and understanding but maintain standards (completion of work and appropriate behavior)
- Work with your student to come up with a plan and time frame to make up missed work if necessary

Dealing with Homelessness:

- Stabilize the child's basic needs
 - Have food, clothing, shelter, medical care, basic hygiene, and transportation needs resolved. Provide a community resource list to the family or youth. If necessary, find a place for students to shower
- Plan assignments so child can keep up without having to take work home or find them a place to do their assignments
- Reach out to parents, school counselor

Dealing with Abuse:

- Respect students' personal space. Show you care by refraining from touching. (It may be misinterpreted by the student).
- Model an appropriate child/adult relationship by establishing sound adult/child behavioural boundaries and adhering to them consistently.
- Respect and maintain the student's privacy

Dealing with Bullying:

- It's important to take bullying seriously and not just brush it off as something that kids have to "tough out."
- If a child tells you they are being bullied, listen and offer support
- Let the principal, or school counselor know what is going on
- Dealing with bullying can seriously diminish a child's confidence. To help restore it, encourage the child to spend time with friends who have a positive influence and to participate in clubs, sports, or other enjoyable activities

Dealing with Community Violence:

- Make an accessible, visible route for students to ask for further counseling or help, and have resources and referrals prepared should students ask
- Share with children as much as they are developmentally able to understand, and allow children to share their fears and concerns
- Limit viewing of media coverage
- Reaffirm positive relationships with school personnel

Dealing with School Suicide:

- Offer students accurate information about suicide and mental health
- Accept and validate a variety of behavioral and emotional responses
- Assist students in identifying emotions and offer coping strategies
- Support and allow student efforts to memorialize those who have passed (for example, having a candlelight vigil)