Implementing Trauma-Sensitive Schools:

* A Seminar for School or District Teams

Thursday, February 26, 2009
College of the Holy Cross, Worcester

**Team Discussion Guide**

1. **Individual Reflection: Strengths, Strategies, and Hurdles.** Take five minutes to think individually about this morning’s overview on the impact of trauma on learning and trauma-sensitive school strategies.

   - What *strengths* do you and your school/district have to build on? Consider practices and knowledge that may not be currently labeled as “trauma-sensitive” but may fit into a plan to more fully implement a trauma-sensitive school.

   - What *activities/strategies* do you think are most important to *create or enhance* to move in the direction of having a more trauma-sensitive school or district?

   - What *challenges/hurdles* do you foresee for further implementing strategies to become more trauma-sensitive?
2. **Team Brainstorm: Strengths, Strategies, and Hurdles.** *Share with your team your thoughts on strengths, strategies, and hurdles.* Start with each team member briefly sharing one strength, one strategy, and one hurdle. After each team member has a chance to provide one example of each, open the conversation up to a general brainstorm, using the attached Flexible Framework as a mechanism to identify strengths and hurdles for each implementation strategy.

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<th><strong>Strengths</strong></th>
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<th><strong>New/Enhanced Strategies</strong></th>
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<th><strong>Hurdles</strong></th>
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3. **What are the areas of shared understanding?** Based on the list generated in your brainstorm, start to narrow the discussion to a shared understanding among your team members for the direction in which your school and/or district could be moving. *Circle the strategies listed in the brainstorm above that represent agreed upon strategies for your school/district to pursue.* Keep in mind the agreed upon strategies may represent both short-term and long-term implementation goals.

4. **Priority Strategies.** From among the circled strategies, what are the *top three selections for new or enhanced strategies* your team feels would be logical “next steps” for increased implementation of trauma-sensitive practices? For each of these three strategies, draw from your brainstorm to identify strengths and hurdles for each.

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<th>New/Enhanced Strategies</th>
<th>Strengths to Build On</th>
<th>Hurdles to Address</th>
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Flexible Framework in Brief

1. School Infrastructure and Climate
   a. Administrative buy in
   b. Norms and values that allow weaving trauma sensitive approaches into school
   c. Identify and address school based barriers

2. Professional development
   a. Identify staff needs
   b. Build on existing competencies
   c. Clarify Roles of teacher and internal mental health providers

3. Linking with Mental Health (internal and external)
   a. Clinical supports for school staff
   b. Resources for families and students
   c. Family communication/collaboration

4. Academic Strategies
   a. Sense of safety for all students
   b. Self regulation
   c. Teach to islands of competence

5. Non-Academic Strategies
   a. Activity based learning and non-academic activities (multiple intelligences)
   b. Staff relationships with students

6. Policies, Procedures and Protocols
   a. Discipline
   b. Community contact/collaboration
   c. Confidentiality
   d. Other

*Helping Traumatized Children Learn*, P 47-74