ACEs and Trauma Informed Care trainings teach us the science behind why toxic stress makes learning and thriving challenging for many children. Early childhood toxic stress is entirely too common, and modern research is proving why it is the basis for many common public health and social problems. Childhood adversities are a strong predictor of later social malfunction, mental illness, health risks, disease and premature death if left unaddressed. According to the CDC, 1 in 4 children has endured traumatic stress in the last 0-90 days.

Schools are the spaces that children spend the majority of their structured, waking life in. With proper training, educators can become skillful at identifying childhood trauma and its effects.

TESTIMONIALS
Wonderful course! Left me with very different ways of thinking about students. Very helpful.
This class blew my mind! I learned so much and know I have much more to learn.
Great sessions. Every teacher should take this. Excellent!
Amazing information. I think all who work in schools or child care need this training. Should be a prerequisite to be hired.
This training was OUTSTANDING! It was so timely and valuable as another component of being trauma-informed in our response to students. Such a good reminder for us to 'see with our heart, not just with our eyes and ears'.
I gained such great insight into why certain students may be struggling at school. This really opened my eyes.

QUAD CITIES AREA Trauma-Informed CONSORTIUM

Once we know better, we DO better. We all have the ability to be change-agents and it starts with education.

For more information or to schedule a training, please contact info@childabuseqc.org or call the Child Abuse Council at (309) 736-7170.

www.childabuseqc.org
# Understanding Traumatic Stress...

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*“Teachers who work with kids who have been exposed to trauma often experience second-hand trauma, or burnout, without necessarily realizing what it is.”*  
—Anne McNelis, Transitions Mental Health
...and What Adults Should Know

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“...and What Adults Should Know

“I know that I can make a profound impact in my students' lives simply by being a kind, consistent adult (this training reaffirmed that). I want to incorporate mindfulness activities into my classroom in order to help my students de-stress & focus to prepare for class. I know that toxic stress can be deeply ingrained in my students' psyches. I loved that this training showed me I can make a difference by modifying my mindset & not my curriculum. It doesn't require any extra planning or a fancy curriculum to make a significant difference in a child's life.”
–2018 ACEs Training Participant

Vicarious Trauma
Retraumatization
Resilience for Educators (Self Care)
Mindful Self-compassion

More courses listed inside

Building up our educators so they can support their students
Adverse Childhood Experiences: ACEs Interface utilizing Master Trainers

The ACE (Adverse Childhood Experiences) study confirms with scientific evidence that adversity during development increases the risk of physical, mental, and behavioral problems later in life. The ACE Study and other research using the Study's framework have taught us that ACEs are the leading cause of health and social problems in our nation - the most powerful determinant of the public's health. Toxic stress during childhood can impact brain development and brain interaction with body systems, leading to problems throughout the life course. But childhood times are also windows of opportunity for building resilience - after all, the developing brain is sensitive to all kinds of experience. Learn about these patterns of brain development, the ACE study, our opportunities for ACE prevention, and how protective systems promote resilience in children, families, and our community. 2, 4 or 6 hours

Tier 1: All Students

1.1 Social Emotional Development

An important part of healthy development is social-emotional learning. In fact, being socially and emotionally competent allows children to be better learners. This training will see what social emotional learning looks like in different environments and how you can support this development. 1 - 4 hours

1.2 Strengths-based Practice: Implementation and Using a Growth Mindset

This session follows the ‘Strengths-based Practice: Culture and Lens’ and provides tools and examples for implementing a strengths-based approach in the classroom and within school staff meetings and consultations. Comparative exercises between a traditional problem-solving model and a strengths-based model will provide opportunity to practice and further integrate understanding of the inherent differences of these variant lens. Attendees will learn ways they can approach the change process with a student from practices that support a student’s strengths and enhance resilience skills. 1 - 4 hours

1.3 Strengths-based: Culture and Lens

Identify and understand the difference between a traditional problem solving approach in therapeutic settings and a strengths-based one. Develop skills in using strengths-based vs deficit-focused language. Learn how to empower families through a strengths-based approach. 1 - 4 hours

1.4 Building Policies and Procedures

This is a series of trainings and consultations to assist a leadership team towards analyzing their school’s location on the trauma-informed continuum and identifying an individualized plan towards becoming a trauma-informed school. This series of trainings/consultations can be designed to fit the needs of the school’s setting and the design of the leadership team. Services range from a comprehensive review of policies and procedures to updating best practices. This training will be specifically tailored to meet current needs based on cooperative assessments. 2 - 12 hours

Funding provided by the Big Ten Conference Penn State Bowl Revenue Penalty funds, and distributed by United Way of Johnson and Washington on behalf of The University of Iowa.

Help keep our children safe.
For the full infographic visit:
www.childabuseqc.org

It is said that if the brain can hurt, the brain can heal. But it takes the community coming together to strengthen families.

The more we know about adverse childhood experiences and their impact on lives and the community, the more we can advocate for safe, stable home environments and loving relationships.

Hope.

Prevention is key. Create communities where everyone can thrive. Build resiliency in families. Help people understand the impact of trauma and heal from their experiences.

“If we can predict it, we can prevent it.” Dr. Rob Anda

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Childhood Trauma is too common.

Becoming trauma informed. Why childhood trauma matters.
Most of us believe that early experiences can determine who we become as adults. The Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) Study confirms it. It’s about more than the numbers. It’s about how we can respond to prevent those traumas before they happen. And it’s about how we respond and intervene when they do take place. This isn’t a lost cause – there is hope that we can end this destructive cycle and improve the lives of future generations.

Childhood Abuse

- physical abuse
- psychological abuse
- sexual abuse
- physical and emotional neglect

Household Dysfunction

1 in 5 ADULTS reported three or more childhood traumas

55%
at least ONE adverse childhood experience

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1.5 Restorative Justice in Schools

American society is organized around the concept of rewards and punishments. It is commonly believed that individuals choose their behavior. If behavior is unsafe or unhealthy, we punish the behavior which will deter it. With increasing numbers of suspensions and expulsions, as well as justice-involved youth, this behaviorist-based approach has been heavily critiqued by modern-day criminology for missing the mark on the causality of problem behaviors in youth. Research is very clear that punishment doesn’t deter antisocial behavior. In fact, traumatized youth are thought to be caught in a trauma-violence cycle that traditional approaches make worse. This session will review what the research says about punishment-based approaches, and discuss how to use a more trauma-informed approach to discipline called Restorative Practice. Both whole-school and classroom-based strategies for Restorative Practice will be discussed. **1-4 hours**

1.6 Mindfulness In Education

Mindfulness in Education is a topic that is intended to provide support for mindfulness training as a component of K-12 education. Research over the past few decades has found that mindfulness training develops:

- Increased attention
- Increased executive function (working memory, planning, organization, and impulse control)
- Decreased ADHD behaviors—specifically hyperactivity and impulsivity
- Fewer conduct and anger management problems
- Increased emotional regulation
- Increased self-calming
- Increased social skills and social compliance
- Increased care for others
- Decreased negative affect, or emotions
- Decreased anxiety in general and text anxiety in particular
- Decreased depression
- Increased sense of calmness, relaxation, and self-acceptance
- Increased self-esteem
- Increased quality of sleep

As such, mindfulness is a foundation for education; mindfulness provides the optimal conditions for learning and teaching and also supports all pedagogical approaches. **1-108 Hours**

1.7 Practical Applications

**Case Study: A Local School’s Journey to Becoming Trauma-Informed**

This session will provide an overview of Thurgood Marshall’s process and path to becoming more trauma-informed. One of Thurgood’s teachers, along with their TIC trainer/consultant, will share their story about the impact TIC training and a school’s commitment to traumatic sensitive practices had on the staff and the school’s culture, programming, policies/procedures and leadership. Attendees will gain a greater understanding of how to implement the TIC principles into their school programs, policies, procedures and practices. **1-2 hours**

1.8 School Specific Trauma Sensitive Training

Most students respond well to traditional classroom management techniques. However, there are some students who exhibit a variety of social, emotional and behavior challenges that are resistant to change. These challenges often interrupt the learning process and frustrate teachers and staff. Thanks to new brain technologies and better research around youth mental health and stress-related disorders, educational systems now have an explanation for what many of these youth are experiencing – reactions to Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). This session will focus on how to describe and understand what is happening in the brains, bodies and lives of these students, and how to make changes in the school environment, in our approach and in our own perspective to improve outcomes for these high risk groups. **3 Hours**

1.9 Resilience: Consideration of Individual Variation in Vulnerability “Why Some interventions work and others don’t”

Adverse Experiences affect the development of both reactivity and self-regulation for infants, children and adults. Counseling models are generally designed as ‘one size fits all’ and do not work effectively with those who have experience childhood abuse. This training is designed specifically for counselors and therapists to help better understand and take into account the individual differences of a child’s reactivity, their temperament, parents’ parenting styles and emergence of self-regulation when crafting individual approaches for counseling interventions.

This training is most effective when administered after the 3 hour ACE’s interface with a professional audience of therapists, counselors, psychologists, etc. **1-4 hours**
2.1 The Mindful Testing Environment

There is a growing body of published research that identifies optimal testing environments for optimizing standardized test scores. This course will take a mindfulness- and sensory integrative-based approach to empowering educators to make simple considerations when facilitating standardized tests in the classroom. Schools will learn new and improved ways to communicate with parents while also creating unified transitions for children and adolescents that help with focus and engagement. 2 - 3 hours

2.2 Trauma Informed Strategies for Academics

School staff members often describe how difficult it is to accomplish the academic expectations of the classroom when children who have been exposed to trauma are so impacted by traumatic symptoms. This impact is displayed in the classroom through both cognitive and behavioral challenges. Ultimately, this influences the learning of all students, not just those who have personally been exposed to trauma. This session provides a variety of tools for teachers and other school staff members to use to avoid, mediate and moderate the impact of trauma symptoms on classroom behavior and academic work completion. 2 - 3 hours

2.3 Sensory Integration Strategies for Trauma Informed Practice

Children are sensory beings. They process and understand their world through sensory and physical experiences before they can process information socially, emotionally or cognitively. As a result, many children who have been exposed to trauma have altered sensory systems that lead to challenges with noise, light, smell, touch, taste, movement and subsequent self-regulation. These challenges are often viewed as “behavior problems.” However, sensory experiences also hold opportunities for children’s brains to more accurately process information from the environment, as well as to learn self-regulation strategies. This session will focus on the relationship between trauma and the senses, ways to support trauma integration through intentional environments, and ways to use sensory strategies to support self-regulation. 2 - 3 hours

2.4 Flight Response and Interventions for Schools

Humans naturally attempt to escape from anxiety-provoking situations as a means of self-protection. Some children who have been exposed to trauma employ avoidance techniques as a response to the dysregulation they feel. This session will help school staff identify anxiety response patterns, how to support students experiencing anxiety, and ways to replace disruptive anxiety responses with more helpful coping strategies. A discussion of the “social brain” and the importance of dignity will also be included in this session. 2 - 3 hours

2.5 Fight Response and Interventions for Schools

Children who have been exposed to complex trauma often display aggressive behavior as a primary means of interacting within their environment. Traditional behavior management strategies are often ineffective, or even exacerbate this aggression, frustrating and confounding school staff members. This session will review the biology of the fight response, and discuss what adults can do to impact the likelihood of an aggressive response from students. The session will also discuss the research around retributive-based approaches to the management of aggressive behavior, and introduce the topic of restorative practice as a more trauma-informed response. 2 - 3 hours

2.6 Freeze - Fear Response and Interventions for Schools

Children who have been exposed to complex trauma often have hyper-sensitive fear and freeze responses. These responses are especially prevalent among young children, and as a child’s “initial escalation response” within the school or classroom. This session will focus on environmental and interpersonal strategies to prevent escalation, as well as ways school staff can manage their own emotional and cognitive responses to support trauma-informed environments. Empathy and validation will be explored as primary intervention tools for freeze and fear responses. 2 - 3 hours

2.7 Brain and Biology: Understanding the Neuro-biology of Trauma

Children who have been exposed to trauma can have emotional and cognitive reactions that surprise and confuse parents, teachers and helping professionals, as well as interfere with children’s ability to function well at home, with peers and at school. These reactions can be explained by the way that the brain and the body interact to produce neurological changes in trauma exposed children. This workshop will describe this body-brain connection, subsequent neurological impact, and brain-based ways to begin to help trauma-exposed children cope with and even reverse the neurological impact of trauma. 1 - 3 hours
How does Childhood Stress affect health and behavior?

- Lowers tolerance for emotional and physical stress, which can result in behaviors such as fighting, defiance, checking out, or isolation.
- Decreases ability to focus and concentrate which can cause problems with learning and memory and result in problems in school.
- Increases difficulty in making friends and maintaining relationships.
- Increases stress hormones called cortisol, which affects the body’s ability to stay healthy and may cause lasting health problems.

Exposure to childhood ACEs can increase the risk of:
- Unhealthy attachments with caregivers
- Running away
- Alcohol and drug abuse
- Depression or Anxiety
- Obesity
- School absence, suspensions and dropouts
- Problems with attention
- Dating violence/abusive relationships
- Sexually transmitted diseases (STD)
- Smoking
- Self-harm
- Unintended pregnancies
- Feeling that you don’t “fit in” with peers
- Lifelong health problems such as cancer and heart disease

When children experience highly stressful events they often develop what’s called “toxic stress.” Toxic stress causes emotional and physical tension in children and can increase their heart rate, blood pressure, breathing and muscle tension. Their thinking is knocked off-line and they go into self-protection or “flight or fight mode.” When children do this they are just trying to feel safe. Adults need to understand this so we are to respond in a way that is helpful.

Change the moment, Change the future.
Tier 3: Student Specific

3.1 Replacing Detention with Meditation and Yoga

In this evidence-based training there will be an overview of why overhauling detention models has grown rapidly in urban environments. When self-regulation skills during structured discipline time are taught as a formal practice, young people can tap into a deeper sense of intrinsic motivation and resiliency. Discussion will be facilitated about what your current program is and what kind of contemplative approaches might be worth exploring in your school/district. Ongoing support is available after this training. **1 - 12 hours**

3.2 Process and Practicum

The purpose of Tier 3 interventions is to offer individualized approaches to a small number of students who need intensive supports to reduce the frequency, duration and severity of externalizing and internalizing behaviors in order to improve outcomes. Because Tier 3 interventions are individually created for the specific needs of the student, this session will provide school staff an opportunity to synthesize what they have learned about Trauma Informed approaches with students, and practice creating a Tier 3 Plan that includes assessment and data, family collaboration, as well as intentional accommodations and interventions for both structured and unstructured school environments. **1 - 4 hours**

3.3 Trauma-Sensitive Discipline

Research and data on school discipline practices are clear: millions of students are being removed from their classrooms each year, mostly in middle and high schools, and overwhelmingly for minor misconduct. When suspended, these students are at a significantly higher risk of falling behind academically, dropping out of school, and coming into contact with the juvenile justice system. A disproportionately large percentage of disciplined students are youth of color, students with disabilities, and youth who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender (LGBT). There is no question that when students commit serious offenses or pose a threat to school safety they may need to be removed from the campus or arrested. Such incidents, however, are relatively rare, and school typically remains the safest place a young person can be during the day. In this course participants will learn theory, practical tools and actionable adjustments to make in educational settings. **2-24 hours**
Addressing Teacher Burnout

Vicarious Trauma
Attendees will learn about the impact of exposure to working with traumatized populations and the ensuing ‘vicarious trauma’ and ‘compassion fatigue’ that impacts professionals. This session will explore these very real risks and understand the signs of you may be suffering; what professionals can do to reduce the impact and take care of themselves. 1 - 2 hours

Retraumatization
In this trauma-informed session participants will be given information to help them identify and understand how individuals are retraumatized—often within systems through which they are attempting to gain assistance. You will learn how to reduce retraumatization within your organization, how to help alleviate symptoms of retraumatization in those around you, and how to view your work through a trauma-informed lens. 1 - 2 hours

Resilience for Educators
Reducing burnout and promoting stress-heartiness in school personnel is an integral piece of creating schools that are strong enough to meet the needs of students while fostering a thriving learning environment. In this training adults will learn best practices in self-care, including mindful self-compassion, mindfulness-based stress reduction and simple strategies that cross over between work and personal life. Participants will understand how to deepen self-awareness and nonjudgmental tolerance for shared human experiences. 1 - 4 hours

Mindful Self-compassion
Mindfulness is the first step in emotional healing—being able to turn toward and acknowledge our difficult thoughts and feelings (such as inadequacy, sadness, anger, confusion) with a spirit of openness and curiosity. Self-compassion involves responding to these difficult thoughts and feelings with kindness, sympathy and understanding so that we soothe and comfort ourselves when we’re hurting. Research has shown that self-compassion greatly enhances emotional well-being. It boosts happiness, reduces anxiety and depression, and can even help maintain healthy lifestyle habits such as diet and exercise. Participants will learn tools to better handle emotions, how to be self-motivated by compassion rather than criticism, and how to become their own best teacher. 2 - 6 hours
Engaging Parents

Protecting Our Children

In 2014 we began a wonderful partnership with Davenport Police Department, Bettendorf Police Department, Scott County Sheriffs Office, Scott County Attorneys Office and Family Resources to offer a community training to keep children safe called “Protecting Our Children: Advice from Child Molesters.”

This program was developed in Oregon by Cory Jewell Jensen after many years of interviews with predators in jail and after extensive research about the issue of sex abuse.

The training includes video interviews with child molesters and provides specific tips about ways community members can keep ALL children safe. **2 hours**

24/7 Dad

24/7 Dads is for dads at all levels of fatherhood and helps to build confidence in being a father and understanding of what it means to be a man and the importance of positive male role models in the community. **2 hours/12 weeks**

Connections Matter

We all face tough times. Ongoing stress from tough times can lead to poor health and other challenges as the brain adapts to survive. Yet, research is now showing us what we can do to change these outcomes. Connections Matter highlights the importance of building caring connections with the children, families and adults in our lives to developing healthy brains, supportive relationships and thriving communities. **1 hour**

Darkness to Light

Child abuse prevention starts with ADULTS. It is our job to keep children safe. The only way to do this is to ensure that adults are knowledgeable and aware of how to keep children safe. Which is why we offer this training to our community! National and local data indicates that up to 20% of children will experience sexual abuse before the age of 18. However, we know that child abuse is 100% preventable, and preventative efforts have already seen the national rate begin to decrease in the last decade. We have invested in the effort to educate our own community and provide the nationally recognized, research-backed Stewards of Children curriculum. Stewards of Children is a two-hour workshop designed to teach all adults specific ways to protect children from sexual abuse. It includes survivor stories, expert guidance, and group discussion to teach adults 5 practical, applicable steps for protecting children. **2 hours**

Managing Stress for Healthy Family Lifestyles

Parenting is messy, complicated, and sometimes just plain hard. Come to understand and discuss what stress and trauma can look like in our kids, and how that can change their development, behaviors, thoughts, and emotions. Recognize how kids and adults experience shame and vulnerability, and the importance of talking about it and responding. Lastly, learn what we can do about childhood stress as parents and community members to make the road easier and support one another. **1.5 hours**

Parenting Classes

Parenting Classes can be developed based on your parents needs, child ages, and location by a variety of local experts. Classes are held over several weeks on a mutually agreed upon time. The agency or school is responsible for recruiting attendees. 1 - 2 hour sessions, over several weeks.

Special Topics

- Poverty
- Attachment
- Human Trafficking
- Sexual Abuse
- Sexual Assault
- Substance Abuse
- Refugee Populations
- Child Abuse Recognition
- Child Abuse Prevention
- Domestic Violence
- Teen Dating Violence
- Yellow Ribbon Suicide Prevention Program
- Mental Health First Aid - Youth
- Mental Health First Aid - Adult
- Verbal De-escalation
- Neighborhood Violence
- Becoming a Trauma-Informed Community

Speaking Engagements and Discussion Panels

Our skilled experts are available to speak to large and small groups of educators, administrators, students, teachers and the community at large. We are also great contributors to discussion panels, and are happy to provide support when the media is involved.
Sometimes life can be difficult, but there is hope...

If you or someone you know has experienced trauma related to Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), help is available. Sometimes ACEs can impair a child’s ability to learn, or do well in school and the community. Adults who have experienced ACEs may have difficulty with substance abuse or mental health, and these things may impact the ability to raise a family and be employed. Understanding the source of our struggles is the first place to begin.

Help is available today by calling:
Family Resources: (563) 445-0557
Child Abuse Council: (309) 736-7170

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs):
- Physical, Emotional or Sexual Abuse
- Physical or Emotional Neglect
- Witnessing family violence, separation from family members through incarceration, death or divorce
- Any other event in which a child has a hard time coping with the situation

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