Trauma informed approaches and practices in the classrooms when working with children with migratory backgrounds.

LESSON LEARNT REFUGE-ED
'no one leaves home unless home is the mouth of a shark'
- Home, by Warsan Shire
CHILDREN WITH MIGRATORY BACKGROUND

Children with migratory background
1. Inter-relationship of past traumatic experiences with present
2. Cumulative stress
3. Belonging and Identity

RECOGNISE - WE HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY
- Integrate these children into host communities
- Host communities to be active in the solution
- IMPROVE access to basic needs and services
- Future leaders and citizens of this world
- Host children and communities also experience stress

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COMBINING EDUCATION AND MHPSS

✓ Educational spaces central in community
✓ Low resources required
✓ No need for specialised services
✓ Sustainable
✓ Basic human right
THE IMPORTANCE OF MENTAL HEALTH

Mental health is a state of well-being in which an individual realizes their own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and is able to make a contribution to their community (WHO, 2014).
MHPSS NEEDS ASSESSMENT

- Psychoeducation on the impact of stress and trauma
- How to identify MHPSS needs
- Limited access to specialised services
- Create a safe space
- REPORTS of signs and symptoms of trauma, depression, isolation and stress, low self esteem, hopelessness and anger.
WHAT IS TRAUMA

How do you define trauma?
**Experience** that results in significant fear, helplessness, dissociation, confusion, or other disruptive feelings intense enough to have a **long-lasting negative effect on a person’s attitudes, behavior, and other aspects of functioning.**

Trauma is an **emotional response** to a terrible event like an accident, rape, or natural disaster.

Traumatic events include those caused by human behavior (e.g., rape, war, industrial accidents) as well as by nature (e.g., earthquakes) and **often challenge an individual’s view of the world as a just, safe, and predictable place.**

- American Psychological Association dictionary

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BIG T - Trauma and small t - trauma

Trauma (big T) - life threatening experiences
trauma (little t) - threatening to the self and worldview

Trauma (BIG T)
- War
- Earthquakes
- Sexual abuse
- Physical abuse
- Witnessing of violence, death or abuse
- Death of loved ones

trauma (small t)
- Poverty
- Divorce
- Separation from family or loved ones
- Limited access to basic needs (water, food, housing)
- Bullying and harassment

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Big T and little t Trauma

“is about a loss of connection - to ourselves, our families and the world around us. This loss is hard to recognise, because it happens slowly over time. We adapt to these subtle changes; sometimes without noticing them.”

- Peter Levine
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Survival Brain

Trauma & Brain Development

Adapted from Holt & Jordan, Ohio Dept. of Education
SYMPTOMS OF TRAUMA Categorised

A. Exposure to actual or threatened death, serious injury, or sexual violence in one (or more) of the following ways:

B. Presence of one (or more) of the following intrusion symptoms associated with the traumatic event(s), beginning after the traumatic event(s) occurred:

C. Persistent avoidance of stimuli associated with the traumatic event(s), beginning after the traumatic event(s) occurred, as evidenced by one or both of the following:

D. Negative alterations in cognitions and mood associated with the traumatic event(s), beginning or worsening after the traumatic event(s) occurred, as evidenced by two (or more) of the following:

E. Marked alterations in arousal and reactivity associated with the traumatic event(s), beginning or worsening after the traumatic event(s) occurred, as evidenced by two (or more) of the following
Survival mode

To cope - these children needed to survive
Body contains the stress
First step for recovery is SAFETY
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SAFETY

External Safety

Internal Safety

Connection and Attachment
https://youtu.be/dtrGwXmjGM8
OUR APPROACH SAFE SPACES

- Social emotional literacy
- Psychoeducation
- How to create safe spaces
- How to recognise signs of distress in children and adults and how to support them
- Relationships building with children listening and communication skills
- How to deal with difficult emotions
IMPACT OF SEA´s and MHPSS

SEA´s and MHPSS

SOCIAL INTEGRATION

WELLBEING

ACADEMIC

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HOBFALL PRINCIPLES

A SENSE OF SAFETY,

CALMING,

A SENSE OF SELF-AND COMMUNITY EFFICACY,

CONNECTEDNESS

HOPE
PSYCHOLOGICAL FIRST AID - PFA

• “Psychological first aid is a set of skills and attitudes for helping people in distress who need support to manage their situation and cope with immediate challenges. Once you have learnt these skills, you can use them both in your personal and working life when responding to a crisis” IFRC PS CENTRE
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Convention of the Rights of the Child</th>
<th>Non-discrimination</th>
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<td>Best Interests of the Child</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>The Right to Survival and Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>Views of the Child</td>
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UNDERSTANDING SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF DISTRESS IN CHILDREN

4-6 year olds

0-3 year olds

7 - 12 year olds

13 - 18 year olds

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PFA FOR CHILDREN

LOOK - First contact with child
LISTEN - Active listening
LINK - To what the child needs and referral when there is concern

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WHEN TO WORRY

If the child is at risk of **harm to himself/herself and/or others**
If a child expresses **suicidal thoughts**
If the child shows **extreme, persistent withdrawal** i.e. no emotional response, and the child’s expression seems flat with no negative or positive expressions.
If the child is persistently **whining/whimpering/uncontrolled crying** over time (different from a grieving, liberating sob).
If the child is **dissociating** i.e. if the child is detached from surroundings and fails to engage emotionally like the child used to do.
If the child is experiencing **hallucinations** i.e. the child is hearing voices that are not real (auditory hallucinations) or seeing things/people that are not real (visual hallucinations) in ways that do not seem playful or joking.
If the child is experiencing **persistent anxiety attacks**
If the child is showing signs of **mental disability** such as permanent difficulties understanding language and social interaction
**SELF CARE**

You can't pour from an empty cup.

Take care of yourself first.

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Practical steps

Meet these children where they are (LOOK and LISTEN) and LINK
SELF CARE

Create a sense of Safety
SELF CARE

Environment of hope
SELF CARE

Authentic social connection
SELF CARE

"ONE SMALL STEP"
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THE TOOLS: BROKERING KNOWLEDGE PLATFORM