Presentation Files:  www.tinyurl.com/StanFOCUS
Ten Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

Kaiser Study 1995-1997

- **ABUSE**
  - Physical
  - Emotional
  - Sexual

- **NEGLECT**
  - Physical
  - Emotional

- **HOUSEHOLD DYSFUNCTION**
  - Mental Illness
  - Incarcerated Relative
  - Mother treated violently
  - Substance Abuse
  - Divorce
# ACE Study Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of ACEs</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>36</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 or more</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
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</tbody>
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Almost two in every three adults experienced one or more ACE
Health Effects of High ACE Scores

**Behavior**
- Lack of physical activity
- Smoking
- Alcoholism
- Drug use
- Missed work

**Physical & Mental Health**
- Severe obesity
- Diabetes
- Depression
- Suicide attempts
- STDs
- Heart disease
- Cancer
- Stroke
- COPD
- Broken bones
Effects of Adverse Childhood Experiences
Of 2,100 children across 10 elementary schools, 248 had 3 or more ACEs

3 x rate of academic failure
6 x rate of behavior problems
5 x rate of chronic truancy
4 x rate of poor health

Spokane ACE Study 2010
Brain Development and Trauma

Trauma causes the brain to adapt in ways that contribute to its survival.

Adaptations can look like behavior problems in school, community, and other environments.

When triggered, “feeling” brain dominates the “thinking” brain.

Brains in a constant state of arousal could go into fight/flight/freeze/force when encountering “minor” triggers.

Students may exhibit internalizing or externalizing behaviors.

Chronic arousal can interrupt the typical developmental process, affecting learning, planning, emotional regulation, attention, impulse control.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physical Health</th>
<th>Emotional Health</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School/Learning</td>
<td>Peer/Family Relationship</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What Might You Notice?
Resilience

Caring relationships with trusted adults

Teaching resilience through skill-building

Reduced effects of trauma and stress and healthier outcomes for our students!
How PBIS can foster a trauma-informed approach

• Create a predictable, consistent classroom environment.
• Provide explicit preparation for transitions and changes in the school, classroom, and clinical environments.
• Create a safe school and classroom environment, where bullying, fights, and crises are responded to quickly, consistently, and compassionately.
• Provide opportunities for teachers and other adults to build meaningful relationships with students in and out of the classroom.
• Provide opportunities for families to build meaningful relationships with school staff.
What additional practices can PBIS schools use?

1. Raise staff awareness of the prevalence and impact of trauma.
2. Pay attention to students’ emotional responses in addition to behavioral ones.
3. Recognize that problem behaviors may be a response/adaptation to trauma.
4. For students impacted by trauma, work with them to identify and reduce school triggers.
5. Establish a discipline policy that is sensitive, predictable, and respectful.
6. Infuse youth development and cultural humility into curricula, student activities, school-wide events, and staff professional development.
7. Provide opportunities for students to develop meaningful relationships with one another.
for more information visit
focuscalifornia.org
FOCUS Program Overview

Why:

• Trauma impacts a child’s ability to learn, meet behavioral expectations and have healthy relationships
• Experiencing a traumatic experience can have immediate effects on a child
• Often times we have no idea a child has been involved in an incident

What:

• FOCUS is a communication system designed to notify schools when a student is exposed to a traumatic incident
FOCUS Program Overview

How:

• When a first responder encounters a child during an incident they send a FOCUS Notification that to the Stanislaus Drug Enforcement Agency (SDEA),

• SDEA then forwards the notification to a designated person at the child’s school

• This simple "FOCUS Notification" alerts the school that this child may have been exposed to a traumatic incident

• No specific details about the incident are given, just one simple request: To focus on the child and handle them with care.

• The designated school official notifies other staff as appropriate

• Other staff can respond with
  ◦ closer monitoring of the student
  ◦ heightened compassion and patience
  ◦ readiness to refer for additional supports
The child/children referenced above may have been exposed to a traumatic event in the last 24 hours (excluding weekends and holidays). He/she could exhibit academic, emotional and/or behavioral problems as a result of this exposure. Please handle him/her with care.

For more information go to www.focuscalifornia.org or call (209) 558-6300

**Referring agency please email form to: FOCUS@stanislaussheriff.com**
To: Enter Teacher’s name
(Teacher)

From: Enter name here
(Principal / Counselor)

Student: Enter Student’s name

Incident Date: Enter Incident Date

**Please mark resources utilized below and email form to FOCUS@stanislaussheriff.com

☐ Teacher ☐ Nurse ☐ Counselor ☐ Community Resources
Suggested First Responders Protocol

• When responding to an incident, determine whether children are present at an incident

• If so, the first responder will document the following for each child:
  ◦ Child’s name
  ◦ Age and date of birth
  ◦ School

• Each first responder agency will establish a process to ensure the FOCUS Notification is promptly submitted to SDEA, such as:
  ◦ FOCUS Notifications are turned in with each police report at the end of an officer’s shift.
  ◦ A designated person reviews reports to see if the FOCUS Notification has been generated.
  ◦ The designee will ensure the FOCUS Notifications are promptly forwarded to the SDEA via email.

• We’re also creating an app to automate this process and make it easier to access by first responders
Law Enforcement Considerations

• If possible, avoid subduing, arresting, and/or interviewing subjects in the presence of children.

• Conduct health and safety check on children
  ◦ Present during incident?
  ◦ Relationship to parties
  ◦ Visual Observation: Physically harmed?

• Separate children from care giving parent

• Speak with the children about the incident

• If applicable, mandated reporting to CPS

• Note: If you are wondering if the event had a traumatic effect on the child, always fill out a FOCUS Notification.
Suggested Education Protocol, Initial

• Provide trauma-sensitive training to all staff

• School districts and schools should identify or create an email address specifically designated to receive FOCUS Notifications
  ◦ Accessible by multiple designated staff (i.e. Superintendent, Principal, or counselor), ideally with one primary contact and two backup staff

• The school designee shares the FOCUS Notification with the appropriate teacher(s) and other staff, following a pre-planned process
Suggested Education Protocol, Follow-up

• Teachers will observe the child’s behavior and academic performance and utilize trauma sensitive interventions as deemed appropriate.

• Examples for initial response:
  ◦ Homework forgiveness, leniency
  ◦ Allowed to rest at nurse’s office
  ◦ Postponing test
  ◦ Providing tutoring or make-up opportunities
  ◦ Monitoring child’s nutritional needs

• If the child exhibits problems (emotional/behavioral/academic/etc.), the child should be referred for additional interventions
  ◦ Counseling support, assessment
  ◦ Cognitive Behavioral Intervention for Trauma in Schools

• Complete the bottom portion of the FOCUS Notification and return to SDEA to report back on general resources used
Cognitive Behavior Intervention for Trauma in Schools

- CBITS is a school-based group and individual intervention. Designed to reduce symptoms of PTSD, depression and behavioral problems
- 5th-12th grade
- Addresses all kinds of trauma
- 10 group sessions + 1-3 individual sessions + 2 group parent sessions + 1 teacher session
- Reduces symptoms of post-traumatic stress, depression and psychosocial dysfunction
- Modified for delivery by non-clinicians
- Free training online
Nevada County Superintendent of Schools Office is researching an improved system of communication for students experiencing trauma. Research shows that prolonged exposure to violence and trauma can seriously undermine a child’s ability to learn, form relationships and focus appropriately in the classroom. After hearing a presentation by George Papadopoulos, Investigator, Stanislaus County District Attorney’s Office and Manbel Garcia, Deputy Probation Officer, Stanislaus County Probation Department, I immediately thought of Nevada County and the needs of our students here.

The Focusing On Children Under Stress (FOCUS) Program in Stanislaus County, modeled after the Handle with Care program from West Virginia, is designed to decrease the effects of a child’s exposure to violence and trauma. FOCUS will help children achieve academically at their highest levels despite any traumatic circumstance(s) they may have endured.

FOCUS supports children exposed to violence and trauma through improved communication and collaboration between first responders (law enforcement, firefighters, emergency medical responders, CPS, etc.), schools and community resources.

A simple “FOCUS Notification” alerts the school that this child may have been exposed to a traumatic incident (i.e. domestic violence, child abuse, death in the family, witness to a crime, loss of home due to a house fire, etc.) and may exhibit or develop academic/behavioral problems. No specific details about the incident are given, just one simple request: To focus on the child and handle them with care.

A designated school official receives the notification and alerts the child’s teacher(s). The teacher will observe the child’s behavior/academic performance, and utilize trauma sensitive interventions as deemed appropriate. If the child exhibits any problems, the teacher will address the issue or refer the child to the school counselor, nurse, and/or any other services as deemed necessary.

I understand that starting up a FOCUS or similar program in Nevada County is a huge undertaking, but I am willing to take the first steps. Please plan to attend on August 29, 2017 and hear how Stanislaus County implemented their FOCUS Program and the success they are having with it. We will consider “next steps” following this introductory meeting.

Christine Espedal
Safety and School Climate Coordinator
Nevada County Superintendent of Schools
Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Are there any costs associated with participating in the program?
   A: This is not cost to participate

Q: Will confidential information be released?
   A: No, the only information obtained and released is the child’s name, date of birth and school. No confidential information about the incident is provided.

Q: What is the age limit?
   A: All school-aged children, preschool through 12th grade.

Q: Are FOCUS Notifications still provided during the summer?
   A: Yes

Q: Who can submit a referral?
   A: First responders (including, but not limited to law enforcement, firefighters, emergency medical responders and emergency room personnel) and ANY mandated reporter
Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Is parental consent necessary for a referral to be completed?
   A: No

Q: What is the criteria for a FOCUS Notification to be generated?
   A: Any situation where a child may have been exposed to a stressful event.

Q: Is there a policy or procedures for the program?
   A: No there is not. A referral should be submitted at the discretion of the first responder, with no guidelines.

Q: Is trauma informed training provided by the program?
   A: No. Although we highly encourage ALL participating agencies first responders and educators) to provide this for the staff, at all levels.
Thank you!

If you have any further questions:  
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(209) 238-1361