

COURSE SYLLABUS

Course:	Trauma Informed Educator
Credit Hours:	3.0 credits / 45 hours
Instructor:	Jessica Janowsky, M.Ed.,E- RYT

Course Description

People experiencing trauma is a major concern. In fact, the National Center for Mental Health Promotion and Youth Violence Prevention reports that “60% of adults report experiencing abuse or other difficult family circumstances during their childhood.” They also declare “25% of children from the United States will witness a traumatic event before they turn 4 years old.”

The concepts and importance of “educating the whole child,” “social-emotional learning,” and attention to providing good mental health practices continue to push educators into redefining their roles and responsibilities. This course is intended to help you look, through a new lens, at the educational institution and your role within it. We cannot manage these challenges without first becoming aware of what they are and their significance for students, parents, teachers, and communities. This course will introduce you to the definitions associated with trauma informed education. You will become better acquainted with common “triggers” that can cause a survivor reexperience their trauma. You will learn how trauma affects the body, the brain and relationships. Lastly, you will be given resources, tools, and strategies to help you provide a safe space for students and to facilitate an emotionally healthy classroom where students feel safe to learn.

Course Goals

To Know

1. The definitions and concepts associated with trauma
2. How the body and brain are affected when a person experiences a traumatic event
3. Which strategies and techniques can be appropriately integrated into your classroom to address the needs and concerns of your students?

To Understand

1. How triggers cause a survivor to re-experience
2. How the neuropathways of the brain are changed as a result of experiencing trauma
3. Muscle memory as it related to experiencing trauma

4. How by building trust and compassion in relationships we can help people overcome and heal from trauma.

and To Be Able To

1. Use social and emotional teaching strategies to promote a safe and kind classroom environment
2. Apply “whole child” concepts to lessons in an effective and appropriate manner
3. Apply teaching strategies that empower students and promote good mental health practices
4. Help students build resiliency in the face of adversity

Course Outline

I. Becoming Familiar with Childhood Trauma

- a. Definitions associated with trauma and childhood trauma
 - Glossary of Definitions
- b. Trauma Informed Teaching
 - Video: “Trauma Informed Teaching” by Dr. Meredith Fox
- c. Adverse Childhood Experiences
 - Article: “Understanding ACEs” by ACEs Connection

II. Trauma and Relationships

- a. The Importance of Communication and Connections
 - Video: “Helping Children Heal” by Helpguide.org
- b. International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies
 - Document: “Trauma and Relationships”
- c. Helping Traumatized People Heal
 - Abstract: “In the trauma-informed care trenches: Teacher compassion, satisfaction, secondary traumatic stress, burnout, and intent to leave education within underserved elementary schools.”
 - Article: “Building Compassionate Teacher-Student Relationships.”
 - Article: “When Childhood Trauma Meets Healing Relationships.”

III. Trauma and the Brain

- a. The Relationship Between Brain Function and Chronic Stress and/or Trauma
 - Article: “How Does Trauma Affect the Brain?”
 - Video: “How Mindfulness Changes Our Brain to Prevent Mental Illness.”
 - Article: “The Brain and Mental Health: How Stress Effects the Brain.”
- b. The Brain as a Map to Understanding Trauma
 - Chart: Triune Brain Theory
 - Infographic: Trauma Informed Schools Practices Tri-phasic Model
 - Chart: Response to Intervention 3-Tier Model

IV. Trauma and the Body

- a. Pain in the Body as a Result from Stress and Trauma Benefits of practicing mindfulness
 - Article: “Symptoms” by Psychophysiological Disorder Association
 - Article: Traumatic Stress vs. PTSD by Celine Elise Redfield
- b. Somatic Exercises to Relieve Trauma
 - Video: Peter Levine: “Secret to Releasing Trauma from the Body”

V. Trauma Informed Practices in the Classroom

- a. Understanding How Trauma Affects A Classroom:
 - Article: “Helping Children and Adolescents Cope with Disasters and Other Traumatic Events.”
- b. Understanding Student Responses to Trauma
 - Article: “Tips for Teachers” by Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention
- c. Promoting a Caring Classroom
 - Article: “Classroom Strategies”

Methods of Instruction

Teachers enrolled in this course will refer to primary and secondary sources as well as gather data from observations to bring awareness to issues that are impacting educational practices in our nation and within their own classroom community. They will be better prepared to teach a “whole child” after understanding that a person’s life experiences determine brain development and even affect our bodies’ systems, especially our nervous and muscular systems. Articles, Videos, Charts, and Infographics will be used to deliver instruction and provide relevant content.

Students will connect with each other throughout the course within forums and various other types of online feedback options built into each class.

Methods of Assessment

To earn in-service credit in this class, students will need to complete all assignments, pass each quiz, and post in all Topic Forums. Graduate Students will need to complete additional assignments, identified as “Graduate Projects,” to receive credit.

In addition to the requirements for in-service credit, Graduate students seeking a B in this class must

- Refer to “Mapping Triggers and Opportunities” by Trauma-Sensitive Schools complete the chart in which a typical student’s trigger is indicated and you write a Trauma-Informed Response (Alternative) to alleviate as much trauma reenactment as possible.

- Refer to NCTSN’s “Trauma Facts for Educators” to describe your school’s reporting procedures, list two community resources available and describe how they help students or the services they offer.

In addition to the requirements for earning a B, Graduate students seeking an A in this class must

- Refer to “The How and Why of Trauma-Informed Teaching” by the George Lucas Educational Foundation. Write a one-page reflection on the question “How will you balance the focus of individual student needs and being attentive to trauma informed educational best practices with delivering high quality content and instruction for the entire class?”

Instructors are online each day of the course and correspond with students through the course itself, feedback on assignments, e-mail, and by phone.

Time Validation

Assignment	Time (in hours)
Topic 1: Becoming Familiar with Childhood Trauma	
A. READ- Glossary of Definitions	1.00
Assessment: Take Quiz on Definitions	1.00
B. WATCH- Video "Trauma Informed Teaching"	2.00
Assignment- Answer reflective questions from video	1.00
C. READ- "Understanding ACEs"	2.00
Assignment- Answer reflective questions from article	1.00
D. Forum Post- being mindful of students' signs of trauma	1.00
Topic 2: Trauma and Relationships	
A. WATCH: Video "Helping Children Heal"	2.00
Assessment: Quiz	1.00
B. READ: "Trauma and Relationships"	2.00
Assignment- Write a reflection essay using information from the article.	3.00
C. READ: Science Direct Abstract on Trauma Informed Care and Teacher Compassion and also "Building Compassionate Teacher-Student Relationships."	2.00
Assignment- Answer response questions	1.00
D. READ: "When Childhood Trauma Meets Healing Relationships"	2.00
Forum Post- Composition Writing: What factors are needed in our teacher-student relationships that can help them overcome trauma?	1.00
Topic 3: Trauma & The Brain	
A. READ: "How Does Trauma Affect the Brain"	1.00
Assignment: Describe the Stress Responses and how a person's character traits will determine his/her responses.	2.00
B. REFER to 3 Infographics I. Triune Brain Model II.Tri-Pasic Model III.RTI 3 Tired-Approach	1.00
Assignment: Using your knowledge of the brain, how can you connect, coach (teach) , and communicate with students at each Tier of the RTI process?	2.00

C. WATCH: Video "Trauma and the Brain" and REFER: Brain Image	1.00
Assignment: Label the parts of the brain and briefly describe what each is responsible for	2.00
Topic 4: Trauma and the Body	
A. READ: "Psychophysiological Disorder Association: Symptoms"	1.00
Assignment: Answer response questions	1.00
B. READ: "Traumatic Stress vs. PTSD"	1.00
Assignment: Answer response questions	1.00
C. WATCH: Video "Secret to Releasing Trauma from the Body"	1.00
Assignment: Opinion Paper- Can people be healed from trauma?	2.00
Topic 5: Trauma Informed Practices in the Classroom	
A. READ: Trauma Informed Care for Children Exposed to Violence "Tips for Teachers"	1.00
Assessment: Quiz	1.00
B. READ: "Classroom Strategies"	1.00
Assignment: Describe 2 strategies you currently use and 2 more you could employ and/or improve upon	1.00
C. READ: "Helping Children and Adolescents Cope with Disasters and Other Traumatic Events."	1.00
Assignment: Describe how the students you teach are likely to react to trauma based on their age. What measures can you have in place that will help them cope?	1.00
Total Time	45.00