



Supporting Students Affected by Intimate Partner Violence

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HRM Services

House of Ruth Maryland is recognized as one of the nation's most comprehensive domestic violence centers.



- 24-Hour Hotline/Chatline
- Emergency Shelter and Transitional Housing
- Client Service Coordination
- Counseling
- Legal Assistance
- Training Institute
- Abuse Intervention Program
- HRM Highlandtown



About Me

- Joined HRM's Training Institute during Fall 2020
- Specialize in survivor-centered projects
 - HRM Storytellers
 - Recognizing & Responding to Intimate Partner Violence self-paced online course
 - Victim Coordinated Entry self-paced online courses
 - Maryland Victims of Crime educational video series
 - MSDE Continuing Professional Development training



Learning Objectives

- Name specific effects of intimate partner violence (IPV) on children
- Recognize the importance of effective, trauma-informed support for students
- Identify strategies for building resiliency and support for students

Children & IPV

- 15.5 million U.S. children live in families in which partner violence occurred at least once in the past year
- 7 million children live in families in which severe partner violence occurred
- 43% of domestic violence incidents with female victims occur in households where children reside

Types of IPV Exposure

Direct

- Seeing a parent assaulted or demeaned
- Hearing loud conflict and violence

Indirect

- Seeing the aftermath (injuries, property damage, etc.)
- Being used by abusive parent
- Learning about what happened to a parent

Common Misconceptions

- Children are too young to understand what's going on
- They are asleep during, don't hear, or otherwise don't know about the abuse
- Children cannot be affected by IPV they do not see

Behavioral Impact: Impact on Child by Age/Development

Infant/Toddler	Pre-School	School-Aged	Adolescence
Sleep disturbances	Fearful	Poor concentration	Anxiety and tension
Eating disturbances	Attachment issues: separation anxiety; clinginess	Change in school performance	May be in abusive relationship
Irritability	Regressive behaviors	Bullying behaviors	Running away
Exaggerated startle	Anger and aggression	Low self-esteem	Truancy
Inability to be comforted	Frequent illness	Feel responsible for the violence	Drug/alcohol abuse
Delays in development	Act out IPV incidents through play	Under or over control of emotions	Suicidal behavior
Unable to establish schedule		Somatic complaints	Poor peer relationships
Learns caretaker is not dependable		Parentified behaviors	

Behavioral Impact: Birth to 5 Years

- Sleep and/or eating disruptions
- Intense separation anxiety
- Inconsolable crying
- Developmental regression; loss of acquired skills
- Increase in anxiety, worries, and/or fears

Behavioral Impact: 6 to 11 Years

- Nightmares
- Aggression and difficulty with peer relationships
- Difficulty with concentration and task completion
- Withdrawal and/or emotional numbing
- School avoidance and/or truancy

Behavioral Impact: 12 to 18 Years

- Antisocial behavior
- School failure
- Depression/anxiety/withdrawal
- High-risk behavior
 - Substance abuse
 - Running away
 - Unhealthy/abusive dating relationships

Discussion

- What are some ways that IPV exposure might impact a child's behavior in the classroom/school setting?
- How are these behaviors typically addressed by schools/educators?

Trauma-Informed

The Importance of Trauma Sensitivity

School Performance: Obstacles to Learning

- Trouble forming relationships (with teachers/classmates)
- Poor self-regulation
- Negative thinking (self-esteem; self-efficacy)
- Hypervigilance
- Executive function challenges

Supporting Students

Addressing the Impact

Risk and Protective Factors

Risk Factors

- Lack of social supports
- Harsh or inconsistent care
- No positive role models
- Few chances to express feelings
- Limited community resources

Protective Factors

- Strong social supports
- Consistent and nurturing care
- Presence of positive role models
- Many chances to express feelings
- Access to community resources

Trauma Recovery: The Brightside

- The brain can change and adapt!
- 15% to 43% of girls and 14% to 43% of boys experience at least one trauma
- Of those, 3% to 15% of girls and 1% to 6% of boys develop PTSD



“How Common is PTSD in Children and Teens?” US Department of Veterans Affairs

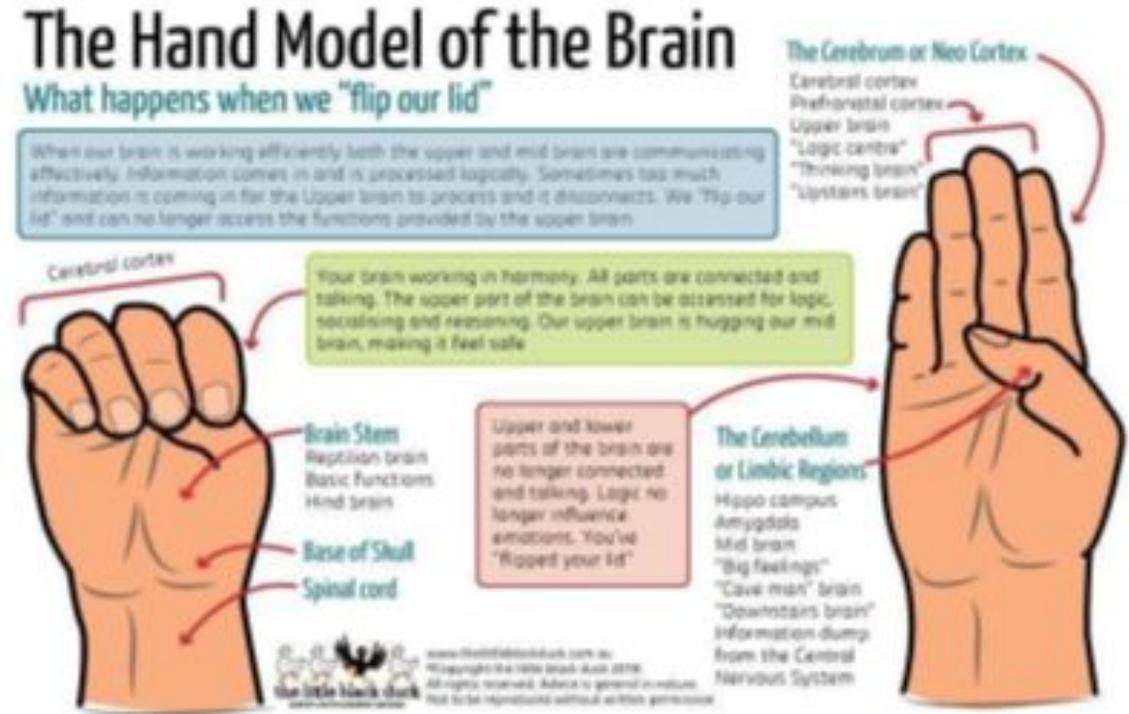
Supporting Students: Mind your emotions (and theirs)!

- Identifying and managing your emotions is the first step to helping students manage theirs
- Remember that behavior is a form of communication
- Teach and model healthy social skills and emotional regulation



Supporting Students: Expect Emotional Delays

- Expect that students will sometimes overreact
- Distinguish between behavior and emotion
- Normalize emotional experiences



Supporting Students: Provide Support

- Provide safe spaces
- Incorporate opportunities for students to talk, write, and create art about their experiences



Supporting Students: Provide Support (Cont.)

- Increase your awareness and education of issues impacting your students (culture, community, environmental, etc.)
- Share strategies with colleagues
- Ask for help



Teachers who lack sufficient training in classroom management experience high levels of stress when dealing with student misbehavior, which contributes to many leaving the profession/teacher attrition

-Aloe et al., 2014; Scott, 2017; Stevenson, VanLone, & Barber, 2020

Supporting Students: Safety Net

- Communicate with families about what you are seeing
- Provide families with resources
- Connect families with outside organizations/warm referrals
- CPS and mandated reporting



For Educators

- **Plan Early:**

Take time to identify situations, events, and actions that might prompt disruptive behaviors and strategize ways to anticipate and address them

- **Be Consistent/Establish Routines:**

Many students see behavioral consequences as random and not connected to their actions when there is a history of inconsistent and unpredictable responses from adults

- **Understand Student Diversity:**

Students represent different racial, ethnic, cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds, which influence norms, behavior, and communication



For Educators

- **Focus on the Positive:**

Focus on promoting desired classroom behaviors rather than only reacting to disruptive ones

- **Use High-Quality Instruction:**

Students who are not appropriately challenged or who find curriculum too difficult are more likely to engage in disruptive behavior

- **Maintain Professionalism:**

Some student behavior can be physically and emotionally draining—it is important to maintain awareness of your own emotions and not take student behaviors personally

For Educators

- Help students feel in control by creating opportunities for them to choose
- Do not make promises you cannot keep
- Be on the lookout for exposure to chaos or additional trauma
- Take steps to build your own coping strategies in order to provide better care to student
- Remember that a caring adult relationship is one of the most effective protective factors for youth

Allow for a fresh start!

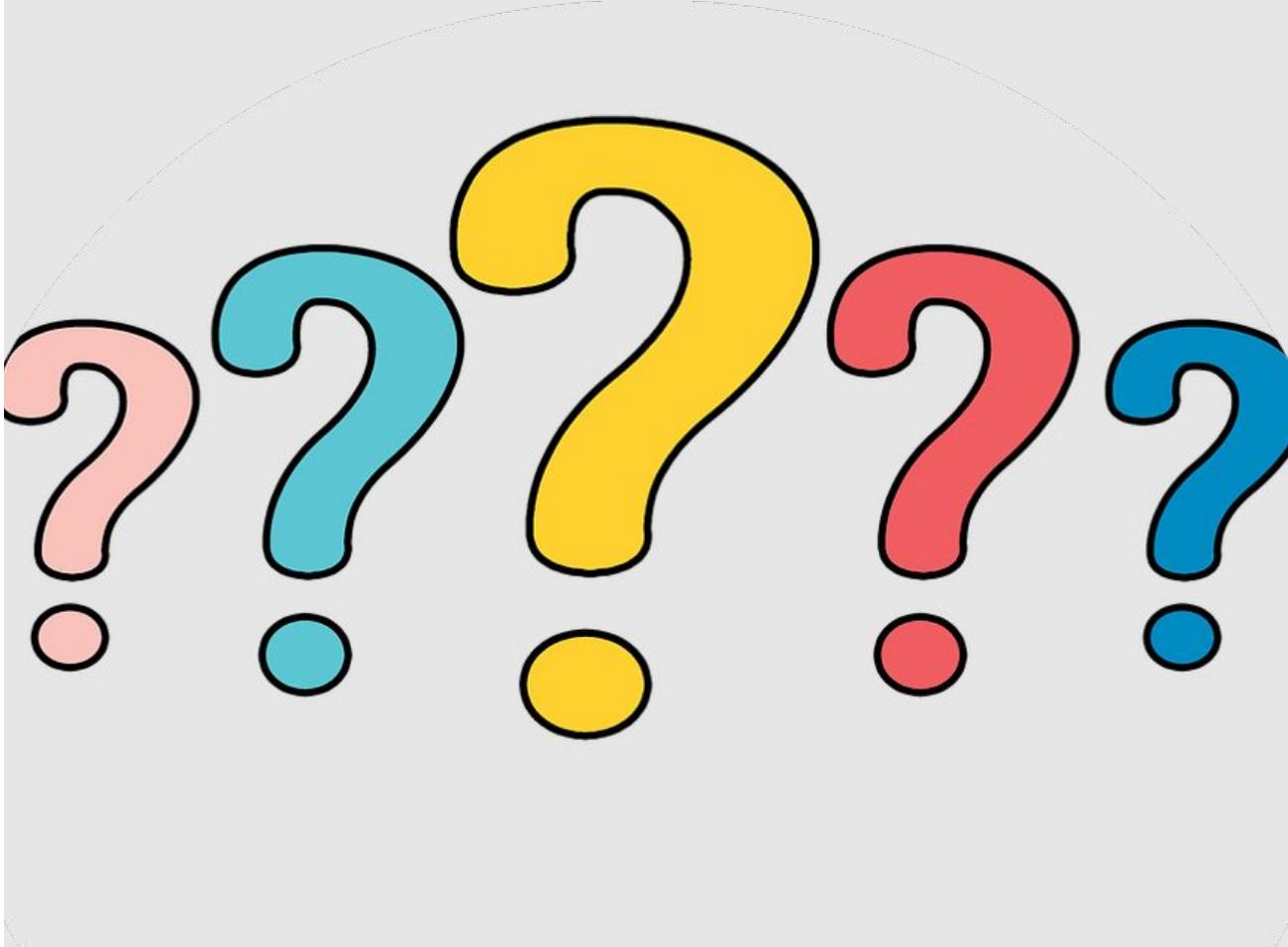
- Students engage in disruptive behaviors for a reason. Our behavior is a means to obtain a desired outcome (express unacknowledged emotions, gain attention, or avoid an unwanted task or activity).
- When bad days happen, be sure to let the student or class start the next day with a clean slate. This offers students the opportunity to make positive choices each day and can motivate them toward positive behavior.



Questions?



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Resources

- Child Welfare Information Gateway: Impact of Domestic Violence on the Community <https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/systemwide/domviolence/impact/impact-victims/#victims>
- The National Child Traumatic Stress Network: Elements of Trauma-Informed Systems <https://www.nctsn.org/trauma-informed-care/trauma-informed-systems/schools/essential-elements>
- Trauma-Sensitive Schools: Helping Traumatized Children Learn <https://traumasensitiveschools.org/trauma-and-learning/the-solution-trauma-sensitive-schools/>
- Vanderbilt University Iris Center: COVID-19 Resources <https://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/module/beh1/cresource/q1/p01/>
- SAMHSSA: Trauma & Violence <https://www.samhsa.gov/trauma-violence>

Save the Dates!

- MSDE CPD Course—Spring 2023
 - May 2nd, 9th, 16th, & 23rd
 - 4:30-7:30 p.m.
 - Virtual meeting via Zoom
 - 1 CPD credit (15 hours) = FREE!
 - 12 Category 1 Social Work CEUs (\$240)





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🌐 www.hruth.org/training-institute