



# Trauma-Informed Family Engagement

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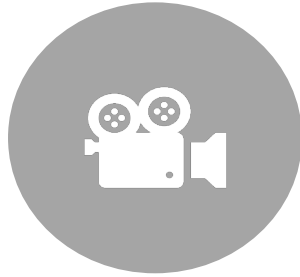
We want to learn  
about you...

In the Q&A:  
Do you have any concerns  
or specific scenarios you'd  
like covered in this session?

# Housekeeping Notes



WEBINAR  
IS BEING  
RECORDED



PARTICIPANTS  
ARE ON MUTE  
& CAMERAS  
ARE DISABLED



INVITE YOU TO  
USE THE CHAT  
TO CONNECT/  
COMMENTS



QUESTIONS  
CAN BE ADDED  
TO THE Q & A

NYS  
TEACHS  
Help Line

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800-388-2014

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Accessible 24/7, Specialists are  
available 9 am to 5 pm

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If you leave a message, someone  
will call back next business day



# Foundational Beliefs that Inform this Session

- Trauma-Informed Family Engagement is an iterative process.
- A trauma-informed approach applies to teachers, school staff & families.
- A family-centered, strengths-based approach to FE is essential.
- We all come to the table with positive intention.

# Learning Objectives

Participants will:

- identify different types of trauma, including intergenerational and systemic trauma.
- understand the impact of trauma, including discrimination and racism, on students and families through the lens of equity and social determinants of health.
- explore strategies to support, engage and empower families with cultural humility, respect and empathy.

# What is Trauma?



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Trauma is the **presence or perceived threat** of an event or circumstance that poses a **risk to safety**.

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**Can be experienced directly or indirectly**, and includes physical harm or emotional harm, or can be life-threatening.

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Exposure to trauma induces feelings of powerlessness, fear, recurrent hopelessness, and a constant state of alert.

# Types of Trauma

Acute, Chronic or Complex

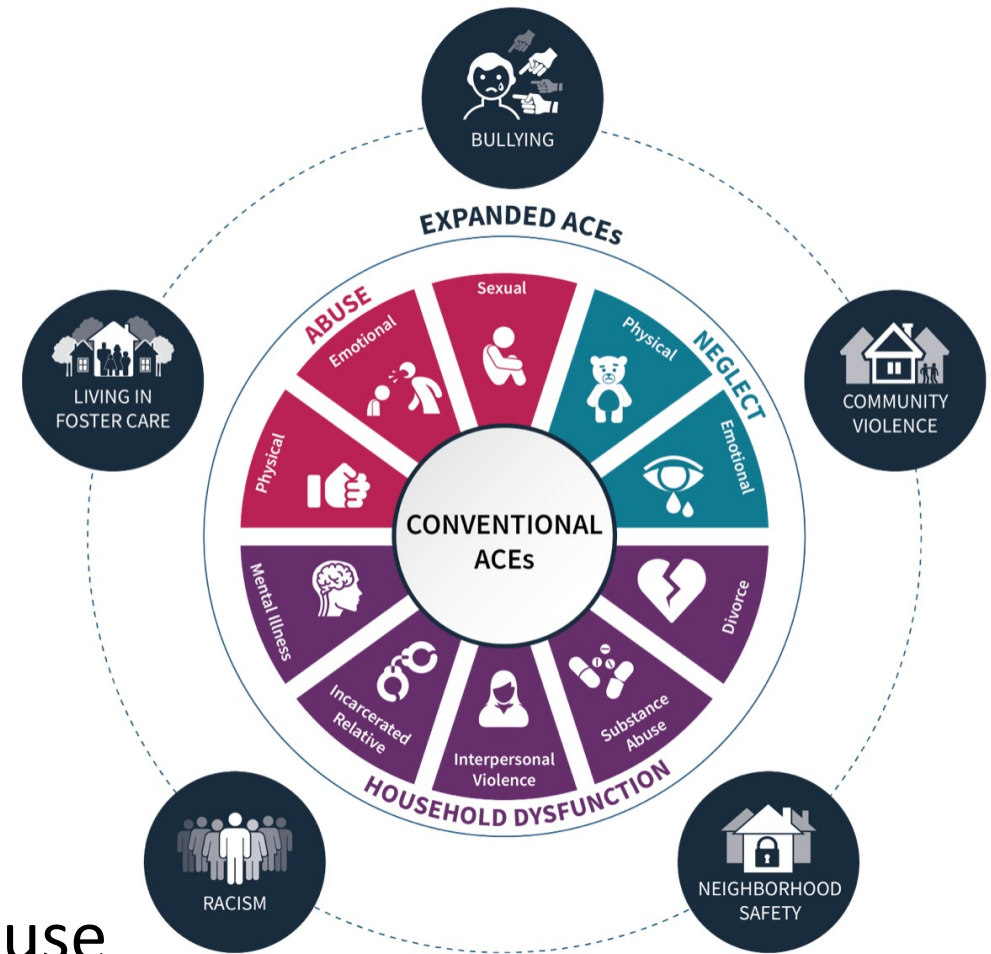
Adverse Childhood Experiences or Adverse Community Environments

Intergenerational, Racial and Systemic Trauma



# Philadelphia Urban ACEs Study

- Over 80% experienced at least one ACEs
- 33% experienced emotional abuse
- 35% experienced physical abuse
- 35% grew up in household with substance abuse
- 24% grew up in household with someone mentally ill
- 13% grew up in household with incarcerated adult



## IMAGE:

Source: Cronholm, P. F., Forke, C. M., Wade, R., Bair-Merritt, M. H., Davis, M., Harkins-Schwarz, M., Pachter, L. M., & Fein, J. A. (2015). Adverse childhood experiences: Expanding the concept of adversity. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 49(3), 354–361.

# The Pair of ACEs

## Adverse Childhood Experiences

Maternal Depression

Physical & Emotional Neglect

Emotional & Sexual Abuse

Divorce

Substance Abuse

Mental Illness

Incarceration

Domestic Violence

Homelessness

## Adverse Community Environments

Poverty

Violence

Discrimination

Poor Housing Quality & Affordability

Community Disruption

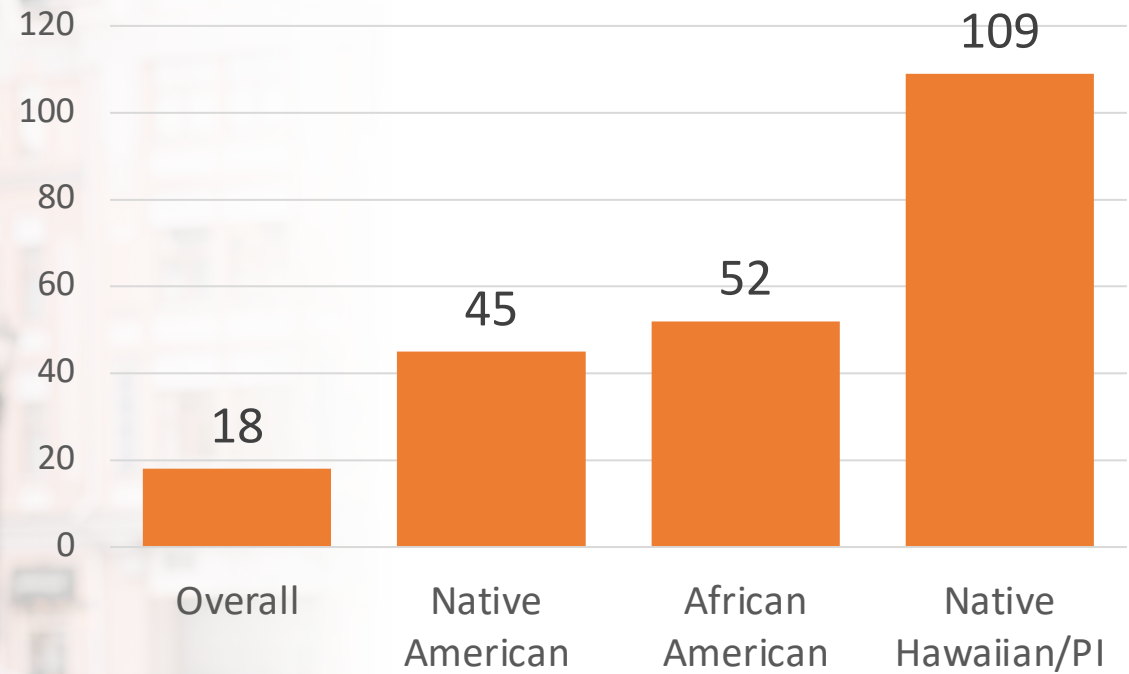
Lack of Opportunity, Economic Mobility & Social Capital



Ellis W & Dietz W, A New Framework for Addressing Adverse Childhood and Community Experiences: The Building Community Resilience (BCR) Model, *Academic Pediatrics* (2017).

# Acknowledging Disproportionality

## Rate of Homelessness Per 10,000



National Alliance to End Homelessness



PBS NewsHour

August 2015

*Study finds PTSD effects may linger  
in body chemistry of next generation*

# Intergenerational Trauma



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The transmission of the impact of trauma across generations, also known as historical trauma.

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Traumatic experiences that have carried across generations include slavery, the Holocaust, forced relocation of Indigenous People and the removal of children to residential schools.

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Epigenetics suggests trauma response can result in changes to gene expression, but it can also be transferred through learned behavior, maladaptive patterns and inequities.

*Trauma not  
transformed...*



*is trauma  
transferred.*

# Racial Trauma



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Psychological injury (i.e. shame, humiliation, injustice) caused by perceived or real racial bias and/or discrimination.

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The source of the threat can be an individual, group or system. The attack or threat can occur in-person, be witnessed or in the media, including social media.

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Reports of hate crimes, police brutality perpetrated against people of color, and reporting about abuse Native American children in boarding institutions can cause re-traumatization.

# Systemic Trauma



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Actions or inactions, often at the policy level, that give rise to conditions that negatively impact trauma responses both at the personal and community level.

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Systemic trauma creates inequities in access and opportunities, and lead to overrepresentation in criminal justice and child welfare.

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Can elicit feelings of being unworthy, mistrust of people, organizations and government, sense of powerlessness and tendency to retreat, isolate or avoid.





*Do the best you  
can until you know  
better. Then when  
you know better,  
do better.*

- Maya Angelou



## What is Family Engagement?

- Shared responsibility
- Meaningful, collaborative
- Family commitment to supporting learning and development
- Changes as children mature
- Applies to multiple settings: school, faith-based institutions, activities, community

# A Trauma-Informed Approach

Ask “**what happened to you**”  
rather than  
“what’s wrong with you”.

Dr. Gabor Mate says,  
“trauma is not what  
happens *to you* but what  
happens **inside of you.**”

# SAMHSAs 4Rs of Trauma-Informed Care Applied to School Setting

Realizing

Acknowledge that trauma is a common experience; don't need to identify "what".

Recognizing

Recognize a trauma response and its impact on social, emotional & academic development.

Responding

Support healing through 1:1 interaction, policies, initiatives, and community partnerships.

Resist Re-traumatization

Protect against events, experiences, places or people that reactivate a past traumatic response.

# Equity in a Trauma-Informed Approach to Family Engagement

Realizing

Acknowledge racism and discrimination, as well as historical and systemic trauma.

Recognizing

Understand the role of family experiences, such as trauma, in your interactions & engagement.

Responding

Apply a strengths-based, family-centered approach to support and engagement.

Resist Re-traumatization

Be mindful of current event, both locally and in the media that might cause re-traumatization.



Recognizing

Responding

When caregivers have trauma history, they may have difficulty....

- making decisions about wellness, safety
- forming bonds with children
- trusting others, including systems
- regulating their emotions
- practicing *healthy* coping strategies



Recognizing

Responding

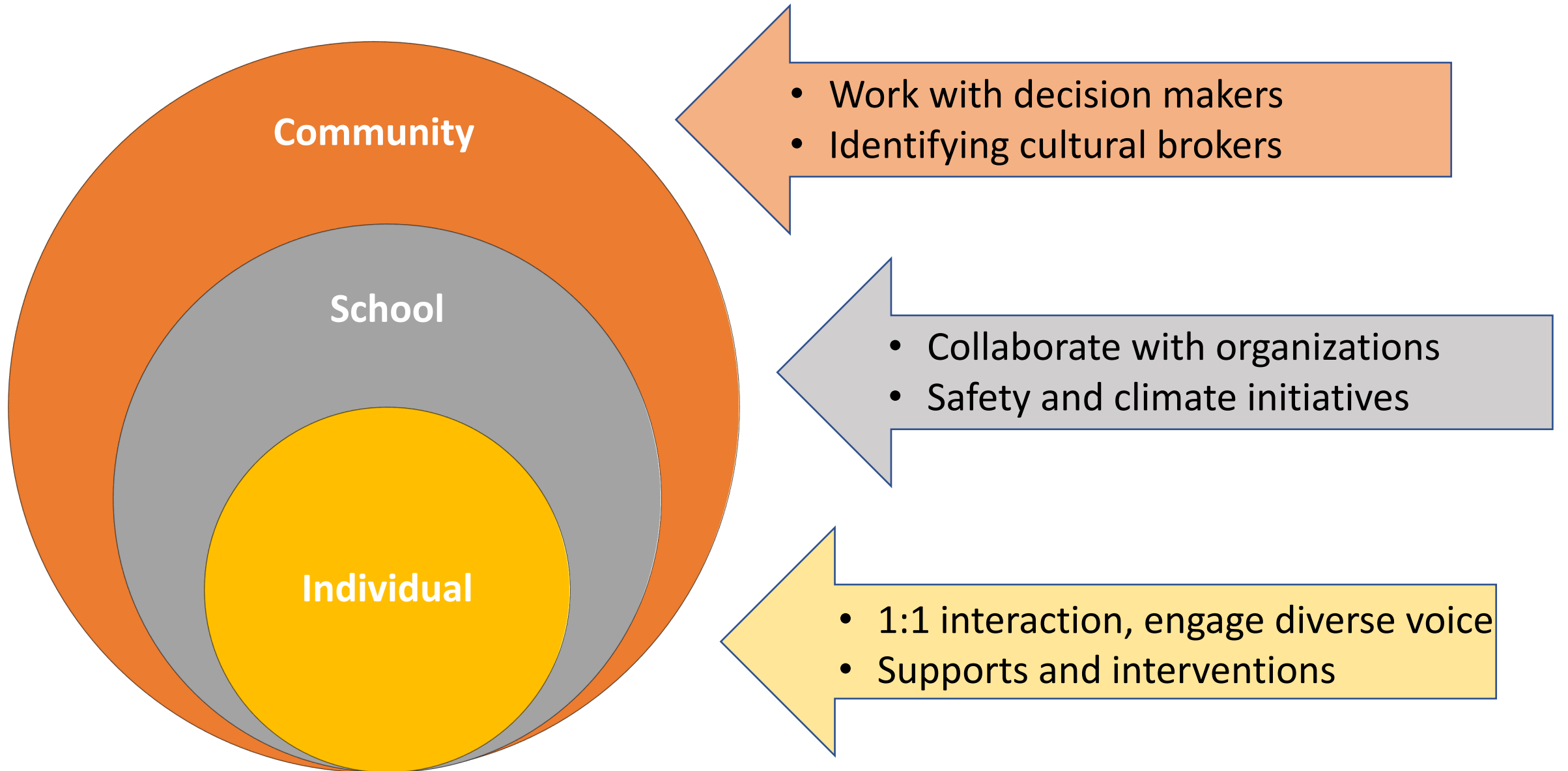
Consider an experience you've had...  
how might you characterize the response?

Fight - demanding, confrontational

Flight - avoiding conflict, dismissive

Freeze - unresponsive, disengaged

Fawn - performative, pretending







## Community Building Circles



Handle with Care



# Practicing Self-Care



**NYSTEACHS.org**

The New York State Technical and Educational  
Assistance Center for Homeless Students



**MEASUREMENT  
INCORPORATED**

**Thank you!**  
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