STUDENT BEHAVIORAL AND MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES: HOW SHOULD SCHOOLS RESPOND?

- Loyola University School of Law

- 10th Annual Education Law

- A Year in Review

- Jennifer Rose, PhD, NCSP

- Advocate Trauma Recovery Center

- June 29, 2023

PURPOSE

- To review influences on student behavior and mental health

- To identify student behavioral and mental health challenges related to trauma

- To describe elements of trauma-informed schools

PRESENTER'S INFORMATION

- Jennifer Rose, PhD, lead psychologist/clinical training director at Advocate Trauma Recovery Center

- Jennifer.rose@aah.org

ADVOCATE TRAUMA RECOVERY CENTER

- The Advocate Trauma Recovery Center (TRC) is a healthcare-based Violence Intervention Program that provides short-term services to survivors of intentional crime at our offices in Evergreen Park, IL and Gurnee, IL. We also offer virtual services.

- Call 708-346-7300 to schedule an intake appointment, or more additional information

ADVOCATE TRAUMA RECOVERY CENTER

- TRC services include:
  - *Individual Therapy*
  - *Support Group*
  - *Social Services and Intensive Case Management*
 - *Medication Management*

ADVOCATE TRAUMA RECOVERY CENTER

- Eligibility Criteria:
  - *Resident of the following Illinois counties: Cook, Kankakee, Kendall, Kane, DuPage, Will, Lake, McHenry*
  - *Age 10 years-old or older*
  - *Victim/survivor of an intentional crime within the past three years or homicide of an immediate family member (no time limit)*
    - Gun shot
    - Stabbing
    - Physical assault
    - Sexual Assault
    - Robbery/burglary
    - Domestic Violence
    - Elder Abuse
    - Hate Crime
    - Stalking and Harassment
    - Human Trafficking
    - Bullying

BACKGROUND

https://www.structural-learning.com/post/bronfenbrenners-ecological-model

# BRONFENBRENNER'S ECOLOGICAL SYSTEMS THEORY
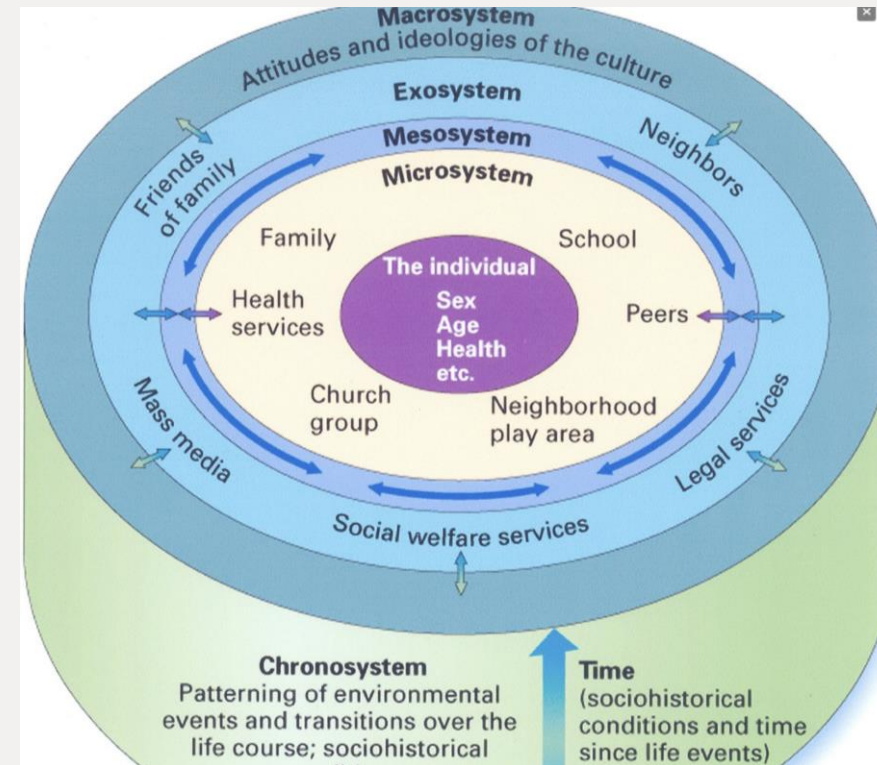
BRONFENBRENNER'S ECOLOGICAL SYSTEMS THEORY

- Microsystem

  - Interactions within the microsystem typically involve personal relationships with family members, classmates, teachers and caregivers. How these groups or individuals interact with the children will affect how they develop. More nurturing and supportive interactions and relationships will likely to foster a better environment for development.

- Mesosystem

  - The mesosystem encompasses the interaction of the different microsystems which children find themselves in. It is, in essence, a system of microsystems and as such, involves linkages between home and school, between peer group and family, and between family and community.

  - https://www.psychologynoteshq.com/bronfenbrenner-ecological-theory/

BRONFENBRENNER'S ECOLOGICAL SYSTEMS THEORY

- Exosystem
  - The exosystem in Bronfenbrenner's ecological model pertains to the linkages that may exist between two or more settings, one of which may not contain the developing children but affect them indirectly nonetheless (ie., a parent's workplace/employment, the child's neighborhood)

- Macrosystem
  - This ecological system is composed of the children's cultural patterns and values, specifically their dominant beliefs and ideas, as well as political and economic systems.

- Chronosystem
  - The chronosystem adds the useful dimension of time to Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory. It demonstrates the influence of both change and constancy in the children's environments. The chronosystem may include a change in family structure, address, parents' employment status, as well as immense society changes such as economic cycles and wars.
  - https://www.psychologynoteshq.com/bronfenbrenner-ecological-theory/
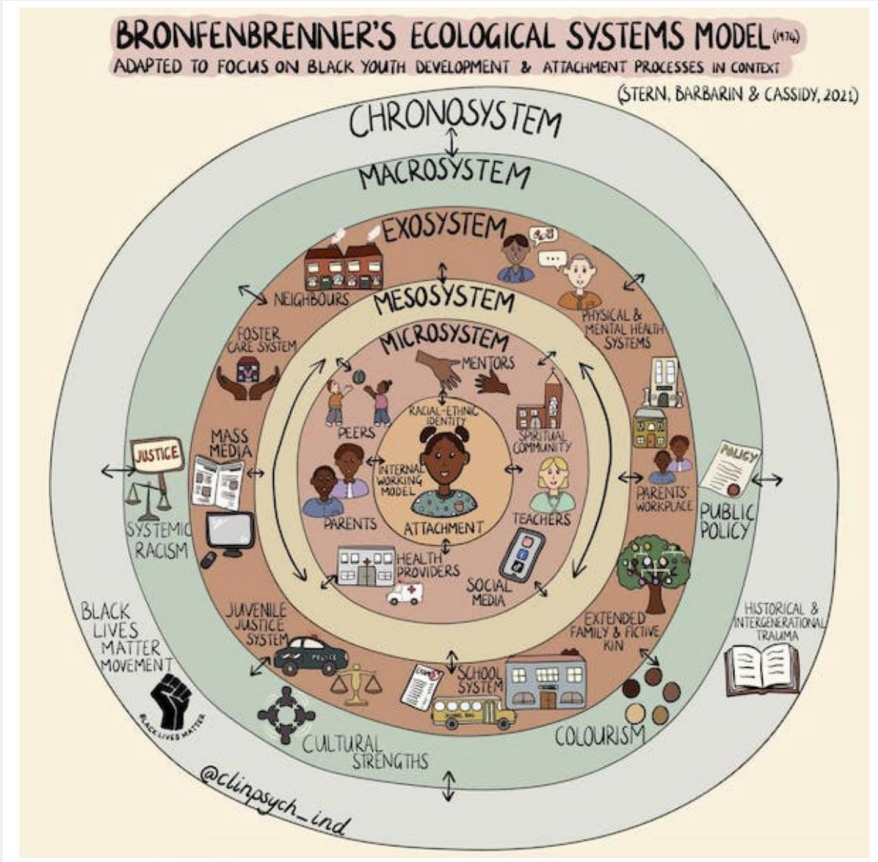
BRONFENBRENNER'S ECOLOGICAL SYSTEMS THEORY

SOCIOHISTORICAL CONDITION: SCHOOL DESEGREGATION

SOCIOHISTORICAL CONDITION: SCHOOL DESEGREGATION

- Brown v. Topeka Board of Education (1954) U.S. schools are ordered to desegregate "with all deliberate speed."

SOCIOHISTORICAL CONDITION: SCHOOL DESEGREGATION

Unfortunately, the desegregation process was neither speedy, or deliberate in most communities…

SOCIOHISTORICAL CONDITION: SCHOOL DESEGREGATION

Bernadine B. Morris, one of the first Black teachers to integrate the schools in Hampton:

> *"Several times I had students who were acting up in the cafeteria, doing childlike things. These teachers wanted to make a federal case of it. They would say something like, 'He's still talking when I told him not to talk.' Well, this is what children do. I would always intervene and tell the teachers that I would take care of the problems. I had to do this, otherwise the teachers would make a big case out of nothing and then the children would get into trouble, be suspended or expelled." Foster (1996)*

SOCIOHISTORICAL CONDITION: SCHOOL DESEGREGATION

- A 1964 study by Gottlieb highlighted the differences in views between White and Black teachers of inner-city Black students

Teachers' Race and Reasons for Job Dissatisfaction		
Reasons	White: Percent of Total Responses	Negro: Percent of Total Responses
Inadequate materials and poor facilities	6	33
Crowded classrooms	13	38
Lack of parental interest	25	6
Behavior-discipline problems	46	19
Other	10	4

SOCIOHISTORICAL CONDITION: SCHOOL DESEGREGATION

Teachers' Race and Their Perceptions of Students			
Adjectives	White Percent	Negro Percent	Percent Differences
Ambitious	20	36	16
Athletic	25	13	12
Cooperative	35	61	26
Happy	31	65	34
High Strung	39	3	36
Lazy	53	19	34
Moody	33	13	20
Rebellious	35	13	22
Shy	12	21	9
Talkative	59	6	53

Gottlieb, 1964

SOCIOHISTORICAL CONDITION: SCHOOL DESEGREGATION

SCHOOL SUSPENSIONS
ARE THEY HELPING CHILDREN?

A Report by the
CHILDREN'S DEFENSE FUND
of the Washington Research Project, Inc.

➢ Documentation of disproportionality dates back to a 1975 Children's Defense Fund Report, "School Suspensions Are They Helping Children?"

➢ Citing data from the Office of Civil Rights, the report stated that "Black children were suspended more than any other group of children in the 1972-73 school year."

SOCIOHISTORICAL CONDITION: SCHOOL DESEGREGATION

Sociohistorical Condition: Covid-19 Pandemic

SOCIO-HISTORICAL EVENT: COVID-19
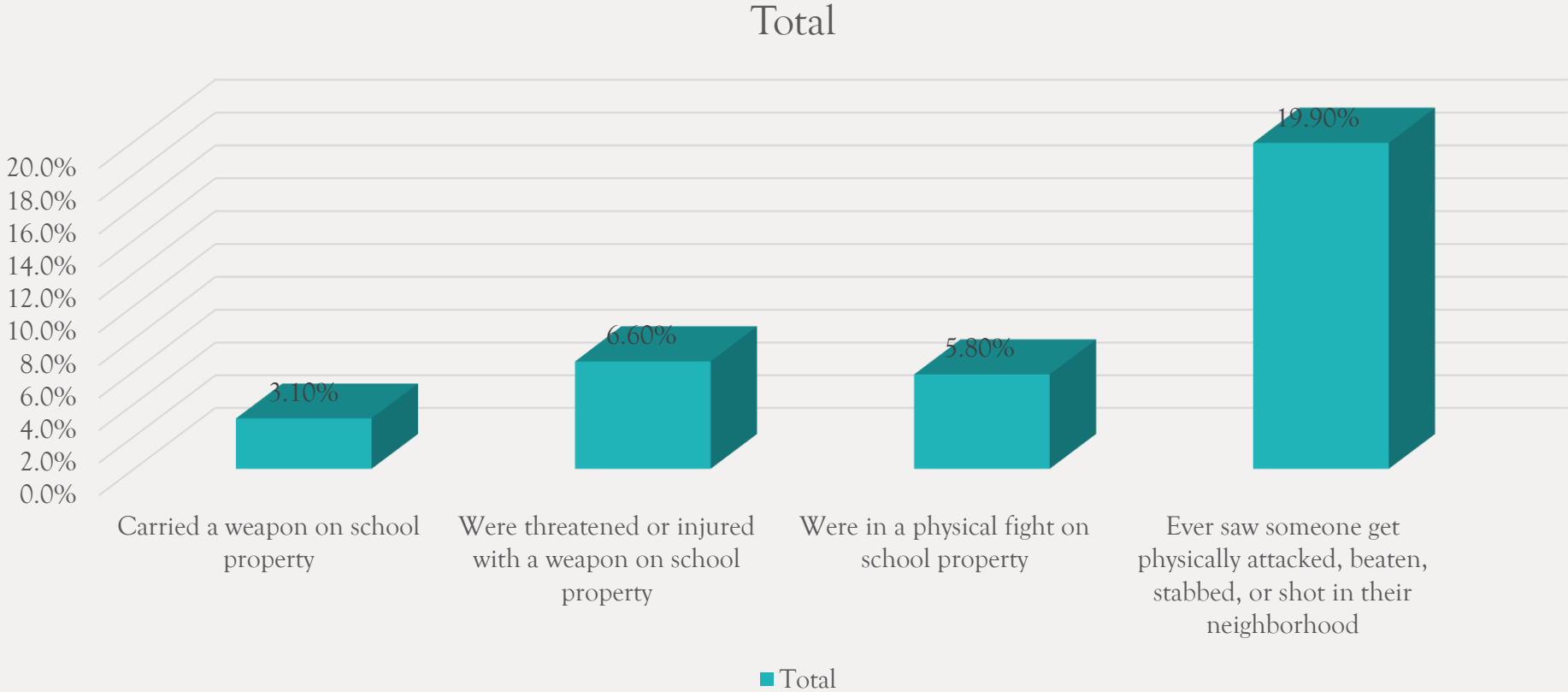
MICROSYSTEM EVENTS AND TRAUMA

PREVALENCE OF CHILDHOOD TRAUMA

- More than two-thirds of children reported at least one traumatic event by age 16

- The national average of child abuse and neglect victims in 2013 was 679,000, or 9.1 victims per 1,000 children.

- More than 1,000 youth are treated in emergency rooms every day for physical assault-related injuries.

- Approximately, 20% of high school students reported being bullied on school property in 2019.

- Approximately 14 youth die from homicide and over 1,300 are treated in emergency rooms for violence-related injuries daily.

– *SAMHSA*

TYPES OF CHILDHOOD TRAUMA

- Accidents (i.e., motor vehicle)

- Mass Disasters

- Trafficking

- War/terrorism/refugee

- Medical (i.e., cancer, transplant)

- Suicide

- Bullying

- Child Abuse (i.e., physical, sexual, emotional, neglect)

- Victim/Witness of Violence
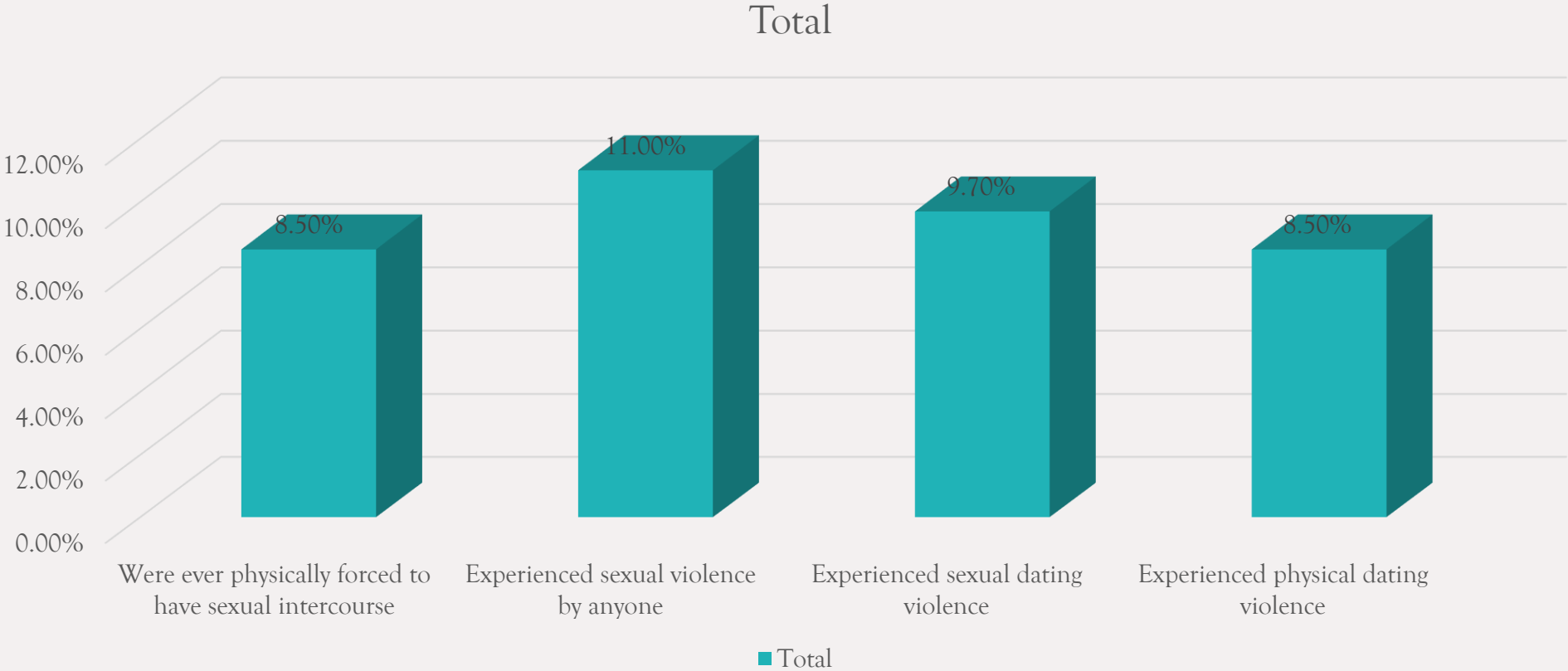 - *Domestic*
  - *Community*
  - *School*

HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH RISK BEHAVIOR SURVEY, 2021

Total

HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH RISK BEHAVIOR SURVEY, 2021

Total

HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH RISK BEHAVIOR SURVEY, 2021

Total

42.30%

22.20%

17.60%

17.60%

10.20%

45.0%
40.0%
35.0%
30.0%
25.0%
20.0%
15.0%
10.0%
5.0%
0.0%

Felt sad or hopeless

Seriously considered attempting suicide

Made a plan about how they would attempt suicide

Made a plan about how they would attempt suicide

Actually attempted suicide

■ Total

IMPACT OF CHILDHOOD TRAUMA

- Learning problems

- Disciplinary issues

- Increased use of behavioral health services

- Increased involvement with child welfare and juvenile justice

- Long-term health issues

- *SAMHSA*

COMMON DIAGNOSES RELATED TO TRAUMA

- PTSD

- Depressive disorders

- Anxiety disorders

- Secondary enuresis or encopresis

- Specific phobias

- Comorbidity with other behavioral health diagnoses:
  - *ADHD*
  - *ODD*
  - *Substance use disorders (SUDs)*

BEHAVIORAL TRAUMA SYMPTOMS

- Avoidance
- Maladaptive behaviors
  - *Sexualized behaviors*
  - *Violent behaviors*
  - *Bullying*
- Traumatic bonding
- Angry outbursts
- Impulsivity
- Difficulty with concentration
- Recklessness
- Substance Abuse
- Self-Injury

COGNITIVE TRAUMA SYMPTOMS

- Irrational beliefs

- Causation of trauma

- Distrust

- Distorted self-image

- Loss/betrayal of social contract

- Accurate, but unhelpful, cognitions

AFFECTIVE TRAUMA SYMPTOMS

- Fear

- Sadness

- Anger/irritability

- Anxiety

- Affective dysregulation

ELEMENTS OF TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE

TRAUMA INFORMED CARE
(SAMHSA, 2014)

- The three Es of trauma

    - *Event*

    - *Experience*

    - *Effects*

TRAUMA INFORMED CARE

(SAMHSA, 2014)

- Individual trauma results from an event, series of events, or set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or life threatening and that has lasting adverse effects on the individual's functioning and mental, physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being.

TRAUMA INFORMED CARE
(SAMHSA, 2014)

- The four Rs of trauma informed care:

    1. ***Realizes:*** *How trauma can affect families, individuals, groups, organizations, and communities*

    2. ***Recognizes:*** *Signs and symptoms of trauma*

    3. ***Responds:*** *By applying TIC principles to all areas of functioning including de-escalation practices*

    4. ***Actively Resists Re-traumatization:*** *Of students as well as staff*

TRAUMA INFORMED CARE

(SAMHSA, 2014)

- Key Principles of Trauma Informed Care:

    1. *Safety (both psychological and physical safety)*

    2. **Trustworthiness and Transparency**

    3. **Peer Support**

    4. **Collaboration and Mutuality**

    5. **Empowerment, Voice, and Choice**

    6. **Cultural, Historical, and Gender Issues**

CHARACTERISTICS OF TRAUMA-INFORMED SCHOOLS

"The question we should ask is not "what's wrong with you," but rather "what happened to you?"

Unlocking the Door to Learning: Trauma-Informed Classrooms & Transformational Schools (McInerney & McKlindon, 2015)

Cycle of Trauma

Trauma → Emotional/Psychological Damage → Behavioral Problems → Punishment
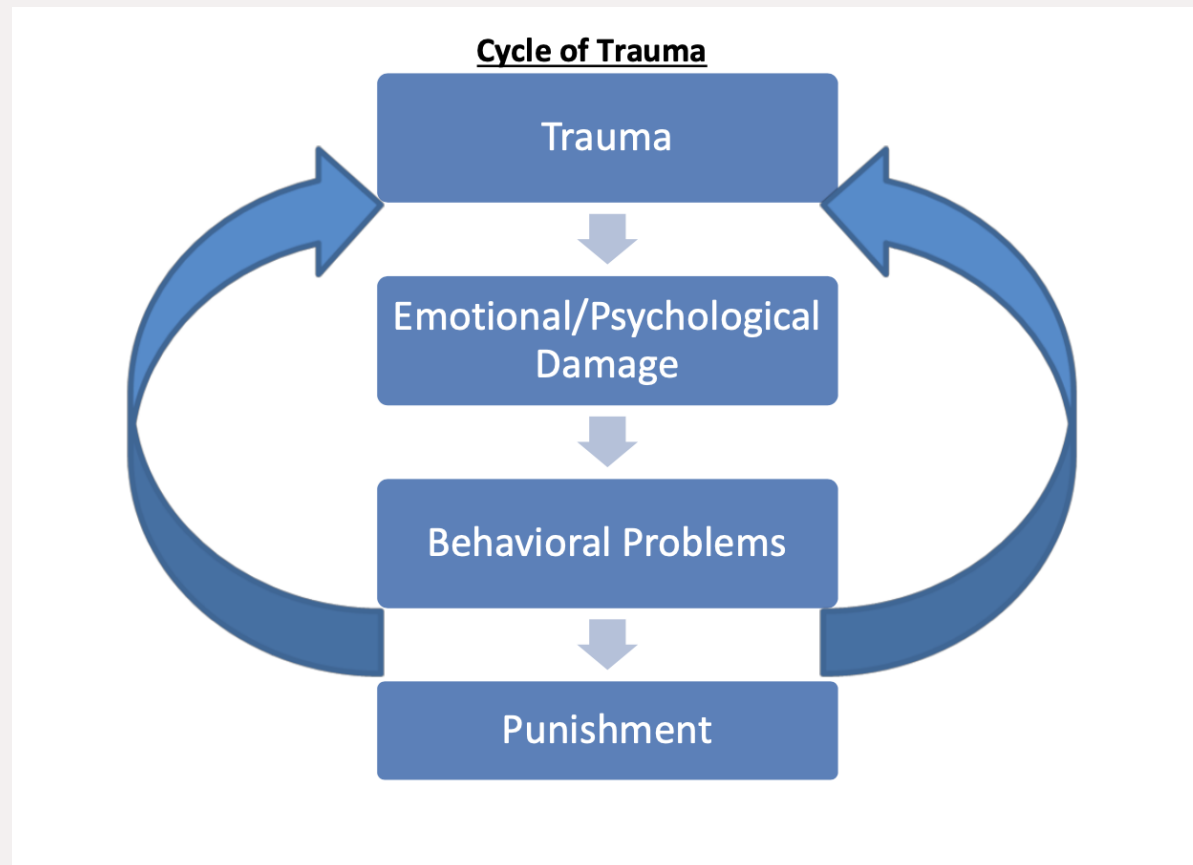
UNLOCKING THE DOOR TO LEARNING: TRAUMA-INFORMED CLASSROOMS & TRANSFORMATIONAL SCHOOLS (MCINERNEY & MCKLINDON, 2015)

- Becoming trauma-informed requires a paradigm shift at the staff and organizational level to re-focus on understanding what happened to a child, rather than focusing on the conduct alone.

**Seven Key Elements of Trauma-Informed Systems
(National Child Traumatic Stress Network)**

1. Screen routinely for trauma exposure and symptoms.
2. Implement culturally appropriate, evidence-based assessments and treatments for traumatic stress and symptoms.
3. Provide resources to children, families, and providers on trauma, its impact, and treatment options.
4. Build on the strengths of children and families impacted by trauma.
5. Address parent and caregiver trauma.
6. Collaborate across child-serving systems to coordinate care.
7. Support staff by minimizing and treating secondary traumatic stress, which can lead to burnout.

COURTESY: LOYOLA UNIVERSITY

LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO: ONLINE PROGRAM IN SCHOOL DISCIPLINE REFORM

- This certificate provides school administrators and educators with the tools and skills needed to lead comprehensive initiatives to reduce the use of suspensions and expulsions and their adverse impacts on vulnerable students.

- The cross-disciplinary program draws on the expertise of faculty in law, restorative practices, school discipline research, root cause analysis, and covers evidence-supported alternatives to exclusionary discipline, and system-level action planning.

- **For fall 2023 entry, the program has an extended July 17th, with courses beginning on August 28th 2023**