Trust-Based Relational Intervention®:
A Trauma-Informed Approach to use in Schools

American School Health Association
July 31st, 2019
Trust-Based Relational Intervention®
About the Institute

• The TCU Institute of Child Development was created as an outgrowth of the Hope Connection™, a research and intervention project developed in 1999 by Dr. David Cross and Dr. Karyn Purvis.

• Through a rich partnership between researchers and adoptive parents, the Institute has developed the Trust-Based Relational Intervention® (TBRI®) model for at-risk children that has made remarkable changes in the lives of many children and families.

• The legacy of Dr. Purvis’ work is being carried on after her passing through the Institute of Child Development and many other professionals who have devoted their careers to working with children from hard places and their families.
The experience of multiple, chronic, and prolonged, developmentally adverse traumatic events, most often of an interpersonal nature.
THE FIVE B’S OF TRAUMA

Brain  Body  Biology  Beliefs  Behaviors
Understanding Risk Factors

- Difficult pregnancy
- Difficult birth
- Early hospitalization
- Abuse
- Neglect
- Trauma
UPSTAIRS BRAIN

Decision Making
Organization
Attention
Planning
Regulate
Reason
Think
Learn

DOWNSTAIRS BRAIN

Arousal State
Danger
Fight
Flight
Freeze
Adverse Childhood Experiences

- Obesity
- Diabetes
- Depression
- Suicide Attempts
- Heart Disease
- Cancer
- Stroke
- COPD
- STDs
- Smoking
- Alcoholism
- Drug Use
The following charts compare how likely a person with 1, 2, 3, or 4 ACEs will experience specified behaviors than a person without ACEs.

*Having an ACE score of zero does not imply an individual could not have other risk factors for these health behaviors/diseases.
What is TBRI®?

• A holistic intervention that has been developed over the past decade

• An evidence based practice that meets the needs of the “whole child”

• An approach to caregiving that is developmentally respectful, responsive to trauma, and attachment-based
Why use TBRI®?

• TBRI® is effective because it is founded in research, theory, and experience

• By applying these principles, TBRI® helps a child or youth return to a natural developmental trajectory
Trust-Based Relational Intervention®

Connecting Principles
Empowering Principles
Correcting Principles
Connecting as the Foundation
TBRI® Connecting Principles

Mindfulness Strategies

Engagement Strategies
MINDFULNESS STRATEGIES

• Examine your own history

• Be aware of child’s emotional and physical needs

• Be aware of the current situation and environment
Attachment and Self-Regulation

• In optimal development, caregiver acts as regulation for the first year of life – how?
• Child learns to regulate on own – how?

External Regulation → Co-Regulation → Self-Regulation
Attachment and Self-Regulation

In places of fear:

• Child’s needs not regulated by safe adult
• Child doesn’t learn to regulate on own
• Child learns other strategies to get needs met
  • Aggression
  • Violence
  • Control
Secure Attachment

• High degree of competence
• Ask for help when they need it
• Persistent
• Creative, well-developed play
• Trusts adults
• Value people rather than things
• Socially competent
• Greater life, marital, job satisfaction
TBRI® Engagement Strategies:

The easiest and most effective way to implement TBRI® immediately is by starting with the Engagement Strategies. The Engagement Strategies, which are part of the TBRI® Connecting Principles, provide valuable ways to nurture healthy connections with children of all ages. When the Engagement Strategies are used consistently and warmly to respond to needs, they facilitate secure attachment. This is known as sensitive caregiving.

Furthermore, the easiest way to begin using the Engagement Strategies is to:

A. Identify the child with the greatest need(s).
B. Identify the greatest need in that child.
C. Select one engagement strategy to focus on and practice with that child.
The Five Engagement Strategies are as follows:

**TOUCH**
- Chin prompt
- Hand on shoulder
- Holding hands
- 'Symbolic touch'

**EYE CONTACT**
- Changes brain chemistry
- "I love seeing your eyes"
- "Are those eyes orange?!"

**VOICE QUALITY**
- Total Voice Control = Tone, Volume, Cadence
  - Crisis Prevention Institute, Inc.

**BEHAVIOR MATCHING**
- Sitting the same way as child/teen
- Choosing the same color toy/sticker as child/teen

**PLAYFUL INTERACTION**
- Playing games
- Not being afraid to be silly
- Using imaginative play
TBRI® Empowering Principles

Physiological Strategies

Ecological Strategies
Felt Safety

• Students who are safe don’t necessarily feel safe.
• What helps students feel safe?
Empowering Children

• Simple Ways to Empower
  • Snack every 2 hours
  • Carry a water bottle
  • Create opportunities for physical play
  • Have noise cancelling headphones available
  • Have fidgets available
  • Provide objects for chewing
  • Provide cushions, weighted items, and bean bags
Nurture Groups

• A way to teach the skills of attachment
• Can be flexible – use 15 min up to 1 hr.
• Rules – Stick Together, No Hurts, Have Fun
• Check-In/Ice Breaker
• Band-Aids
• Engine Check/Calming Techniques/Life Skill
• Feeding
• Closing
HOW DOES YOUR ENGINE RUN?
Sensory Ideas for Classrooms

- Bean Bags
- Bodysox
- Blowing Bubbles
- Chewelry
- Exercise Ball
- Fidgets
- Gum or straws to chew on
- Mini trampoline
- Noise cancelling headphones
- Resistance Bands/bungee cords around chair legs
- Velcro under desk
- Visual timers
- Waterbeads, beans, rice
- Weighted items (lap pads, blankets, or stuffed animals)
- Wiggle Seats
- Calming Corner [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dxBy1w4S0yw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dxBy1w4S0yw)
TBRI® Correcting Principles

Proactive Strategies

Life Value Terms – Scripts
Choices
Compromises
Sharing Power

Responsive Strategies

IDEAL Response©

Levels of Response™
TBRI Problem Solving

• What are the challenging behaviors?
• What is the message behind those behaviors?
• Ask yourself these questions:
  Am I connected?
  Am I empowering the student?
  Am I teaching proactively?
  Am I catching it low?
  Do I have a plan to help calm the student?
• If you answer No, to any of the above, create steps to do those things
• Follow up with your efforts. How did it work?
RESOURCES

• www.child.tcu.edu
• https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=TBRI
• The Connected Child – Dr. Karyn Purvis & Dr. David Cross
• Beyond Behaviors – Dr. Mona Delahooke
• The Importance of Addressing Complex Trauma in Schools: Implementing Trust-Based Relational Intervention in an Elementary School, (Purvis, Milton, Harlow, Paris & Cross, 2014), International Journal of Research and Practice on Student Engagement.
• The Early Promise of TBRI Implementation in Schools, (Reid, Proctor, & Brooks, 2018). School Leadership Review.