



California Social Emotional
Learning Modules

Professional Learning Toolkit

**Addressing Trauma and
Adversity: Supporting
Student Mental Health**



Topic 5




Topic and Module Overview

Caring for Ourselves: The Science of Emotional Resilience	MOD 1.1	Understanding Your Emotions
	MOD 1.2	Navigating Your Emotions
	MOD 1.3	How to Be Kind to Yourself
	MOD 1.4	How to Be Compassionate Without Suffering So Much
	MOD 1.5	Self-Awareness, Emotional Resilience, and Equity
Safety & Belonging in Classrooms and Schools	MOD 2.1	Why Belonging Matters
	MOD 2.2	Knowing Ourselves First: Surfacing Our Beliefs About Social and Emotional Well-Being and Belonging in Schools
	MOD 2.3	The Questions of Belonging: Interventions to Help Students Feel Like They Belong
	MOD 2.4	Meeting Students' Psychological Needs to Help Them Feel Like They Belong
	MOD 2.5	Cultivating Belonging Through Teacher-Student and Peer Relationships
	MOD 2.6	Building a Belonging School Through Trust and Psychological Safety
Teaching for Social, Emotional, and Academic Development	MOD 3.1	Preparing to Support SEL in Classrooms
	MOD 3.2	Explicit SEL Instruction
	MOD 3.3	Planning for Social-Emotional-Academic Development
	MOD 3.4	Integrating SEL into Learning
Committing to Racial Equity and Cultural Responsiveness	MOD 4.1	Unpacking Our Identities: Addressing Identity, Power, and Privilege
	MOD 4.2	Engaging in Meaningful Conversations about Race and Equity
	MOD 4.3	SEL Instruction Through a Culturally Responsive Lens
	MOD 4.4	Elevating Student Voices
	MOD 4.5	Evaluating Our Systems, Policies, and Procedures
Addressing Trauma and Adversity: Supporting Student Mental Health	MOD 5.1	Defining and Understanding Trauma and Adversity
	MOD 5.2	Recognizing the Signs of Childhood Trauma and Adversity
	MOD 5.3	Creating Healing-Centered Environments
	MOD 5.4	Developmental and Other Strategies for Healing
	MOD 5.5	Mental Health Crisis Intervention: Steps and Strategies
Supporting SEL through Family and Community Engagement	MOD 6.1	Exploring Family and Community Engagement with an SEL Lens
	MOD 6.2	Building Partnerships with and Honoring the Contributions of Diverse Families
	MOD 6.3	Listening and Communicating Effectively with Families
	MOD 6.4	Expanded Learning and SEL: Collaborating Across In-School and OST Contexts
	MOD 6.5	Aligning around SEL Through Community Partnerships



Topic 5 Learning Objectives

Addressing Trauma and Adversity: Supporting Student Mental Health

Content	Learning Objectives	CA TSEL Guidelines
5.1 Defining and Understanding Trauma and Adversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define trauma, mental health, and the role of SEL in addressing mental health Understand Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES), tolerable, chronic, and toxic stress and how each can impact development Reflect on our own experiences and how they inform our response to trauma 	 <p>Link Objectives to Developmental Indicators in California Transformative SEL Competencies</p> <p>The California Department of Education (CDE) aims to support and advance the efforts of educators across California who are working to fully integrate systemic SEL and equity by building on the promise of T-SEL as a concept. To provide these supports, the CDE has articulated developmental indicators for CASEL's five core competencies.</p> <p>Sourced from CDE (July 2023):</p>
5.2 Recognizing the Signs of Childhood Trauma and Adversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learn how to recognize the general signs of trauma, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> --the connection between psychosocial development, stress, and trauma --signs and indicators of stress and trauma at each psychosocial stage --four key reminders about signs of stress and trauma 	
5.3 Creating Healing-Centered Environments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand the components of healing-centered engagement Learn about trauma-informed programs and practices that support hope, healing, and equity Explore how and why educators can elevate Black joy 	
5.4 Developmental and Other Strategies for Healing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore specific strategies and approaches for healing and fostering resilience, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strategies that address 1) safety, 2) relationships, and 3) regulation - Strategies that target students' developmental needs at three levels: 1) preschool, 2) elementary, and 3) secondary. 	
5.5 Mental Health Crisis Intervention: Steps and Strategies	<p>Explore the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What constitutes a mental health crisis The warning signs of a mental health crisis in children and teens and what to do if the crisis involves suicide How to de-escalate a crisis Health equity, disparities, and the role of race and poverty in mental health Connecting students to professional mental health help Resources to develop a school-wide crisis response plan and a mental health safety plan for students 	



Additional Resources: Addressing Trauma and Adversity: Supporting Student Mental Health

Research and Research Briefs

[How to Implement Trauma-informed Care to Build Resilience to Childhood Trauma](#): This brief summarizes current research and promising practices for implementing TIC to support the well-being of children exposed to trauma and help them reach their full potential.

Articles/Websites

[Child Psychiatrists Warn That the Pandemic May Be Driving Up Kids' Suicide Risk](#): This NPR article discusses the increase in suicide among students, the causes, and possible solutions.

[Erik Erikson's Eight Stages of Psychosocial Development](#): This brief article (including a graphic) gives an overview of Erikson's stages of human development.

[National Child Traumatic Stress Network, Age Related Reactions to Trauma](#): This two-page article describes how young children, school-age children, and adolescents react to traumatic events while offering suggestions on how parents and caregivers can help and support them.

[The Belief Behind the Behavior](#): A one-page chart helps teachers understand the beliefs and goals motivating student behavior—along with ways educators can respond effectively.

[The Future of Healing: Sifting from Trauma Informed Care to Healing Centered Engagement](#): In a groundbreaking article, Shawn Ginwright, argues for "a fresh lens that promotes a holistic view of healing from traumatic experiences and environments."

Video and Audio Resources

A short video from Edutopia demonstrates how the cortisol-fueled fight-or-flight reaction can be better regulated by [Activating the Brain with Movement Breaks](#) (3:12).

[Dr. Bessel van der Kolk: On Interoception and Yoga](#) (3:50): Trauma expert, Dr. van der Kolk, explains how practices such as yoga and tai chi can help people cope with the effects of trauma.

[Dr. Shawn Ginwright, Keynote Address, 2019 Boost Conference](#) (43:11): Watch a powerful talk about radical healing in critical times.

Dr. Stephen Porges offers additional insights about how polyvagal theory figures into trauma treatment in [How Heart Rate Figures into Trauma Treatment](#) (3:13).

[Peace Corner: Creating Safe Space for Reflection](#) (2:39): This brief video from Edutopia shows how students can practice self-regulation and manage their stress and frustration in a de-escalation space within a classroom.

[Shifting From Trauma-Informed to Healing-Centered](#) (28:55): This webinar from Dr. Asif Wilson explores the relationship between trauma-informed pedagogies and deficit ideologies.

In this TED Talk, Charles Hunt shares [What Trauma Taught Me About Resilience](#) (14:21).



Additional Resources: Addressing Trauma and Adversity: Supporting Student Mental Health

Adult-focused Practices for Supporting Students

[Check-in Model](#): This document provides guidance for Pupil Personnel Service (PPS) professionals in supporting all students during the global pandemic using a “check-in” model.

[Toxic Stress Guide](#): This guide from Harvard University’s Center on the Developing Child includes videos and articles that features in-depth information about the science and causes of toxic stress and how to prevent and address it.

HeartMath offers a free [HeartMath Experience](#) with nine videos that provide information about the brain and stress as well as strategies for emotion regulation and coherence.

“[Talking to Kids about Their Mental Health](#)” is a how-to guide for families with strategies for establishing a healthy rapport with your children in order to address difficult topics together.

[Tier 2 Strategies for Building Relationships](#) is a tool from Turnaround for Children that supports teachers as they brainstorm relationship-building strategies for individual students.

Important Websites and Information in California

[California School-based Mental Health Alliance](#) works to identify best practices for trauma-informed, healing-centered, and resilience-focused work in schools and school-based health centers in California.

[California Student Mental Health Implementation Guide \(November 2020\)](#) is a guide intended to support local education agencies (LEAs) and county behavioral health departments (BHDs) as they partner to deliver comprehensive, high-quality school mental health services.

[California Department of Education Mental Health Resources](#) focus on psychological and mental health issues, including coping with tragedy, crisis intervention and prevention, school psychology, and suicide prevention.

[National Alliance on Mental Illness California](#) is the leading organization of individuals working with mutual respect to provide help, hope, and health for those affected by serious mental illness.

[Suicide Prevention Training](#): California Department of Education, San Diego County Office of Education, and LivingWorks designed this training to help you recognize potential signs of suicidal thinking and connect students to professional help.



Additional Resources: Addressing Trauma and Adversity: Supporting Student Mental Health

Practices for Students

[Emotional Response Strategies](#) (In-Person): This tool from Turnaround for Children supports students in independently identifying strategies they can use to respond to their emotions. It also provides an opportunity to identify important relationships they can rely on when they need support in dealing with an emotionally-charged event or situation.

[Emotional Response Strategies](#) (Virtual): In this planner from Turnaround for Children, students think about the emotions they expect to feel during the day. Then, they talk with others about the strategies that they use when they have strong feelings and need something to do with them.

[Making Classrooms and Schools Trauma-Informed and Healing-Centered](#): A quick guide from Greater Good in Education that offers practical strategies for making classrooms and schools trauma-informed and healing-centered.

Focus on the [New 3 Rs](#) (Relationships, Routines, Resilience): Infographics from Turnaround for Children that provide practical strategies for parents, families, and educators to help students develop resilience.

[Peace Corner: Creating Safe Space for Reflection](#) (2:39) A short video from Edutopia that shows how students can practice self-regulation and manage their stress and frustration in a de-escalation space in each classroom.

[Speak Up at School: How to Respond to Everyday Prejudice, Bias, and Stereotypes](#): A guide from Learning for Justice that helps educators and students develop the skills for speaking up when someone uses biased language, microaggressions, or stereotypes in school.

[Strategies for Trauma-informed School Communities](#): Browse this guide from California's Essentials for Childhood Initiative to learn how to implement trauma-informed school practices to improve resiliency in school-age children and youth.



MOD 5.1 Defining and Understanding Trauma and Adversity



TAKE IT DEEPER: Our Identity with Trauma and Adversity

Think about the following aspects of your identity and how they impact the way you engage with this content.

Your background. What are the ways your upbringing or culture might influence how you think about or respond to topics such as trauma, adversity, and mental health?

Your inner voice. What stories or narratives do you tell yourself about mental health and trauma? Are those stories serving you, your family, and your students?

Your experience. As someone who experienced a global pandemic, you learned how to navigate a sense of collective trauma. What strategies and knowledge do you have now that you can share with others?

Your role models. Do you have a mentor or someone you admire who has suffered trauma or mental health challenges and has shown resilience or channeled their experiences into something constructive?

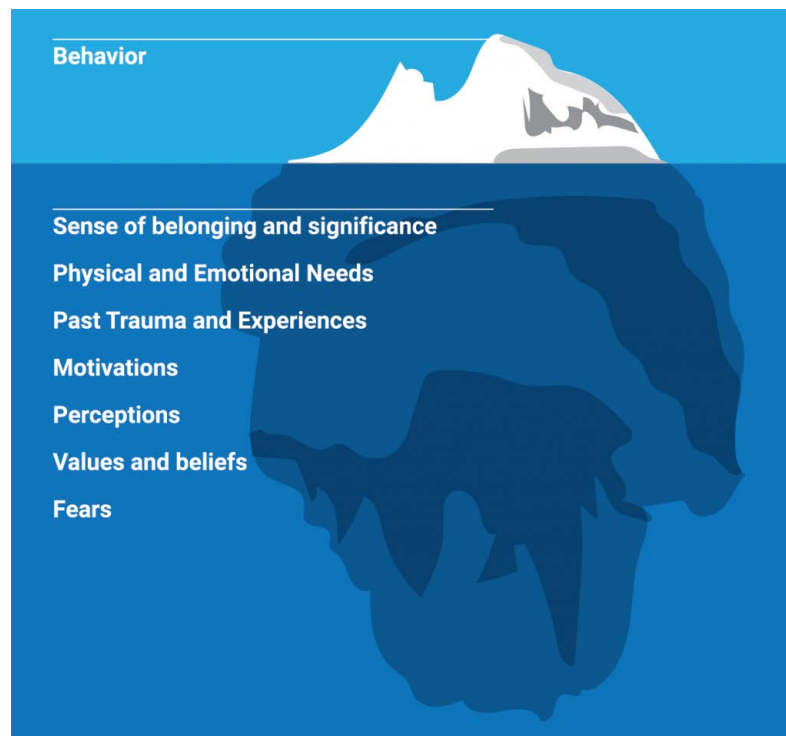
MOD 5.2 Recognizing the Signs of Childhood Trauma and Adversity



TAKE IT DEEPER:

Beliefs Behind Behaviors

Referencing the Behavior iceberg, beneath the surface of our behaviors is our sense of belonging, and our physical and emotional needs. Far below are past traumas, our perceptions, fears, values, and beliefs.



Your experience. How might childhood trauma look in students academically? Emotionally? Behaviorally?

Your experience. How do you respond and what are your beliefs behind those responses?

MOD 5.3 Creating Healing-Centered Environments



TAKE IT DEEPER: Creating Healing-Centered Environments:

Watch a video on [Developing Trauma Sensitive, Healing-Centered Communities](#).

What are three new insights about cultivating healing-centered environments?

What are two commitments you are going to personally make to increase healing in your classroom, in your school, or in your community?

What is something you want to dig into deeper?

MOD 5.4 Developmental and Other Strategies for Healing



TAKE IT DEEPER: Strategies for Healing

What responses and practices do you currently use for healing?

What specific strategies to create safety, cultivate relationships, and foster emotion regulation?

What are your strengths and areas for growth?

How might you learn and expand your ability to support healing and resilience?

MOD 5.5 Mental Health Crisis Intervention: Steps and Strategies



TAKE IT DEEPER: Brainstorming A Network of Supports for Students in Crisis

How could your school or organization support students in developing a personal well-being plan that includes the following: 1) personal warning signs of stress or anxiety and 2) strategies, assets, resources, and/or relationships they can draw on to navigating challenges?

What local organizations or institutions could partnerships be built with and among to increase the number of relationships and resources students can turn to in crisis? Are current partnerships with local resources meeting your student and community needs? If not, how could those partnerships be bolstered?

Are families and community stakeholders being intentionally leveraged as mental health resources? Is there listening or education that needs to happen to enhance family and community engagement around this topic?

Are students being leveraged and engaged to form a peer network to provide support to other struggling students where appropriate? How are students already leading in this way and how can educators support their efforts?