



Through Our Eyes: Children, Violence, and Trauma

Videos and Resources

Last Updated April 2014 / NCJ #241394

Interventions in Schools Transcript

- MARLEEN WONG, PH.D., LCSW, CLINICAL PROFESSOR, SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK, UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA:** We have seen so many children come into schools who are exposed to violence—issues that place our children in jeopardy every single day.
- RON HERTEL, PROGRAM SUPERVISOR, COMPASSIONATE SCHOOLS INITIATIVE, OSPI, WASHINGTON STATE:** Bullying and harassment.
- MARY DORGAN, TEACHER, MANITOU PARK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, TACOMA, WA:** Domestic violence, neglect, abuse.
- TIM DELMORE, TEACHER, RED RIVER HIGH SCHOOL, GRAND FORKS, ND:** We have had a multitude of suicides.
- JOE VARGAS:** I've got kids here that have seen a dead body in the street. They think, "Am I going to be next?"
- MARY A. WILSON, ED.D., PRINCIPAL, MANITOU PARK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, TACOMA, WA:** We had a first grader choking himself, saying that he wanted to die.
- RON HERTEL:** Survival trumps learning for children who have trauma in their life. And when survival trumps learning, learning is going to be compromised. Every student, you know, spends 6 to 7 hours a day in the school. If they live in a chaotic environment at home, many times, the school is the only safe, sane place where they feel that their well-being is regarded. It becomes a real important survival tool in students' lives.
- MARY DORGAN:** We talked about what bullying is. Now who can think of a way that someone is bullying? Children who deal with traumatic issues, their mind is not on the schoolwork. As educators, we need to address the emotional, the social, the physical, and the intellectual parts of children.
- RON HERTEL:** When you think of one-third of the students that are in your classroom, impacted by the traumas that are going on in their life... The Compassionate Schools Initiative in Washington State, and the training that accompanies that, is really to help teachers better understand what trauma does to a student's ability to learn.
- MARY WILSON:** My staff went through extensive training. They welcomed it. It was a huge paradigm shift of changing attitudes and perceptions. It talked about adverse childhood experiences and how it affected the child.
- RON HERTEL:** We ask a student, "What happened to you?" instead of, "What's wrong with you?"
- MICHELLE CANION, TEACHER, MANITOU PARK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, TACOMA, WA:** We know the problems that they have. But really understanding how it affects them—the long-term effects of it—has been real helpful to us. Active listening! Sometimes it's the quiet kids. They put on a mask, and you have no idea what's going on. I'm always asking, you know, "Hey, how's it going? We're here to help you." It's all about building a relationship with the kid.
- MARY WILSON:** We have to be able to intervene right away. We build safety plans, we work with the parents, and we say, "This is the plan that we have, but we want your input. What can you do to support us?"
- MARY DORGAN:** When you deal with children who have traumas, the conventional methods of dealing with them are often not applicable.
- INSTRUCTOR:** So we're going to do the sun salutation.
- MARY WILSON:** Many of our kids needed to learn how to calm down. So we started yoga. And the kids absolutely love it.
- INSTRUCTOR:** This is...?
- STUDENT:** Swaying tree.
- INSTRUCTOR:** Swaying tree.
- RON HERTEL:** It's not our intent to turn teachers into counselors or social workers for their students, but to really create the climate and the culture in the school that benefits their ability to learn.
- MARLEEN WONG:** School-age children can experience a wide range of traumatic events, regardless of whether a child lives in an urban area or a suburban or rural area. Is there a lot of crime in the child's neighborhood? Is there drug use and abuse? Experiences that adults need to ask about.
- DEITRA BRYANT-MALLORY, MA, LICSW, DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF SPECIALIZED INSTRUCTION, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS:** We know that there is a link between academic engagement and school engagement, and traumatic stress and violence. Some of the symptoms that our children present with in school, like re-experiencing, hyper-arousal, avoidance—those things show up as problematic behaviors in the school setting.
- MARLEEN WONG:** When we created CBITS—that's Cognitive Behavioral Intervention for Trauma in Schools—we wanted to create an intervention that was school-friendly.

SARA DUCKERY, LICSW, SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKER, KELLY MILLER MIDDLE SCHOOL, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS: The goal of CBITS is to give our students a set of skills. It helps the students deal with the past trauma that they've experienced, and also helps them deal better in the future with things that may be stressful for them. We're going to be using the Fear Thermometer in order to kind of assess how we're feeling, okay?

DEITRA BRYANT-MALLORY: CBITS is a 10-week intervention that gives kids individual and group sessions. It includes all kinds of activities that make trauma bearable.

SARA DUCKERY: We talked about different relaxation strategies that we can use when we're feeling really stressed-out.

DEITRA BRYANT-MALLORY: It's an intervention that is fun and is appropriate for kids in the adolescent developmental stage.

MARLEEN WONG: They learn ways to cope with the anxiety, how to work through those moments when they're thinking about the incident. Really teaching them problem-solving skills.

DEITRA BRYANT-MALLORY: What that means is that we have children that are better able to attend in class, better able to have strong social relationships and make healthy attachments to both peers and adults. Those are the things that make for successful personal and academic lives.

JODY THOMPSON, ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT OF TEACHING & LEARNING, GRAND FORKS PUBLIC SCHOOLS, ND: In our school system, everybody is responsible for our children—from the custodian to the cook to the classroom teacher to the school secretary to the building principal.

FAYE KIHNE, LSW, DIRECTOR OF PREVENTION & COMMUNITY SERVICES, COMMUNITY VIOLENCE INTERVENTION CENTER, GRAND FORKS, ND: Every school in Grand Forks County has signed on to do primary prevention and intervention for kids. The Safer Tomorrows project addresses childhood exposure to all types of violence.

JODY THOMPSON: We work closely with very good partners across our community to make sure that our students are safe.

THERESE HUGG, LPC, WELLNESS COORDINATOR, COMMUNITY VIOLENCE INTERVENTION CENTER, GRAND FORKS, ND: We bring therapists that are trained in trauma therapies into the schools to meet with students who have been exposed to violence. It's important to have trauma-informed care and trauma-informed teaching.

JAN VERDI, TEACHER, LARIMORE JR./SR. HIGH SCHOOL, LARIMORE, ND: Bullying can stay with you forever. And it can leave scars; it can tear you apart. We had indicators that bullying is going on, especially cyber bullying. The anti-bullying training that we took gave us the background on how to conduct, say, class meetings and how to train other teachers.

JODY THOMPSON: We have our own social workers and counselors, so if there is a report of bullying or violence, we have a systematic way to manage that across all of our school facilities.

TIM DELMORE: Our counselors do a very good job of alerting staff of potential students that are going through problems. If we hear that students are going through some kind of abuse, we're obligated to report that. A lot of students don't understand that they are in abusive situations. So we focus a lot on relationships, talking about, "What does a normal, healthy relationship look like?"

MIKE BERG, RETIRED FOOTBALL COACH, GRAND FORKS, ND: One of the points we want to get across is that we can be abusive without even thinking about it. Coaches see things and hear things that other adults don't. They're in situations on a practice field, in a locker room, on a bus, where they can actually see teachable moments. We can impart so much more that the kids can take with them when they leave that's gonna have a great influence, not only on themselves, but on the people in their lives.

JAN VERDI: The safety of our children is everybody's responsibility. They're our kids, they're our legacy, and they need to be taken care of.

[Web Site Links Disclaimer](#) | [Multimedia User Tips](#)



[OVC Home](#) | [OVCRC](#) | [OVC TTAC](#) | [FAQs](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Site Map](#) | [Archive](#) | [Link to Us](#)
[DOJ Home](#) | [OJP Home](#) | [CrimeSolutions.gov](#) | [GMS](#) | [Grants.gov](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [Language Access](#)
[Legal Policies and Disclaimers](#) | [FOIA](#) | [USA.gov](#) | [Recovery.gov](#)



Office for Victims of Crime
810 Seventh Street NW., Eighth Floor, Washington, DC 20531

The Office for Victims of Crime is a component of the Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice.