

What Trauma-Informed Practice Looks Like



The Royal Commission into child sexual abuse recommended schools be “trauma-informed”. Being trauma-informed does not mean teachers and schools must be trained to treat trauma. Rather they must understand the impact it can have on children's lives.

An Australian Institute of Family Studies discussion paper on trauma-informed practice notes:

To provide trauma-informed services, all staff of an organisation, from the receptionist to the direct care worker and the board of directors, must understand how violence impacts on the lives of the people being served so that every interaction is consistent with the recovery process and reduces the possibility of re-traumatisation.

So, for schools to be trauma-informed, school staff need to know about the prevalence and consequences of childhood trauma. Increasing the confidence of school staff about how to work with children impacted by trauma and adversity is also important.



Examples of trauma-informed practice include:



Providing teachers with information about how best to teach and support children to regulate their emotions and build positive relationships. This includes getting children to identify their emotions and check in on themselves and others around them to get acquainted with how they and their peers react to situations.



Assessing and revising school policies and practices that may re-traumatise or trigger anxiety or aggression in students (such as student isolation practices).



Providing staff with self-care strategies, such as meditation, to help them respond to their experiences working with children impacted by adversity or trauma.



Encouraging staff to recognise students' strengths and help students develop their own learning goals.

References:

Content taken from *The Conversation*.

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Adapted by *Get into Neurodiversity* for a global audience.