

Understanding and Mitigating the COVID-19 Mental Health Pandemic

Helping Members Navigate
Change from
Retraumatization to Reform



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Session Overview

1. Collective Trauma
2. Our Current State
3. Assisting Staff and Members
4. Positioning Your Pool to Lead
5. Tools to Rebuild Trust and Safety and Prevent Violence



Collective Trauma



Our Current State

Mental State	CALM	ALERT	ALARM	FEAR	TERROR
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“This is not sustainable”

“School staff have been bitten, spit on, kicked, punched, urinated on, hit by thrown objects, etc.”

“Schools are stretched thin and need to have some things removed from their plate.”

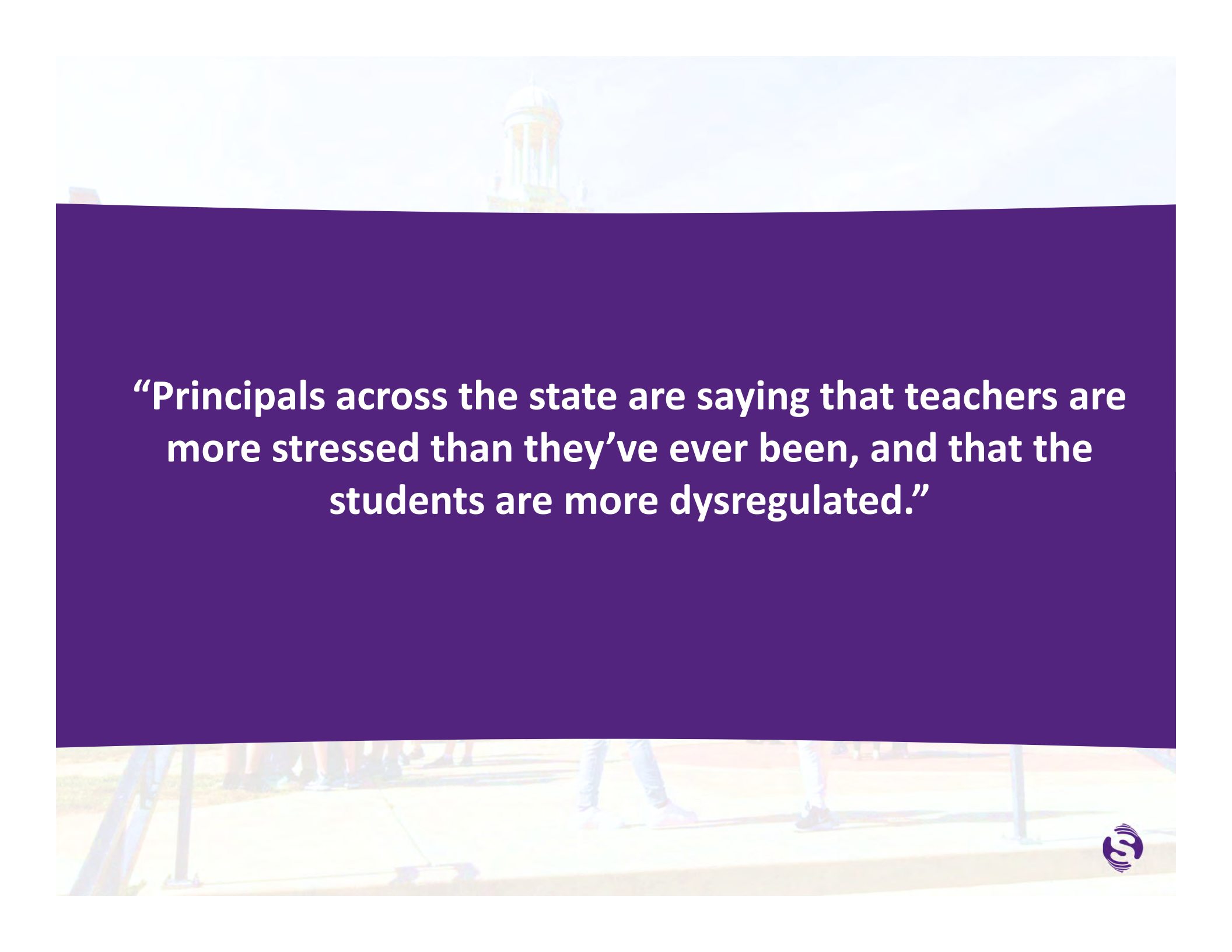
“A general sense of helplessness and fear has permeated our school”

“These are students in crisis”

“Schools are in survival mode”

“This is the most difficult period in public education in my 23 years”





“Principals across the state are saying that teachers are more stressed than they’ve ever been, and that the students are more dysregulated.”



Why is "state" important?



Sense of Time	Extended Future	Days Hours	Hours Minutes	Minutes Seconds	Loss of Sense of Time
Primary secondary Brain Areas	NEOCORTEX <i>Subcortex</i>	SUBCORTEX <i>Limbic</i>	LIMBIC <i>Midbrain</i>	MIDBRAIN <i>Brainstem</i>	BRAINSTEM <i>Autonomic</i>
Cognition	Abstract	Concrete	Emotional	Reactive	Reflexive
Mental State	CALM	ALERT	ALARM	FEAR	TERROR

What state are our educators in?



Regulation





ACES Matter

“A regulated, calm adult can regulate a dysregulated, anxious child but a dysregulated adult can never calm a dysregulated child.”

Dr. Bruce Perry

All learning is state dependent



					
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www.ChildTrauma.org Bruce D Perry, MD, PhD © 2010-2013					

- Have you ever become upset at someone or something, and while doing so, remembered many past instances of when you were upset at the same person/thing? This is an example of state dependent learning.
- State dependent learning occurs when you recall information easily when you are in the same physiological or emotional state or setting as you were when you originally encoded the information.
- What happens if your earliest “learning” of something was in a situation that caused you trauma?



**It's
Not
Fair**

**“TRAUMA
COMES BACK AS
A REACTION, NOT
A MEMORY.”**

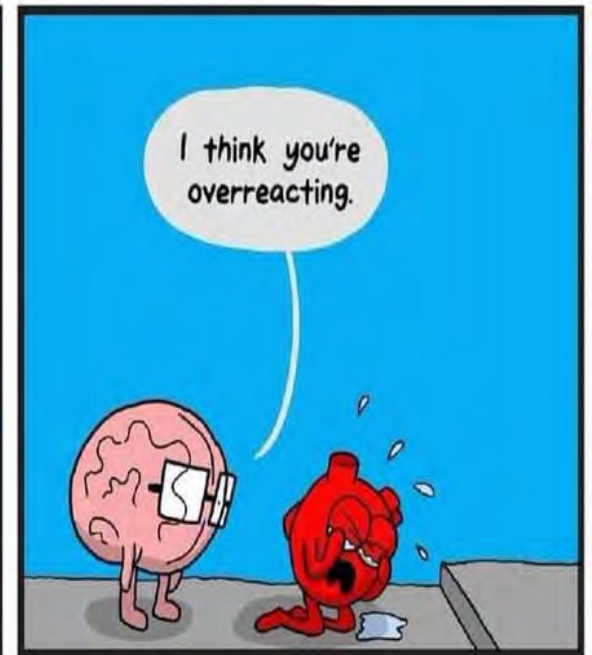
- BESSEL VAN DER KOLK



“

1. Why are you so emotional?
2. That is not a normal response.
3. I think you're overreacting.
4. It's not a big deal.

”



Supporting Staff and Members



The Four R's

A program, organization, community, or system that is trauma-informed...

- **REALIZES** the widespread impact of trauma and understands potential paths for recovery;
- **RECOGNIZES** the signs and symptoms of trauma;
- **RESPONDS** by fully integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, and practices;
- Actively seeks to **RESIST** re-traumatization.



What Else Can We Do?



What Can Educators and Districts Do?


- Create positive, safe, and affirming school environments
- Expand social/emotional learning programs and other evidence-based approaches that promote healthy development
- Learn how to recognize signs of changes in mental and physical health among students, including trauma and behavior changes
- Provide a continuum of supports to meet student mental health needs, including evidence-based prevention practices and trauma-informed mental health care.
- Expand the school-based mental health workforce
- Support the mental health and trauma awareness of all school personnel



How can you advise your members?

- Protect and prioritize students with higher needs and those at higher risk of mental health challenges
- Provide access to comprehensive, affordable, and age-appropriate mental health care for all employees and their families, including dependent children
- Implement policies that address underlying drivers of employee mental health challenges, including both home and workplace stressors
- Create a workplace culture that affirms the importance of the mental health and wellbeing of all employees and their families
- Regularly assess employees' sense of wellbeing within the workplace



The background of the slide is a composite image. The top half shows a large, ornate dome of a building, likely a government or institutional structure, under a clear sky. The bottom half shows a group of people walking on a paved path, with their legs and feet visible. A large, semi-transparent purple rectangle is overlaid in the center, containing white text.

Although we may not feel it, we have the luxury of time. We can use that time to plan with purpose and vision, as well as use it to position our agencies to lead.





HOPE



@PeacefulMindPeacefulLife

As traumatized children,
we always dreamed that
someone would come and save us.
We never dreamed that it would,
in fact, be ourselves, as adults.
-Alice Little

Thank You

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