Project AWARE: Supporting the Implementation of Trauma Informed Care within FCPS

Unfortunately, childhood exposure to traumatic events (e.g., violence, neglect, and abuse) is a common occurrence nationally and internationally, and many trauma exposed children often do not receive the treatment or intervention support needed to address emotional and psychological distress after exposure to traumatic events.

With the understanding that children’s emotional and psychological functioning has a significant impact on their ability to excel within the educational system, FCPS is utilizing their SAMHSA funded AWARE grant to partner with the University of Kentucky Center on Trauma and Children to assist with implementing Trauma Informed Care (TIC) within the educational system.

Research and clinical practice has shown that systematic implementation of TIC within the educational system can enhance children’s academic, emotional, and psychological functioning.
What is Trauma Informed Care?

TIC consists of practices and procedures that recognize and address the impact that exposure to violence and maltreatment has on children’s emotional, relational, neurobiological, and cognitive functioning. Systematic implementation of TIC within a school system requires:

- increasing school personnel’s understanding of trauma and its impact on student’s functioning
- a review of current policies and procedures to ensure they are sensitive to the needs of students who have been trauma exposed
- the development of additional policies and procedures to meet the needs of students who have been trauma exposed
- ongoing collaboration efforts with other systems to enhance school personnel’s knowledge of and ability to address the needs of students who have been trauma exposed.

Through the FCPS and CTAC partnership, trainings have been conducted with several schools including William Wells Brown, Winburn Middle, MLK, Crawford Middle, Mary Todd Elementary, Bryan Station High School, Preschool Center, The Stables, Family Care Center, Day Treatment, Detention Center, and Homebound/Home Hospital. Furthermore, key helping professionals across the district (e.g., FRYSC, school psychologists, guidance counselors, and social workers) have been trained in TIC as well. Tates Creek High, Tates Creek Middle and Tates Creek Elementary have been identified for Project Aware year 3 to continue our Trauma Informed Care initiative. To aid with the implementation of TIC and to enhance sustainability within trained schools, an opportunity for ongoing collaboration with schools and CTAC will be offered via a Trauma Champion program.

What is the Trauma Champion program?

The Trauma Champion program will consist of educators and school personnel who are passionate about infusing TIC within their school setting. These individuals will be identified as Trauma Champions, and the Trauma Champion program will provide a platform and opportunity for Trauma Champions from various schools across the district to network and problem solve concerns and barriers as they implement TIC. Also, trauma informed specialist from CTAC will be present at Trauma Champion program meetings to help facilitate conversation, aid in problem solving, and to further enhance the knowledge and skill set of the Trauma Champions. This program will create a community of trauma informed advocates within local schools who can champion the efforts of TIC within FCPS for many years to come.