



ST. AEMILIAN-LAKESIDE, INC.—
Providing foster care, education and mental health services

Creating Trauma Sensitive Schools

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Trauma-Specific vs. Trauma-Sensitive School

Therapy

- Licensed mental health professionals
- Intervention occurs in therapist's office in 1:1 or group sessions
- Focus is on addressing trauma reactions & reducing symptoms

School

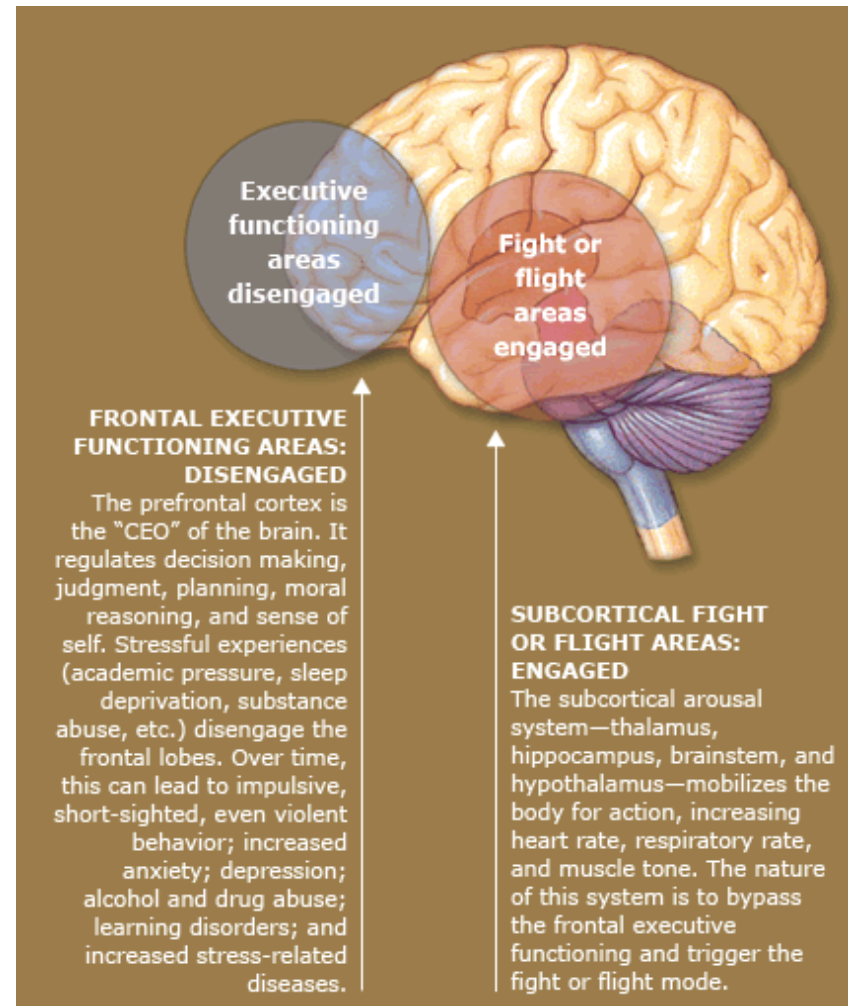
- Licensed educators & support staff
- Sensitivity & accommodations occur throughout the school
- Focus is on students' educational success through emotional & physical safety, empowerment, trust, choice, & collaboration

Activity



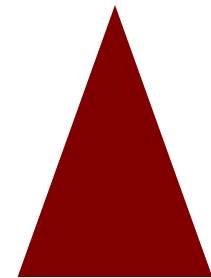
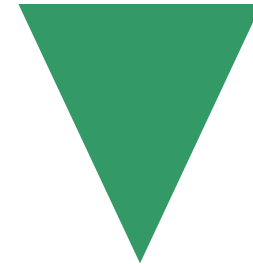
Impact on the Brain

- If there is danger, the “thinking” brain shuts down, allowing the “doing” brain to act
- Traumatized children experience changes in brain structures, neuro-chemistry & genetic expression



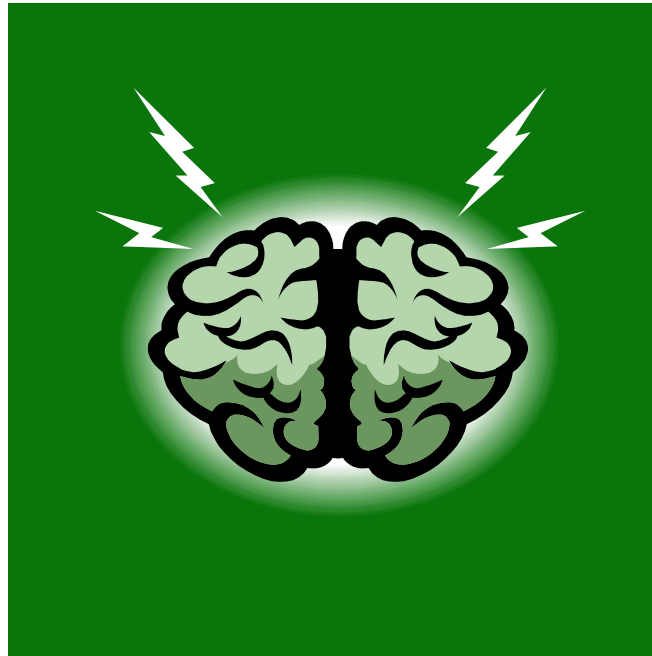
Cortical Modulation

- Cortex can modulate lower brain
- Lower become sensitized through early trauma
- Cortical development is impaired through early trauma

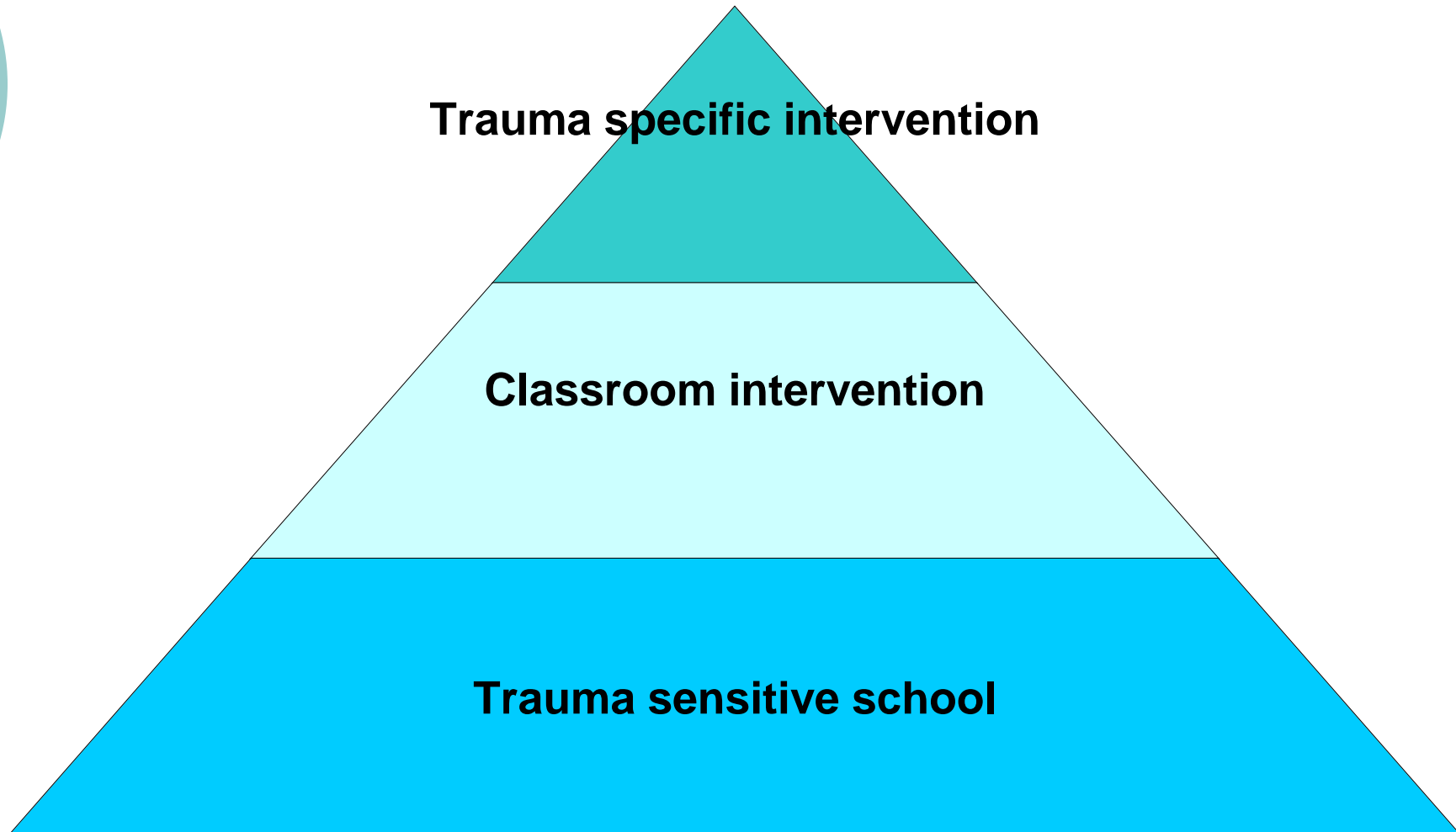


Impact on the Brain

- Trauma changes the brain



Levels of Intervention



Trauma-Sensitive Schools

Trauma-sensitive schools acknowledge the prevalence of traumatic occurrence in students' lives & create a flexible framework that provides universal supports, is sensitive to unique needs of students, & is mindful of avoiding re-traumatization.



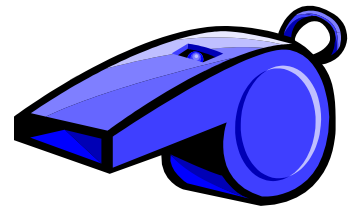
Classroom Intervention



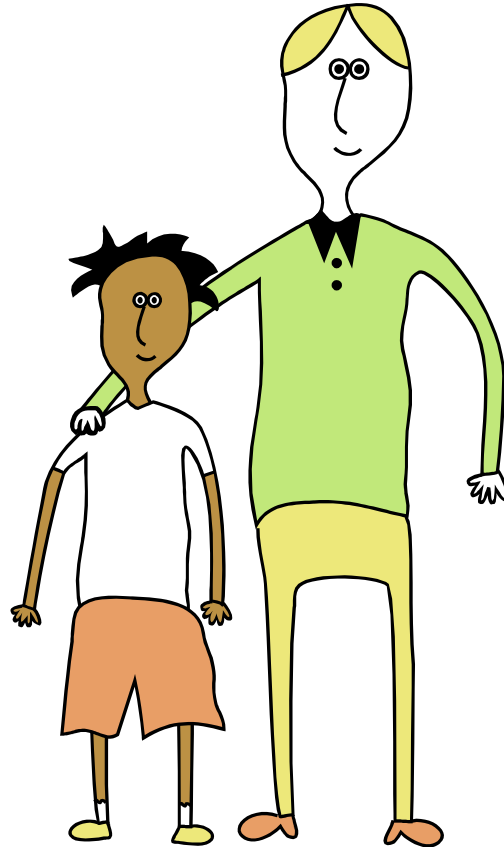
Trauma-sensitive Classroom Strategies: TRUST

Relationship with the educator based on...

- Unconditional positive regard for all students
- Checking assumptions, observing & questioning
- Being a relationship coach

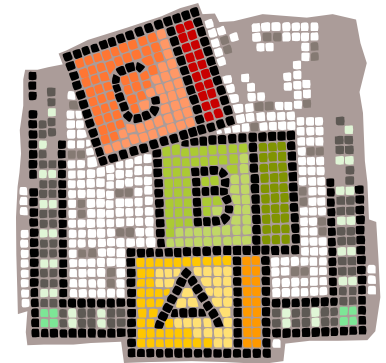


Relationship first!



Building blocks of relationship

- Understanding and Acceptance
- Attunement
 - Are you present?
 - Are you listening?
 - Are you reflecting?
- Affection
 - Touch
 - Non-physical affection
 - Effective praise
- Unconditional positive regard
- Assumption of positive intent



“Knowledge speaks but wisdom listens” – Jimi Hendrix

Classroom Strategies to establish SAFETY

- Predictable structure, relationships, & environment
- Clear & consistent rules for managing behavior & setting limits
- Accommodations to meet individual strengths & needs
- Reduce bullying & harassment
- Avoid seclusion/restraint



Classroom Strategies to establish EMPOWERMENT

- Embed mental health instruction into curriculum by teaching
 - Coping skills
 - Self-regulation skills
- Provide guided opportunities for meaningful participation
- Maintaining high behavioral & academic expectations
- Build on strengths
- Build competency



Trauma-Sensitive Classroom Strategies: CHOICE



- Adult works with student to create self-care plan to address triggers
 - Identify triggers
 - Eliminate trigger or create coping strategies to deal with triggers
- Giving choices & alternatives
 - “Comfort rooms”
 - Learn about lower brain interventions
 - Sensory diets
 - Safe & acceptable expression of feelings
- Collaborative Problem Solving (Lost at School - Greene, R.)

Lost at School – Ross Green Collaborative Problem Solving Model

Challenging behavior occurs when demands placed upon children for:

- Flexibility
- Adaptability
- Frustration Tolerance
- Problem solving

Skill deficit vs. motivation problem

Steps of Collaborative solving

- Empathy –gather information to clarify child’s perspective on unsolved problem
- Problem – sharing adult perspective on unsolved problem
- Invitation – brainstorming solutions

- <http://www.livesinthebalance.org/simple-plan-b>

Change in perspective...

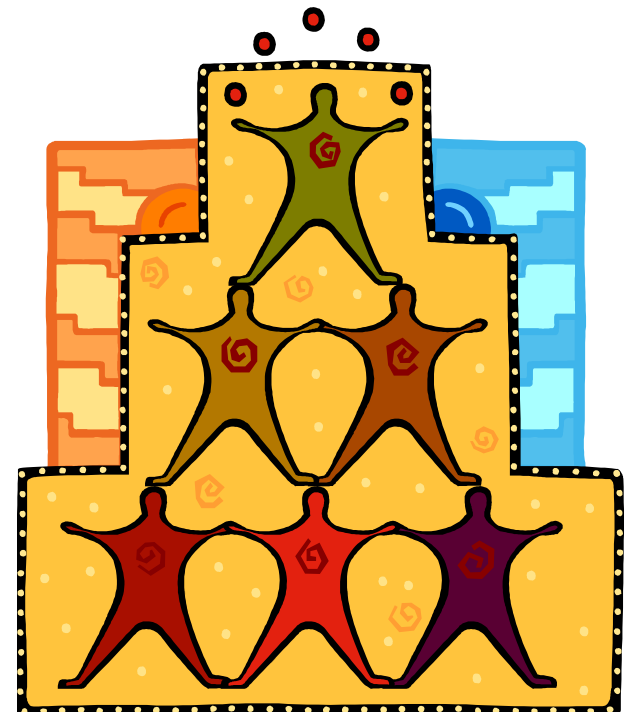
- Think effective intervention, not appropriate consequence



Behavior	
↓	
Collect Data: When? Where? With whom? How often?	
↓	
Develop Theory about why behavior is occurring (function of the behavior – what need is he trying to get met and/or what skill does he/she need to learn)	
↓	
Develop an intervention to address this need	
↓	
Collect ongoing data? Does it work?	
↓	↓
Yes	No
↓	↓
Continue to monitor	Collect more data and develop new theory

Trauma-Sensitive Classroom Strategies: COLLABORATION

- School Staff
 - Building Consultation Team (BCT)
 - Identify triggers (FBA)
 - Classroom consultation
- Students
- Family
 - Family education
 - Family training & support
- Community
 - Community referrals
 - Wrap around services
 - Community partnerships



Trauma specific intervention: Student level



Typical Interaction

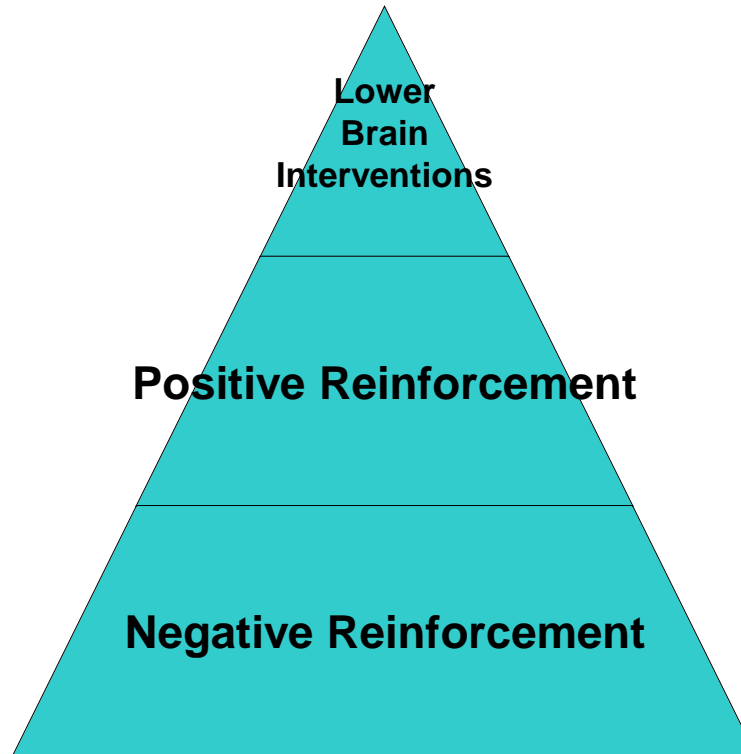


- Child response to stress:
 - Fight= aggression
 - Flight = run or dissociate
 - Freeze =withdraw



- Adult response:
 - Verbally process incident
 - Increase consequences
 - Set up reward system/ incentives
 - Lower expectations for this child
 - Get them out!

Behavioral Change Pyramid



Individual Intervention: How do we talk to the lower brain?

- Think about babies...



What changes the brain?

- Activity that is
 - Patterned
 - Rhythmic
 - Repetitive
 - Repeated with sufficient frequency
 - Sensory based
 - Done within the context of relationship
- Brain changes in a use dependent way
- Regulates lower brain so that cortex is accessible for thinking and learning



Regulating activities

- Symbolic play/ play therapy
- Art
- Music
- Physical activity
- Car/ Fishing therapy
- Sensory interventions
- Patterned repetitive sensory intervention in the context of relationship (Neurosequential Model of Therapeutics – Child Trauma Academy)

Sensory Detective

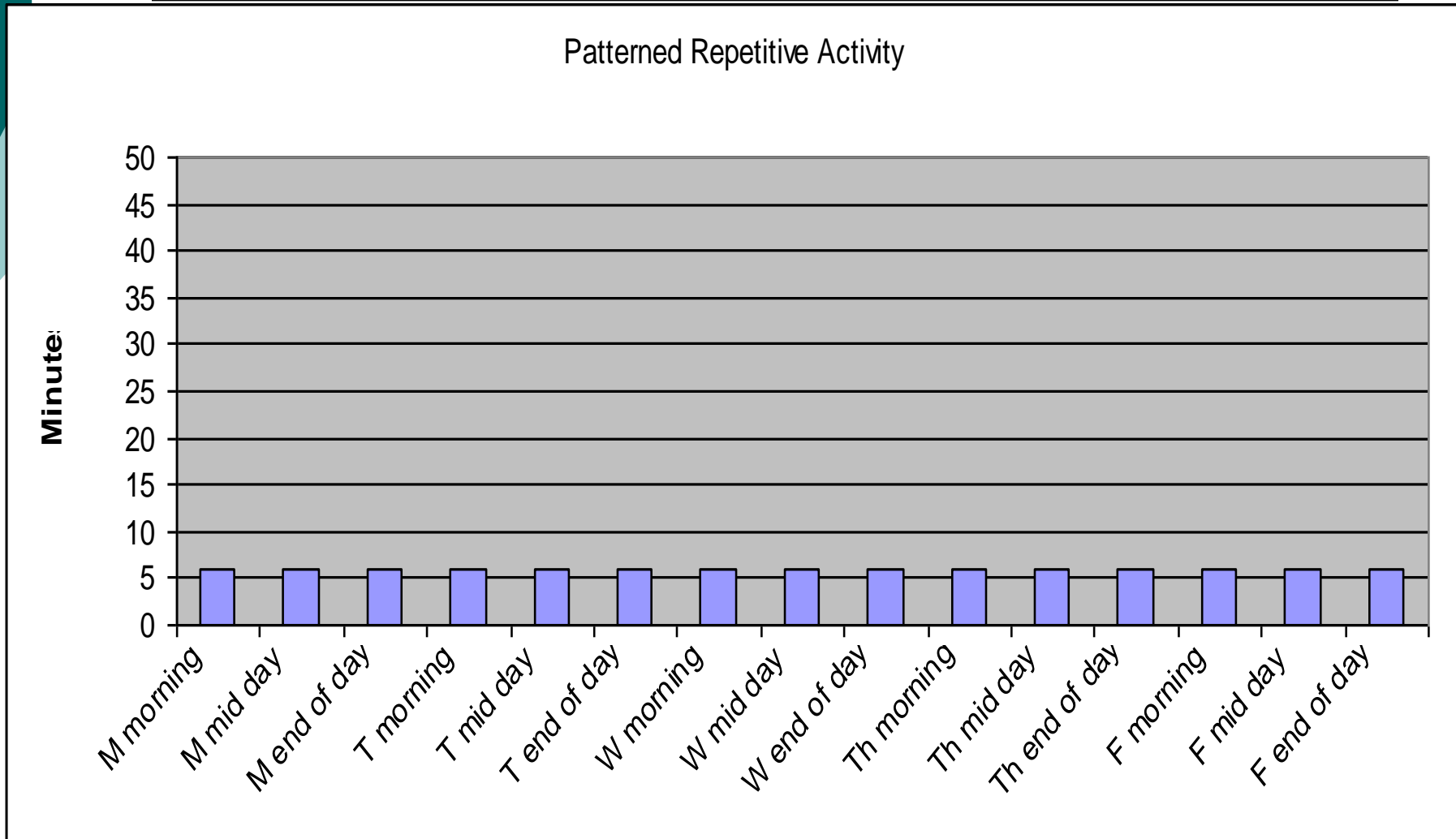


- What might sensory preferences/ seeking look like?
- What might sensory triggers look like?
 - Touch
 - Movement
 - Sound
 - Sight
 - Smell
 - Taste
 - Vestibular
 - Muscles/Proprioception

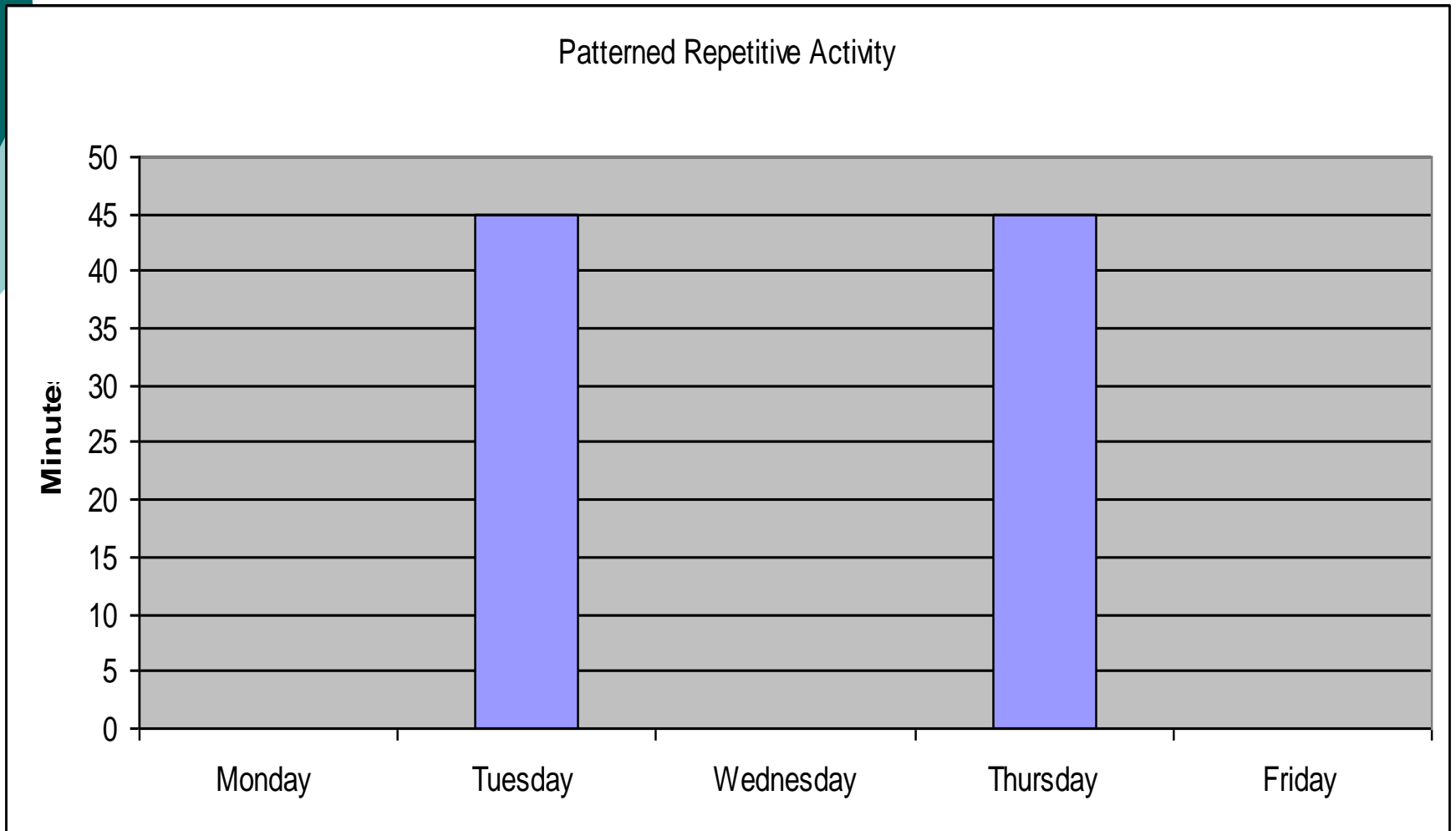
Examples...

- Bal-a-vis-x
- Heartmath
- Physical activity – yoga, stretching, bouncing a basketball
- Sensory breaks
- Nurturing connection
- ...See handout

So we need this...

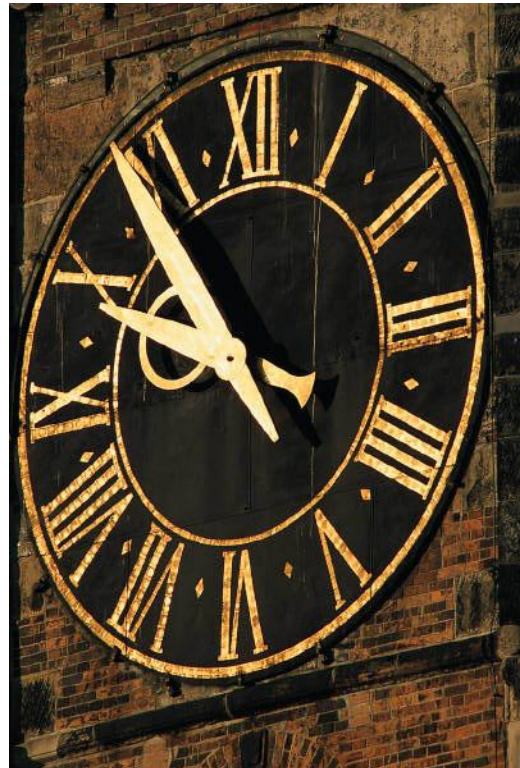


Not this...



Common concerns...

- Time



We need more...



- School Based Services Program

Contact: Sara Daniel 262-305-0711 sdaniel@st-al.org

- In-service training on issues of mental health and trauma
- Teacher consultation regarding student needs
- Therapeutic support for children in the school setting
- In-home family therapy to support student progress
- Mental Health support to in-district alternative programs/
self contained classrooms to create healing classrooms
- Trauma and NMT assessment, recommendations and
coaching to implement in school setting

- Transitions Therapeutic School –campus located in
Milwaukee Contact: Elizabeth Matola 414-465-5753
ematola@st-al.org

Credits

- Creating Trauma-Sensitive Schools to Improve Learning: A Response to Intervention (RtI) Model Daniel LCSW, Sara; Dibble, Nic; Dunning, Chris; Hudson, Elizabeth; Black, Pamela
<http://www.dpi.state.wi.us/sspw/mhtrauma.html>
- Child Trauma Academy (Dr. Bruce Perry), <http://childtrauma.org>
- National Child Traumatic Stress Network, <http://www.nctsnet.org>
- National Center for Trauma Informed Care,
<http://mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/nctic/>
- *The Emotional Brain*, J LeDoux
- *Affective Neuroscience: The Foundation of Human and Animal Emotions*, J.P. Panksepp
- Bessel van der Kolk, <http://www.traumacenter.org>
- Juli Alvarado, <http://www.coaching-forlife.com/>
- Dr. Robert Anda, CDC (ACE Study)
- *Helping Traumatized Children Learn*, Massachusetts Advocates for Children 2005
- Understanding Traumatic Stress in Children Bassuk M.D., Ellen L.: Konnath LICSW, Kristina, Volk MA., Katherine T.
- *The Heart of Learning and Teaching Compassion, Resiliency & Academic Success* Wolpow, Ray; Johnson, Mona M.; Hertel, Ron; Kincaid, Susan O. 2009