

# Integrating Trauma-Informed Practices within Your School Wide PBIS Framework

Increasingly, there is recognition of the benefits of a trauma-informed approach and the delivery of such an approach within school systems.<sup>1</sup> Multi-Tiered Systems such as the Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) framework provide a strong foundation to integrate prevention practices such as a trauma-informed approach through established school leadership teams, professional development practices with ongoing coaching, data based decision making, and coordinated school wide routines for tiered instruction. Integration of prevention efforts within a district or school's existing PBIS Framework reduces duplication and isolated efforts and resources as well as promotes prevention as a whole to address more broad overall risk factors for students. Integrating prevention practices into current school wide PBIS implementation can also promote stronger application and generalization of skills for students and adults.<sup>2,3,4</sup>

According to the national Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMSHA) a **trauma-informed approach for any system, including schools, adheres to the following 4 R's:**

1. **Realizes** the widespread impact of trauma and understands potential paths for recovery;
2. **Recognizes** the signs and symptoms of trauma in clients, families, staff, and others involved with the system;
3. **Responds** by fully integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, and practices; and
4. Seeks to actively **resist** re-traumatization."<sup>4</sup>

Implementation of the **PBIS** framework with fidelity in schools **simultaneously encourages and fosters recommended trauma-informed school practices** through promotion of safe, predictable and routine environments that foster positive, and trusting relationships among students, staff, families/caregivers and community members. The **Mid West PBIS Network** has created a crosswalk that clarifies more specifically the connection of School-Wide PBIS and Classroom-Wide PBIS practices with supporting students that have been through trauma, and these resources may be helpful for current school teams working to integrate a Trauma-Informed Approach within their PBIS implementation with school staff:

- **School-Wide PBIS**
- **Classroom-Wide PBIS**

The table on the next page provides some considerations for PBIS team enhancements for integrating a trauma-informed approach within PBIS implementation based on the four R's described and aligns them with some examples of this enhancement in practice based on foundation of PBIS implementation already in place. The corresponding enhancement resource table is to assist teams looking to implement an enhancement within current PBIS implementation.



*Suggested Citation:* Raulerson, C. & Fintel, N. (2020). *Integrating Trauma-Informed Practices within Your School Wide PBIS Framework*. Florida's Positive Behavior Support Project, University of South Florida: [http://flpbis.cbcs.usf.edu/other/mental\\_health.html](http://flpbis.cbcs.usf.edu/other/mental_health.html).

# Enhancements for Integrating TIC into Your PBIS Framework

SCHOOL WIDE PBIS ENHANCEMENTS BASED ON 4 Rs	EXAMPLE OF INTEGRATING THIS ENHANCEMENT
Build knowledge and awareness of school staff on the impact of trauma for students and adults with connection of PBIS implementation.	A school team utilizes ongoing professional learning opportunities available for PBIS to build knowledge about impact of trauma on students before connecting to training on implementation of an aligned PBIS practice on campus.
<p>Utilize expanded data sources such as school climate, universal social emotional screening, focus groups and additional community data sources (e.g., rates of Baker acts, foster care placements, emergency room visits, arrest rates) to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Establish the need for a trauma-informed approach</li> <li>2. Inform resource mapping to identify gaps in current MTSS for trauma-informed, evidenced based practices.<sup>4</sup></li> <li>3. Consider integrating necessary social emotional learning competencies as part of current school wide and classroom instruction to focus on mental wellness and replacement skills for learned trauma coping responses such as fight, freeze, or flight.<sup>3,4</sup></li> <li>4. Support students in using social emotional skills that are taught as a first response to problem behavior through redirection, reteaching and de-escalation techniques.<sup>4,5</sup></li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A PBIS team reviews community data that illustrates an increase in arrest rates from violent acts in their local school community with examining school wide discipline trends to consider next steps in action planning.</li> <li>• School wide focus group data suggest students lack self-regulation skills across age groups and the school PBIS team responds with suggestions for instruction and curriculum to focus on self-regulation as part of established and ongoing PBIS instruction.</li> <li>• A school or district team reviews current partnerships with community mental health agencies to increase available supports in small group and individual counseling as part of tiered supports.</li> <li>• An existing PBIS leadership team reviews and selects a social emotional learning program then plans for what supports are needed for implementation within existing PBIS and academic school wide instruction, and considers reteaching of these skills within a discipline matrix school wide.</li> <li>• Classrooms integrate de-escalation skill instruction as part of routines and then add visuals to prompt use of this routine as initial responses to problem behavior.</li> </ul>
Focusing on self-care school wide by supporting staff well-being and identifying and responding to secondary traumatic stress triggers. <sup>3,4</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School PBIS team fosters supportive culture for staff self-identification of concerns and use of effective strategies to respond to staff concerns with consideration of student needs and interventions.</li> <li>• School PBIS team utilizes self-care action planning format with school staff to promote awareness of the need for self-care as well as ways for staff to identify effective strategies.</li> <li>• School PBIS team utilizes self-care routines regularly throughout the school year and integrates them as part of staff reinforcement events.</li> </ul>



## References

1. Chafouleas, S.M., Johnson, A.H., Overstreet, S., & Santos, N.M. (2016). Toward a blueprint for trauma-informed service delivery in schools. *School Mental Health*, 8, 144-162. DOI 10.1007/s12310-015-9166-8
2. Domitrovich, C. E., Bradshaw, C. P., Greenberg, M. T., Embry, D., Poduska, J. M., & Jalongo, N. S. (2010). Integrated models of school-based prevention: Logic and theory. *Psychology in the schools*, 47(1), 71-88.
3. Embse, N., Rutherford, L., Mankin, A., & Jenkins, A. (2018). Demonstration of a trauma-informed assessment to intervention model in a large urban school district. *School Mental Health*, 1-14. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12310-018-9294-z>
4. National Child Traumatic Stress Network, Schools Committee. (2017). Creating, supporting, and sustaining trauma-informed schools: A system framework. Los Angeles, CA, and Durham, NC: National Center for Child Traumatic Stress.
5. Plumb, J.L., Busch, K.A., & Kerseovich, S.E. (2016). Trauma-sensitive schools: An evidence-based approach. *School Social Work Journal*, 40(2), 37-60.

# Resources to Help Teams Implement Trauma-Informed Enhancements within their PBIS Framework

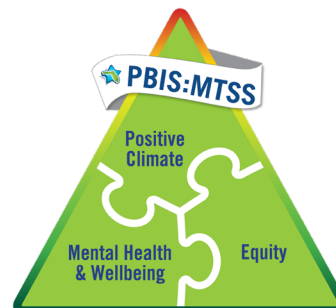
Building Knowledge of School Staff on Trauma Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Using Positive Behavioral Interventions &amp; Supports (PBIS) to Help Schools Become More Trauma-Sensitive Modules for Knowledge Building</li> <li>Midwest PBIS Network Trauma Education Modules - What is Trauma and Trauma and the Brain</li> <li>Washington Compassionate Schools Initiative</li> <li>National Child Traumatic Stress Network: Trauma-Informed Schools</li> <li>Helping Traumatized Children Learn: Massachusetts Advocates for Children: Trauma &amp; Learning Policy Initiative</li> <li>Colorado Department of Education Trauma-Informed Schools Approaches</li> <li>Adverse Childhood Experiences Resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Now Is The Time-Technical Assistance Center – ACES Webinar</li> <li>The Illinois Aces Collaborative</li> <li>ACES Too High Website</li> <li>ACES Connection Website</li> <li>Tennessee Building Strong Brains Program</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Utilize Expanded Data Sources To Establish Need and Integrate Evidenced Based, Trauma-Informed Interventions That Foster School Based Mental Health Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Center for School Based Mental Health Resource Mapping Guide</li> <li>Integrated Systems Framework Monograph</li> <li>Integrated Systems Framework Implementation Resources for Mental Health Integration</li> <li>NASP Creating Trauma-Sensitive Schools</li> <li>SAMSHA Mental Health Referral Pathways</li> <li>Ohio AWARE Universal Screening Guidance</li> <li>National Childhood Traumatic Stress Network Resources for Evidenced Based Practices</li> <li>Colorado Behavioral Health Framework</li> <li>Practice Wise Blue Menu of Evidenced-Based Psycho Social Interventions for Youth</li> </ul>
Integrating Social Emotional Competencies Within your PBIS School Wide Instruction and Discipline Approaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teaching Social Emotional Competencies Within A PBIS Framework From OSEP Technical Assistance Center</li> <li>FLPBIS TIC and PBIS Chats: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Part 1</li> <li>Part 2</li> </ul> </li> <li>Collaborative for Academic Social Emotional Learning</li> <li>Integrating Restorative Practices into your PBIS Framework FLPBIS chats: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Part 1</li> <li>Part 2</li> </ul> </li> <li>National Technical Assistance Center For Trauma-Informed Care</li> <li>Using Positive Behavioral Interventions &amp; Supports (PBIS) to Help Schools Become More Trauma-Sensitive</li> <li>NASP Creating Trauma-Sensitive Schools</li> <li>Midwest PBIS Modules: Integrating TIC into current Systems and Trauma-Informed Classroom Strategies</li> <li>Washington Compassionate Schools</li> </ul>
Focusing on Self-Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Washington Compassionate Schools: Self Care Action Plan and Strategies</li> <li>Wisconsin Trauma-Sensitive Schools Online Professional Learning Modules</li> <li>SAMHSA's wellness strategies</li> <li>SAMHSA's Eight Dimensions of Wellness</li> <li>National Child Traumatic Stress Network-Self-care and Compassion Fatigue Within The Trauma-Informed System Framework</li> </ul>
Additional Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Now is The Time-TA Center- Trauma-Informed Train the Trainer Resource</li> <li>Ohio Department of Education Trauma-Informed School Resources</li> </ul>

# Trauma-Informed Care and PBIS

PBIS provides a foundation for a trauma-informed prevention approach that **reduces risk factors and promotes protective factors** for **all students**.

School-wide enhancements based on the **4 R's of a trauma-informed approach**<sup>1</sup> should be integrated into your PBIS framework:

## PBIS Unifies School-Wide Practices



<b>1 REALIZE</b> the widespread impact of trauma and understand the paths for recovery	Build knowledge and awareness of school staff on the impact of trauma for students and adults with connection of PBIS implementation.
<b>2 RECOGNIZE</b> the signs and symptoms of trauma in students, families, and staff	Use expanded data sources to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Establish the need for a trauma-informed approach.</li><li>2. Inform resource mapping and needs assessment.</li></ol>
<b>3 RESPOND</b> by fully integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, and school practices	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>3. Integrate social emotional learning competencies to focus on mental wellness and replacement skills for learned trauma coping responses, like fight replacement, freeze, or flight.</li><li>4. Support students in using social emotional skills taught as a first response to problem behavior through redirection, re-teaching and de-escalation techniques.<sup>1,2</sup></li></ol>
<b>4 RESIST</b> re-traumatization actively	Focus on self-care school wide by supporting student and staff well-being.

The **PBIS** framework **encourages and fosters trauma-informed school practices** by promoting safe, predictable and routine environments that support positive, and trusting relationships among students, staff, families/caregivers and community members.<sup>1,3,4</sup>

### References

1. National Child Traumatic Stress Network, Schools Committee. (2017). Creating, supporting, and sustaining trauma-informed schools: A system framework. Los Angeles, CA, and Durham, NC: National Center for Child Traumatic Stress
2. Plumb, J.L., Busch, K.A., & Kerseovich, S.E. (2016). Trauma-sensitive schools: An evidence-based approach. *School Social Work Journal*, 40(2), 37-60.
3. Domitrovich, C. E., Bradshaw, C. P., Greenberg, M. T., Embry, D., Poduska, J. M., & Jalongo, N. S. (2010). Integrated models of school-based prevention: Logic and theory. *Psychology in the schools*, 47(1), 71-88.
4. Embse, N., Rutherford, L., Mankin, A., & Jenkins, A. (2018). Demonstration of a trauma-informed assessment to intervention model in a large urban school district. *School Mental Health*, 1-14. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12310-018-9294-z>