

Child Trauma Toolkit for Educators (2008)

Adapted from The National Child Traumatic Stress Network's website

Research suggests that approximately 25% of American children will experience at least one traumatic event by the age of 16. A child's reactions to trauma can interfere considerably with learning and/or behavior at school. However, schools also serve as a critical system of support for children who have experienced trauma.

Administrators, teachers, and staff can help reduce the impact of trauma on children by recognizing trauma responses, accommodating and responding to traumatized students within the classroom setting, and referring children to outside professionals when necessary. The National Child Traumatic Stress Network has developed tools and materials to help educators understand and respond to the specific needs of traumatized children.

The Child Trauma Toolkit for Educators was developed to provide school administrators, teachers, staff, and concerned parents with basic information about working with traumatized children in the school system. The toolkit is comprised of the following components:

- [Trauma Facts for Educators \(PDF\)](#)
This one-page fact sheet is designed to help educators learn more about the impact of trauma on children's behavior and performance in a school or classroom setting. It also provides specific recommendations for teachers to help mitigate the impact of trauma on children in the classroom.
- [Psychological and Behavioral Impact of Trauma: Elementary School Students \(PDF\)](#)
- [Psychological and Behavioral Impact of Trauma: Middle School Students \(PDF\)](#)
- [Psychological and Behavioral Impact of Trauma: High School Students \(PDF\)](#)

These comprehensive documents are intended for educators who work primarily with elementary, middle school, and high school students, respectively. They describe how to identify children in the three age groups who may be experiencing traumatic stress reactions. They also teach educators how to manage these children within the school and classroom settings.

- [Self Care for Educators \(PDF\)](#)
Working daily with children who have been exposed to trauma can be very difficult for school professionals. This handout defines secondary traumatic stress, compassion fatigue, and vicarious traumatization: three reactions that educators who work with traumatized children may have. The handout describes why these reactions are so important to prevent and address, and outlines specific recommendations for appropriate self-care.
- [Suggestions for Educators \(PDF\)](#)
This document provides a list of simple and straightforward strategies educators can use to accommodate a traumatized child in the school setting. It also teaches educators how to determine when traumatic stress reactions are severe enough to merit a referral for additional help.
- [Brief Information on Childhood Traumatic Grief for School Personnel \(PDF\)](#)
This information sheet focuses primarily on how teachers and school personnel can identify and assist children in their school who are experiencing child traumatic grief. While acknowledging that most children who have experienced the death of a close friend or family member do not develop childhood traumatic grief, the information sheet identifies specific signs and symptoms of childhood traumatic grief for teachers to look for. This resource also outlines strategies that school staff can engage in to help students with child traumatic grief.