

FROM HOPE TO RESILIENCE
Complex Trauma & Social Emotional Learning: Pathways to Improving Academic Success

April 7th & 8th, 2010
Red Lion Hotel at the Park, Spokane

Washington State University Extension's Area Health Education Center (AHEC) supports awareness building and the development of school-based strategies to recognize and address the impacts of complex trauma exposure on student learning and achievement. Since 2008, this work has included training more than 8,000 school, health, and social service personnel in basic concepts about trauma risk and response. We are presently moving from pilot intervention to large-scale intervention testing in partnership with schools. A critical part of supporting this work is continuing professional development.

To support these efforts, we are offering a conference that will provide intermediate level training to school and community professionals who have introductory knowledge of complex trauma and social emotional learning as organizing principles for school improvement. In addition, we hope to support mobilization of knowledge-to-practice efforts in local school-community partnerships.

The **overarching goal** of the conference is to provide conceptual and program-specific knowledge about trauma-informed and trauma-specific student support programs, social emotional learning curricula, and the adaptation of school improvement practices. The framework uses Response to Intervention principles to both improve universal social emotional learning and phased response to children when trauma is identified as a barrier to school success.

The conference's **primary audience** is Pre and K-12 educators and administrators with allied community service providers as a secondary audience. We strongly encourage participants attend **in local teams** organized, depending on the size of the district, at the school building or district level. Teams could range from 4 – 6 participants with each team including minimally one school administrator (typically the building principal or small district superintendent), one classroom teacher, and one school student support staff, i.e., school nurse, counselor, school social worker. Community partners will be selected by the school team and could include local mental health providers, juvenile justice staff, public health, and child welfare professionals.

Conference objectives include:

- Introduction to and critical evaluation skills regarding social emotional learning curricula infused in standard academic practice. The conference will provide rationale, research evidence, and analysis of current best practices in social emotional learning.
- Introduction to current principles and best practice recommendations regarding culturally appropriate practice with an emphasis on Latino and Native American cultural issues.
- Present guidelines and practice recommendations regarding Response to Intervention as a planning resource to address social emotional learning and trauma in school improvement practice.
- Within the Response to Intervention framework, present evidence-based and promising practice program information regarding trauma-informed and trauma-specific practice.

In order to support organizational change in schools to address complex trauma, efforts have to address K-12's core educational mission and methods of change. By aligning trauma response with social emotional learning as the principal predictors of academic success, we coordinate trauma response with school improvement efforts. The pervasive nature of trauma in school children creates specific barriers to meeting annual academic performance standards, and adopting a trauma-informed strategy provides a conceptual framework for addressing barriers to school success. Addressing complex trauma as a major threat to social emotional learning and academic competency provides a unifying framework supporting health promotion goals for all children and phased efforts to support early identification and remediation.