

# Trauma Informed Practices

**By Myers, Scott**

## Trauma Informed Practices

I feel blessed to be a citizen of the United States of America. There is NO WHERE else I would rather live than right here in America. Particularly, I REALLY appreciate having the opportunity to live and fulfill my life mission of serving in public education here in Holcomb, Kansas, as the Superintendent of Schools. As I have said on multiple occasions, we are advantaged here in the Land of the Longhorns for a variety of reasons, but it all comes back to roost with the fact that our people here are simply exceptional. We care deeply about each other and are consistently looking for ways to make things all that much better for each other.

It is with that deeply held principle that I have been working with our district to address issues that are becoming more and more prevalent in our schools – students who have been/are experiencing trauma of some sort or other. Unfortunately, more and more issues are surfacing in society. With the fast-paced environment of modern day America, the influence of the global community being brought to the fingertips of everyone via technology, economic pressures, and the issues of everyday life, people are experiencing more challenges today than in the past. Yes, there have always been pressures in society, but things seem to be intensifying for a variety of reasons. And, when these pressures reach a certain “boiling point,” students react in a variety of potentially negative and even self-destructive ways.

Unfortunately, as is the case with ANY school system, we are not in the position to head off these pressures and stressors that exist. Rather, we are in the position of dealing with the manifestation of these pressures and the fallout that occurs. Given this reality, the Holcomb School District has jumped headlong into learning as much as possible about Trauma and how it impacts our students. Toward that end, we have engaged in a series of professional learning opportunities throughout the year that have focused on the topic of “Trauma and its impact on students” to help the staff recognize when a student is experiencing trauma and then how best to deal with the situation so as to preserve learning opportunities for the student in crisis and for all those around that student. No, NONE of this work is easy; HOWEVER, it is ESSENTIAL as the ravages of trauma truly can alter the path of a person’s life.

As time goes on, I invite you to engage with us as much as you are able to learn more and more about this important topic. You are more than welcome to attend any of the professional learning opportunities we hold that present themselves around this topic, and

I also invite you to take a good hard look at the [\*\*TRAUMA GUIDEBOOK\*\*](#) we have created to assist the teachers with this complex issue. When you take a look at this guidebook, you will see it is a comprehensive approach addressing this issue, providing definitions, science realities about the impact of trauma on the physical brain, and then also pragmatic ideas for how to set up “trauma sensitive” environments and also strategies to employ when faced with someone experiencing trauma.

Obviously, there is no “magic bullet” to address this issue, but I DO also know this: The key to impacting people in a positive manner is the PEOPLE themselves involved in the efforts, so I know while this is daunting, we here in Holcomb are positioned for success as we are oriented simply to do what is right for our students regardless of the efforts it might take. We will NOT fail for lack of trying. J