



NATIONAL
DROPOUT
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CENTER/NETWORK

NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 26 NUMBER 1

T R A U M A - I N F O R M E D E D U C A T I O N

D'ANDREUS JENKINS SHOULD HAVE BEEN A STATISTIC—ONE OF THE THOUSANDS OF STUDENTS WHO DROPS OUT OF SCHOOL EVERY YEAR. D'ANDREUS WAS BORN IN JAIL TO A TEENAGE MOTHER WHO HAD DROPPED OUT OF HIGH SCHOOL HERSELF. AT TWO DAYS OLD, HE WAS SENT TO LIVE WITH HIS GRANDPARENTS. D'ANDREUS WAS CARED FOR BY A PATCHWORK OF CARETAKERS FOR LONG HOURS EACH DAY. UNKNOWN TO HIS GRANDPARENTS, D'ANDREUS SUFFERED BOTH EMOTIONAL AND PHYSICAL ABUSE BY ONE OF HIS CARETAKERS. THE EMOTIONAL TRAUMA WAS DEVASTATING.

In middle school, D'Andreus struggled, dangerously volatile one day and heartbreakingly vulnerable the next. Then, the loss to a lengthy prison sentence for drug trafficking of the one brotherly male figure in his life with whom he had developed a relationship devastated D'Andreus. It also changed his life.

The arresting officer noticed D'Andreus and recognized his volatility as well as his vulnerability. He had seen the same often in other children and knew from experience that D'Andreus most likely had no one at home to help keep him on track or to encourage him to keep striving to reach his goals. Recognizing the void, the arresting officer began to develop a relationship with D'Andreus, filling the void by engaging him in a quick game of basketball or a weightlifting session—anything to show him someone believed in him. Over time, D'Andreus responded, slowly realizing the inner resiliency that would change his life.

D'Andreus *should* have been a statistic—and he is. Today, he's one of hundreds of thousands who have hopes for bright futures. Like D'Andreus, many young people today carry wounds with them as they head out to school each day, interact with friends and family, and experience life in their communities. Unseen but very real, these wounds are the result of trauma, many times experienced in the form of poverty, abuse, violence, loss, and family dysfunction. Research shows that this trauma has a direct effect on cognitive function, emotional health, and interpersonal capacity. To address these effects, those who work with youth can implement trauma-informed policies and approaches

to their work that move wounded youth toward healing and have a positive effect on overall student achievement. In short, they, like the arresting officer who saw and addressed a need in D'Andreus, can help wounded students become a positive statistic—a high school graduate.

The National Child Traumatic Stress Network (www.nctsn.org/trauma-types/complex-trauma/effects-of-complex-trauma) states that complex trauma can affect children in a multitude of ways, such as problems with

- attachment and relationships, including romantic relationships, friendships, and with authority figures such as teachers or police officers;
- physical health, including improperly developed immune and body stress response systems;
- emotional responses, including difficulty identifying, expressing, and managing emotions;
- dissociation, including mental separation that affects a child's ability to be fully present and can significantly fracture a child's sense of time and continuity, leading to adverse effects on learning;
- behavior, including being easily triggered or "set off" and lacking impulse control or the ability to think through consequences before acting;
- cognition, including thinking clearly, reasoning, or problem solving and deficits in language development and abstract reasoning skills;
- self-concept and future orientation, including shame, guilt, low self-esteem, hopelessness, and a poor self-image;



- long-term health consequences, including smoking, unprotected sex, and other high-risk behaviors, heart disease, cancer, and early death; and
- economic impact, including direct and indirect costs for child abuse and neglect of \$284.3 million per day (in 2007 values).

This issue of the *National Dropout Prevention Center/Network Newsletter* focuses on addressing the needs of all students, but particularly those who may carry wounds from either physical or emotional trauma. It contains a call for emphasis on creative and restorative justice as an alternative disciplinary model for all students—particularly wounded students—and a model restorative justice program in Clayton County, GA. A practitioner offers ideas for establishing relationships with students involving texting, apps, and Facebook posts. In addition, an elementary school staff in Ohio provides an overview of their successful reverse mentorship and community service programs to underscore the advantages of recognizing the needs of wounded students early on. A teacher, a club sponsor, a school custodian, an afterschool activity supervisor, a coach, and anyone else who works with youth can change lives through a trauma-informed approach.

Alternative Discipline Strategies

by Brittany Grimshaw and Kaylee Harrell

Cornerstone Elementary School serves students K-4th grade. Located in Wooster, OH, a city with a population of 26,500, 63% of its students qualify for free or reduced lunch.

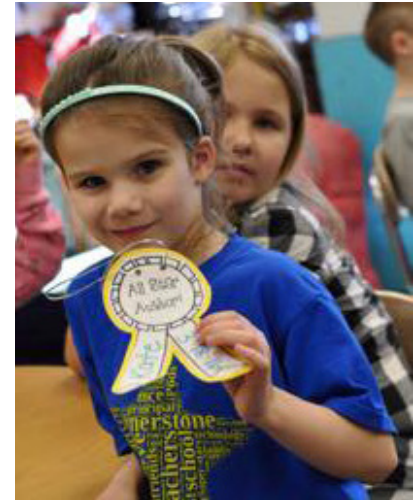
A few years back, an increasing number of students were walking through our doors on a daily basis needing some of the basics for survival—food, clothing, and shelter. An even greater number of students came to school looking for love and attention, things that they may not have been getting at home. Staff members found themselves encountering an increasing number of behaviors that disrupted the learning environment they had worked so hard to establish. Typical responses of sending a child to the office, taking away recess, or even suspensions were proving to have little to no effect on student behaviors. During the 2014-2015 school year, 30 out-of-school suspensions were issued for behaviors that violated school rules or policy. The suspensions proved ineffective for the reshaping of inappropriate or dangerous behavior.

The staff was eager to learn how to effectively teach and nurture these young students. At the start of the 2015-2016 school year, a focus group of teachers and administrators came together to form a culture and climate committee. The group's goal was to identify areas for improvement

and then develop action steps to help accomplish them. The committee first redeveloped our school mission statement: Academic Excellence Within a Caring Community. Next, we developed action steps: (a) provide additional support in deescalating students and handling complex behavior issues, and (b) take into consideration the average years of experience of our teachers and provide professional development opportunities for them to grow.

In the winter of 2016, our staff received the training, Reaching the Wounded Student, presented by Dr. Joe Hender-shott. No staff member was exempt from this training. It was presented to teachers, administrators, cooks, janitors, paraprofessionals, counselors, and anyone else who regularly came into contact with students at Cornerstone Elementary.

One of the most beneficial programs implemented this year following our training has been the community service program with our third-grade students. After noticing a large number of discipline referrals for fighting during recess, a community service program was implemented. We learned that traditional consequences are often ineffective for wounded students. Instead of sitting in the office or classroom during recess, students were assigned community service. This included tasks such as organizing classroom libraries, cleaning common areas, pulling weeds in the flowerbeds, or helping teachers with classroom jobs. The tasks were supervised by the Behavior Specialist, which allowed for social skill instruction to occur throughout the process. When conflict would arise, the students would work through it with the help of the Behavior Specialist. Students were guided through problem-solving strategies such as active listening, talking it out, and compromise. Students began to recognize that they were often getting into trouble during recess and started asking to come to community service to keep themselves out of trouble. After the students completed the assigned task, they ate lunch together. It was a structured time, supervised by an adult who explicitly modeled and taught manners, conversation skills, and appropriate social interactions among peers.



Four students were also selected to take part in a reverse mentorship program. The students were not the typical children chosen to be in a mentorship role. They had trouble getting along with others and were often disrespectful to peers and adults. They were paired with students receiving services from the autism resource room. The students who were often observed being disrespectful were now in a position of teaching students with disabilities how to interact appropriately with others. They were tasked with modeling appropriate social skills, such as asking someone to play at recess, playing games together, and turn taking in conversations. Throughout the process, the third-grade students learned how to interact appropriately with others and how important their words really are.

The number of out-of-school suspensions dropped from 30 to 11 this year. After creating a culture and climate committee that led the way for positive cultural change and receiving professional development in the area of working with wounded students, two new programs were implemented. Both the community service program and the reverse mentorship program proved to have great results while positively impacting our students through strategic re-teaching opportunities for desired behavior.

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The *National Dropout Prevention Center/Network Newsletter* is published quarterly by the National Dropout Prevention Center/Network. Your comments are always welcome.

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DeeperDive Learning, Inc., Joins NDPN as Innovation Partner



■ DeeperDive Learning, Inc. has joined the NDPN's Innovation Partner program, a service partnership committed to reducing the nation's dropout rate and helping ensure that students graduate from high school. Headquartered in Naples, FL, DeeperDive develops educational products and software designed to enhance the ability of educators to provide effective seamless intervention.

"NDPC/N is pleased to welcome DeeperDive as our newest partner. Their personalized, interactive professional development opportunities that yield evidence-based outcomes provide a complementary perspective to NDPC/N's initiatives for addressing dropout issues," said Dr. Sandy Addis, Executive Director of NDPC/N. "We are excited to explore additional opportunities to work with them in the future."

DeeperDive Learning, Inc., joins a dynamic and growing partnership program that includes Edgenuity, Inc.; AdvancePath Academics; WIN Learning, BrightBytes; ViziTech USA; and Catapult Learning. NDPC/N continues to welcome partners whose resources significantly enhance our mission of dropout prevention, intervention, and recovery.

Specialist Certification Program

■ Join a growing army of educators and practitioners identified as working with and/or on behalf of students at risk of dropping out of school. The National Dropout Prevention Specialist (NDPS) certification program is founded on NDPC/N's research-based effective strategies, known youth risk factors, professional learning participation, and field implementation of acquired knowledge. This certification verifies and strengthens dropout prevention experience and expertise and facilitates networking with others equally dedicated to dropout prevention. Go to <http://dropoutprevention.org/services-certifications/national-dropout-prevention-specialist-certification-program/> for more information or contact us at

ndpc@clermson.edu with any questions or to register for the program.

NDPC/N 30th Anniversary Celebration

■ Mark your calendar for the National Dropout Prevention Center/Network's 30th Anniversary Celebration on Monday, October 24, 2016, to be held at the NDPC/N home office located at 209 Martin Street, Clemson, SC! Plan to drop in any time between 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. ET. The program will begin at 3:00 p.m. ET. If you can't attend, the program will be live streamed beginning at 2:45 p.m. More details and an invitation to follow later!

NDPS Field Projects

■ NDPC/N recently launched a new section of our Web site devoted to the Field Projects of the National Dropout Prevention Specialists. This Web site section recognizes the work of Specialists who have completed the Certification Program and establishes them as a resource to others. Field projects are available at <http://dropoutprevention.org/people/certification-specialist/>

Diploma Planning Institute (DPI)

■ Over the past two years, NDPC/N has conducted more than six DPIs in districts and states across the nation to help teams from schools/districts work on written dropout prevention plans. Visit www.dropoutprevention.org/diploma-planning-institute/ to view a short video filmed during a summer 2015 DPI in Maine, and contact NDPC/N at 864-656-2599 or ndpc@clermson.edu for more details or to arrange a DPI for your state or region. Join our *Solutions to the Dropout Crisis* webcast October 11, 2016, from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. ET for an in-depth look at a DPI.

Upcoming *Solutions to the Dropout Crisis*

■ Join *Solutions to the Dropout Crisis* webcast on Tuesday, September 13, to hear Dr. Susan Bon discuss "Getting It Right: Wise Policy Makes for Effective Dropout Prevention." *Solutions* is available for viewing free at 3:30 p.m. ET the second Tuesday of each month at www.dropoutprevention.org/webcast. Archived sessions are always available.

2017 At-Risk Youth National FORUM

■ The theme for the 2017 At-Risk Youth National FORUM in Myrtle Beach, SC, April 19-22, is *All In for At-Risk Youth*. Research has long indicated that athletics and extracurricular activities engage students and keep them in school and that dedicated coaches and activity sponsors can be very effective "graduation coaches." The FORUM will feature numerous sessions addressing the application of effective coaching strategies to prevent dropouts. Dabo Swinney, head football coach at Clemson University, will open the conference as our keynote speaker. Additional speakers and sessions will make this a FORUM you won't want to miss!

Call for Manuscripts

■ National Dropout Prevention Center/Network publishes two journals: *The Journal of At-Risk Issues* and *ENGAGE: The International Journal of Research and Practice on Student Engagement*. We are soliciting manuscripts to consider for publication. Link to our "Journals" Web page for more information on each journal's focus and audience as well as "Call for Manuscripts" guidelines for each journal. Contact ndpc@clermson.edu with any general questions regarding these journals and submission guidelines.

2016 NATIONAL DROPOUT PREVENTION NETWORK CONFERENCE
 Detroit Marriott at the Renaissance Center
 October 2-5, Detroit, MI

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Creative and Restorative Justice for the Wounded Student

by Susan C. Bon

The public school system has been quick to adopt and impose rigid policies upon students, such as zero tolerance, which originated in the Gun-Free Schools Act (1994). This type of discipline flows from a one-size-fits-all mentality and has received increasing criticism because of the negative impact on disadvantaged and underserved students. Such students are the wounded students who struggle to find success in school for a wide variety of reasons and are often unable to adapt to rigid school structures and teacher expectations.

Rigid school policies are designed to maintain an orderly learning environment, yet they tend to perpetuate injustice for wounded students who are less likely to adjust their behaviors in response to these untested and uniform disciplinary approaches. Exclusionary practices and the increasingly myopic emphasis on rigorous curriculums and assessments at the expense of building social capital and positive relationships with students may actually lead to further social exclusion for wounded students.

Instead of exclusionary practices, schools should be adopting practices that build stronger communities and enhance students' social capital and positive relationships to support learning and success in an ever-changing and information-driven society. Access to education and engagement in the learning process is critical to the future success of students. As noted by Chief Justice Warren in the landmark desegregation case, *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) (*Brown I*), "It is doubtful that any child may reasonably be expected to succeed in life if he is denied the opportunity of an education."

Given what we have learned about the challenges facing wounded students, it is time for schools to consider alternative disciplinary models (e.g., discipline codes that are less punitive and instead use creative and restorative justice approaches to discipline).

Creative and Restorative Justice

Through creative justice, the ethical and moral imperative of education is emphasized. Creative justice is premised on three key components:



- Mutual listening—students want to be understood. They need us to recognize their intrinsic claims and need for justice.
- Giving—students demand something from us, even if it is just an acknowledgement of them as persons.
- Forgiving—students seek the opportunity to be reunited to their peers and school community; forgiveness does not ignore the consequences of disruption; instead it recognizes that justice can be restored through reunion.

Creative justice strategies can be adapted for use in schools to meet the unique needs of each school environment. Justice is a necessary principle not only because it provides order, but also because it serves as a unifying power to connect individuals to their social groups and promote harmony and fairness among those in the group. Applying this concept of justice in schools, educators should reevaluate their student codes of conduct to determine whether justice is equally valid for all students.

Similar to creative justice, the principles of restorative justice rely upon an innovative approach that favors repairing relationships over the need to assign blame and punishment. Restorative justice occurs through formal and informal interventions "to put things right" for the individuals involved in a dispute or for those offended or harmed by behaviors. Interventions might include mediation, conferencing, and healing circles. Through these activities, the affected individuals are provided a chance to talk, which should include sharing what happened, explaining how they feel, and

identifying how they would like to repair the harm caused.

Conclusion

Educators have significant influence over students' lives, especially wounded students who may be more likely to come from low-income backgrounds or distressed family structures. As a result of increasingly distressed family networks, schools often need to provide the critical social capital and support networks that promote learning and increase opportunities in life. The well-being of individuals, in general, is influenced by those around them given our natural tendencies to rely on clues from others to make sense of and even judge our individual worth. If the clues we give wounded students are purely exclusionary and punitive, we dehumanize students for the sake of enforcing rules, thereby denying their integrity and intrinsic value. Finally, wounded students are more likely to benefit from flexible and evidence-based practices that address the root of problem behaviors, such as substance abuse or trauma in their lives. Thus, schools need to explore how alternative approaches to justice, such as creative or restorative justice can be employed to achieve the necessary goals of student conduct codes, such as deterring disruptive behavior so students can engage in learning.

-Susan C. Bon, JD, PhD
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Gun-Free Schools Act of 1994, 20 U.S.C. §§ 7151 et seq.

For more information, access these archived *Solutions to the Dropout Crisis* webcasts. Page Nichols' and Pender Makin's webcast explores "A Customizable Approach to Restorative School Discipline: Replacing Ineffective Punitive Consequences With Human-Centered Educational Practices" and is available at www.dropoutprevention.org/webcast/a-customizable-approach-to-restorative-justice-school-discipline-replacing-ineffective-punitive-consequences-with-human-centered-educational-practices/. Access Dr. Joe Ryan's discussion on "Reducing the Use of Seclusion and Restraint in Schools" at www.dropoutprevention.org/webcast/62-reducing-use-seclusion-and-restraint-schools/

The Paradox of Education in America

by Steven C. Teske

There is a paradox in public education and it centers on the operative term *public*. How public is *public*?

After all, public is defined as something that is open to all, and within the context of public education there are two fundamental characteristics: tax funded and compulsory attendance.

Yet, a trend known as zero tolerance in public school discipline developed around the mid-nineties—before the Columbine tragedy—has eviscerated the *public* in public education. It is true that public school systems embrace all children entering kindergarten, but zero tolerance policies effectively push them out of school like adoptive parents who later decide that the cute little baby they adopted from foster care turns out to be too much to handle, and tries to return the child like it's the return counter at Walmart.

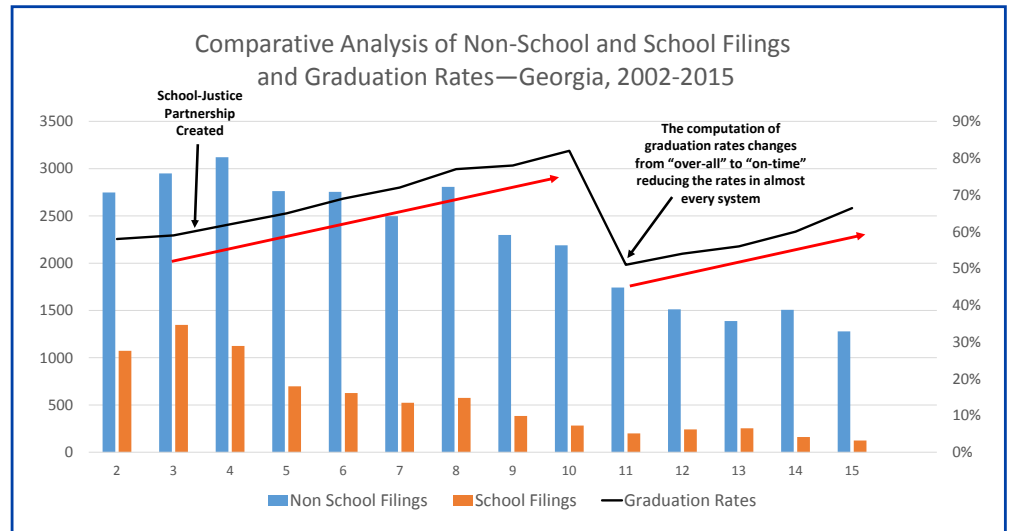
Zero tolerance policies have produced an oxymoronic system in which we create laws that compel attendance at schools—to the extent that parents go to jail if they neglect the law—but subject students to rigid and harsh disciplinary responses that effectively push them out of what is otherwise a system open to all.

Zero tolerance policies are viewed as a panacea for poor school climate. “If we can just get rid of those bad kids, we can improve the school climate” is the mantra of many school administrators.

The research, however, does not support this anecdotal concept and, in fact, suggests the opposite is true (Mitchell & Bradshaw, 2013).

The unintended consequences of zero tolerance policies have mostly harmed students already wounded by childhood trauma, including family violence, addicted parents, mental health disorders, neglect, physical and sexual abuse, and other traumas associated with poverty. Kids with disabilities, for example, are nearly three times more likely to be suspended out of school compared to those without disabilities (U.S. Dept. of Education, 2014).

Notwithstanding the plight of students with disabilities, there are many more students ineligible for special education that are expelled for disruptive behaviors that are a symptom of trauma.



When the zero tolerance policies in my county caused a dramatic increase in school suspensions, expulsions, and arrests that drove down the graduation rates to an all-time low of 58% and increased the juvenile crime rate to an all-time high in Georgia, it was time to reevaluate what was not working by doing the opposite.

We created the nation's first school-justice partnership that produced a 91% decline in school arrests and a 42% decline in suspensions and resulted in a 24% increase in graduation rates (see graph). As goes graduation, so goes crime. Coinciding with these outcomes was a 71% decline in delinquent filings in the county.

The most strategic tool in our partnership was the creation of our System of Care (SOC), an independent backbone agency that targets chronically disruptive students using evidence-based programs to reduce disruptive behavior by addressing the underlying determinants of those behaviors.

Trauma is the predominant reason for student referral (86%), but the outcomes reflect the positive impact on graduation rates: 87% decline in disciplinary referrals, 62% increase in attendance, and increase in grades.

We employ an epidemiological approach to disruptive behaviors which calls for the identification of disruptive students, a determination of the underlying causes, and developing treatment strategies targeting the causes.

Diseases do not occur by chance and are not randomly distributed, and neither are disruptive behaviors. As such, they can be studied to determine the causes, and to develop solutions for a cure.

Public education means education for all our children, including those who make us mad. Zero tolerance policies punish students for displaying symptoms that make adults mad, and in so doing they worsen school climate and compromise public safety.

Traumatized people traumatize people. To stop the traumatizing, we must address the underlying trauma. The system needs to change if we want better outcomes, but it will require the entire community wrapping its arms around the schools.

—Steven C. Teske
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Increasing Connections Through Cell Phones

by Willyn Webb

According to Dr. Joe Hendershott, founder of Hope 4 The Wounded, “Feeling isolated or having the feeling that no one understands just seems to deepen the sense of hopelessness in the wounded person” (2016). As educators working with wounded youth, we never seem to have enough time to give to each and every student, yet we do not want any student to feel isolated.

Inconsistent attendance makes creating connections challenging. According to a study of Philadelphia’s dropout crisis, “Of those 8th graders who attended school less than 80% of the time, 78% became high school dropouts” (Neild & Balfanz, 2006, p. 4). Connecting with students who are in school only 20% of the time is hard, but those are the kids who are often wounded and with whom we need to connect with the most. Therefore, capitalizing on the device our students are most likely to respond to is our best tool of relationship engagement and connection. “Ninety-two percent of teens report going online daily—including 24% who say they go online ‘almost constantly,’ according to a new study from Pew Research Center” (Lenhart, 2015, p. 1).

Further, Lenhart (2012, p. 2) states:

63% of all teens say they exchange text messages every day with people in their lives. This far surpasses the frequency with which they pick other forms of daily communication, including phone calling by cell phone (39% do that with others every day), face-to-face socializing outside of school (35%), social network site messaging (29%), instant messaging (22%), talking on landlines (19%) and emailing (6%).

Providing a phone for those who do not have one and utilizing the strategies to follow could make the difference between a student staying in school or dropping out. Two valuable ways to approach the use of cellphones in creating connections with wounded students are individual connections through a texting service or a professional Facebook account and extended connections through apps. When

you acknowledge students’ needs and their digital world, it shows you care and are willing to go beyond the academics, outside the school walls, and support them in the most user-friendly way possible.

Individually texting each student seems daunting or potentially unsafe, but a group texting service provides documented texts; safe boundaries (not your own number, but a site assigned code); and a variety of options from one-way blasts to curated group chats (Nielsen & Webb, 2011). Through group texting we can increase our influence, build relationships, set safe parameters, and effectively use our time. One example is Cely, a free group texting service designed with educators in mind. By reaching out to the student in a quick and personal way, we are better able to show we care, that we want a relationship, and that we welcome communication. We are doing what Dr. Hendershott explains as cultivating “a conviction in wounded children that their worth is bigger than their wounds” (2016).

Another individual option is through Facebook. According to Lenhart (2015, p. 2) reporting for Pew, “Facebook remains the most used social media site among American teens ages 13 to 17 with 71% of all teens using the site.” By creating a school-identified or professional Facebook account, educators can send messages to students in the same way as the texting service. All messages are documented, which provides a measure of protection and professionalism. If every time a wounded student is absent, has a bad day, or is challenging, we send a text or Facebook message that communicates concern and empathy as a caring adult, then we are giving that consistent message that is so important in a way that is user-friendly, documented, and safe. This sets up what Dr. Hendershott states as elements of a professional plan for dealing with wounded students: “Protect your students’ confidentiality” [he/she doesn’t have to talk to you at school] and, “Create opportunities to listen” [perhaps in the way that the student may feel most comfortable communicating] (2016, p. 77).

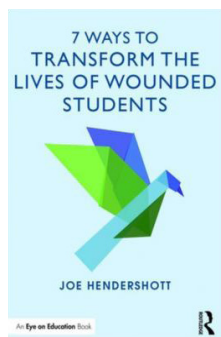
Extended connections can also be developed through conversations about apps. When the phone is a distraction, which is often the case, open a conversation about what supports might be available through the phone. You can see the wounded student hiding by looking at his/her phone thinking, I’ll look at my phone and I don’t have to talk to you, or look you in the eye, or face the reality of my situation. Ask, What ways could the cell phone support you? Are there apps that address his/her issue (e.g., teen dating violence, addiction, the need for safe and confidential counseling, peer pressure, bullying, domestic violence, depression, or anxiety)? The many issues wounded students may be dealing with and/or the aftereffects of trauma that keep them from engaging in school are often addressed through apps.

Among high school and college students, psychopathology is five times more prevalent than in 1938 (Twenge et al., 2010). The World Health Organization report, *Health for the World’s Adolescents* (2014), reveals that “depression is the predominant cause of illness and disability for both boys and girls aged 10 to 19 years.” These wounded students need additional connections and one way to maximize our influence and build relationships is through the use of students’ own devices. Using the text service to check on them, show you care, and send praises all increase your influence and ability to engage them in school, decreasing their likelihood of dropping out. Connections build community between educators and wounded students while providing effective means for additional support outside of school. Teaching wounded students the skill of using their phone for support, for information, for networking, for education, and for counseling is a skill that empowers them throughout their lives.

—Willyn Webb, MA, LPC, NCC
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BOOK REVIEW



7 Ways to Transform the Lives of Wounded Students. (2016). Joe Hendershott. New York and London: Routledge and Taylor & Francis Group, 107 pages [ISBN: 978-0-415-73495-0 (pbk.)]

Dr. Joe Hendershott's latest book, *7 Ways to Transform the Lives of Wounded Students*, helps to clarify the difference between an "at-risk" student and a "wounded" student. He explains, "At-risk students are typically identified based on certain situational criteria." To most educators, this means that something may have happened to this individual or individuals. Additionally, Dr. Hendershott identifies wounded students as children who have experienced or continue to experience emotional and/or physical traumatic events, which have a profound impact on their ability to function in the classroom and in life.

Educating students is a challenge. This book provides strategies to assist educators in meeting students where they are. To effectively educate a child, you may have to address the social and emotional aspects of their lives before you can meet their educational needs. Chapter 4, "Incorporate Empathy," will open your eyes to the critical role that empathy plays in your ability to create truly meaningful relationships with those whom you teach. Understanding and appreciating this vital component can change your life as an educator and forever change the lives of your students.

From Dr. Hendershott's firsthand experiences as a high school assistant principal, principal, alternative school principal, and the principal at a residential treatment facility, we gain a wealth of real-world practical information designed to help us grow, while meeting the needs of our students.

This book and the seven key strategies provide an outline to creating a change in you as the leader, your school community, and the students who are facing challenges that many of us can not or choose not to imagine.

-Kerry Daugherty, Principal
Timberland High School
Berkeley County, SC

RESOURCES

[American Psychological Association](http://www.apa.org/) is the leading scientific and professional organization representing psychology in the United States.
www.apa.org/

[CDC's Adverse Childhood Experiences \(ACEs\)](http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/acestudy/) study explores the short- and long-term outcomes of childhood exposures to adverse childhood experiences. ACEs are defined as childhood abuse, neglect, and exposure to other traumatic stressors.
www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/acestudy/

[National Association of School Psychologists](http://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/) explores childhood trauma and offers resources and best practices for addressing this trauma.
www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/

[The National Child Traumatic Stress Network](http://www.nctsn.org/), funded by the Center for Mental Health Services, offers research and resources specifically related to childhood trauma.
www.nctsn.org/

E V E N T S

November 10-16, 2016 Dallas, TX
32nd Annual Meeting of the International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies, *Trauma and Public Health: Innovative Technology and Knowledge Dissemination*
www.istss.org/am16/home.aspx

February 21-24, 2017 San Antonio, TX
National Association of School Psychologists Annual Convention, *Small Steps Change Lives*
www.nasponline.org/professional-development/nasp-2017-annual-convention

March 15-16, 2017 Los Angeles, CA
Changing the Paradigm Conference, *Building Trauma-Informed Schools and Communities*
www.echoparenting.org/professional-services/conferences

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VIEWPOINT

I am reminded almost daily that this world is very different from the one in which I grew up. Poverty, violence, and abuse are rampant while virtues such as trust and security are elusive and rare. Things my children and future grandchildren will encounter daily didn't exist when I was a child. Technology has placed valuable tools, information, violence, and cruelty in the palms of our hands. We are bombarded with images of trauma from around the world and in our own backyard.

The Children's Defense Fund reminds us annually of the ugliness in our world. They report in the U.S. a child is confirmed abused or neglected every 47 seconds, a child is arrested every 21 seconds, a child is killed by abuse or neglect every 5.5 hours, and a child or teen commits suicide every 4.5 hours. In 2013, the percentage of U.S. students in public schools who come from low income homes broke the 50% mark. These are just a few of the statistics that demonstrate the state of America's children.

Studies show that approximately 68% of Americans have experienced some type of trauma during childhood while children from urban areas and ethnic minorities experience particularly high rates of recurrent interpersonal [complex] trauma (*The State of America's Children*®, 2014).

Research also shows that there is a strong link between trauma and cognitive function. Trauma affects functions such as memory, sustained attention, sequential organization, problem solving, transitions, expression, emotional regulation, responding to instructions, and more. Students who exhibit these difficulties are often labeled as defiant, difficult, or slow. The National Child Traumatic Stress Network tells us that those who have experienced complex trauma often have difficulty identifying, expressing, and managing emotions. They can be unpredictable and explosive with memories of the trauma exacerbating their already vulnerable emotional state. Sometimes, what may be a mildly stressful situation for others triggers

an intense emotional response in an emotionally wounded child. To those children, the world is a dangerous place where even loved ones can't be trusted to protect them. Often, children resort to either acting out or withdrawing, unable to calmly express their emotions. Emotionally wounded children become easily overwhelmed, giving up in frustration over even small tasks. As tasks become harder, frustration increases until, finally, they give up.

In a trauma-filled world, it is important for educators and administrators to understand the effects of trauma on learning, be aware of types and causes of trauma, and understand strategies that help reach students who may exhibit these effects. The strategies that reach these students have also demonstrated effectiveness with the general student population as well.

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