Trauma-Sensitive School Checklist

**Lesley University**

*Center for Special Education*

**Trauma and Learning Policy Initiative**

*of Massachusetts Advocates for Children*

*and the Legal Services Center of Harvard Law School*

*This checklist is organized by five components involved in creating a trauma-sensitive school.*

*Each component consists of several elements.*

*Please assess your school on each element according to the following scale:*

1 = Element is **not at all** in place

2 = Element is **partially** in place

3 = Element is **mostly** in place

4 = Element is **fully** in placeSchool \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Team Members (name and position)

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

A trauma-sensitive school is a safe and respectful environment that enables students to build caring relationships with adults and peers, self-regulate their emotions and behaviors, and succeed academically, while supporting their physical health and well-being.

In each of the component tables below, record an “X” in one of the four columns on the right that correlates with your school’s assessment, based on the criteria above.

# School-wide Policies and Practices

| **Element** | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| * School contains predictable and safe environments (including classrooms, hallways, playgrounds, and school bus) that are attentive to transitions and sensory needs. |  |  |  |  |
| * Leadership (including principal and/or superintendent) develops and implements a trauma-sensitive action plan, identifies barriers to progress, and evaluates success. |  |  |  |  |
| * General and special educators consider the role that trauma may be playing in learning difficulties at school. |  |  |  |  |
| * Discipline policies balance accountability with an understanding of trauma. |  |  |  |  |
| * Support for staff is available on a regular basis, including supervision and/or consultation with a trauma expert, classroom observations, and opportunities for team work. |  |  |  |  |
| * Opportunities exist for confidential discussion about students. |  |  |  |  |
| * School participates in safety planning, including enforcement of court orders, transferring records safely, restricting access to student-record information, and sensitive handling of reports of suspected incidents of abuse or neglect. |  |  |  |  |
| * On-going professional development opportunities occur as determined by staff needs assessments. |  |  |  |  |

# Classroom Strategies and Techniques

| **Element** | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| * Expectations are communicated in clear, concise, and positive ways, and goals for achievement of students affected by traumatic experiences are consistent with the rest of the class. |  |  |  |  |
| * Students’ strengths and interests are encouraged and incorporated. |  |  |  |  |
| * Activities are structured in predictable and emotionally safe ways. |  |  |  |  |
| * Opportunities exist for students to learn and practice regulation of emotions and modulation of behaviors. |  |  |  |  |
| * Classrooms employ positive supports for behavior. |  |  |  |  |
| * Information is presented and learning is assessed using multiple modes. |  |  |  |  |
| * Opportunities exist for learning how to interact effectively with others. |  |  |  |  |
| * Opportunities exist for learning how to plan and follow through on assignments. |  |  |  |  |

# Collaborations and Linkages with Mental Health

| **Element** | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| * Policies describe how, when, and where to refer families for mental health supports; and staff actively facilitate and follow through in supporting families’ access to trauma-competent mental health services. |  |  |  |  |
| * Access exists to trauma-competent services for prevention, early intervention, treatment, and crisis intervention. |  |  |  |  |
| * Protocols exist for helping students transition back to school from other placements. |  |  |  |  |
| * Mental health services are linguistically appropriate and culturally competent. |  |  |  |  |
| * Staff has regular opportunities for assistance from mental health providers in responding appropriately and confidentially to families. |  |  |  |  |

**Family Partnerships**

| **Element** | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| * Staff uses a repertoire of skills to actively engage and build positive relationships with families. |  |  |  |  |
| * Strategies to involve parents are tailored to meet individual family needs, and include flexibility in selecting times and places for meetings, availability of interpreters, and translated materials. |  |  |  |  |
| * All communications with and regarding families respect the bounds of confidentiality. |  |  |  |  |

**Community Linkages**

| **Element** | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| * School develops and maintains ongoing partnerships with state human service agencies and with community-based agencies to facilitate access to resources. |  |  |  |  |
| * When possible, school and community agencies leverage funding to increase the array of supports available. |  |  |  |  |

**2 3 4**

**1 2 3 4**

**1 2 3 4**

**1 2 3 4**

**1 2 3 4**

**1 2 3 4**

**1 2 3 4**

**1 2 3 4**