Oregon Afterschool Conference

Supporting Youth And Racial Equity, Anti-Racist, Trauma Informed Care

October 21, 2020

Mark Jackson
Executive Director

Presenter Profile

A native of Portland, Oregon, Mr. Jackson is a graduate of Portland State University with credentials in Sociology, Communications, English and Black Studies.

As co-founder of REAP Inc., Mr. Jackson serves as the Executive Director. He brings has over twenty-five years of youth programming and organizational management experience. Mr. Jackson has provided visionary leadership in both the nonprofit and public sector that engages business leaders, educators, students, community leaders and parents.

Mr. Jackson is best known for his passion in the areas of youth advocacy, education equity, leadership, coalition building, public policy, and project management.

Passion for student voice and leadership is what underscores Mr. Jackson's unwavering commitment to empower culturally diverse students to meet their potential while challenging educators to teach beyond implicit and complicit biases.

Mr. Jackson's current community volunteer affiliations include:
- Governor's Racial Justice Council – Education Recovery Committee
- Oregon Department of Education, Black Student Success Plan Advisory Group
- Higher Education Coordinating Commission – Leadership Council for Equity

Oregon State Board of Education

Black Lives Matter Resolution

October 15, 2020

History Informs The Present

WHEREAS, we acknowledge that throughout Oregon's history, institutional and structural racism have caused division and fear for our communities, and that we share in the responsibility to respond to these circumstances on behalf of all Oregon school districts, educational professionals, students and families;

WHEREAS, we acknowledge that the authors of Oregon's constitution declared that no Black people could reside in the state or hold real estate, a law that wasn't repealed until 1926; and that racist language in the state constitution wasn't removed until 2002, all of these causing lasting negative consequences for Black communities;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Oregon State Board of Education:

(5) Urgently requests that Oregon school districts, public charter schools, and education service districts consult with local and state community partners to develop, implement, and/or strengthen comprehensive networks of support for students and families who are experiencing increased harassment, violence, bullying, or hatred based on race…

Session Description

This training focuses on supporting youth with an Anti-Racist and Trauma Informed Care approaches that address structural and historic oppression and introduce the concept of how trauma affects people and their lives.

This workshop outlines short-term and long-term effects of trauma, and other analyses of trauma and how it psychologically, socially and developmentally affects students.

Session Objectives

✓ Participants will review the importance of and modes of Trauma-Informed Care and possible triggers in our afterschool programs or school environments.

✓ Participants will compare models of delivery in direct service settings with a trauma-informed lens vs. a non-informed lens, and

✓ Participants will learn about vicarious trauma, and ways to de-escalate and minimize secondary traumatic stress.

Community Building Exercise (Breakout Session)

✓ What was your first exposure to racism as a child and how did you respond?

✓ What was your most recent exposure to racism and how did you respond?

What Is Racism?

Racism is a "system of structuring opportunity and assigning value based on the social interpretation of how one looks (which is what we call 'race') that unfairly disadvantages some individuals and communities, unfairly advantages other individuals and communities, and saps the strength of the whole society through the waste of human resources."

Racism is a social determinant of health that has a profound impact on the health status of children, adolescents, emerging adults, and their families.

Although progress has been made toward racial equality and equity, the evidence to support the continued negative impact of racism on health and well-being through implicit and explicit biases, institutional structures, and interpersonal relationships is clear.

Failure to address racism will continue to undermine health equity for all children, adolescents, emerging adults, and their families. [1]

What Is Implicit Bias?

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZWgVs4qj1ho

REAP
the next wave of leaders

Internalized Racism

The impacts of racism may result in internalized racism *(internalizing racial stereotypes about one's racial group).*

The importance of a prosocial identity is critical during adolescence, when young people must navigate the impacts of social status and awareness of discrimination based on race.

Although children and adolescents who are the targets of racism experience the most significant impact, bystanders are also adversely affected by racism. [1]

Impact of Racism

Racism at the Intersection of Education and Child and Adolescent Health

Educational achievement is an important predictor of long-term health and economic outcomes for children. Adults with a college degree live longer and have lower rates of chronic disease than those who did not graduate from college.

It is critical to recognize the institutional, individual, and internalized levels of racism that occur in the educational setting because education is a critical social determinant of health for children.

Disparities in educational access and attainment, along with racism experienced in the educational setting, affect the trajectory of academic achievement for children and adolescents and ultimately impact health. [1]

Teacher-Student Interaction

Children may also experience personally racism early in their schooling, which may be internalized and ultimately affect their interactions with others. Early teacher-child interactions are important for long-term academic outcomes.

The relationship of teacher to student across ages and grade levels influences school adjustment, literacy, math skills, grade point average, and scholastic aptitude test scores. Given the critical nature of the student-teacher relationship, it is important to explore how racism and implicit bias affect this dynamic.

Student-teacher racial mismatch can impact academic performance, with studies showing that African American children are more likely to receive a worse assessment of their behavior when they have a non-Hispanic white teacher than when they have an African American teacher.

This finding may result from racial bias in teachers' expectations of their students, with data demonstrating that white and other non–African American teachers are more likely than African American teachers to predict that African American students would not finish high school. [1]

ANTI-RACIST STRATEGIES

1.“Check-uity is not Equity

One-time diversity professional development is not enough.

After School Programs must commit to sustained and intentional professional learning around race, racism, implicit bias, program-induced trauma, and other equity-focused efforts.

This work needs to be sanctioned and supported at the board and executive level where all staff are part of the learning.

ANTI-RACIST STRATEGIES

2. Leaders Model.

After School Program Leaders must play a pivotal role in having hard conversations and creating <u>safe & brave</u> spaces to disrupt racist thinking and practices at their program sites or in school environments.

Many leaders operate from a reactive point of view and not a proactive one. Leaders should be talking to their staff regularly about how to create racially supportive programming.

Leaders must challenge their staff around deficit-based thinking about students of color.

ANTI-RACIST STRATEGIES

3. Silence Should NOT be Endorsed!

In many After School Programs, staff often make racially inappropriate comments, say dismissive things, or state jokes that are racially insensitive. Their colleagues remain silent, do not disrupt such comments, laugh at them, and do not repudiate their colleagues for making offensive comments.

Bystanders who remain silent in the face of inappropriate comments, gestures, jokes, and behaviors made by colleagues and students are **complicit in creating hostile learning communities.** Bystanders need to demonstrate the courage to call their colleagues and students to task about inappropriate behaviors.

ANTI-RACIST STRATEGIES

4. Racially diverse staff must be heard.

In many After School Programs, staff of color are all too aware of the hostile racial climate that exists in an organization. Many speak up about how they and their students are subjected to racially inappropriate work environments.

When such comments are made, leaders must listen to them, believe them, and take steps to address them—**immediately**!

However, staff of color should not be expected to do the emotional labor of fixing or addressing such issues. **We need allies!**

Be informed & sensitive to **Racial Battle Fatigue**
– *Dr. William Smith*

ANTI-RACIST STRATEGIES

6. Believe students!

The important #MeToo movement centered on the oppression, assaults, and abuse of women. The message was clear: Listen and believe women who are survivors of sexual violence.

A similar call should be made for BIPOC youth. When youth speak about issues of race, racism, discrimination, exclusion, and prejudice, **believe their stories**.

When they state that they have been subjected to lower expectations, hostile adults, different standards, and unfair discipline **believe** them, **advocate** for them, and **challenge** your colleagues who are skeptical.

7. Be informed of Critical Race Theory (CRT)

Critical Race Theory is a race-conscious approach to examining inequities that impact people of color; supports a narrative approach; centralizes voices, experiences, and perspectives of racialized people; and uses a race-conscious approach to assess social, political, economic, and legal norms, systems, institutions, and practices.

While CRT has evolved and expanded, one integral aspect and core tenet is that **CRT recognizes race as a social construct**, constantly shaped by political forces, and provides a framework through which racial subjugation can be named and eliminated.

STRATEGIES

8. Make The Investment

Recognizing that racism has significant adverse effects on the individual who receives, commits, and observes racism, substantial investments in dismantling structural racism are required to facilitate the societal shifts necessary for optimal development of children in Oregon and the United States.

Budgets priorities, curriculum and professional training are reflections of the values that inform After School programming.

Community Building Exercise (Breakout Session)

- ✓ What concerns you the most about serving students who may be dealing with trauma?

- ✓ What would youth in your after school program say about your approach to responding to conflict?

What Is Trauma?

Definition of Trauma – The 3 Es

- An emotionally painful or distressful **EVENT**

- The **EXPERIENCE** of the event induces an abnormally intense and prolonged stress response

- The event and experience of the event result in lasting physical and mental **EFFECTS**

What Is Our Response To YOUth?

At the heart of these approaches is the belief that students' actions are a direct result of their experiences, and when students act out or disengage, the question we should ask is not **"what's wrong with you,"** but rather **"what happened to you?"**

By being sensitive to students' past and current experiences with trauma, youth service providers can break the cycle of trauma, prevent re-traumatization, and engage a child in learning and finding success in school. [2]

Brain Development & Learning

**Impact of Trauma on Brain Development and Learning**

Children and adolescents are continually developing, and life experiences influence their development in both positive and negative ways.

Physiological changes to children's brains as well as emotional and behavioral responses to trauma have the potential to interfere with children's learning, school engagement, and academic success.

Because most brain development occurs during a child's early months and years when the brain is most "plastic," traumatic experiences in the early years, such as abuse and neglect and exposure to violence, can profoundly impact and limit brain development, resulting in cognitive losses, physical, emotional and social delays, all of which undermine learning. [3]

Brain Development & Function

Trauma impacts brain development and function
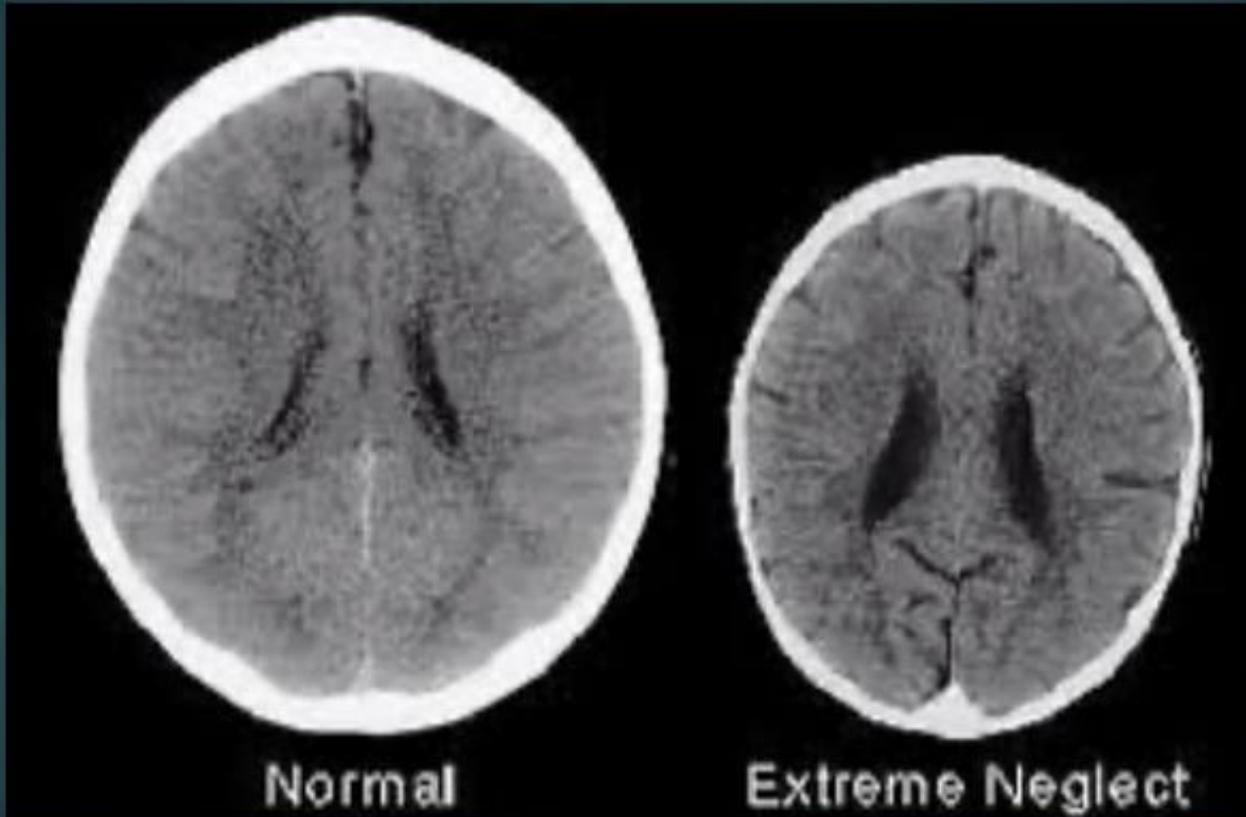
Normal   Extreme Neglect

3-year-old children

Social Interaction

Trauma Changes the Way Children Interact with Others

Trauma may also impact children's relationships with peers and teachers in the classroom. Children who have experienced trauma may be distrustful or suspicious of others, leading them to question the reliability and predictability of their relationships with classmates and teachers. Research indicates that children who have been exposed to violence often have difficulty responding to social cues and may withdraw from social situations or bully others.

For example, when compared to their classmates, children who have been physically abused have been found to engage in less intimate peer relationships and tend to be more aggressive and negative in peer interactions. Further, students who have experienced trauma may feel that authority figures have failed to provide safety for them in the past and may therefore be distrustful of teachers.

Rules and consequences may be viewed as punishment by children who have experienced trauma, increasing the potential for re-traumatization, while at the same time increasing the likelihood that these children will be subject to discipline and exclusionary practices on a repeated basis. [4]

Cycle of Trauma
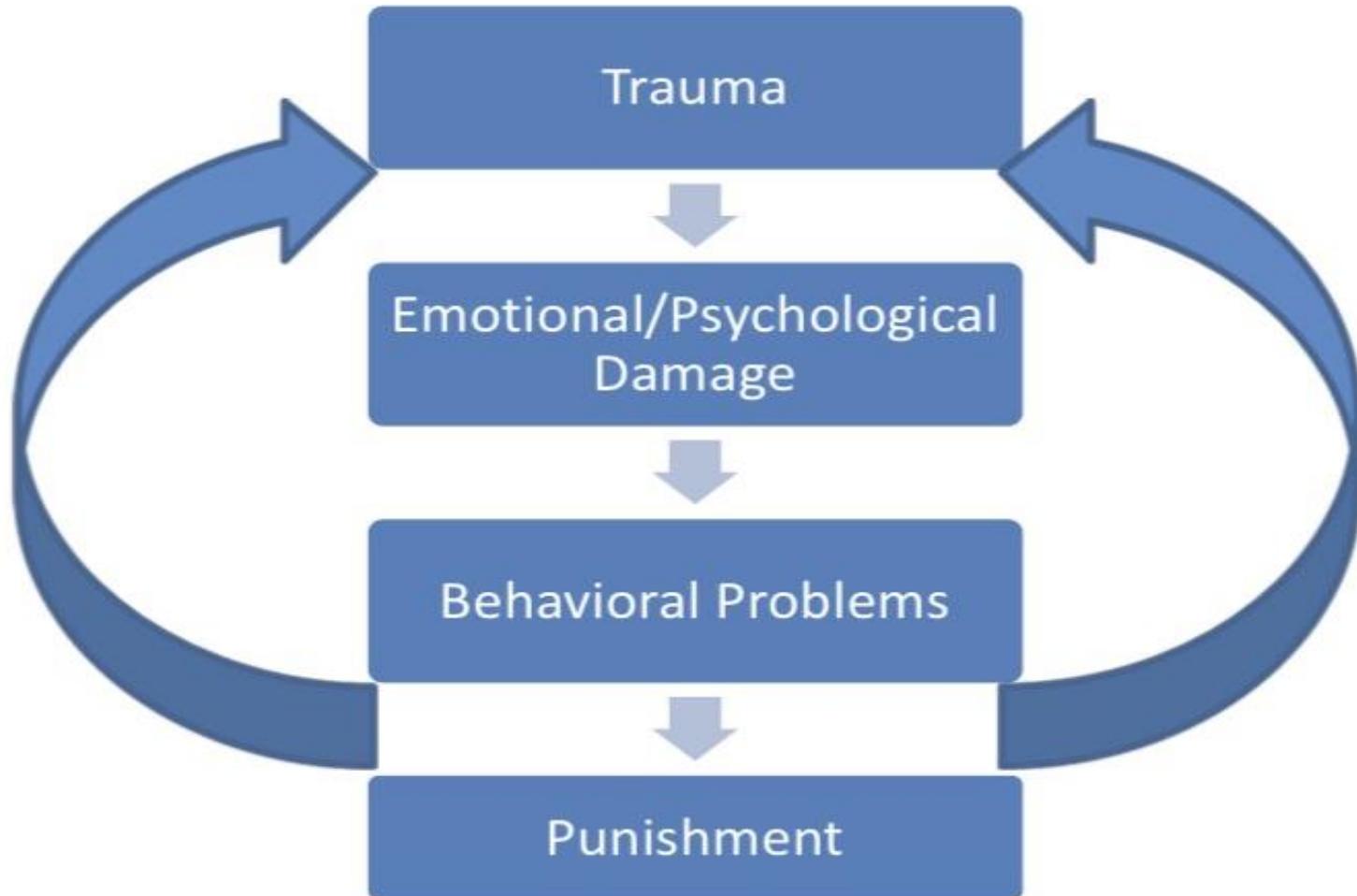
Vicarious Trauma

Vicarious trauma (VT) and Secondary Traumatic Stress (STS) are frequently used interchangeably to refer to the *indirect* trauma that can occur when we are exposed to difficult or disturbing images and stories second-hand.

Secondary traumatic stress, also known as compassion fatigue, is emotional stress that may result from an individual hearing about a person's experience with trauma.

Staff working with young people impacted by trauma are at risk of developing vicarious trauma. In order to address this, **After School Programs should emphasize self-care**, provide resources, and ensure structural supports to address staff's own trauma and/or secondary traumatic stress.

Implementing Trauma-Informed Approaches in After School Program

Similar to other child and family-serving organizations, being trauma-informed in After School programming means being informed about and sensitive to trauma, and providing a safe, stable, and understanding environment for students and staff.

The primary goal of trauma-informed approached is to prevent re-injury or re-traumatization by acknowledging trauma and its triggers, and avoiding stigmatizing and punishing students.

After School Programs – Trauma Informed

Sunrise of Philadelphia

An after-school program had youth write poems about people who were no longer with them, either lost to death or simply separated across distance — a possibility in this largely immigrant and refugee community.

The activity gave them a chance to explore loss and sadness, which — perhaps unintentionally — **fit right into Sunrise's focus of being a trauma-informed organization.**

"One of the things you can do with your staff and students [in a trauma-informed organization] is **help them make sense of their experiences**," said Marina Fradera, trauma and curriculum specialist at Sunrise.

After School Programs – Trauma Informed

U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) offers a guide for organizations:

- ✓ Realize the widespread impact of trauma and the potential paths for recovery

- ✓ Recognize the signs and symptoms

- ✓ Respond by fully integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures and practices

- ✓ Resist re-traumatization.

Trauma Informed Environment

Creating A Climate of Collective Health…

Safety – An environment where kids feel physically, emotionally, and culturally safe; helps kids regulate and fosters relationship building. Important components of this are staff to youth ratios and physical space.

Fifty youth with two adult leaders in a large open area does not create an environment of safety; smaller ratios and access to soft, comfortable spaces creates a safer environment and helps to support youth's ability to better regulate.

Trustworthiness – Programming is predictable and consistent; youth know what to expect when arriving at the program. Staff "walk the talk" to alleviate any fear or anxiety that may be created by the unknown.

Trauma Informed Environment

Choice – Abuse and neglect are experiences which steal an individual's autonomy and ability to make choices for oneself. Providing opportunities for youth to have choice within programming (youth can choose from activity options) and choice in directives (it's homework time, you can sit at the table or grab a clipboard and go to the rug) can help fill that void. These choices allow for autonomy while giving youth multiple options to get to where it is we want them to go (getting out their homework)!!! (LOL)

Collaboration – The understanding that learning happens in relationships; staff who intentionally work to make all youth feel like they belong and help youth to develop new skills allows for greater social-emotional learning. In addition, supporting parents and working with other agencies (such as schools, therapists, or social workers) builds a net of support for youth.

Trauma Informed Environment

Empowerment – The lifting up of youth's strengths and an understanding that troubling behavior patterns have served the youth in some capacity. Acknowledging the behaviors they have developed and helping them reframe those behaviors can be an incredibly powerful message.

The idea that "sassy" is the strength of advocating for your needs and helping youth to find more successful ways to exercise those strengths is empowering and more likely to illicit skill development than rewards or punishment. [6]

"When kids are upset and acting out, it does no good to give an ultimatum or talk about consequences. At a certain level of being upset, kids literally can't process it" - *Marina Fradera*

Trauma Informed Approach – Case Study

Tom is walking to the classroom for after school programming when his classmate Jim bumps into him in the crowded hallway.

The students' youth coordinator, Ms. Jones hears Tom and Jim begin to yell at one another and steps into the hall just as Tom pushes Jim.

Ms. Jim and her colleague Mr. Johnson stepped in to break up the incident. This is the third behavior incident Tom has been in this program year.

Trauma Informed Approach – Case Study

Initial Response

Traditional Response	Trauma Informed Approach
Ms. Jones and her colleague Mr. Johnson verbally reprimand Tom and Jim and call for the school security guard. The boys are escorted to the program manager's office by the school campus security and Ms. Jones returns to her classroom.	Ms. Jones and her colleague separate Tom and Jim and bring them each to an empty classroom to calm down. Ms. Jones has developed a strong relationship with Tom and, once he has calmed down, asks him "what's going on?" It takes a few minutes, but Tom eventually opens up to let Ms. Jones know that he is feeling "on edge" due to instability and being bullied at school. While Ms. Jones is talking with Tom, Mr. Johnson deescalates Jim and begins a conversation with him about his behavior.

Trauma Informed Approach – Case Study

Discipline Action

Traditional Response	Trauma Informed Approach
Both students meet with the program manager who quickly gathers the facts and determines that the level of severity of the altercation warrants a 1-day program suspension for Jim (as this was his first offense) and a 5-day suspension for Tom. Tom is labeled as a "repeat offender" and told that he will be expelled for his next offense. Both students' parents are called and told that their child has a discipline problem.	Following their individual conversations, Ms. Jones, Mr. Johnson, Tom, and Jim meet with the program manager. In a non-confrontational conversation within a restorative circle, both students review the facts and the emotional impact and apologize for over-reacting. Consistent with program discipline policies, both students complete a restorative plan to govern their behavior in the future and are then permitted to participate in program activities.

End Notes

[1] Source: Racism and Its Effects on Pediatric Health, American Academy of Pediatrics, Pediatrics August 2019, 144 (2) e20191765; DOI: https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2019-1765

[2] Maura McInerney, Esq. & Amy McKlindon, M.S.W.

[3] Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University. (2007). A science-based framework for early childhood policy: Using evidence to improve outcomes in learning, behavior, and health for vulnerable children

[4] Source: Van der Kolk, B. (2003). The neurobiology of childhood trauma and abuse; Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Clinics of North America, 12(2), 293-317. 33 Margolin, G., & Gordis, E.B. (2000). The effects of family and community violence on children. Annual Review of Psychology, 51, 445-479; Streeck-Fischer & van der Kolk (2000)

[5] U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

[6] Trauma-Resilient Informed Practices in Expanded Learning Programs: A Snapshot of Trends in the Field

End Notes

[1] Source: Racism and Its Effects on Pediatric Health, American Academy of Pediatrics, Pediatrics August 2019, 144 (2) e20191765; DOI: https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2019-1765

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[5] U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

[6] Trauma-Resilient Informed Practices in Expanded Learning Programs: A Snapshot of Trends in the Field

Resources

Recommended Book Readings

White Fragility, Robin DiAngelo

Race Matters, Cornel West

Blind Spot: Hidden Biases of Good People, Anthony Greenwald & Mahzarin Banaji

Why Are All The Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria, Dr. Beverly Daniel Tatum

Resources

Local Training Consultants Resource

REAP Inc. – www.reapusa.org

Center for Equity & Inclusion – www.ceipdx.org

Coaching for Educational Equity (CFEE) – www.edequityoregon.net

Equality NW – www.equalityworksnw.com

Capacity Building Partnerships – www.capacitypartnerships.com

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The Next Wave Of Leaders