

YOUR EVERYDAY GESTURES CAN HELP A CHILD HEAL.

Research continues to show that witnessing or experiencing traumatic events in childhood can impact the physical development of a child's brain. You can help reverse the effects. In fact, as a caring adult, you could be the most important factor in helping children heal. Here's what you can do:



CELEBRATE

Use "put-ups," not "put-downs."



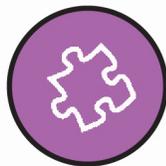
COMFORT

Stay calm and patient.



LISTEN

Show an interest in their passions.



COLLABORATE

Ask for their opinions.



INSPIRE

Expose them to new ideas.

Childhood trauma
Changing minds.

DEFENDING CHILDHOOD Ad Council FUTURES WITHOUT VIOLENCE

Washtenaw
SUCCESS BY 6



www.WashtenawSuccessBy6.org

Find more information and helpful tips at ChangingMindsNOW.org

CELEBRATE

- Greet children by name and offer a handshake or high five.
- Create concrete processes for giving children positive feedback when they demonstrate skills such as perseverance and focus, and support them when they face setbacks.
- Be sure your interactions with students are positive, encouraging, and supporting.
- Point out students' talents and strengths to them, and offer more opportunities to build on these skills.
- Engage children in open-ended, free play or activities that build their confidence.
- Establish a climate of respect that supports "put-ups, not put-downs."
- Recognize children when they are doing things right. When you need to redirect their behavior, do so privately and calmly.
- Allow children to hang their artwork and creations in the classroom.

COMFORT

- When a child is going into survival mode, or example, when children turn red and clench their fists, start rapidly breathing, or freeze and have a "deer-in-the-headlights" look, approach them calmly and offer comfort, rather than discipline.
- When you notice a child is having a difficult time, ask yourself, "What's happening here?" rather than, "What's wrong with this child?" This simple mental switch can help you realize that the student has been triggered into a fear response, which can take many forms.
- When you see children who have been triggered, calmly reflect back to them: "You seem like you're having trouble or getting irritated," and then offer a couple choices of things they can do. This will help them gain a sense of control and agency, and it will help them to feel safe again.
- Teach students activities such as yoga, meditation, breathing games, and affirmations to help them learn emotional control, social awareness, self-awareness, relationship skills, and anger management.
- Create routines and transitions for children so they know what to expect.
- Create a safe and cozy space in your classroom where kids who are upset can go to calm themselves down.
- During your daily routines, you may notice children's triggers. When you see patterns, develop strategies to minimize the issues.

LISTEN

- Role model listening and respecting each person's opinions and beliefs—with your peers and with students.
- Listen and support other interests and passions beyond what you are teaching them.
- Remain curious, and ask supportive questions that get underneath negative behavior. For example, "Which part of getting your homework done is hard?" and "Why is that part hard?" instead of, "Why didn't you do your homework?"
- Create processes that allow all students a chance to share and to be heard.
- Create a positive classroom by making rules and norms that support respectful listening among all members of the school community.

COLLABORATE

- Work together with children to create agreed-upon rules and expectations.
- Facilitate working together with peers toward a common goal.
- Model the problem-solving process rather than just giving students the answer.
- Notice when children are frustrated and offer supportive guidance.
- Work through conflicts together. Teach nonviolent resolution skills and problem-solving methods.

INSPIRE

- Believe in your students' potential. Create a climate of achievement by setting high standards and expectations.
- Help children see their natural talents and use them in the classroom.
- Create opportunities for children to help each other. Find ways for all students to share their expertise.
- Provide opportunities to take on leadership roles inside and outside of the classroom.
- Ask about children's friends and help them identify friends that make them feel happy and confident.
- Be a role model. Set a positive example by the way you approach tasks and relationships.