

Ohio Deans Compact

P20 Literacy Collaborative Virtual Meeting (via Zoom)

June 11, 2020

9:00 AM – 2:00 PM

Notetaker: Emily Kresiak, on behalf of WordFarmers Associates

(9:00 AM) Welcome & Introductions

Mary Murray, EdD and Dottie Erb, PhD, Co-facilitators, P20 Literacy Collaborative

- Dr. Murray and Dr. Erb introduced themselves, and Dr. Murray asked that members mute their mics and for new members to unmute and introduce themselves.
- New members: Mary Dodds (ODE); Allison Laumann (Third Grade Teacher, Washington Elementary, Marietta), Maria Pappas (Chief of Core Curriculum, Youngstown City), Bonnie Stalter (First Grade Teacher, Washington Elementary, Marietta) Kim Christensen (Senior Lecturer, Bowling Green), Robin Haught (Title 1 Teacher, Washington Elementary, Marietta)
- Dr. Murray welcomed new members and provided an overview of the agenda. Dr. Erb introduced the presenter.

(9:15 AM) The Psycho-social Impact of Reading Difficulties on Children and Youth

Steven P. Dykstra, PhD, Practicing Psychologist, Milwaukee County, WI, and Founding Member, Wisconsin Reading Coalition

- Today's topic— "A Developmental Model of Trauma, Growth, and Resilience: The Place for Language and Reading"
- Presenter noted the group will discuss the best ways to teach reading, but he is not a reading teacher and does not have the toolbox to teach first graders in the classroom.
- Presenter gave a background of his education and work. Would ask students during a session, "Tell me about when you first started in school." Students explained what was positive and negative and if reading was more difficult. Students who had behavioral difficulties also showed difficulties reading, one did not cause the other. Presenter will exhibit principles in the presentation with case studies.
- "A Girl from Up North" Case Study
 - 17-year-old female attempted suicide—the presenter met her in the hospital and discussed her environment and circumstances with her and her family, and uncovered she was raped from a boy from her high school.
 - Asked her if school was always hard, and discussed hardships early on in school, particularly reading—she struggled with reading throughout school.
- The Fundamentals of Development
 - Three pillars of development, shared foundational pieces between all human beings
 - Safety and Security—goes beyond basic and superficial physical needs, emotional need for attachment is essential for development. Referenced famous case studies, particularly the research of Michael Rutter and Harry Harlow.
 - Language—need for language and words and reading. Brain is wired to understand and produce language. Lack of language is like being starved of safety and security and nourishment.

- Relationships—need for social interaction, also helps brain growth.
 - Children can develop these fundamentals but lose them over time, possible to get them back. If deprived of one, though, building from nothing is challenging.
- A Review of Classic Developmental Stages
 - Freud and Erikson—developing trust as a child and forming new relationships quickly.
- Psychosocial Trauma
 - Shared examples of early trauma and the impact over time with accumulated trauma, and trauma informed care and early recognition.
 - Injury—psychosocial trauma is also an injury to your brain.
 - ACES—Adverse Childhood Experiences Scale, short list of questions, four or more “yes” answers meant more dramatic outcomes later in life (e.g., work, education, environment).
 - Risk Permanent Changes—PTSD, brain never returns to original state.
 - Range of Trauma—can recover from severe trauma through relationships and security, otherwise vulnerable for more time.
 - Severe and Acute vs. Chronic and less severe
- Illiteracy as Trauma (Shame Fatigue)
 - Presenter coined the term “Shame Fatigue.” Shared a case study where a 16-year-old girl would repeatedly run away and throw herself into dangerous situations. Found out she had difficulty reading and felt deep shame because of it, so feeling shame from the dangerous situations was irrelevant. Preferred getting herself into trouble than having to read aloud in elementary school.
- RAD—Before PTSD
 - Lack the development of safety and security
 - Identified by psychologist Michael Rutter, and research by Harlow
 - An insult to the essence of our humanity—kids are at risk of lacking growth
- Neurological Consequences
 - Trauma—smaller brains and less connections of nerve cells, smaller Corpus Callosum (referenced VA study), inefficient organization of the brain, overuse of right hemisphere and underuse of frontal lobes, reflects a deeply evolved need
- The Neurological Basis
 - Language—helps organize the brain, promotes a left hemisphere bias, enlarges the Corpus Callosum, promotes and builds frontal lobe activity, generates efficiency, reflects a deeply evolved need
 - These language features are the opposite of the above trauma consequences.
 - Referenced a Dr. Nadine Gaab video—watch the brain read.
 - Relationships—increases brain connectivity, promotes language, soothes the brain, complex social drive likely led to large brains, “default network” (preparing for next social interaction during interaction), linked to safety and survival, reflects a deeply evolved need.
- Model of the “Fundamentals of Development”—*Safety and Security* at the base with *Language* and *Relationships* as columns. In the middle, for the future, are: *Hopes, Dreams, Interests, Experiences, Talents, and Knowledge*. Includes arrows showing the connections between them.

- Presenter discussed the benefits of reading—ability to reach other times, places, and people.
- When you Grow Up
 - Children imagining a future at 5-years-old is limited and changes with the onset of puberty. Rapid development to frontal lobe, ability to self-reflect on future. Difficulty seeing a future if a child experienced reading difficulty.
 - Case study of a girl who experienced severe trauma but was a naturally gifted reader, brother taught her to read and escape circumstances through books, grew up to lead a generally successful life. Exceedingly rare case, most would struggle in reading and life.
- Poverty and Racism
 - Poverty is trauma, racism is violence, epigenetics and generational trauma inherited from parents. Poverty and racism affect literacy rates (i.e., additional stress, lack of communication, disbelief in a future).
- Closing the Gap and the Lessons of Head Start
 - Head Start aimed to close the gap. Instead the gap slightly widened, but achievement gaps cannot be erased. More important to teach in a better way, improve literacy rates, and everyone improves.
- Where Can We Intervene?
 - Reduce trauma and build resilience, promote healthy relationships, influence and provide access to language, offer dreams of success.
- The Intervention Model has *Language* as the base, with *Relationships* and *Safety and Security* as the pillars. *Wonder* and *Magic* in the center.
- Presenter quoted Donald Meichenbaum, Cognitive Behavioral Therapist, teach children of trauma to read.
- The Great Vaccine—reading builds and extends language, develops and repairs the brain, helps you understand others / builds the “default network,” fosters resilience, benefits everyone.
- Literacy as Justice—we have the resources and knowledge to teach literacy well, lack the resolve.
- 11:40 AM—break for questions from participants
 - Question—husband teaching at new district, struggling with the students’ language and cursing at the school, is there an impact if language includes constant profanity?
 - Answer—Depends on if there is underlying rage.

(11:45 AM) Break

(12:30 PM) The Psycho-social Impact of Reading Difficulties on Children and Youth (continued)

Steven P. Dykstra, PhD, Practicing Psychologist, Milwaukee County, WI, and Founding Member, Wisconsin Reading Coalition

- Presenter welcomed everyone back. Noted there were questions in the chat feature and encouraged participants to ask more. Stanley (Tech, WFA) read questions aloud.
 - Question—Which area of the brain is more impacted by psychosocial trauma?
 - Answer—Deeper areas of the brain (e.g., brainstem, limbic system). Has negative consequences for other areas of the brain, both indirect and direct.
 - Question—How does psychosocial trauma impact the development of children’s language?

- Answer—Different effects at different ages and when trauma occurred. If language is not developed by critical periods, then ability heavily decreases.
 - Question—Is that neuroplasticity that allows neurons in the brain that compensates for injury the same with emotional trauma?
 - Answer—The same basic principal. Brain adapts but there can be consequences if areas of the brain do not develop.
- Presenter began presentation and asked if the facilitators would monitor the chat feature for additional questions. Briefly reviewed the areas of trauma that were discussed in the morning. Also, the ability to heal over time, responses to treatment, and disruption to development. Discussed three pillars and how they constantly interact.
- What this looks like
 - When it does not go well—the gap tends to get bigger over time, get further and further behind, early intervention is important. Also discussed examples of when it goes well. Goal is to reach a point in adolescence when a student will be confident in their future.
- Technology and social media—the increase in suicide for kids during the increase in social media is difficult to ignore, needs to be monitored. Other considerations include—the world is changing rapidly with technology, students can experience a knowledge gap that widens over time, fighting for social justice for kids can give them a sense of purpose.
- Reading is an antidote, facilitates relationships and coping, and reorganizes the brain in desirable ways, within our control.
- Therapy, Therapists, and Therapeutics
 - New roles during COVID-19, particularly teaching roles, and teaching/learning remotely. Everyone can be therapeutic in a short period of time, at the right time, and still be effective and beneficial. Strong relationships have a greater impact than the expertise, such as a relationship between a child and a therapist.
- Tricks and Techniques
 - Warnings—some changes will not be good, will be struggle and failure alongside trauma, accept the limitations of what you can provide (i.e., cannot save everyone).
 - Be open, healthy arrogance, and calm and collected without big reactions.
 - Talk slowly, be patient, say “I wonder,” less is more, more important to listen than provide a solution or say “I don’t know,” and exhibit love and forgiveness.
- Presenter asked if there are questions or comments. Showed a slide with his name and role.
 - Comment—Former coach, never said “I understand” to a student because chances are you do not.
- Presenter thanked everyone for their time and encouraged participants to contact him anytime.
 - Stanley noted there was “an outpouring” in the chat.
 - Presenter ended with “be kind.”

(1:40 PM) Facilitator Wrap-up

Next Steps/Schedule/Meeting Evaluation

Evaluation Link: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/P20_Literacy_June_2020

- Dr. Murray shared updates and reminders
 - Updates

- Improving Literacy Partnership Grantees were given a no-cost extension through 9/30/21
- Information about annual reporting will be provided to PLs
- Reminders
 - P20 Literacy Collaborative Website: @OhioP20
 - P20 Literacy Collaborative Twitter Handle: @OhioP20
 - Complete the evaluation form (look for an email from Aimee Howley that includes a survey link)
- Thanked everyone for participating.

(1:45) Adjourn