

Educator Knowledge & Preparedness in Supporting Children with Trauma/Adversity

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Background

The present study shows that the majority of participants, despite the level of education or years of experience, do not feel they have the specific knowledge or preparedness to support children who have experienced early adversity or trauma. In the current study, it was reported that 69% of participants have not participated in professional development that is specific to childhood trauma and/or early adversity. All participants answered that they would benefit from increased training and/or professional development in the area of supporting children with trauma and/or early adversity.

Limitations

Time that was given to complete the recruitment of participants.

Contact supervisors reporting that staff did not have time to come out of program to complete the survey.

Small sample size.

When obtaining a diploma or degree, there should be a course in how to be trauma-informed and how to support children who have experienced trauma and/or early adversity.

When individuals are offered PD, it should be mandatory for all RECE to complete a course on trauma and early adversity.

When centres are being visited by Assessment for Quality Improvement, there should be a section on the environment of each

Gunnar, M. R. (1998). Quality of early care and buffering of neuroendocrine stress reactions: Potential effects on the developing human brain. *Preventive Medicine, 27*(2), 208-211.

Hadfield, K., Ostrowski, A., & Ungar, M. (2017). What can we expect of the mental health and well-being of Syrian refugee children and adolescents in Canada? *Canadian Psychology/Psychologies Canadienne, 58*(2), 194-201. doi: 10.1037/cap0000102

Do RECEs feel prepared and knowledgeable to support children that have experienced trauma and/or early adversity?

Methodology

Research Design

Quantitative research design using survey methodology.

Instrument

Online survey with eleven multiple-choice questions and one open-ended short-answer question. Questions explored issues such as professional development (PD) opportunities, supervisor support, trauma-informed environments, and confidence in supporting children with trauma/early adversity.

Procedure

Social media and recruitment by supervisors of centres in the city of Toronto & Durham.

Participants

Thirty-five participants with at least five years of experience within the sector and in good standing with the College of Early Childhood Educators.