

Knowledge of Trauma-Informed Practice: A Mixed Methods Exploratory Study with Educators of Young Children

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Abstract : Decades of research on the impact of trauma in early childhood suggest severe risks to the mental health, emotional, social and physical development of a young child. Trauma-exposed students can pose a variety of different levels of challenges to schools and educators of young children and to date, few studies have addressed ECE teachers' role in providing trauma support. The present study aims to contribute to this literature by exploring the beliefs of British Columbia's (BC) early childhood education (ECE) teachers in their level of readiness and capability to work within a trauma-informed practice (TIP) framework to support their trauma-exposed students. Through a sequential, mix-methods approach, a self-report questionnaire and semi-structured interviews will be used to gauge BC ECE teachers' knowledge of TIP, their preparedness, and their ability in using this framework to support their most vulnerable students. Teacher participants will be recruited through the ECEBC organization and various school districts in the Greater Vancouver Area. Questionnaire data will be primarily collected through an online survey tool whereas interviews will be taking place in-person and audio-recorded. Data analysis of survey responses will be largely descriptive, whereas interviews, once transcribed, will be employing thematic content analysis to generate themes from teacher responses. Ultimately, this study hopes to highlight the necessity of utilizing the TIP framework in BC ECE classrooms in order to support both trauma-exposed students and provide essential resources to compassionate educators of young children.

Keywords : early childhood education, early learning classrooms, refugee students, trauma-exposed students, trauma-informed practice

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