



HANDLE WITH CARE OKLAHOMA

PROTECT • HEAL • THRIVE

Oklahoma House of Representatives
Study #22-080

Sponsored by
Representative Ajay Pittman
October 20, 2022

<https://handlewithcareok.org/>

Goals of the Study:

- Preventing the debilitating impact of untreated trauma
- Strategies for early supports
- Call to Action:
Expansion of Handle With Care statewide



3 Simple Steps for Handle With Care

**Formal and informal HWC notices
**opportunity for families experiencing toxic stress to receive referral to peer support group at a family resource center*



First Responder responds to a 911 call where a school-age child/teen is a victim, witness, or bystander to a serious crime, traffic accident, arrest, or other.



First Responder makes a HWC notification via e-mail to school/child care agency: three words “Handle With Care” along with the name, age and school are included.



School district/daycare helps provide trauma-sensitive interventions, counseling and/or social services to student in crisis, the following school day, as needed.

Handle With Care: History - nationally



- 2009** Office of Juvenile Justice Survey
- 2010** Defending Childhood Initiative
- 2011** WV Children's Justice Task Force formed a subcommittee to look at programming
- 2012** Developed the **HWC** program
- 2013** Piloted the **HWC** program
- 2015** WV State Police launched **HWC** statewide
- 2019** 65 cities in 27 states have launched **HWC**
- 2022** All 50 states have launched **HWC**

Handle With Care: History in Oklahoma



Aug 2018	Pilot began with OCPD and OKCPS
April 2019	Presentation at OK Child Abuse Prevention Conf.
June 2019	OTPC Interim Study Request Submitted with OK House of Representatives
June 2019	Andrea Darr from WV presented at OCCY
Aug 2019	Presentation at OTPC Conference
Sept 2019	PHIO become HWC fiscal agent
Oct 2019	Presentation at State Capitol (Study # 19-074)
Oct 2019	10 State Leaders went to National HWC Conf
Nov 2019	Started Oklahoma HWC website
Jan 2020	Handle With Care Oklahoma became CLEET certified
Feb 2020	House Bill 3640 provided HWC training statewide
Feb. 2021	Launch of statewide website
May 2021	Partnered with RAVE software to reach 85% of schools in OK
Oct 2022	Presentation at the State Capitol (Study #22-080)

Handle With Care: Collaborative Planning



OKLAHOMA SHERIFFS' ASSOCIATION
TRAINING • TECHNOLOGY • TRADITION



Public Health
Institute of
Oklahoma



OKLAHOMA
Education



OKLAHOMA
Mental Health &
Substance Abuse



OKLAHOMA
State Department
of Health

RAVE
MOBILE SAFETY



OKLAHOMA
Human Services



Oklahoma Turning Point Council
COMMUNITY PARTNERS IN PUBLIC HEALTH INNOVATION

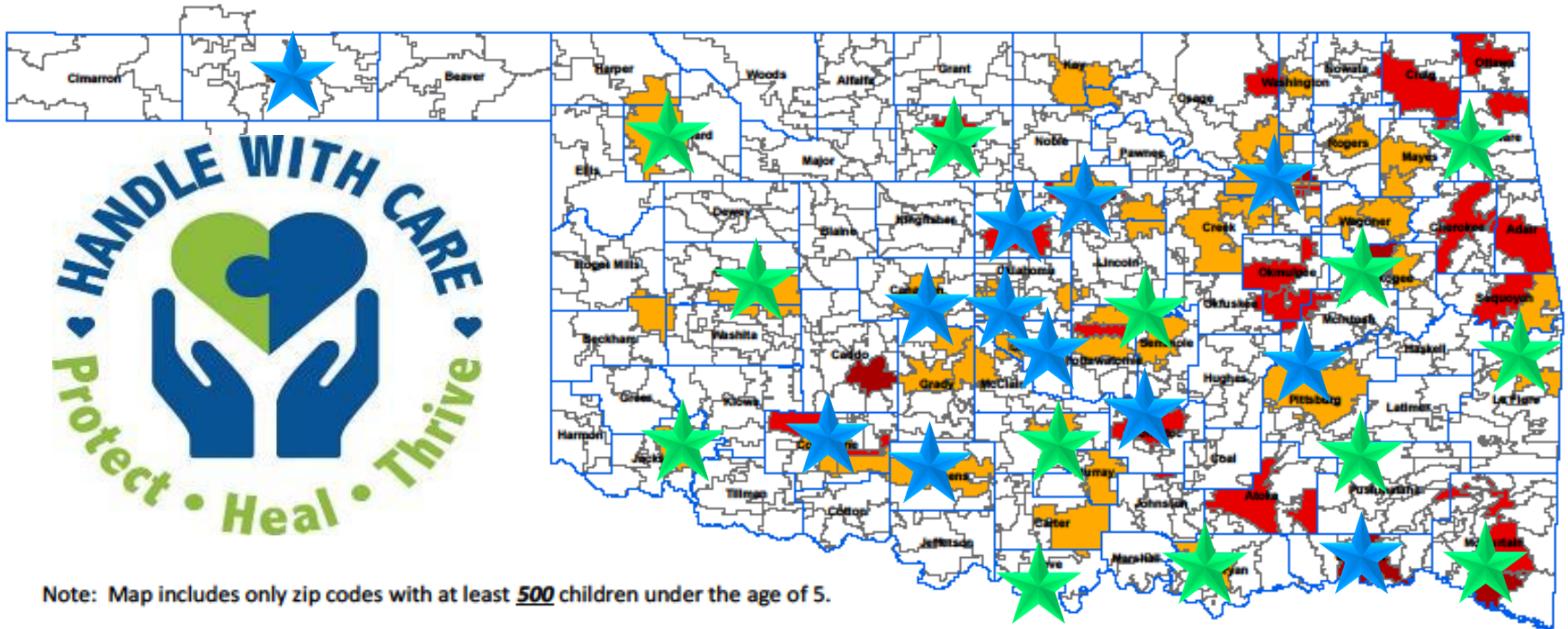


OKLAHOMA
Bureau of Narcotics &
Dangerous Drugs Control

Council on Law Enforcement
Education and Training



Growing Interest in the Handle With Care Model in Oklahoma



Source: US Census Bureau, 2010-14 American Community Survey.
 Map prepared by the Community Service Council 10.17.16. (rev. 1.24.17)



= interest in Handle With Care

= Implementing Handle With Care

Methods to Support Implementation

Statewide website:

<https://handlewithcareok.org/>

Monthly planning call:
1st Wednesdays
10-11am

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84481751587>

Trainings available upon request
Email: info@handlewithcareok.org

Special thanks to
PHIO and OTPC:



Public Health
Institute of
Oklahoma



Oklahoma Turning Point Council
COMMUNITY PARTNERS IN PUBLIC HEALTH INNOVATION



HANDLE WITH CARE: OKLAHOMA
PROTECT • HEAL • THRIVE

Search ...

Search

Home

Handle With Care ▾

Drug Endangered Children ▾

Child Human Trafficking ▾

Recognizing/Responding to Child Abuse ▾

Contact Us



The "Handle With Care" Model:

News & Announcements:

Examples in ALL 50 States

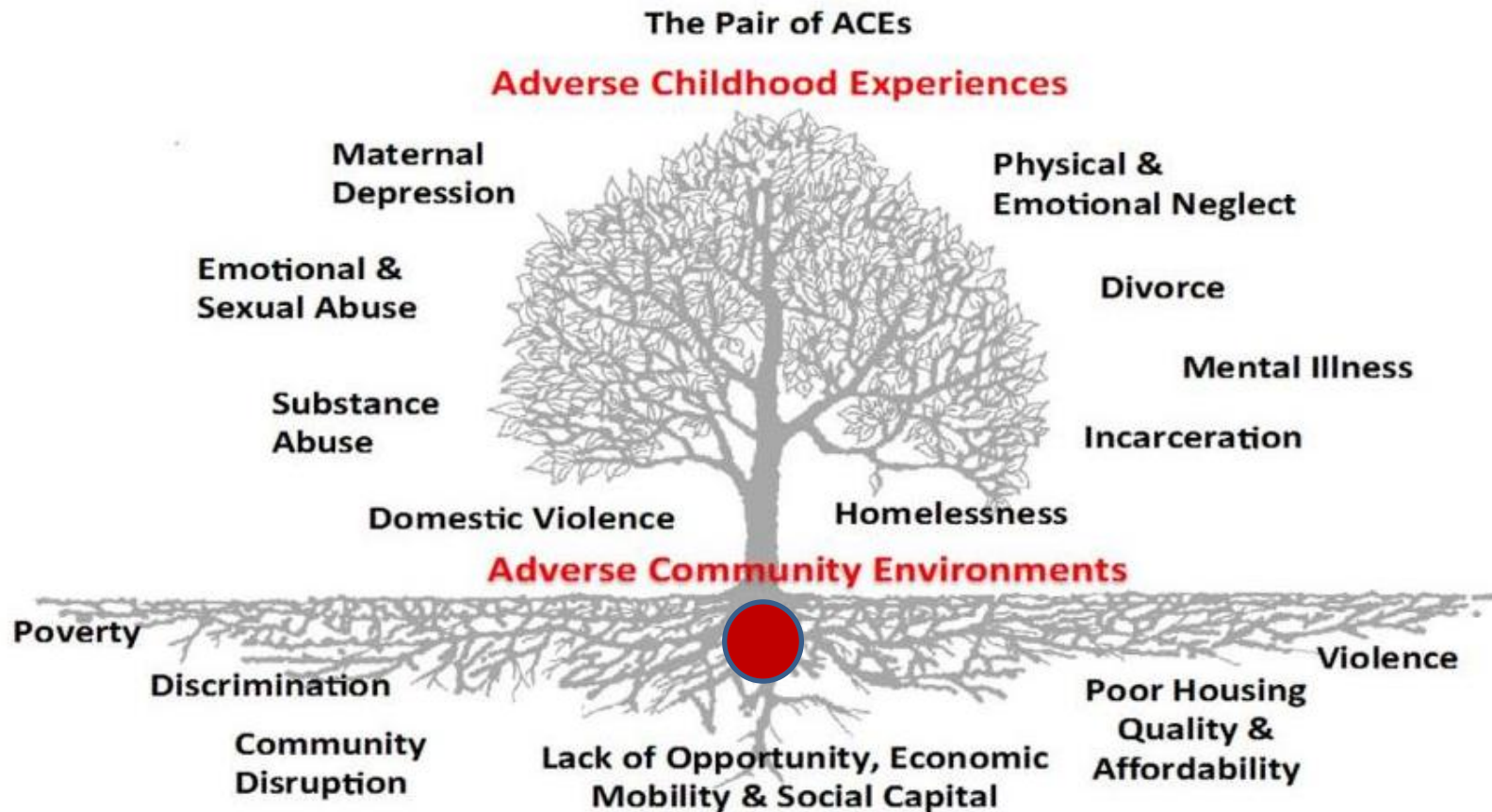


*Oklahoma is recognized as a top 5 state for implementation efforts


Positive Effects of Handle With Care



What is the root cause of generational adversities and health inequities?



Ellis, W., Dietz, W. (2017) A New Framework for Addressing Adverse Childhood and Community Experiences: The Building Community Resilience (BCR) Model. *Academic Pediatrics*. 17 (2017) pp. S86-S93. DOI information: 10.1016/j.acap.2016.12.011

 = The seed of generational adversity is the prolonged activation of stress response systems in the absence of protective relationships; toxic stress; relational poverty.

The Problem

A recent national survey found that **57%** of American children have been exposed to violence, crime, or abuse in their homes, schools or communities – and that **48%** were direct victims of two or more violent acts.

Office of Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention.2015. Children's Exposure to Violence, Crime, and Abuse: An Update. <https://www.ojp.gov/library/publications/childrens-exposure-violence-crime-and-abuse-update>

Stress



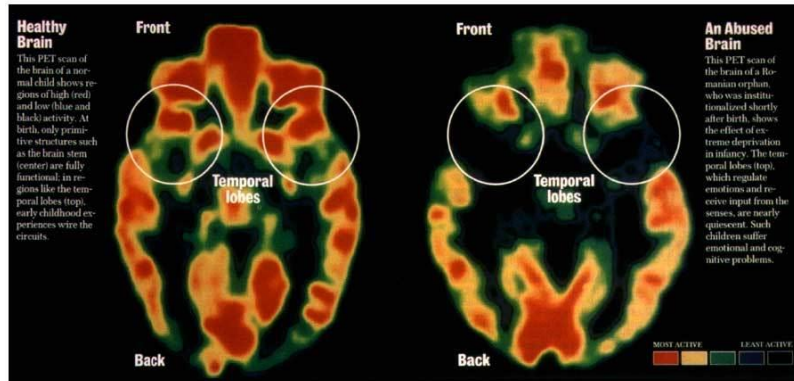
Brief increases in heart rate,
mild elevations in stress hormone levels.

Serious, temporary stress responses,
buffered by supportive relationships.

Prolonged activation of stress
response systems in the absence
of protective relationships.

Center on the Developing Child – Harvard University

Untreated Trauma



Turns off the learning switch!



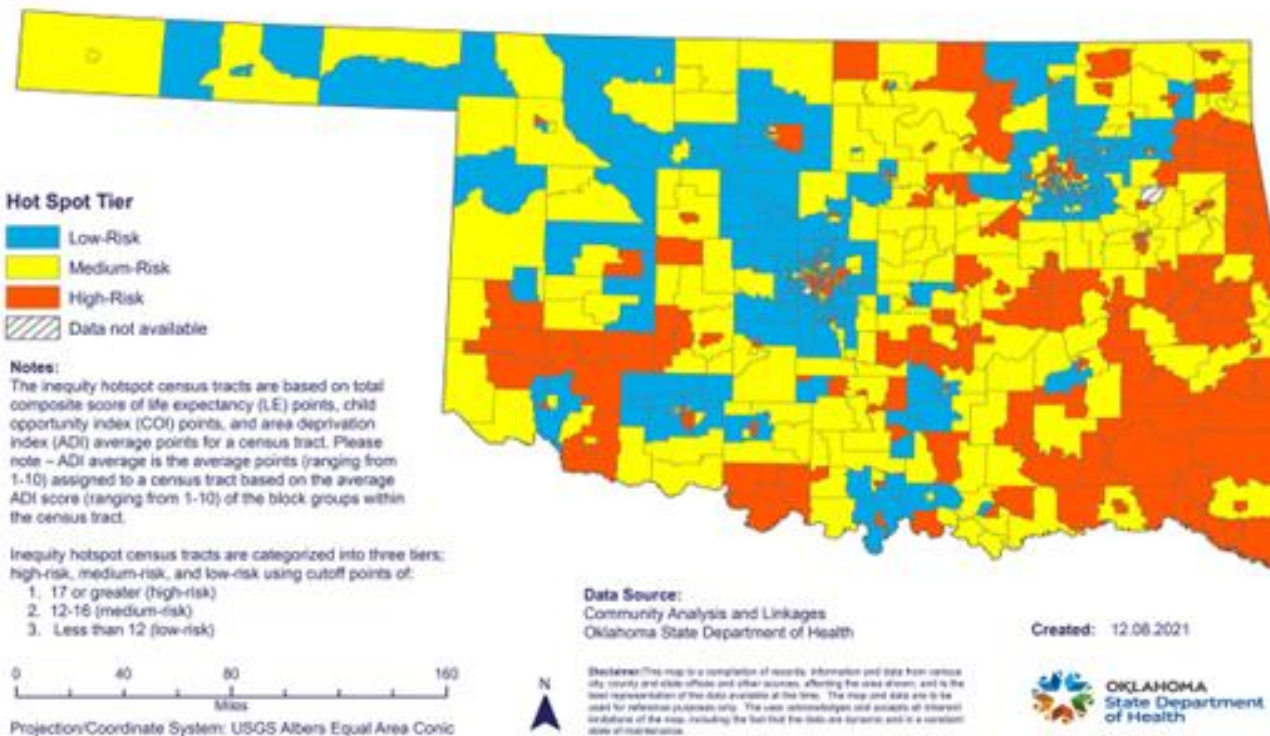
Unaddressed Trauma can lead to:

- Chronic Absenteeism
- Truancy
- Drop out
- Contact with law
- Incarceration



Implementation Strategy: All Counties, especially Inequity Hot Spots

Oklahoma Inequity Hot Spots



Source: <https://www.okintheknow.org/wellness-county-profiles/>

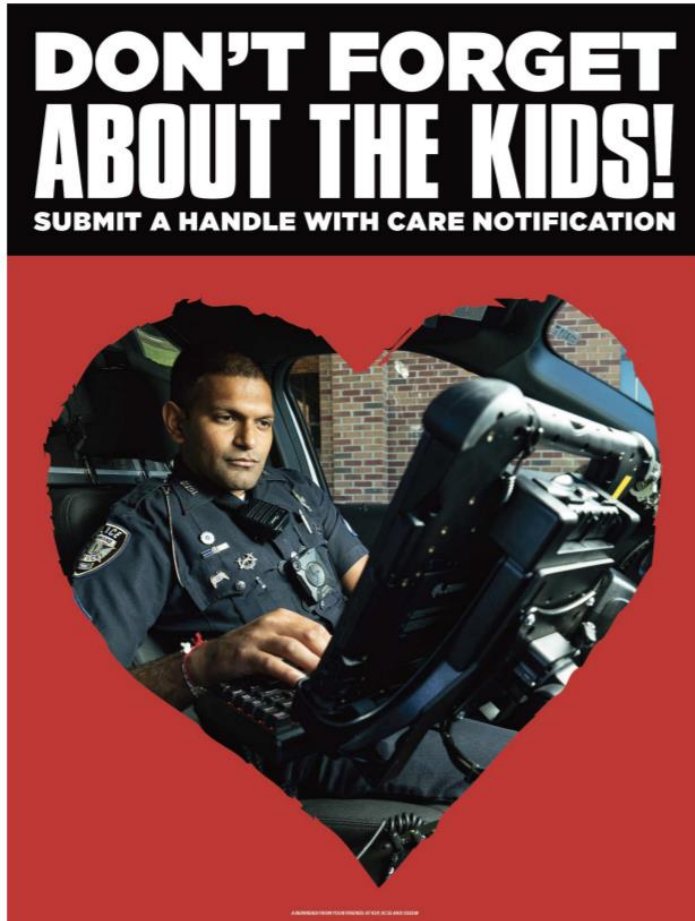
All Hands-On Deck: Braiding Resources with Cross-sector Partnerships



The graphic features the text "Connecting the Dots" in a black, hand-drawn, sans-serif font. The word "Connecting" is on the top line, and "the Dots" is on the bottom line. The text is surrounded by several colorful circles: a green circle at the top left, a red circle at the top right, a yellow circle in the middle, a purple circle on the left, and a red circle at the bottom. Dotted lines connect these circles in a path that loops around the text, starting from the green circle, going to the red circle, then the yellow circle, the purple circle, and the bottom red circle, before returning to the green circle. The entire graphic is set against a white background.

Connecting
the Dots

First responders often walk away from a 911 call wishing they could do more for the kids...





3 Simple Steps for Handle With Care

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**opportunity for families experiencing toxic stress to receive referral to peer support group at a family resource center*



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School district/daycare helps provide trauma-sensitive interventions, counseling and/or social services to student in crisis, the following school day, as needed.

Supporting Local Implementation



HWC Notice

“The child referenced below was on the scene with a first responder in the last 24 hours and could exhibit academic, emotional, and/or behavioral problems as a result of exposure to a traumatic event.

Please handle him/her with care. For more information, go to www.handlewithcareok.org”

Name:
Age:
School:

**Sample Directive Policy and Sample MOUs available on website*



Handle With Care Notice

From Law Enforcement to the School

To: _____ From: _____
(School) (Law Enforcement Agency)

Date: _____ Time: _____ Incident Date: _____

The child referenced below was on the scene of a police action in the last 24 hours and could exhibit academic, emotional and/or behavioral problems as a result of exposure to a traumatic event. Please handle him/her with care. For more information go to www.handlewithcarewv.org

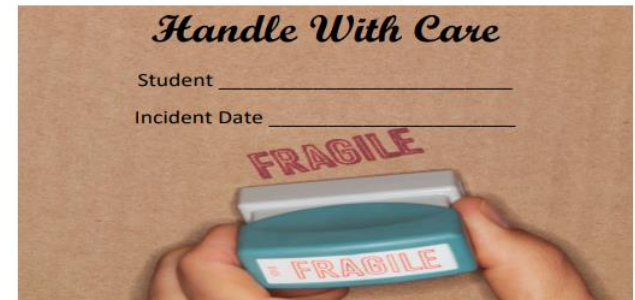
Childs Name: _____ Age: _____

Childs Name: _____ Age: _____

Childs Name: _____ Age: _____



To: _____ From: _____
(Teacher) (Principal/Counselor)





Supporting Local Implementation

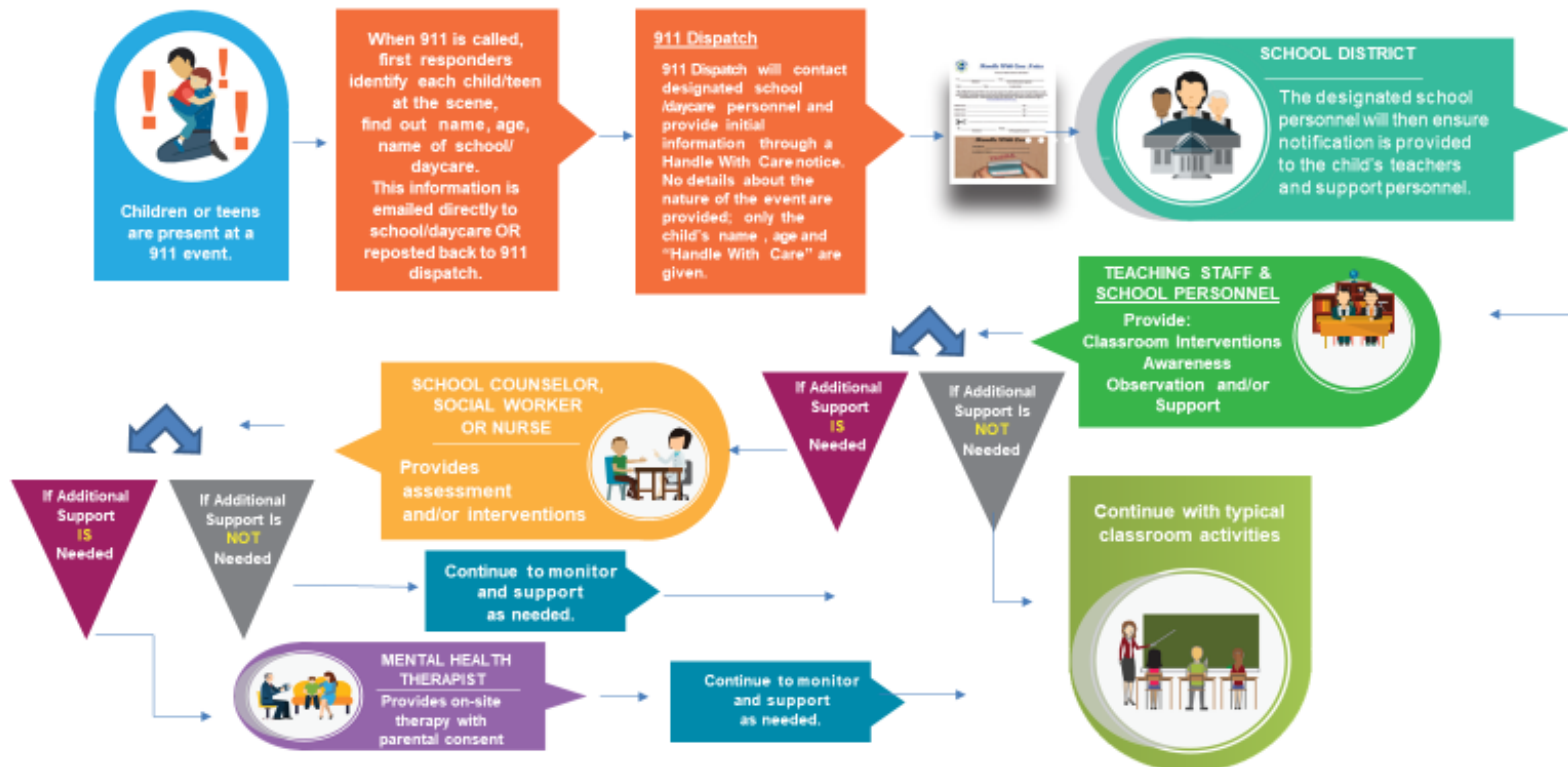
Process Flow Chart



HANDLE WITH CARE OKLAHOMA
PROTECT • HEAL • THRIVE

Process Flow Chart
[Click here for Overview Video](#)

www.handlewithcareok.org



Supporting Local Implementation: Training

Statewide website: <http://www.handlewithcareok.org>

Email: info@handlewithcareok.org

Handle With Care Sector-Specific Training:

911 Dispatch Centers: RB Hauf (RAVE)

Law Enforcement: Mark Woodward/Sarah Scott (OBN)

Schools: Elizabeth Suddath & Jon Parker (OSDE)

Mental Health: Brittany Couch & Tania Woods (ODMHSAS)

District Attorney: Jennifer Crilly, Director of Training (DA Council)

Coalitions: Robert Lee/Doug Ishmael (Evolution Foundation)

Public Health Institute of Oklahoma facilitates

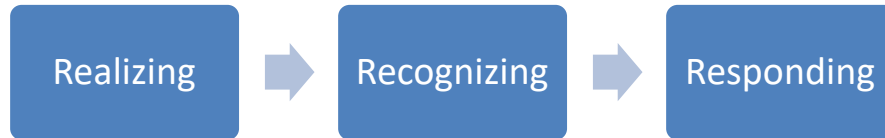
Monthly HWC OK Community Support Calls: (all are welcome)

1st Wednesday of the Month 10:00am – 11:00am

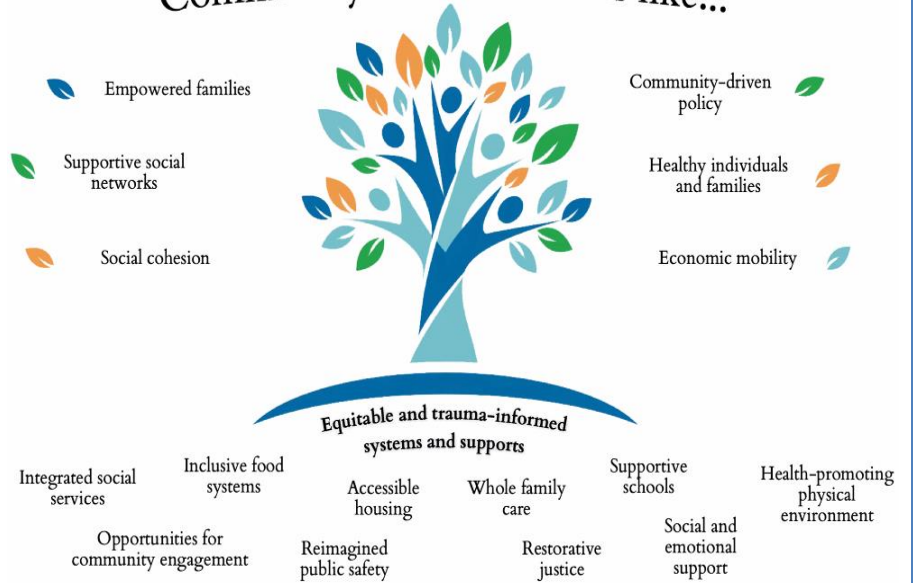
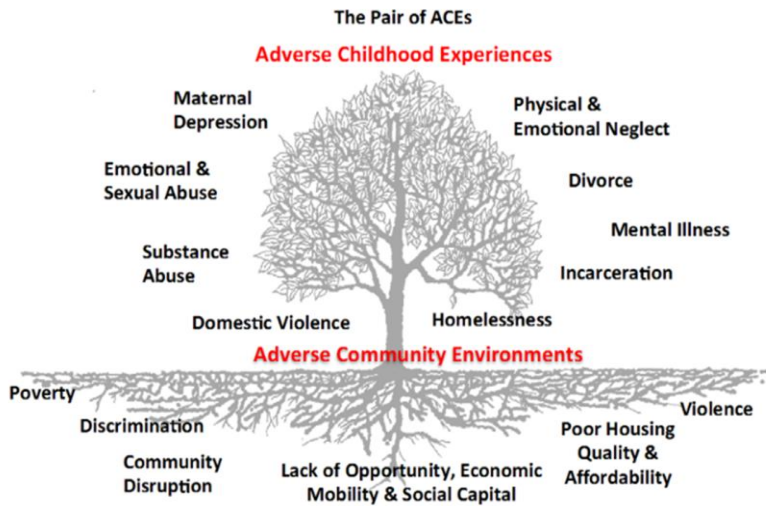
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84481751587>

[Calendar Series Invitation Link: Click Here](#)

Shared Vision



Community resilience looks like...



Ellis, W., Dietz, W. (2017) A New Framework for Addressing Adverse Childhood and Community Experiences: The Building Community Resilience (BCR) Model. *Academic Pediatrics*. 17 (2017) pp. S86-S93. DOI information: 10.1016/j.acap.2016.12.011

Source: Dr. Wendy Ellis <https://publichealth.gwu.edu/departments/redstone-center/resilient-communities>




- A program aimed at ensuring that children (birth to 18 years) who are exposed to violence receive appropriate interventions so they can succeed in school to the best of their ability.
- Research shows that trauma can undermine children's ability to learn, form relationships and function appropriately in the classroom.

FOCUS BEHAVE APPROPRIATELY LEARN


Goal....

All first responders maintain communication protocol with schools regarding children/teens exposed to a traumatic event, so all children can feel safe and learn.



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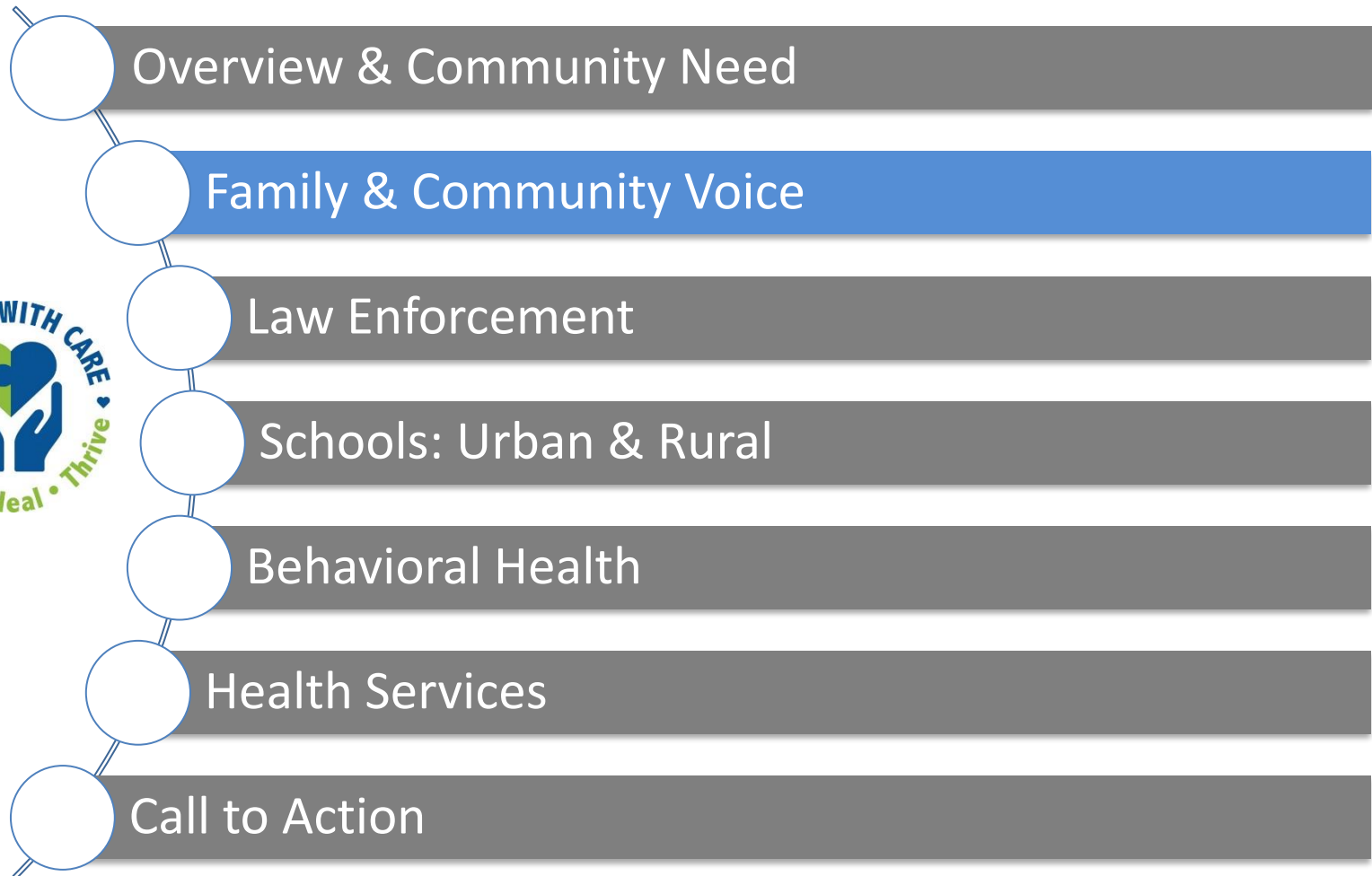
Our school practices
Handle With Care
so all children can feel safe and learn.



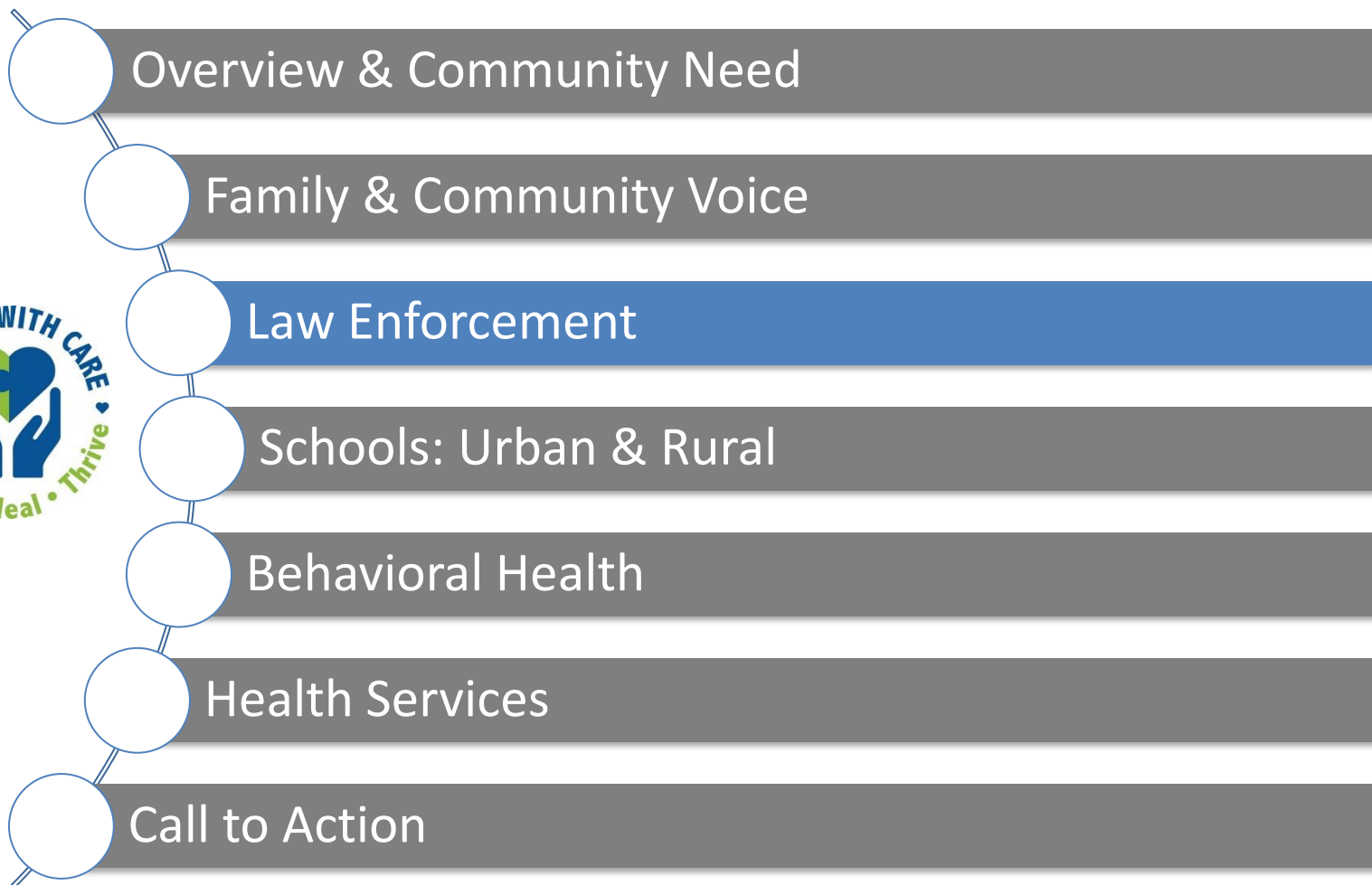
The "Handle With Care" Model: If a law enforcement officer encounters a child during a call, that child's information is forwarded to the school before the school bell rings the next day. The school implements individual, class and whole school trauma-sensitive curricula so that traumatized children are "Handled With Care". If a child needs more intervention, on-site trauma-focused mental healthcare is available at the school.

Learn more:
HandleWithCareOK.org

Positive Effects of Handle With Care



Positive Effects of Handle With Care



First Responders Endorse Handle With Care



OKLAHOMA
Bureau of Narcotics &
Dangerous Drugs Control

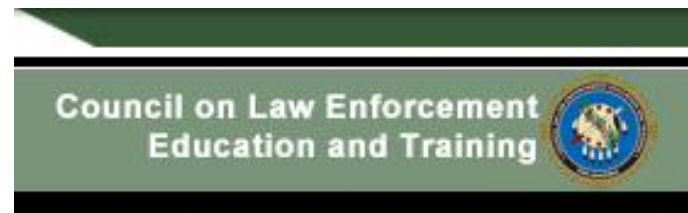


OKLAHOMA SHERIFFS'
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Video for Law Enforcement: “Safeguarding Children of Arrested Parents”



**OKLAHOMA SHERIFFS'
ASSOCIATION**
TRAINING • TECHNOLOGY • TRADITION



Source:

<https://handlewithcaremd.org/law-enforcement-protocol.php>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=386&v=ir2xA6XniSA&feature=emb_logo



Oklahoma City Police Department Endorses Handle With Care

- 2018 – Truancy Unit shifted focus and renamed Youth Enrichment Services (YES).
- Primary focus of this unit is to provide basic life necessities and support families in need.
- Officers created partnerships with various churches, food banks and organizations to alleviate red tape and provide same day services.
- 2018 – Handle with Care implemented.



Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IKPady_4vGw



Oklahoma City Police Department

OCPD General Procedure

234.20 Handle with Care Notification Protocols

Officers should consider that routine police incidents/calls, although normal to police officers, may be quite traumatic to school-age children. Officers will send an email to handlewithcare@okcps.org when any officer encounters a juvenile who has been exposed to trauma of any kind such as:

1. The arrest of a household member;
2. A witness to a violent crime;
3. The victim of abuse;
4. Involved in a loss of life;
5. Collision involving serious injury or death; or
6. Any other situation the officer believes could be traumatic to the child.



Oklahoma City Police Department



WHY ?? –

“Prolonged exposure to violence and trauma can seriously undermine children’s ability to focus, behave appropriately, and learn. It often leads to school failure, truancy, suspension or expulsion, dropping out, or involvement in the juvenile justice system.”

- Joe Ristuccia, Ed.M.



Oklahoma City Police Department

Spring 2018

- 4,710 students identified as being truant
- Issued 206 citations
- 10 categories that were specifically designed to address truancy from law enforcement perspective
- No social services provided

Fall 2021

- 497 students identified as in need of social services or who were exposed to trauma
- 46 categories that are focused around addressing trauma and providing social services
- From the 46 categories, officers logged nearly 2000 entries for those 497 students who were exposed to trauma or in need of services



Oklahoma City Police Department

- In 2020, Youth Enrichment Services unit began reviewing all Handle with Care referrals received from OCPD's records management system.
- OKCPS uses database called Awareity/TIPS they enter our referrals as external entries and referrals that are generated within the school as internal.

The screenshot shows a software interface with a dropdown menu. The menu is open, displaying four options: 'HANDLE WITH CARE UT', 'HANDLE WITH CARE UTILIZED', 'NOT APPLICABLE', and 'NOT UTILIZED'. The 'HANDLE WITH CARE UTILIZED' option is highlighted in blue. Above the dropdown, the text 'Handle with Care' is visible. To the left of the dropdown, there is a label 'Ident Add' and a search icon. At the top of the interface, there are checkboxes for 'Stic Violence' and 'Drive by Shooting'.



Oklahoma City Police Department & Oklahoma City Public Schools

Handle with Care through Awareness reports

January – June 2021 (6 months)	July 2021 – June 2022 (full school year)	July 2022 - September 2022 (3 months)
External reports – 98	External reports – 137	External reports - 21
Internal reports – 139	Internal reports – 375	Internal reports - 32
Total reports - 237	Total reports - 512	Total reports - 53



Oklahoma City Police Department & Oklahoma City Public Schools

Why is a policy important?

- ❖ It creates “all-hands-on deck” approach for promoting safe and supportive homes in conjunction with schools and communities that help students succeed.
- ❖ Mitigates negative effects experienced by student's exposure to trauma and adverse childhood experiences (ACEs).
- ❖ Ensures appropriate interventions that help students achieve academically despite any traumatic circumstances they may have endured.



Oklahoma City Police Department & Oklahoma City Public Schools

Statewide Implementation

- ❖ 509 school districts in the state of Oklahoma – one of the highest nationwide
- ❖ High mobility rate in large cities and limited resources in smaller cities and towns
- ❖ Statewide implementation would ensure we are “talking the same language” in every city and town when it comes to collaboration between law enforcement and school districts
- ❖ Maximizing resources for benefit of students & their families
- ❖ Planting seeds of HOPE along every step of the way



Oklahoma City Police Department & Oklahoma City Public Schools

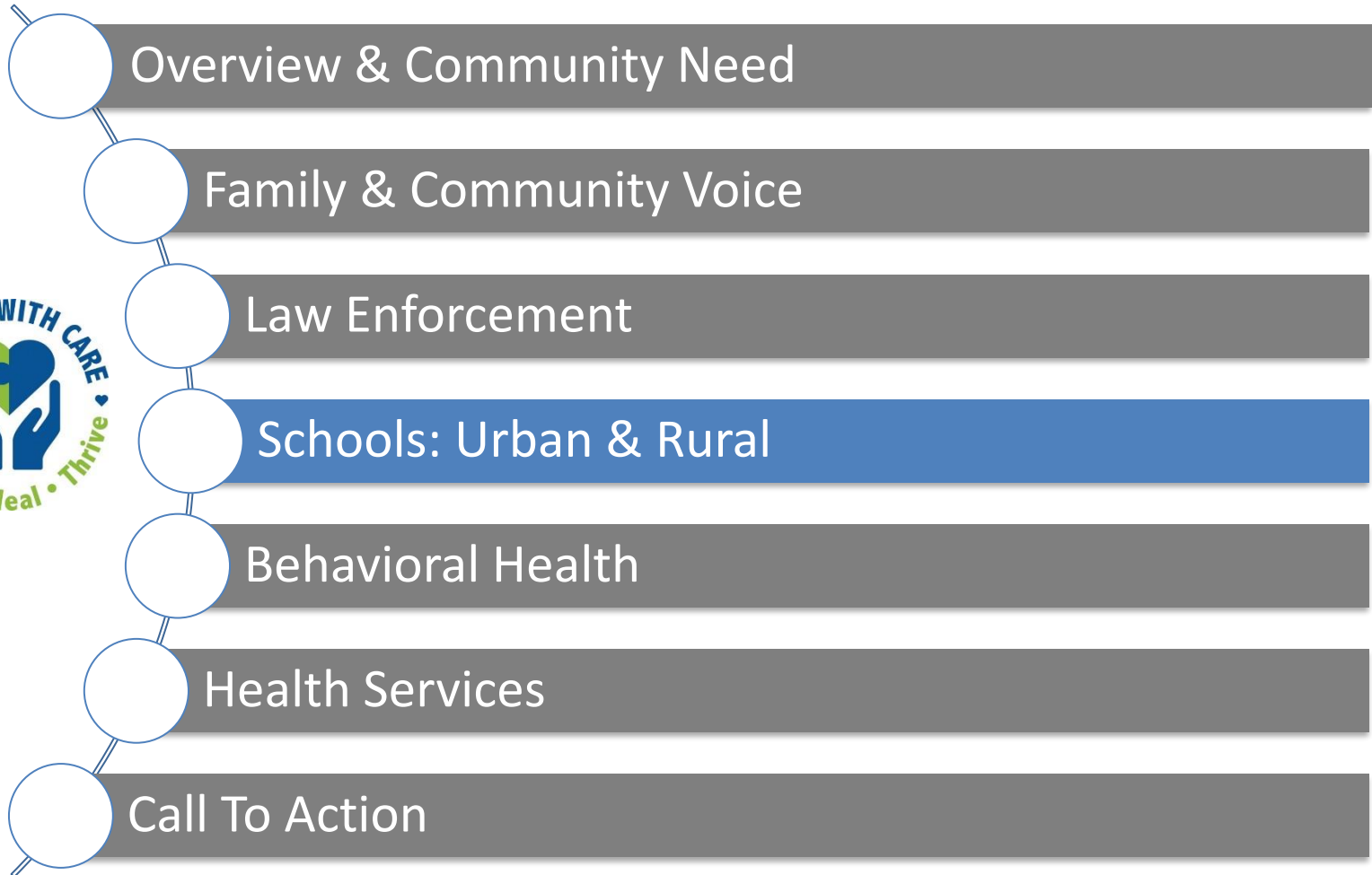
Planting trees together.



*The true meaning of life
is to plant trees, under
whose shade you do not
expect to sit.*

- Nelson Henderson

Positive Effects of Handle With Care



Childhood Trauma and Classroom Behavior

A traumatized child sees the world as a dangerous place, including the school. Unfortunately, many adopt behavioral coping mechanisms that can frustrate educators and evoke exasperated reprisal.



Reactivity and Impulsivity

Aggression

Defiance

Withdrawal

Perfectionism



What is a Trauma Sensitive School?

A trauma-sensitive school is one in which:

- All students feel safe, welcomed, and supported;
- Addressing trauma's impact on learning on a school-wide basis is at the center of its educational mission;
- A place where an on-going, inquiry-based process allows for the necessary teamwork, coordination, creativity and sharing of responsibility for all students; and
- Where continuous learning is for educators as well as students.

Individual Interventions

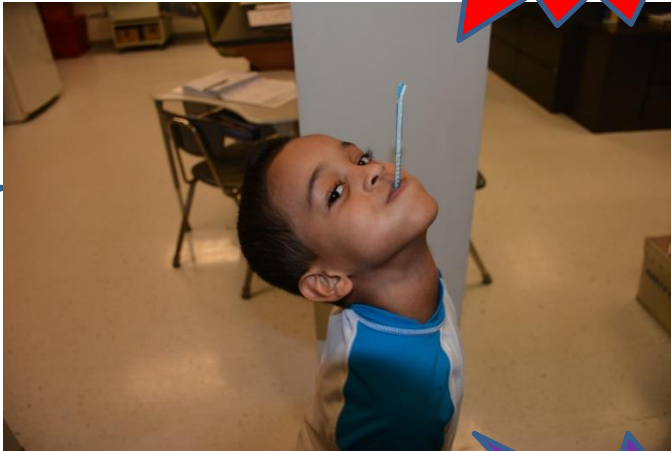


Individual Academic Interventions



Rest

Postpone testing



Retesting



IEP

School Interventions

Thumbs Up



LE visiting classroom

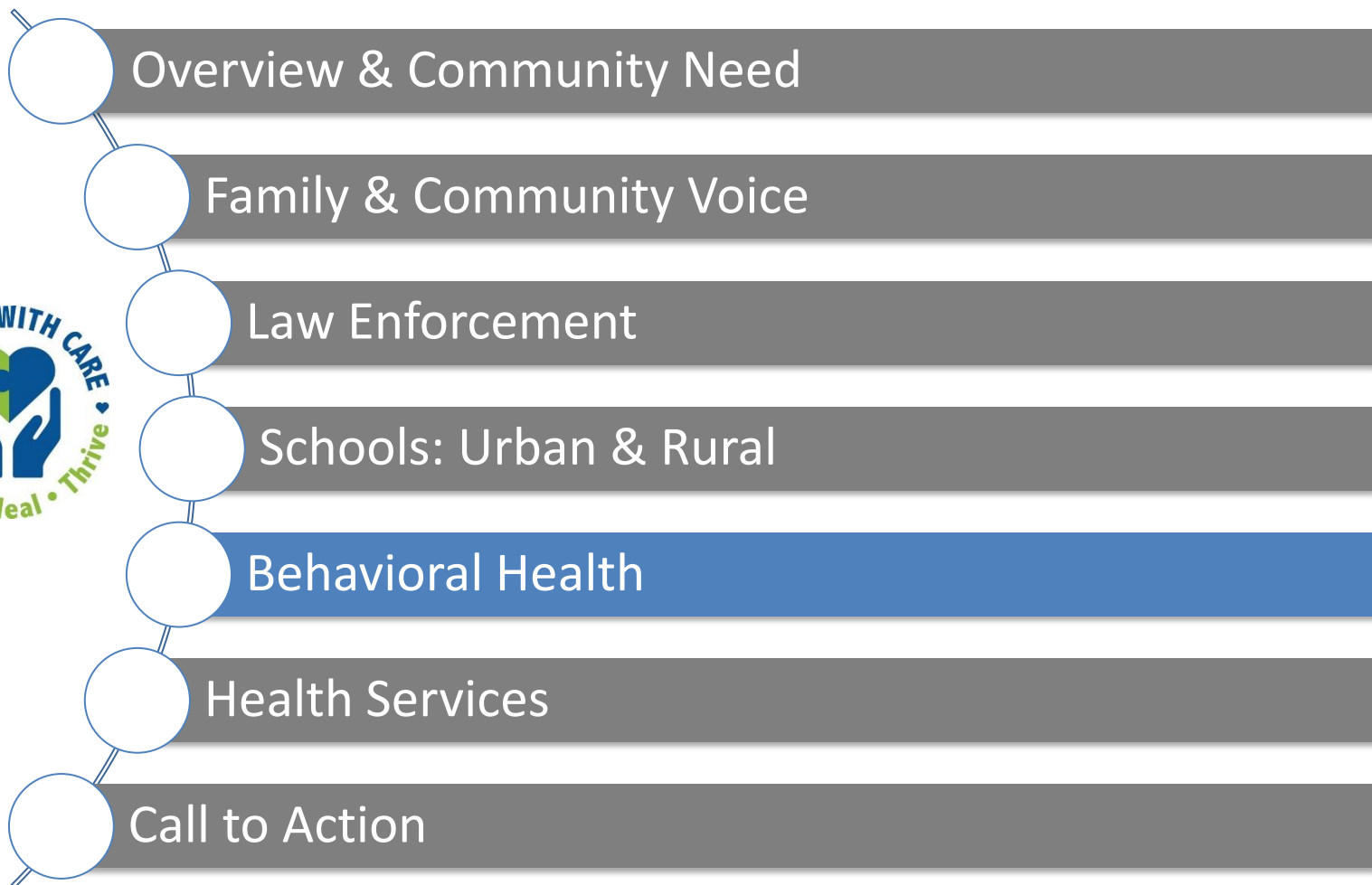
Therapy Dogs



Building Relationships



Positive Effects of Handle With Care





OKLAHOMA Mental Health & Substance Abuse



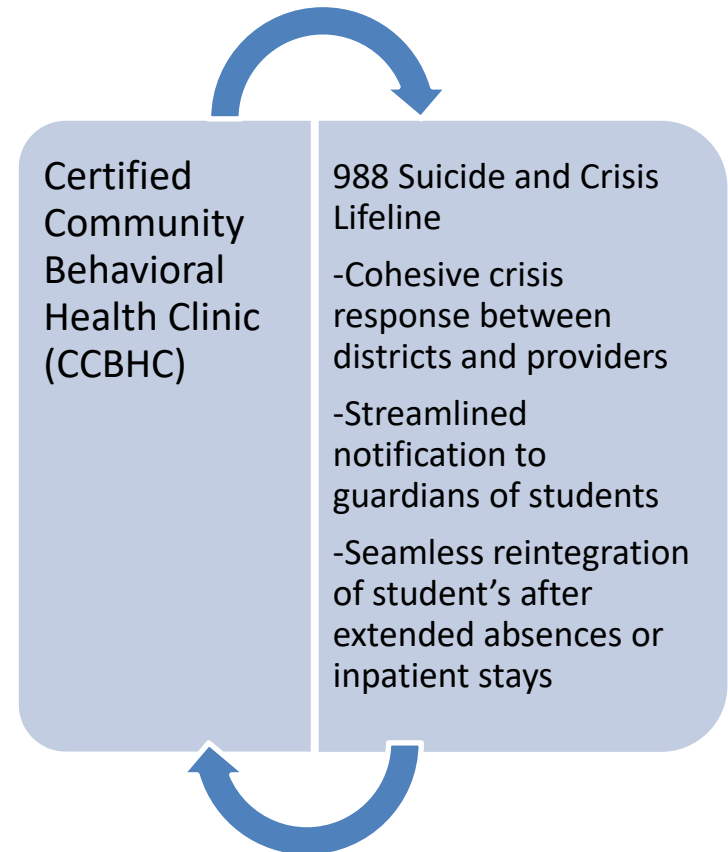
Oklahoma Systems of Care School-Based Initiative works with schools and local Community Mental Health Centers to:

- Develop strategies to implement school-based behavioral health services using practice standards developing under Project AWARE (Advancing Welfare And Resilience Education) and BISS (Behavior Intervention Services and Supports).
- Leverage access to prevention programming, early identification of behavioral health challenges, and treatment options using the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS).
- Increase communication between community partners and school staff to improve the quality of care for students and school systems

Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics (CCBHCs)

- CCBHCs, are a new provider type in Medicaid being offered across Oklahoma.
- CCBHCs are replacing the old Community Mental Health Center (CMHC) model.
- CCBHCs represent an opportunity for states to improve the behavioral health of their citizens by:
 - providing community-based mental and substance use disorder services;
 - advancing integration of behavioral health with physical health care;
 - assimilating and utilizing evidence-based practices on a more consistent basis; and
 - promoting improved access to high quality care.

Care coordination is the linchpin holding these aspects of CCBHC care together and ensuring high quality care and improved outcomes. [Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics \(CCBHC\)](http://oklahoma.gov) (oklahoma.gov)



OKLAHOMA
Mental Health &
Substance Abuse



OKLAHOMA Mental Health & Substance Abuse



Increasing School-Based Partnerships with CCBHCs:

Recently the Oklahoma State Legislature passed HB4106, which increase school-based partnerships between CCBHC's, certified ODMHSAS providers and school districts. Currently, the Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services and the State Department of Education are working to establish guidelines to support local partnerships between CCBHC's, certified ODMHSAS providers and school districts.

Student Mental Health Protocol document (HB4106)

that provides model policy guidance for school districts:

<https://sde.ok.gov/sites/default/files/Student%20Mental%20Health%20Protocol.pdf>



Behavioral Intervention Services and Supports Schools (BISSS)

- BISSS provides early identification of behavioral health issues;
- assessment and referral for treatment;
- professional learning for school staff in early detection and response to behavioral health issues;
- Embedded a Behavioral Health Coaches within the school
- Crisis emergency response and consultation from local System of Care providers



OKLAHOMA
Mental Health &
Substance Abuse

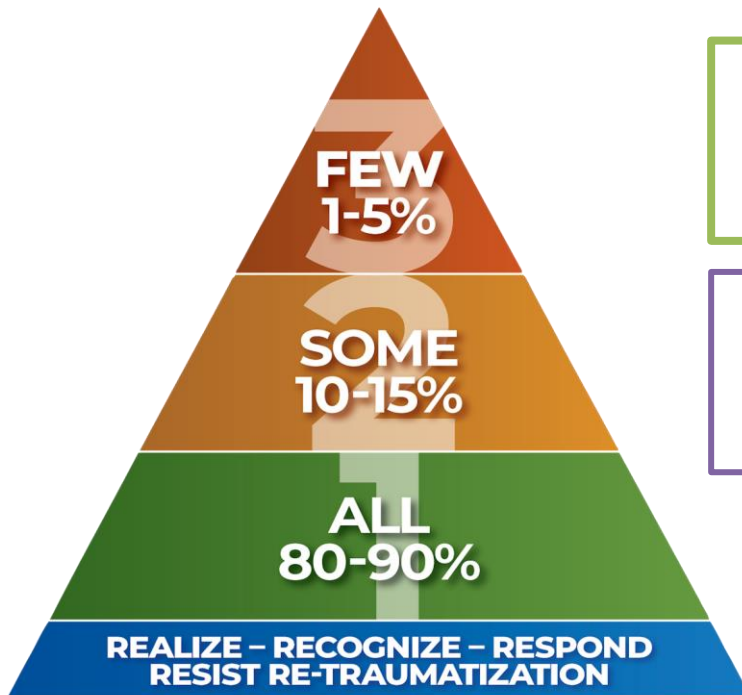
Behavioral Intervention Services and Supports Schools (BISSS)

Participating schools commit to:

- Forming a **multi-disciplinary team (MDT Team)**, the mental health leadership team of a school from multiple disciplines,
- Receiving ongoing professional development from local System of Care children's mental providers
- Participating in school wide evaluation and outcome activities

BISS is currently being implemented in 90 school sites across the state, with more sites being added each school year.

Tier-Based Approach: Providing ALL kids with supports as needed



Individualized Interventions

Few individualized, assessment-based
Intense, durable supports for high-risk behaviors

Targeted Interventions

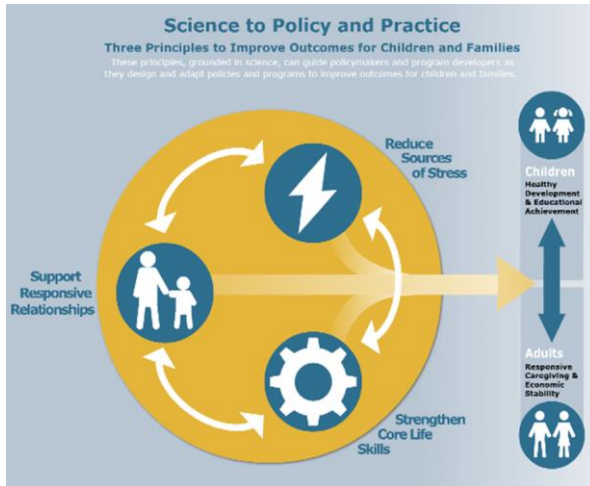
Some identified as at-risk,
high efficiency, rapid response

Universal Supports

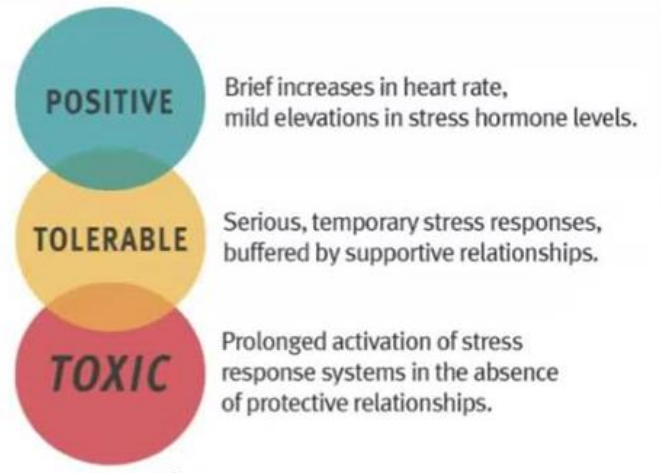
All settings.
Focus on prevention

BISS utilizes a school-wide structural framework with a 3-tiered intervention that allows for a continuum of supports to be provided based on the identified risk, character, and severity of students' issues and needs. Students, school staff and parents receive year-round guidance and hands on support from local mental health providers.

A “peer support group” is one of the strategies to turn Toxic Stress to Tolerable Stress



Source: Harvard's Center on the Developing Child



Example:

Students enrolled at middle school and high school campuses in AWARE districts may qualify for a small group service named SPARCS. [SPARCS](#) is a small group for adolescents experiencing high levels of stress related to traumatic events or ongoing stressful interactions. The groups are run by school counselors, AWARE staff and providers from the local community mental health partner.



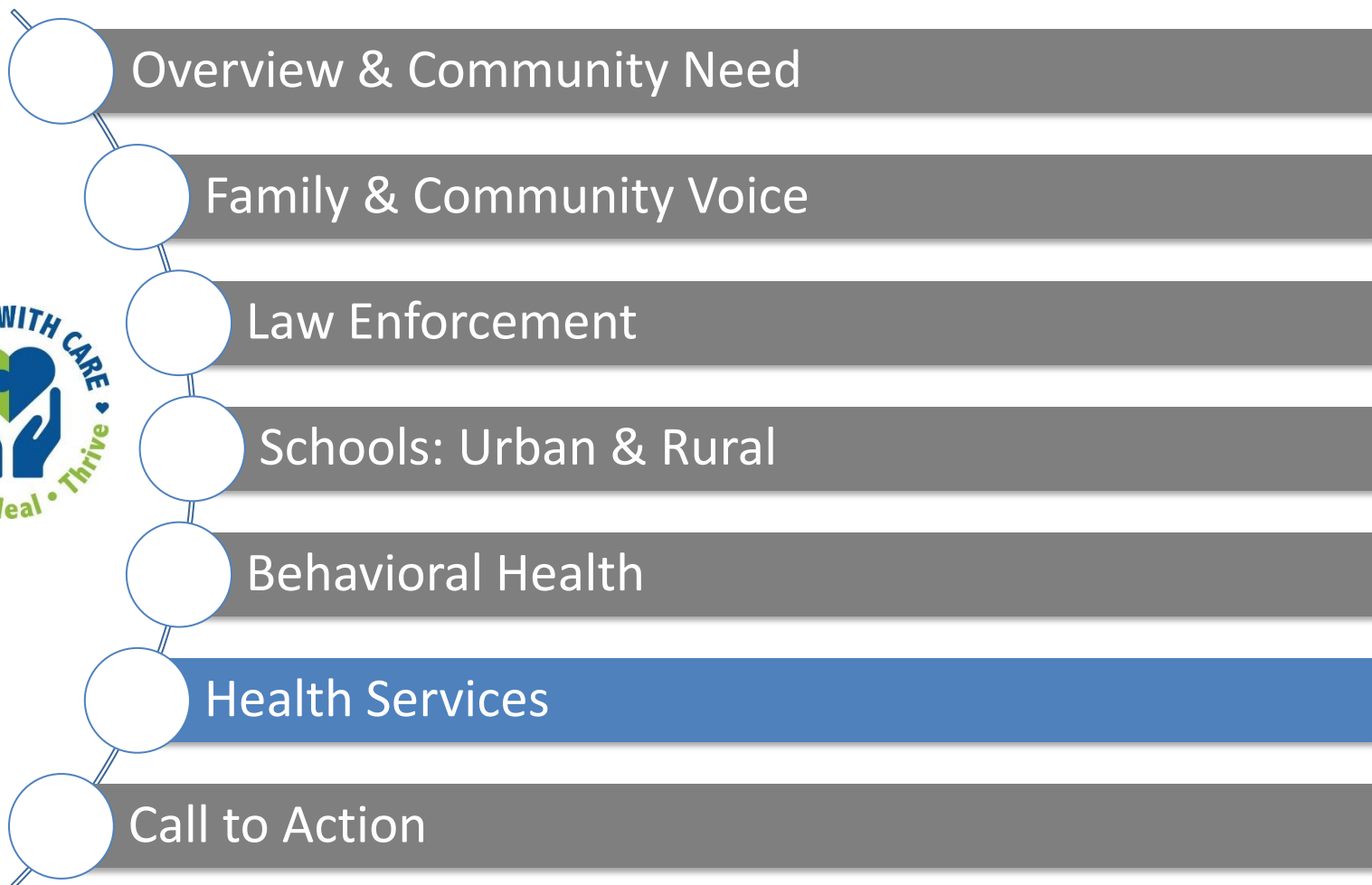
OKLAHOMA Mental Health & Substance Abuse



Statewide mental health supports for schools:

- Resource Hotline: call 988
- Youth Mobile Crisis Line 24hr Line: call 1-833-885-CARE
- Facilitating partnership agreements between schools and local community mental health center to offer **FREE** services
- Contact Brittany.Couch@odmhsas.org

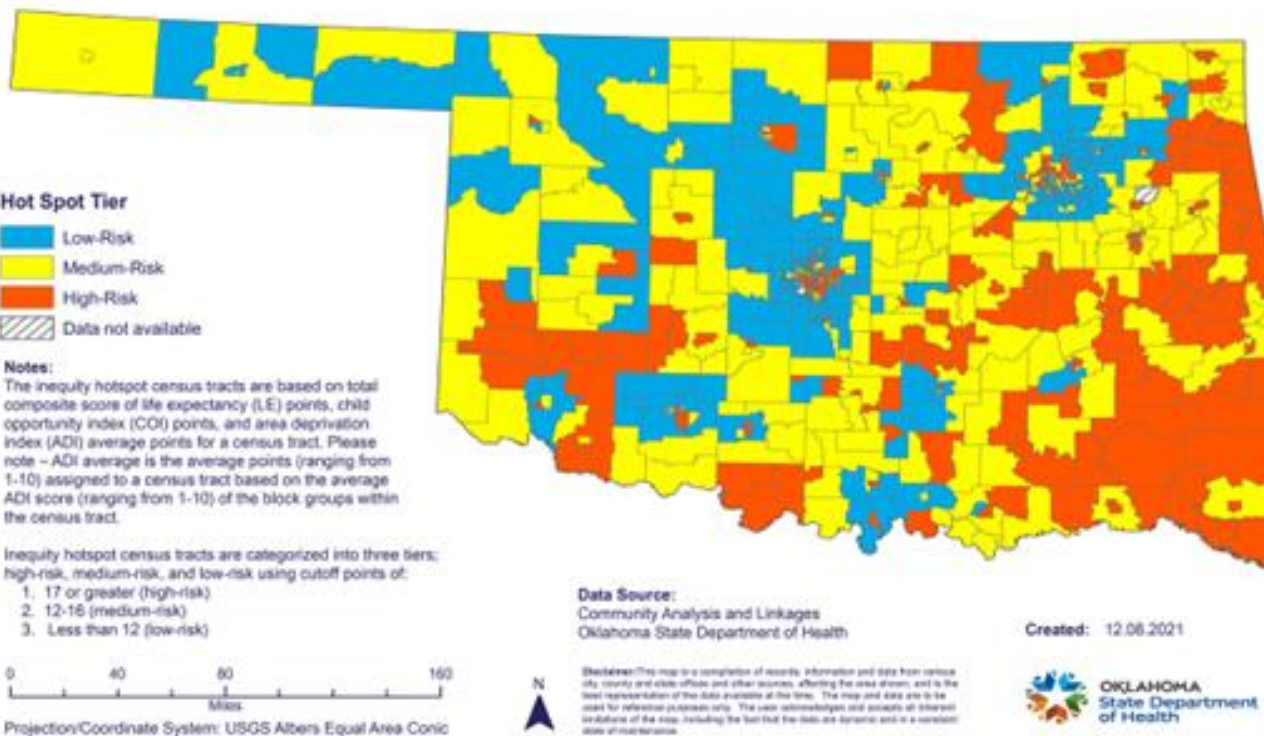
Positive Effects of Handle With Care





Implementation Strategy: All Counties, especially Inequity Hot Spots

Oklahoma Inequity Hot Spots



Source: <https://www.okintheknow.org/wellness-county-profiles/>

Protect Now

Mental
Health

Attention
& Focus



Executive Skills

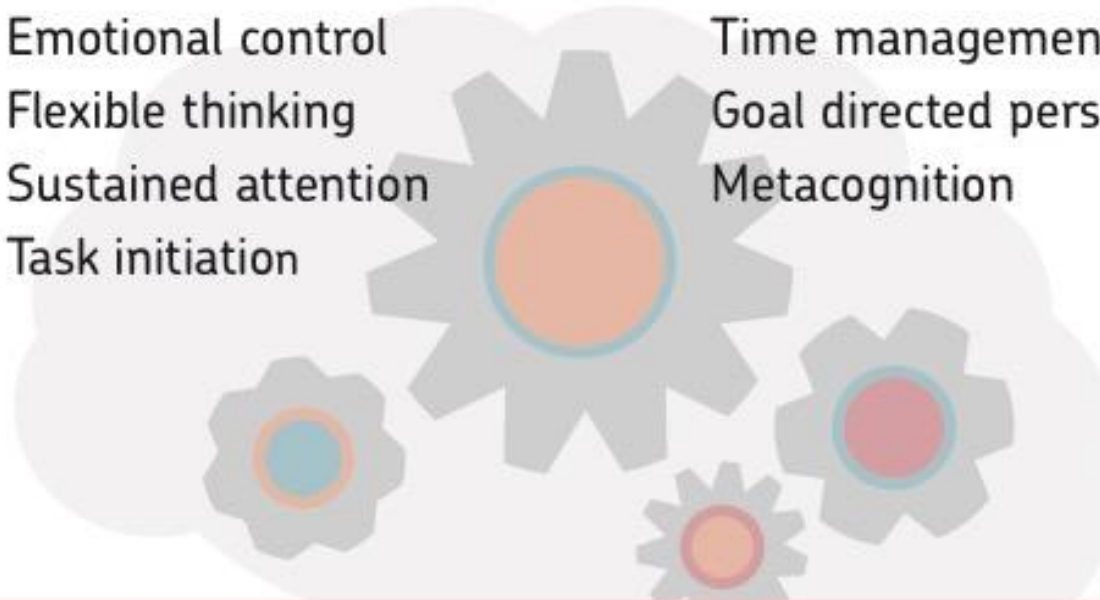
for complex thinking and goal-focused action

Response Inhibition

Working memory
Emotional control
Flexible thinking
Sustained attention
Task initiation

Planning & Prioritizing

Organization
Time management
Goal directed persistence
Metacognition



WHAT HELPS DOPAMINE & NOREPINEPHRINE

Safety

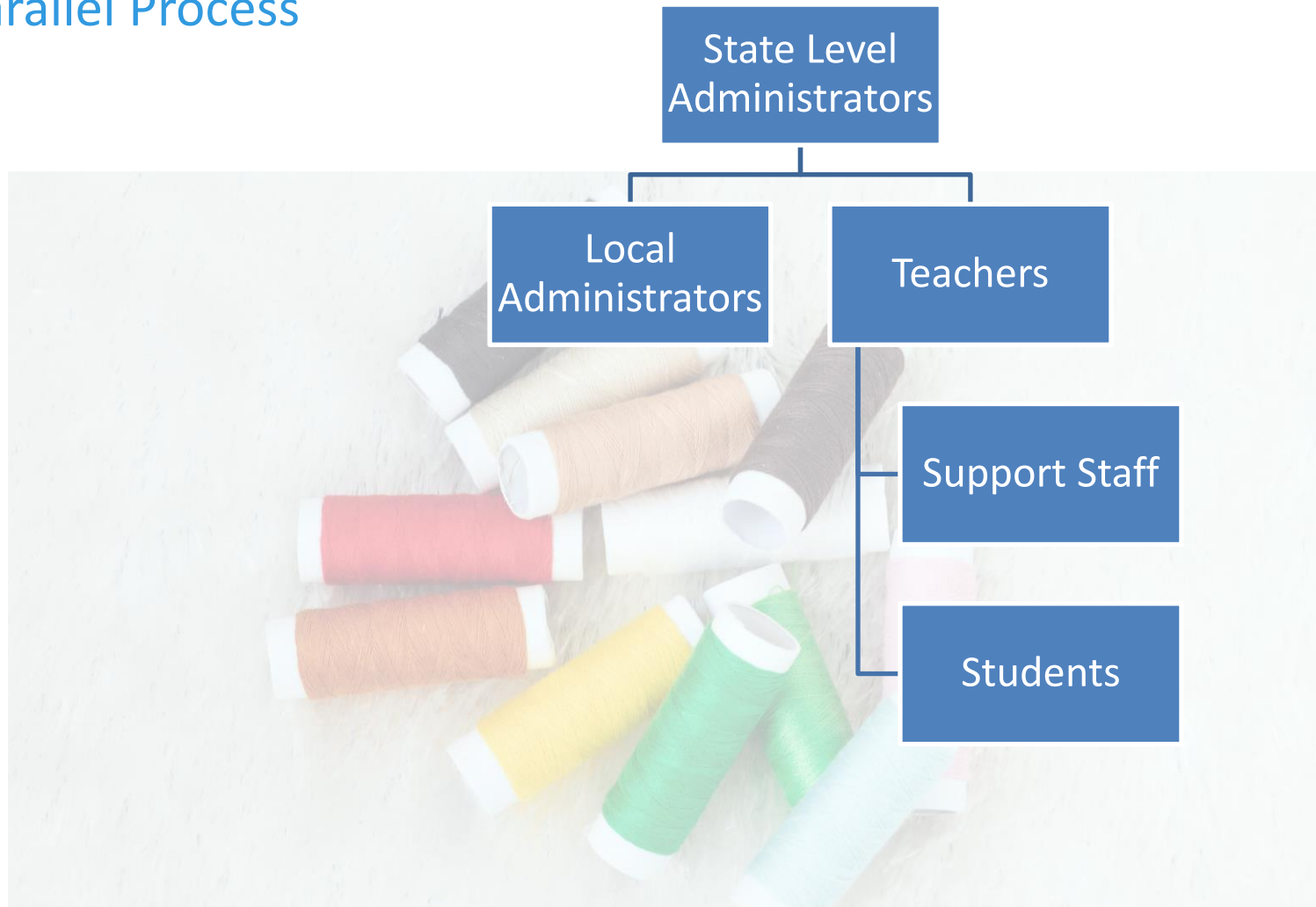
Calming - breathing, aromatherapy, exercise, mindful movement

Connecting - especially helping, laughter

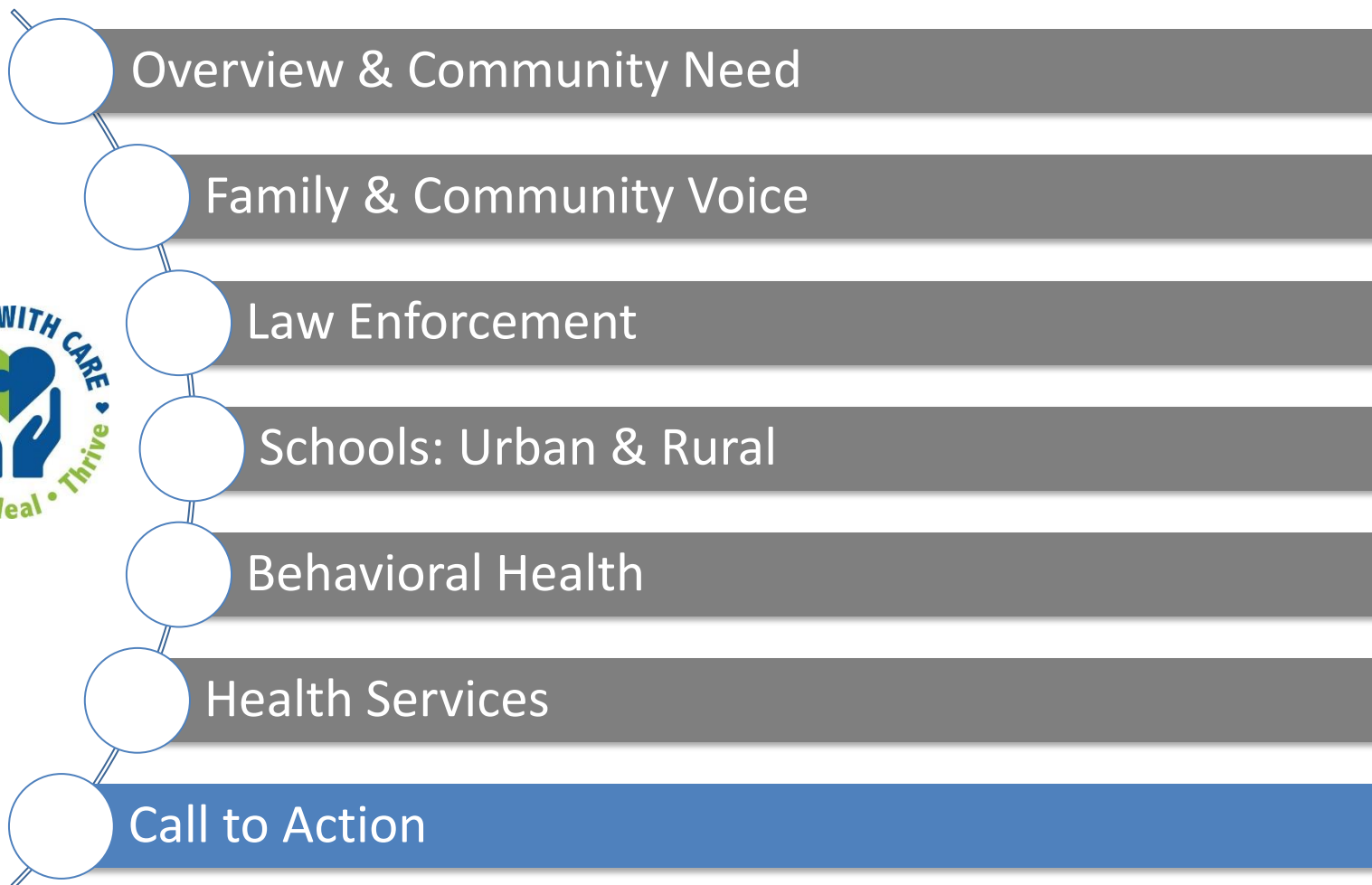
Diet - Vitamins D & B, Omega 3, chocolate

Narrative - understanding what happened, reducing shame/blame, tempering mastery

Parallel Process



Positive Effects of Handle With Care



How is Handle With Care beneficial for each community?

- Empowers local communities to take initiative to address trauma
- Increases communication and coordination across agencies to improve community outcomes
- Builds trust with child and family
- Promotes problem-solving with family to increase family, youth, child, and infant stability
- Low-cost




HANDLE WITH CARE OKLAHOMA
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Policy Action Steps to Advance HWC OK Statewide:

- Continue to build consensus with first responders to require notification protocol to schools when child/teen is at a traumatic scene
- July - Submitted Interim Study application with bipartisan support
- August – Interim Study approved/prepped and confirmed speakers
- Oct – Presentation at State Capitol
- December – Submit Legislation topic; draft legislation
- January 2023 – Submit 1st version of legislation
- February 2023 –Legislative Session begins


Goal....

All first responders maintain communication protocol with schools regarding children/teens exposed to a traumatic event, so all children can feel safe and learn.



HANDLE WITH CARE OKLAHOMA
PROTECT • HEAL • THRIVE

Our school practices
Handle With Care
so all children can feel safe and learn.



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Learn more:
HandleWithCareOK.org

Q&A - Discussion

Adrienne B. Elder, MPH
Community Consultant & Trainer
info@handlewithcareok.org
405-426-5431

5 Steps to Bring Handle With Care to Your Community



1. Start the Conversation: Use the model email, one-pager and talking points to begin conversations with stakeholders.
2. Create a Group and a Vision: Use the guide/checklist, sample invitation letter, presentation and one-pager to host/cohost a 90-minute community stakeholder meeting.
3. Create Handle With Care Notification Flow: Use the model phone/email/text notification flow to create a system in your department and school.
4. Implement HWC: Use the sample training materials to train law enforcement and school staff on the impact of childhood trauma and the Handle With Care Program.
5. Promote the Program: Use sample press release and social sharing guide.

salud.to/handlewithcare

Source: <https://salud-america.org/webinar-how-to-start-handle-with-care-to-help-students-who-suffer-trauma/>

For More Resources, Toolkits and Templates:

- **Handle With Care Toolkit for Law Enforcement:**
<https://handlewithcaremd.org/law-enforcement-protocol.php>

Handle With Care Community Action Pack:

<https://salud-america.org/handle-with-care-full-action-pack/>

- **Sample of statewide website from West Virginia:**
<http://www.handlewithcarewv.org/handle-with-care.php>
- **Request Training from OK Bureau of Narcotics**
<https://www.obnidd.ok.gov/how-do-i/request-a-presentation>