



HOLOCAUST, GENOCIDE & HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION INITIATIVE

The Initiative's Trauma-Informed Approach

Trauma-informed frameworks address the multilayered challenges of supporting students, teachers, and other school community members who are experiencing or have experienced trauma. Trauma-informed practices also require educators to pay close attention to how intersecting identities of race, gender, class, sex, ability, ethnicity, religion, and nationality may impact their students based on individual and communal histories of trauma. Given the complexity of trauma's impacts on students, it is important for educators in all roles to develop understanding, skills, and methodologies for addressing trauma in individual, classroom, and schoolwide contexts. The Holocaust, Genocide and Human Rights Education Initiative supports educators in developing trauma-informed approaches through:

Online Asynchronous Learning

The Initiative offers a self-paced, online course on Trauma-Informed Practices for Educators. This comprehensive, interactive course:

- Introduces educators and school personnel to research-based frameworks for understanding trauma at individual, classroom, and schoolwide levels,
- Provides concrete examples and methods to help educators apply concepts to their specific contexts and roles, and
- Connects participants with extensive trauma-informed resources to use and share.

Yearlong Professional Development Program

The Initiative invites Pennsylvania educators to participate in yearlong programs that support their teaching of difficult topics like the Holocaust, systemic violence/oppression, and trauma. Institute participants work in small inquiry communities to design action plans that incorporate inquiry-based learning and trauma-informed practices in their teaching. Sessions are designed to help educators recognize when curricular content or situations could be triggering or retraumatizing for students. Participants focus on developing strategies to get to know students and families, build supportive classroom communities, and make thoughtful instructional decisions. Since trauma is multifaceted and individually variable, the Institute provides educators with opportunities to practice and discuss how they would examine media, lesson plans, texts, and instructional strategies with a trauma-informed lens. With the help of experts, participants also examine the tension between the need to teach histories of violence and trauma and the importance of avoiding triggering and retraumatizing students.

Instructional Materials and Resources

The Initiative curates and customizes existing content from leading organizations in Holocaust, genocide and human rights education and develops new content to support the use of media and teaching difficult topics in the classroom. Instructional materials curated and developed by the Initiative are reviewed from a trauma-informed perspective and annotated with trauma-informed considerations for teachers, where appropriate. The Initiative also compiles and shares helpful resources from outside agencies and organizations to support educators implementing trauma-informed practices in their contexts.