

The Making of a Trauma-Informed Classroom: Finding Healing Through Connection

Presented By: Tammy Schamuhn, Tania Johnson

Date(s):

Tuesday, January 21, 2020
9:00 AM - 3:30 PM

Session Location:

Central Alberta Regional Consortium
8 Page Avenue, Red Deer, AB

Registration Fee:

\$75.00

Audience: Teachers

Grade Level: K-12

About the Session:

Children with experiences of trauma often present with significant challenges within a classroom setting. Their behaviours are often unpredictable and can shift the learning environment of a classroom. The behavioural representation of their experiences often poses challenges for teachers, administrators, support staff, and peers. In addition to these challenges, the fundamental lack of safety felt by these children significantly impedes their capacity to learn. Schools have an incredibly unique opportunity to provide a child with space in which they feel safe, connected, and supported. By learning new ways to support children and youth who have experienced, trauma, inconsistency, and significant challenge in their life, we can maximize the opportunity to give these children a safe place to land.

ICP's trauma training focuses on increasing knowledge regarding how trauma impacts brain development and the body, and how these shifts present behaviourally in children. We additionally explore how experiences of trauma impact memory systems and learning, and ways in which we can support children in connecting to the school community and engaging in the classroom milieu. We will also explore strategies to engage with students presenting with challenging behaviours.

Instructional Objectives:

- Discuss trauma and its definitions and challenges in defining trauma
- Examine the impacts of trauma on neurological development
- Investigate the impact of trauma on information processing and memory systems
- Explore the impacts of trauma on attachment systems and relational patterns
- Foster a greater understanding of behavioural patterns commonly associated with traumatic experiences
- Learn ways to engage and support development of brainstem, limbic system, and cortical regions of the brain
- Examine the importance of knowing impacts of own story and self-care for those in supporting roles
- Develop tools and strategies to support students in the classroom
- Explore the importance of play in development and processing experiences of trauma
- Explore long-term outcomes of traumatic experience in childhood

About the Presenter(s):

Tammy Schamuhn

I am a Registered Psychologist and Registered Play Therapist. In addition to my training as a therapist, I obtained a Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education and I worked as an elementary teacher for three local school districts before attending graduate school. Inclusively, I have over 17 years of experience working with children in a professional capacity. I am also the founder and Executive Director of Family Counselling Centres.

I have been working in private practice for the past 7 years in Alberta, primarily with children and their families. I also include animals in my therapy and have developed a canine assisted and equine assisted therapy programs.

I approach my clinical and consultative work with parents and professionals with an attachment and neurobiological lens: all of my work is based on the neurology of the brain and how attachment is integral to adaptive functioning of both children and adults.

I am a passionate, empathetic, and experienced clinician here for my community to help children, teens, and adults heal and grow. I aim to have warm, respectful, and productive relationships with the clients I collaborate with, and I enjoy being part of the positive change that families experience.

Tania Johnson

I am a Registered Psychologist, Registered Play Therapist and one of the Co-founders of the Institute of Child Psychology. I grew up in South Africa and have had the opportunity to travel extensively, including living and working in Asia for several years. I have a deep respect for cultural diversity. In 2006-2007, I was the recipient of an International Internship at "Cancer Treatment Centers of America" where I provided ongoing support for individuals diagnosed with advanced stages of cancer. This experience ingrained within me the vital connection between the mind and the body.

In 2012, I received my Masters of Counselling from City University of Seattle. During my Master's degree, I worked both on the front lines and as a counsellor with foster and adoptive families who faced a range of emotional, behavioural and cognitive challenges.

Since completing my degree, I have worked in a private practice setting with children, teens, adults and families. My work with the Institute of Child Psychology has given me the opportunity to present to parents, professionals and caregivers on topics pertaining to children's mental health. I currently specialize in working specifically with parenting issues.

I work primarily from an attachment based perspective. This means that I work with clients to explore how early relationships impact how we come to understand our self, other people and the world.