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Why Teacher Education Programs Should Take a Trauma-Informed Approach

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Childhood trauma can have important impacts on students' ability to learn and socialize in the classroom. The term "trauma" is used to describe experiences or events a person perceives as harmful or detrimental to their well-being. Because trauma is a subjective response, people are affected differently by stressful events in their lives. Students affected by trauma have always attended school. However, until recently, little information about trauma was available to educators. Educators and others working in schools need to understand the prevalence of trauma, its effect on learning and student performance, and how social systems, including schools, can support students who have experienced trauma and draw from their strengths and resiliency. As this information has become more widely available, a variety of discussions have emerged about teaching practices, school climate, and trauma-related teacher education.