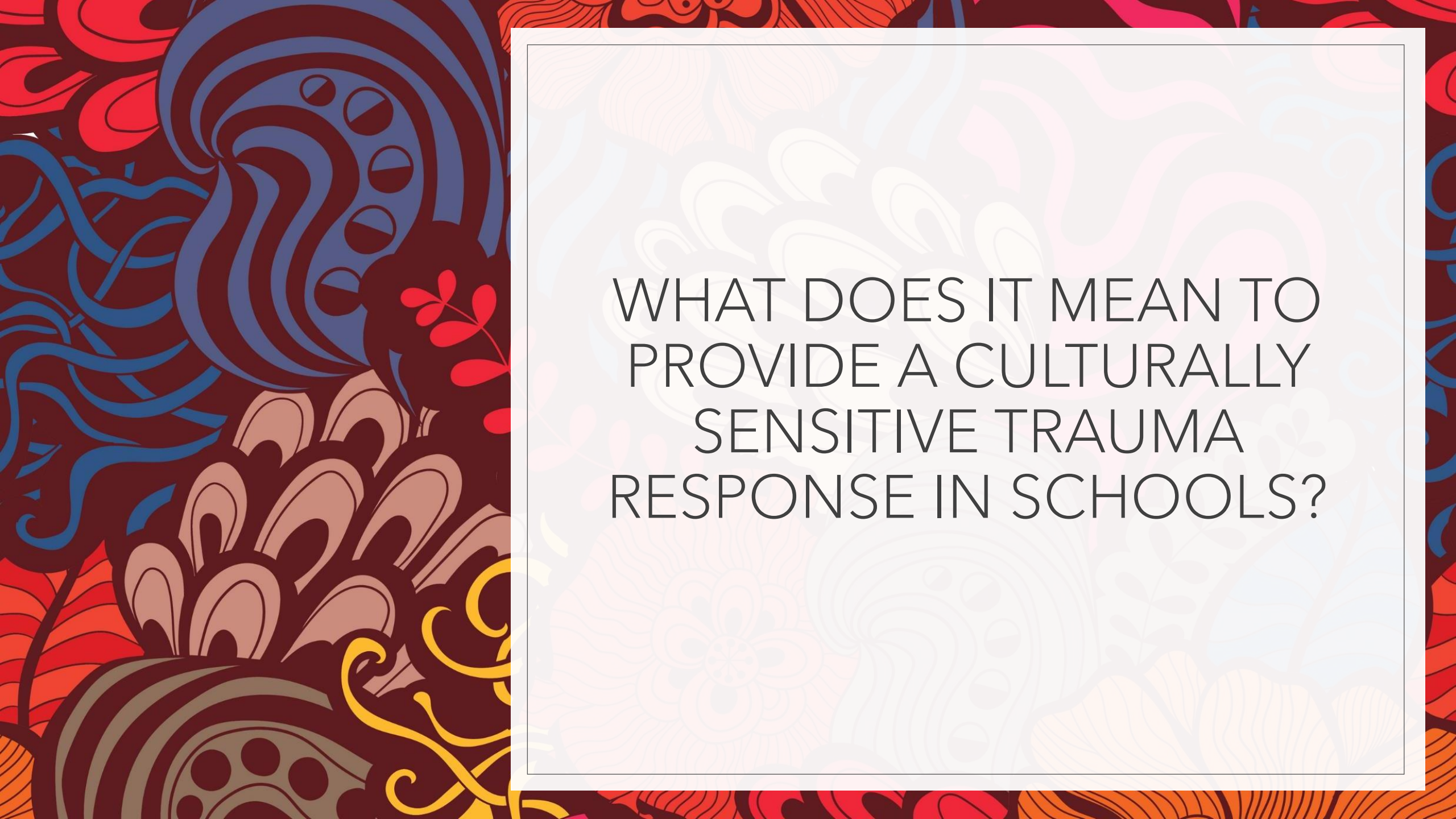




CULTURALLY SENSITIVE TRAUMA RESPONSE IN SCHOOLS

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WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO
PROVIDE A CULTURALLY
SENSITIVE TRAUMA
RESPONSE IN SCHOOLS?

The Brain, Stress and Trauma

Amygdala

- Anger/Anxiety
- Learns by associations
- Constant stress causes growth
- Brains are social - anxiety can be contagious

Prefrontal Cortex (PFC)

- Planning, judgement, impulse control, decision making
- Empathy
- Learning & connections

Autonomic Nervous System (ANS)

- Ventral vagal: Safety and connection
 - Social, engaged, connected
- Sympathetic response: protection through movement
 - Fight, flight
- Dorsal: Neuroception of life threat
 - immobilization, shut down

Hippocampus

- Keeper of memories & facts
- No access to the PFC, no learning or storage
- **Upset kids need to settle**

Autonomic Nervous System



VENTRAL

Safe & Social

Feeling secure and connected to people around you

SYMPATHETIC

Mobilized for fight or flight

Feeling stressed or agitated

DORSAL

Shutdown

Feeling disconnected or numb

*Adapted from *The Polyvagal Theory in Therapy* by Deb Dana



CONSIDER ACES

- Emotional/physical/sexual abuse
- Emotional or physical neglect
- Violence in the home
- Substance abuse in the home
- Mental illness in the home
- Parental separation or divorce
- Incarcerated household member
- Bullying (by another child or adult)
- Witness to violence outside of home
- Witness to sibling abuse
- Racism, sexism, any other form of discrimination
- Homelessness
- Natural disasters/war

IMPLICATIONS OF ACES

- Behavioral disruption
- Toxic stress
- Inattention
- Mental health issues
- Substance abuse/smoking
- Sexual acting out behaviors
- Intimate partner violence
- Suicide attempts/suicide
- Myriad chronic health conditions

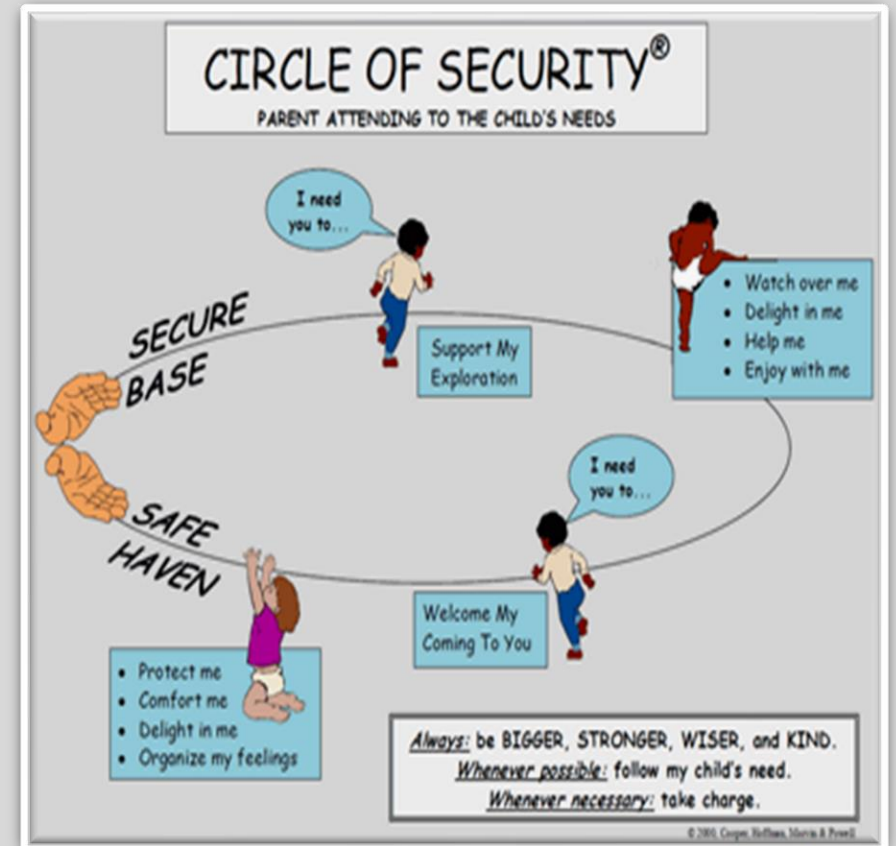
Trauma Busters



- Having resilient care givers
- Securely attached relationships
- Available, healthy nervous systems to model regulation and to co-regulate with
- Social connections
- Getting basic needs met
- Caregivers who understand development
- Building social and emotional skills

The Teacher/Parent as an Emotional Base

- A student's perception of a positive connection to a teacher combined with high expectations is the **STRONGEST** predictor of academic growth
- Supportive, kind, connected adults engender a zest for learning
- Students need the opportunity to return to the secure adult



Bigger, Stronger, Wiser, Kind and Emotionally in Control

There are Boats All Around...



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