Cognitive Problem Solving Strategies
What We Will Know and Do

- Build an understanding on how trauma impacts cognitive skills
- Leave with some strategies that you could try in your classroom to support cognitive skills
Cognitive skills are the mental capabilities that our students need in order to successfully learn in school.

Cognitive skills are taught so students impacted by trauma are able to think about (rather than emotionally respond to) triggers and challenging situations.

Staff understand the impact of trauma on the uneven acquisition, retention, and performance of cognitive skills.
The Impact of Trauma in The Classroom - Cognitive

- Memory
- Problem Solving
- Reasoning
- Organization of Concepts
- Focusing
- Taking in new concepts
- Cause and effect
Strategies to Promote Cognitive Skills
Strategies

- Help children break down tasks into small, manageable steps
- Repeat information or provide written instructions
- Establish routines through planning and prompting next steps
- **Teach cause and effect relationships**
- **Emphasize sequences of events**
- Scaffold tasks by allowing children to work alongside classmates in cooperative groups
To be successful, students need to be able to clearly recognize cause and effect relationships so they can think analytically in their personal and academic lives.

Without the ability to identify these relationships, students are at risk socially and academically.
How to Introduce Cause and Effect into Classroom Discussions

- Use real world examples as often as you can.
- Ask questions: Why? What happened? How do you know? What is your evidence?
- Encourage students to consider multiple cause and consequences of events. Ex: What happens when we waste electricity?
- Use graphic organizers or flow charts to help students think about cause and effect relationships.
Discussion

What do you think of when teaching cause and effect relationships to your students?

Why is this important when looking through a trauma lens?
Traumatized students are often described as “Not seeing the forest for the trees,” as they can connect the dots but cannot see that the connected dots eventually form a horse. (Rodenbush, 2015).
Sequencing refers to putting events or information in a specific order. The ability to sequence requires higher-order thinking skills, from recognizing patterns to determining cause and effect and more.

Sequencing helps students understand and organize material they've learned as well as help them solve problems.
Example of Teaching Sequences of Events
Instructions: Identify one of the strategies we have discussed (or one from the list) that you would like to try.

- How will you put this into place?
- What will you immediate next steps be?
- How will you assess this strategy?
Team Talk: Review the “How”

How will you adjust your practices to support learning for students who have experienced trauma?

How will you involve families and students in practices?

*Fill this in on your Action Plan under “Objectives and Action Planning”*
References/Resources

https://educators.brainpop.com/teaching-tip/sequence-learning-objectives/


https://www.teachervision.com/professional-development/cause-effect-lesson
