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Parental Involvement Within the Trauma-Informed School Counseling Culture

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Journal of Ethical Educational Leadership

Trauma-informed school counselors as leaders in the community can use a parental involvement model to support the academic, career, and social/emotional needs of students (Rock, 2022). Studies indicate a consistent need for increased parental involvement in schools (Bower & Griffin, 2011; Epstein & Van Voorhis 2010; Wells, 2020). Following ethical standards for practice and leadership, school counselors can facilitate parental involvement that implements a trauma-informed foundation to help meet complex needs of students (ASCA, 2022). Further, applying a Post-Traumatic Growth (PTG) model can be integrated to empower both students and parents towards creating a positive outcome for future success (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 1996, Tedeschi & Calhoun 2004). Implications for incorporating trauma-informed models into a comprehensive school counseling program are discussed.

Parental Involvement within the Trauma-Informed School Counseling Culture

In 2014, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) developed a framework around trauma for use in education and other child service sectors. This framework became the defining standard for defining trauma in which "individual trauma results from an event, series of events, or set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or life-threatening and that has lasting adverse effects on the individual's functioning and mental, physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being" (Frankland, 2021; SAMHSA, 2014, p. 7). Traumatic events can include the experiencing or witnessing of physical and sexual abuse, emotionally harmful experiences, loss, war, natural disaster, or living in an environment in which a caregiver has limited or impaired ability. An estimated 26% of children under the age of 4 will have experienced or witnessed a traumatic event in their lifetime (SAMHSA, 2014, p. 51). An alarming 46% of children under the age of 18 will have experienced at least one traumatic event during their childhood (Frankland, 2021). Brown et al. (2022) report that 10% of all children surveyed in the 2016 National Survey of Children's Health reported experiencing three or more Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). Research indicates that 29% of children that are under the age of 17 in rural communities have experienced two or more ACEs (Frankland, 2021, p. 51). Childhood trauma exposure can have lasting adverse

effects throughout the lifespan, affecting cognitive, behavioral, and health components, including signs of depression, anxiety, aggression, substance use, and increased rates of suicide attempts (SAMHSA, 2014; Frankland, 2021). Additionally, within the school setting, trauma can negatively impact a student's cognitive and learning abilities and the ability to regulate emotion and behavior (E. C. Brown et al., 2022). Brown et al. (2022) have found that the current research shows a strong correlation "between childhood trauma and negative educational outcomes across all population groups, including lower grades, decreased performance on standardized achievement tests, and school truancy" (p. 664).

School counselors are instrumental as community leaders in identifying and supporting students affected by trauma. School counselors can provide evidence-based, interventional support and resources that promote resiliency and student success and mitigate the effects of trauma (Alvarez et al., 2022). The American School Counseling Association's (ASCA) position statement describing the school counselor's role as it relates to trauma-informed practices states:

> School counselors understand the impact adverse childhood experiences have on students' academic achievement and social/emotional development. Through the implementation of a school counseling program, school counselors strive to identify, support, and promote the success of students who have experienced trauma (ASCA, 2016, ASCA Position, section).

In 2014, SAMHSA outlined four characteristics of a trauma-informed program: realizing, recognizing, responding, and resisting (ASCA, 2022). Within the trauma-informed school, counselors and educators must realize their role as leaders in the community and the impact trauma has on students and have a thorough understanding that students do have the potential to recover from trauma. They need to know how to recognize and respond to the signs and symptoms of trauma students display (E. C. Brown et al., 2022). This knowledge must extend to integrating policies, procedures, and practices. Lastly, they need to be cognitively aware of their actions and responses that will allow them to resist the re-traumatization of the student (ASCA, 2022). Through the school counselor's advocation efforts to promote policies and procedures that focus on a trauma-sensitive framework, school settings can transform into a trauma-sensitive setting that fosters students' feelings of safety and being supported (ASCA, 2022). Additionally, fostering parental involvement in school can have a positive impact on meeting students' academic and developmental needs (Hornby & Lafaele, 2011).

The Relationship between Trauma and Attachment

Parental involvement is a critical factor in child development from birth. The ethological theory of attachment highlights the importance of early child and caregiver attachments from birth to ages two and beyond (Bowlby, 1969, 1988) Bowlby described how early attachments are instrumental in developmental growth across the lifespan. Children need feelings of safety, cognitive and emotional connection, responsiveness, and compassion to form secure attachments. Ainsworth et al. (1978) measured attachment, and further research found it can fall into the categories of secure attachment, avoidant attachment, resistant/ambivalent attachment, or disorganized/disoriented attachment (M. Main & Solomon, 1986).

A child lacking secure attachment may struggle not only at home but at school or in the community regarding interpersonal relationships or seeking support to meet their needs (Lldiz & Ayhan, 2022). Groh et al. (2012) reports youths with a history of disorganized attachments are at significant risk of expressing hostility with their peers, anti-social behaviors, and have the potential for internalizing symptoms. This disorganized attachment has been proposed to be associated with the caregiver's frightening or disoriented behavior with the child (H. E. Main & Hesse, 2006). The attachment figure is intended to be the source of joy, connection, and emotional soothing. Instead, the child's experience of developing disorganized attachment is such that the caregiver is the source of alarm, fear, and terror, so the child cannot turn to the attachment figure to be soothed (H. E. Main & Hesse, 2006). This finding provides important insights into the nature of the transmission of trauma across the generations. In addition, it offers insights to school counselors and teachers regarding how the child may react or respond to them within the school setting. Problematic behaviors may manifest when facing other types of traumas, such as natural disasters, sudden accidents, or the global pandemic. Advocating for students to secure necessary therapeutic interventions to address attachment related trauma is an ethical duty of the school counselor (ASCA, 2022). Through advocacy efforts, school counselors can apply existing research and applicable models that involve a multifaceted systems approach to support families, teachers, and the greater community (Bronfenbrenner, 1989).

Parental Involvement

Parental Involvement or "caregiver involvement" can be defined as supporting the child at home with homework, navigating relationships with peers and teachers, helping volunteer at school, attending workshops, or getting involved in parent and teacher associations (Anthonyraj & Sasikala, 2019). Parents who build these positive relationships across child and adolescent developmental stages positively impact children's academic and personal success (Hornby & Lafaele, 2011). Parents are the students' first teachers; therefore, school and parent partnering with those in the child's educational journey are essential. Parental involvement in their children's

education has been defined in several ways in the literature and appears to be a recurrent theme noted in the literature (Yuliant et al., 2022). Considering the parent has a long-standing history of connecting, advocating, and caring for the child, they can act as the child's most valuable trusted asset in terms of emotional, psychological, and cognitive development. The earlier a parent gets involved with their child's education, such as through volunteer methods, the more connected the parent can be with the student and school community.

Parental Involvement Models

Applying models from existing research can incorporate a broader trauma informed community approach toward health and wellness for best practices in school counseling. For example, the Epstein model (J. Epstein, 1992; J. L. Epstein & Salinas, 2004; Hutchins et al., 2012; Yildiz, 2021) can provide a framework for understanding the benefits of parental involvement. This model sees the student within a broader context of family and community (Bower & Griffin, 2011). According to Epstein (1992), how the school views and interfaces with the family system can impact the child's overall success. Epstein's model is grounded on the theory of spheres of influence based on Bronfenbrenner Ecological Model (1989). The three main spheres of influence are family, school, and community. To some degree each of these aspects requires a leadership perspective in modeling, supporting, and collaborating to offer children a healthy perspective of interpersonal and intrapersonal well-being. Some areas that may intersect include after-school programs, churches, faith-based communities, neighborhoods, recreation centers, and sports.

The Epstein model categorizes the following six types of parental involvement: Parenting, Communicating, Volunteering, Learning at Home, Decision Making, and Collaborating with Community (J. Epstein, 1992). Using these categories can assist school counselors and leaders by providing a framework for communication and structure between family and school to support the student. In addition, secondary gains include awareness of self and others, perspective-taking, and facilitating the opportunity for deep, meaningful connection within a caring community. This deep, significant connection and process can create new healthy attachments within relationships towards students feeling the pillars of attachment such as, felt safety, a sense of being seen and known, the experience of felt comfort, a sense of being valued, sense of support for being and becoming one's unique best self (D. P. Brown & Eilliott, 2016). It is important to consider that preexisting attachment styles of parents and children can impact the type of parental involvement utilized within this model. Attachment style can also affect how the child responds within interpersonal relationships with teachers, peers, and school counselors.

When examining attachment, there are features of supportive, healthy parenting that aid in the development of the academic, emotional, and psychological well-being of children. Some of these features include 1.)

Establishing a daily family routine, 2.) Monitoring outside school activities the child engages in, 3.) Modeling the value of learning and self-discipline related to hard work, 4.) Expressing realistic expectations of what achievement is, 5.) Encouraging child developmental process at school, 6.) encouraging reading, writing, and discussion of what is learned with family at home, and 7.) involving children in community sports or lessons that can introduce them to mentors and role models (Henderson & Berla, 1994).

Bronfenbrenner's Ecological model (1974; 1989; Berry, 2019) uses systems and community impact with a collaborative approach. Bronfenbrenner highlights the importance of the child's social surroundings, biology, and environment. Bronfenbrenner postulates that interacting with the environment is complex because the child is still developing. This interaction is even more applicable given the research on neurobiological aspects of trauma and the impact on the child's developing brain (Walkley & Cox, 2013). Bronfenbrenner's model brings into the foreground the developing person and the need for deliberately designed environments that foster collaborative relationships with all intertwining persons, roles, actions, and processes (Härkönen, 2011). This interrelated, complex understanding of the developing child considers biological, psychological, social, and spiritual aspects of the self while simultaneously considering the dynamic nature of the environment and the greater system (Walkley & Cox, 2013). Within the context of the complex layers of child, family, school and community it can be understood that the focus of Epstein and Bronfenbrenner is to have a true, vested learning community (J. L. Epstein & Salinas, 2004).

Cultural Competency When Working with Diverse Family Systems

As counselors working in the school or community, we understand that it is important to apply multicultural counseling competencies with the students and families we work with. According to Hayes and Erford (2023), "multicultural counseling may be defined as counseling that actively considers the influence of the counselor and client's cultural identities on a counseling relationship, process, and outcome" (p.4). In addressing parental involvement in particular, it is imperative to understand all the various aspects of culture including shared values, practices, social norms, and diverse worldviews that are associated with individuals within the school community. A few of these diverse cultural components include students and families where English is their secondary language, and they may be first- or second-generation immigrants still attempting to acculturate. Other cultural components to consider may include lower socio-economic status families who may struggle due to limited resources making it difficult to be fully accepted or involved within the school system.

In addition, there may be several diverse blended families who are made up of various levels of intersectionality. Some students may come from same sex parent couples, and the aspect of family systems and dynamics are diverse in nature and can impact how the student and family interface with the school and community. Understanding the impact of collective

trauma on culturally diverse families is crucial for school counselors and this can be pivotal in taking the trauma informed perspective especially given that research has linked increase of stress and trauma with minority groups. "Violence and trauma are especially significant for clients who have suffered many oppressive experiences, particularly when tied to their intersecting identities. Understanding the role of intersecting identities on a client's ability to cope and process collective trauma is important" (Hays & Erford, n.d., p. 25). In addition, according to ASCA A1h. ethical code, school counselors are called to "Respect students' and families' values, beliefs and cultural background, as well as students' sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression, and exercise great care to avoid imposing personal biases, beliefs or values rooted in one's religion, culture or ethnicity" (ASCA, 2022, p. 7). A systems approach to multicultural counseling competency is necessary to assist school counselors in facing biases and potential ethical concerns head on. School counselors are mandated to consider and apply the influence of family, community, and other environmental factors including social justice practices on individual and systemic levels (Ratts et al., 2016).

According to the multicultural counseling competencies, counselor self-awareness is first on the competencies concerning professional disposition of attitude and beliefs and includes the school counselor to have self-awareness and self-understanding of who they are, what social location they come from, and their own identity personally and professionally. Self-awareness requires insight and perspective taking in understanding how their social position, standing and cultural identity impacts others around them and how others perceive them. In other words, according to Ratts, et al. (2016), "Privileged and marginalized counselors are aware of their social identities, social group statuses, power, privilege, oppression, strengths, limitations, assumptions, attitudes, values, beliefs, and biases" (p.5) Further, school counselors can continually assess their own attitudes and beliefs about racial identity, which is an ongoing and developmental process (Day-Vines et al., 2021).

In addition to individual counselor awareness, it is necessary to explore the impact of the role of the school counselor within the community. To increase collaboration within the community, school counselors can acknowledge that school systems are comprised of diverse individuals who are impacted by sociocultural and sociopolitical experiences. Therefore, school counselors require skills to facilitate open conversations that include contextual dimensions of race, ethnicity, and culture. Culturally responsive school counselors can ethically connect with families from all racial, ethic, and cultural backgrounds to identify and meet the mental and behavioral health needs of students (Hughes et al., 2020). The American School Counselor Association (2021a) State-of-the Profession study noted efforts to increase cultural responsiveness through training for promoting diversity, equity, inclusion (DEI), and access. Specifically, 33% of respondents reported requirements for DEI training for all faculty, 27% reported DEI training was

included in student curriculum, and 16% reported positions were created for DEI specialists (p.13). Discussions on DEI can help build understanding and increase skills for broaching conversations with students and families.

Standards of Practice for School Counselors

School counselors are uniquely positioned professionals within the school setting to facilitate discussions on DEI. The roles and responsibilities of the school counselor are multifaceted and include supporting and advocating for each student while working collaboratively with teachers and families. Further, school counselors adhere to the highest professional standards of integrity, leadership, and professionalism (ASCA, 2022). The professional accreditations and professional and ethical standards that school counselors adhere to encompass a variety of professional organizations, including The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) (Johnson & Carrico, 2020). School counselors are mandated to adhere to the ASCA ethical and professional standards and competencies, which ensure that school counselors are appropriately promoting the academic, career, and social/ emotional development of all students in the K-12 setting (ASCA, 2022). The ASCA National Model provides a comprehensive framework for school counselors to develop their school counseling program to meet all students' needs through support and advocacy. In addition, this includes the roles and responsibilities necessary to collaborate effectively and consulate with all stakeholders to promote all students' academic, career, and social/emotional success (ASCA, 2019; Rock, 2022).

The school counselors' mindsets and behaviors, outlined in the ASCA Professional Standards and Competencies, provide the framework for school counselors to equip themselves with the adequate "knowledge, attitude, and skills" that are vital to being an effective change-maker within the school setting (ASCA, 2022, p. 1). The ethical standards outlined in the ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors provide the ethical principles necessary to implement a comprehensive school counseling program that facilitates a school environment that supports and advocates for all students (ASCA, 2022). The ethical cornerstone of the school counselor's role is to support student's academic, career, and social/emotional development (ASCA, 2022, p. A.3). By applying their extensive knowledge of human development theories to practice, school counselors can provide all stakeholders with the knowledge necessary to understand trauma-informed practice (ASCA, 2019, M 7 & B-PF 1). School counselors must have a systemic understanding of the trauma-informed practice to best promote student outcomes through effective interventions and support. To ensure equitable outcomes for all students, school counselors exercise leadership to foster systemic change as necessary (ASCA, 2022, B.1.d)

School counselors are ethically bound and adhere to the belief that effective school counseling is a collaborative process that involves consulting and working alongside all stakeholders, including families, teachers, and school staff, to promote student development (ASCA, 2022, A.6; ASCA, 2019,

M 5, B-SS 5, B-SS 6). Therefore, school counselors must apply a systems approach alongside parents who collaborate on all levels to support students successfully. When using the systems mindset, it is essential to consider Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Model. School counselors can understand that a child's social surroundings, biology, and environment are crucial when working collaboratively to support trauma-affected students. Even in parent-child relationships where the relationship attachment presents as flawed, the parent can be included as an integral contributor to the conceptualization and support plan.

By leading as an example, school counselors can demonstrate the importance of fostering self-awareness, addressing one's biases, and uncovering potential triggers and trauma responses to reduce negative experiences in trauma-informed professional settings. By modeling this behavior, school counselors can teach and support the ongoing dispositional development of other stakeholders. The Counsel for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) dispositional literature illustrates the importance of interpersonal and intrapersonal characteristics, values, beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors within communication, including commitment, openness, respect, integrity, and self-awareness (CACREP, 2016). Through this practice, school counselors can be integral in helping others understand how their unique reactions and responses to specific situations involving trauma can lead to parallel process reactive responses.

Fostering Parental Involvement

There are several theories and tools to consider in the face of adversity to cultivate healing and growth for students, parents, families, and entire school communities. Even when including parents indirectly, it can be further explored how counselors use case conceptualization in working with students within the context of the entire system. It may be best to include parents directly to support students' academic success, personal success, and overall well-being. However, there are instances where family conflict can be a barrier to desired student outcomes. Some considerations include children who have traumatic attachment backgrounds with their parents. Often these children may attend school to avoid family conflict, domestic violence within the home, or other types of defined abuse or neglect.

Confidentiality is essential for minors in challenging situations at home. This highlights the need to establish and maintain trusting relationships with school counselors (ASCA, 2022). School counselors regularly face ethical decision-making situations, including mandated reporting and other concerns where the counselor's assessment concludes that the parent or caregiver may not be the healthiest support for the child. Therefore, assessing whether the parent is an ally and advocate of support or a barrier to student success is crucial. This aspect of the parent as an advocate or barrier also stems from prior research on attachment theory (Lidiz & Ayhan, 2022). For example, insecure attachments to parents may hinder the student's ability to work

through trauma and manage symptoms experienced within the school setting. In such a situation, the school counselor may contact parents to include the support of the family system.

When contacting family or other members of the student's support system, school counselors adhere to the ASCA Ethical Standard that they must respect a student's ethical right to confidentiality while balancing this with a parent's legal right to guide their child's life (ASCA, 2022, A.2.g.). In addition, school counselors are ethically mandated to respect the rights of parents and work collaboratively with parents to "facilitate and advocate for students' maximum growth in the areas of academic, career, and social/emotional development" (ASCA, 2022, B.1.b.). Knowing when to exclude a parent and invoke a student's right to confidentiality is an ongoing dilemma for school counselors (Stone, 2017, p. 5). Stone notes that school counselors who build collaborative relationships and trust with parents are positioned to help parents better understand the role and responsibilities of the school counselor and the ethical issues that school counselors face when working with minors. In addition to a parent's legal right to guide their child's life, school counselors must also adhere to all federal, state, and local laws, as well as district policy, when working with students and families where the child's welfare is in question (ASCA, 2022, B.1.g.).

Because laws regarding minors can be complex, understanding the rules and regulations pertaining to minors is critical when working in a trauma-informed setting and with family systems that cause the student's trauma. The school counselor must use an ethical decision-making model when deciding what information should be shared with the family in these situations. While there are many models one can consider, the ASCA Ethical Standards decision-making model is appropriate for diverse situations (ASCA, 2022 F.a-l.). ASCA lists the Intercultural Model of Ethical Decision Making, Solutions to Ethical Problems in School (STEPS), and the Ethical Justification Model to consider when faced with an ethical dilemma. As social change agents, school counselors may face circumstances where they need to intervene on behalf of the student to address trauma within the family system. School counselors can also empower students with practical, data-driven tools they can implement to navigate through complex family systems. According to ASCA, "school counselors play an integral role in helping promote child welfare by providing direct and indirect student services. Those services include advocating for students' ends by addressing issues that could affect their academic, personal, and social/emotional well-being" (American School Counselor Association, 2021b, para. 3). A school counselor's primary obligation is to the student; therefore, in situations where the parents present a barrier to student success, school counselors should apply their professional judgment, seek supervision, and consult with their administration on best practices to make decisions that support student success and foster continued growth (Stone, 2017, p. 199).

Post Traumatic Growth

In facing trauma individually and collectively, counselors can begin to unearth triggers and disarm them with the knowledge of the trauma Four F's model by becoming self-aware and responding with a better understanding if someone is prone to fight, flight, freeze, or fawn (Walker, 2013). According to Walker (2013), people often react with an emotionally charged demeanor such as being ready to fight, run away, petrification or fawning by people pleasing the "offender." Understanding how we may be more prone to respond when triggered can give us valuable insight in responding more intentionally in health. School counselors can also access and reflect on organic resiliency features they may already encompass while building on training in others. In addition, counselors can exhibit and foster in others a specific model after exercising resiliency, known as Post Traumatic Growth or PTG. PTG is a theory that states transformation can occur following trauma. Developed by Tedeschi and Calhoun (1996), PTG posits that people who endure psychological struggle following adversity can see growth afterward. For example, Kristo (2021) stated, "Teachers, counselors, and parents should work together to both support high school students facing adversity and foster resiliency through discussion and exploration of new life perspectives arising from the pandemic" (p. 1605).

According to Calhoun and Tedeschi (1998; Tedeschi & Calhoun, 2004), people develop new understandings of themselves based on shifting their worldviews regarding ideas, thoughts, feelings, and beliefs about themselves, others, the world, and God. This new worldview offers a unique perspective on life. This growth is often seen within the self, applying deeper meaning, and is then used to empower others facing adversity. Within the school community, we can consider the Post Traumatic Growth Inventory, which evaluates growth after trauma as observed in the inventory created by Tedeschi and Calhoun (1996). This inventory outlines five core areas: 1. Appreciation of Life, 2. Relationships with Others, 3. New Possibilities in life, 4. Personal Strength, and 5. Spiritual Change and Growth. According to research by Kutza & Cornell (2021), college students have demonstrated PTG post COVID-19 which indicates the potential for benefits from cultivating a strengths-based model with K-12 students. In addition to PTG Theory, there are several components of resiliency that may be related as well.

Resiliency. According to the American Psychological Association (2014), resilience is "the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats or even significant sources of stress" (para. 4). According to several studies, the Brief Resilience Scale has been used to study the scores and impact on participants who have experienced trauma and extreme stressors such as the COVID-19 pandemic. According to Yu, Yu, & Hu (2021), High school graduates demonstrated resilience as illustrated in several facets that align with themes of finding a "strong willingness to seek meaning and accept the psychological distress brought about by the epidemic" (p.1066). There

appears to be a desire to find hope, meaning and purpose even in the midst of stress and collective trauma. According to Warbington et al. (2019, p. 64) "School support is one factor that helps to build resilience."

The Army Master Resiliency Program (MRT) is one model of resiliency that has been broken down into concrete dispositions or characteristics towards steps of growth. Some of the critical components of the MRT include having characteristics such as self-awareness, self-regulation, optimism, mental agility, strength of character, and connection. People who demonstrate higher ability towards resiliency often have the following characteristics and can tap into or facilitate ongoing growth and development: Optimism, altruism, moral compass, faith and spirituality, humor, having a role model, social support, facing fear, having meaning and purpose in life (2020, p. para. 4).

According to Taylor (2017), there are skills for building resilience, including remaining calm and in the moment, which can be connected to meditation and grounding techniques. An additional skill is using one's body as feedback to understand what the person is experiencing. Biofeedback and exercises towards physical awareness can prove beneficial to support the person in how they can "hear" what their body needs.

Another facet of regulation is accepting what is and embracing change or transition as it occurs. Throughout life, it is apparent that one thing we can rely on to be consistent is "change." The more counselors can support students, parents, and teachers in embracing change and ambiguity while learning to flex with the times, the better. In addition, nourishing oneself is essential for building and surrounding oneself with positive social relationships. Finally, finding purpose and deeper meaning in life is important while practicing each skill daily. School communities, and especially school counselors, are essential workers within the context of supporting students with services, and they can understand the culture since they are a part of the ecological system. "School support is one factor that helps to build resilience, and it seems as though school counselors who have personally experienced the same natural disaster [trauma] as the students seem to feel as though they are equipped to provide more empathetic support" (Warbington et al., 2019, p. 64).

Barriers to Parental Involvement

Since parental involvement is a key component of students' overall success, it is important to consider potential barriers and create strategies to help remove them. Barriers are varied and can be highly individual. However, common barriers include lack of parenting, potential insecure attachment styles, parental systems trauma, collective trauma, language barriers, and education level, which can impact parents' ability to be involved with their child's education. Parents may also feel insecure from their own negative childhood experiences in school or lack the time and/or financial resources necessary to be involved (Baker et al., 2016; Berry, 2019). School counselors can work to address these barriers in their program evaluation process to

further growth and change as leaders in the community. Barriers can be identified by asking parents to share their barriers or limitations for attending school events. It can be helpful to educate parents on potential barriers to aid in identification. Next, parents can be asked if there are any steps to take that might increase their involvement. Uncovering answers to these basic questions can be a starting point for increasing parental involvement through uncovering and understanding immediate needs and past experiences (Baker et al., 2016). Further, Vaishnavi and Aneesh (2018) state, "But when a school counselor effectively explains the process of counseling, ethics, and the problem of the child to the parents, parents become cooperative to counseling" (p. 363).

Schools lacking a systems community-based approach, can consider including Epstein's model, to increase parental involvement. "The Epstein model is one of the most widely referenced frameworks for parental involvement" (Bower & Griffin, 2011, p. 78). With each grade level, school activities to develop and maintain partnerships with families decline and drop dramatically during the transition to middle grades (Baker et al., 2016; J. Epstein, 1992). Helping parents and communities stay engaged as the child ages must be considered using a developmental perspective. For example, parental (PTA) involvement looks very different in K-5th grade as opposed to middle school support and later even high school connections. In addition, evaluating teacher and school counselor biases is a necessary part of cultural competencies and impacts how the school conceptualizes student and family needs. School counselors must use critical thinking skills, evaluate barriers, and exercise personal self-reflection to avoid biased thinking to best support parents and children in schools. The various models and strategies discussed can support school counselors in their personal work with students and in exercising leadership to advocate for any needed systemic changes. An overall goal for school counselors includes increasing parental involvement using a trauma-focused model to support students, families, and school communities.

Implications for Practice

In summary, the need for a systems approach utilizing a trauma focused model including parental involvement is a substantiated blueprint for social health and success. When applied, the Epstein model can be foundational in developing a plan for school counselors to integrate within a trauma informed plan of care in their school communities. Wells (2022) highlights the importance of a culturally responsive, trauma informed school counselor framework for best serving students and families. In addition, counselors are faced with also navigating state legal age of consent requirements, mandatory reporting procedures, and maintaining confidentiality, as these are vital factors that need to be considered when implementing a systems approach (ASCA, 2022). Ethical decision-making models are also helpful when evaluating complex situations involving these factors. These models can help organize and evaluate information obtained from the system including factors

such as informed consent, confidentiality, family members involved, the circumstances at play, and balancing boundaries (Forester-Miller & Davis, 2016). Other important considerations are ongoing disclosure and consent for the presenting problem and the client-aligned goals the school counselor is working towards achieving. Maintaining the professional role and responsibility as a school counselor is crucial regarding the professional relationship with the student. Maintaining such functions and high ethical standards while keeping professional counselor dispositions in check requires the support of ongoing close supervision and/or engagement in the professional school counseling community. Feedback, support, and resources obtained in supervision and engagement in the school counseling community can further support ethical and productive interactions when involving the family system and parents (Hilts et al., 2022).

Considering the biological, psychological, social, and spiritual aspects of the self while simultaneously considering the dynamic nature of the environment and the greater system can have a positive impact on students academically and personally (Walkley & Cox, 2013). Understanding the impact of parent and child attachment on a student's development can bring additional insight to student needs at various stages. Incorporating concepts from Walkers (2013) Four F's trauma response self-awareness model and integrating a PTG perspective while educating students and parents on individual factors for increased resilience can provide needed support and encouragement. This application can further cultivate a trauma-informed school counseling culture. Finally, working to remove barriers and create an equitable and optimal learning environment for all students is foundational to the work of a trauma-informed school counselor.

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