**Principles for working with children who are going through trauma**

* **Principle One: Always Empower, Never Disempower**
  + Show compassion by avoiding power struggles
  + Response should reflect an understanding of potentially traumatized behavior
  + Recognize that the youths’ behavior may be outside awareness /self-control
  + Discipline should be consistent and respectful
  + Discipline should never resemble violence against children
    - (yelling, sarcasm, blaming, threats)
* **Principle Two: Provide Unconditional Positive Regard**
  + Show genuine respect for the children as people
  + Focus on building trust
  + Avoid “what is wrong with you?” or telling them their faults
  + Empathize with children and youth
  + There is a healing power of an adult who cares
  + Acknowledge their feelings
  + #2: example – child yells at an adult staff: “I hate you. You suck.” staff responds: “I am sorry you feel that way. I realize this is hard for you right now, but you are bright and you can do this. I am here to help you when you are ready.”
* **Principle Three: Maintain Consistent Expectations**
  + Set consistent, expectations, limits, and routines
  + Allows youth to begin to separate between arbitrary rules & ones that are purposeful
  + Promotes Safety
  + Most appropriate when they are immediate, related, age-appropriate, and delivered in a calm, respectful voice
  + #3: example – sends a message they are worthy of attention. “I see that you are struggling and feeling angry, but you can’t continue to behave in this manner. You must stop interrupting the work of others. For now I’m going to have you change your seat. Would you rather sit in the back of the room or next to my desk?”
  + The “perfect choice” gives the child/youth a choice between two real options that will give you what you need from them, while empowering them with a positive choice to make.
* **Principle Four: Check Assumptions, Observe, and Question**
  + Identify your own assumptions – when you catch yourself making an assumption, choose to make an observation instead
  + Then ask questions – **Be sure you are willing to listen carefully to the response**
    - This is how we display respect and show unconditional positive regard
  + Consider each child independent of any factors you may know about his/her personal life
  + Acknowledge their feelings
  + May help to record your observations – which may also allow us to remove emotionally charged responses – better to focus on the context of students behaviors.
  + #4 when we make assumptions about who is likely to be traumatized based on a stereotype of any one group in our programs, we may stop from seeing who actually has been affected by trauma. Trauma is an individual response, When we consider the children in our care, all possibilities exist for each child.
  + The quiet, withdrawn child who is emotionally absent during class should and can be as much of a concern as the child who misbehaves.
* **Principle Five: Be a Relationship Coach**
  + Continue to teach/foster students how to get along, supporting relationships between the child and their parents as well as their peers (just like what we teach in elementary school).
  + By helping students feel safe, you are allowing them to put more energy into learning
  + Putting less energy into dealing with emotions and behavior that detract from learning will result in better scores
  + You can help students take small but significant steps toward mending relationships with others
  + Most appropriate when they are immediate, related, age-appropriate, and delivered in a calm, respectful voice
  + #5: example the relationships we establish with the children in our care, influence the tone and demeanor in our classrooms and program facilities.
* **Principle Six: Provide Guided Opportunities for Helpful Participation**
  + Promotes a sense of self-worth – provides an opportunity to be heard, make choices, and have a sense of accomplishment
  + Helping others strengthens resiliency
  + Can create trust
  + #6 example: we all want to belong – gives us opportunities to be heard, make choices, have responsibility, and be engaged.