Courageous Conversations: A partnering tool to achieve equity in schools

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Participant microphones will be muted at entry – you will be able to unmute during the discussion portion of our webinar.

If you have questions during the webinar, please use the chat or use the “raise hand” feature during discussion to have your microphone unmuted.

This session is being recorded and it will be available on the MHTTC website within 24 hours of the close of this presentation.

Information about CEUs will be sent in a follow-up e-mail.

If you have questions after this session, please e-mail: newengland@mhtcnetwork.org.
OUR TEAM

Yale Program for Recovery and Community Health

in partnership with

C4 Innovations, Harvard University Department of Psychiatry, and Center for Educational Improvement
...and silence is not always golden...

“In the end, we will remember not the words of our enemies but the silence of our friends.”
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<th><strong>Learn</strong></th>
<th><strong>Understand</strong></th>
<th><strong>List</strong></th>
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<td>About courageous conversations and its importance in promoting equity in schools.</td>
<td>Understand the importance of cultural humility when building partnerships with your school community.</td>
<td>List the four agreements of a courageous conversation.</td>
<td>Identify school-based opportunities for courageous conversations.</td>
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The coronavirus disease 19 (COVID-19) pandemic caught the world unprepared early this year, and continues to grow, and as of May 25, 2020 a total of 5,557,783 coronavirus cases worldwide have 348,314 have died.

The United States is now the most affected country, surpassing 1.6 million cases and 99, 561 deaths.

COVID-19 is a major psychological stressor for the entire population, and loss of educational and work activities also threatens to worsen economy and public mental health.

The causes, patterns and trajectories of COVID-19 mental health consequences, and potential interventions are just beginning to be understood and need to be prospectively researched.
Effects on Education

About 258 million children and youth are out of school, according to UIS data for the school year ending in 2018. The total includes 59 million children of primary school age, 62 million of lower secondary school age and 138 million of upper secondary age. Environments children and families have come to rely on for many supports resulted in a number of increased mental health challenges around the globe (Lee, 2020).
The Impact of COVID-19 on Families:


- The “new normal”? means Big changes in everyday routine.
- The economic impacts also have dramatic effects on the wellbeing of families and communities. For vulnerable families, lost income due to an outbreak can translate to spikes in poverty, missed meals for children, and reduced access to healthcare far beyond COVID-19.

Anxiety, Depression, and Mental Illness are on the Rise

“On one end of the spectrum there are students who deal with intense expectations and the unrelenting competition of college admissions. On the other end, there are students who face the social and psychological effects of violence and poverty. Add to that the challenges presented by social media, bullying, and other daily encounters, and the reasons for such breakdowns are obvious (Korminiak, 2017).”
The Importance of Cultural Humility

“Cultural humility is the “ability to maintain an interpersonal stance that is other-oriented (or open to the other) in relation to aspects of cultural identity that are most important to the [person].”

Embracing Cultural Humility

Cultural humility is different from other culturally-based training ideals because it focuses on self-humility rather than achieving a state of knowledge or awareness.
FACTORS THAT IMPACT CULTURAL DIVERSITY

https://ccbmdr.ahslabs.uic.edu/
Intersectionality represents the idea that the *crossing of multiple forms of oppression* with regard to gender, race/ethnicity, class, sexuality, disability status, etc. produces distinct sets of perspectives and consequences among individuals.

**Intersectionality Theory**
(Kimberlé Crenshaw 1989; McCall 2005)
Privilege Awareness
(McIntosh, 1992; Robinson & Howard-Hamilton, 2000)

**Prejudice:** attitudes, beliefs, and feelings toward the members of some group based solely on their membership in that group (can be positive or negative)

**Power:** the ability to control circumstances access to resources and to decision-makers to get things done; to influence others; to define reality for themselves and for others

**Oppression:** a state of asymmetric power relations characterized by domination, subordination, and resistance, where the dominating persons or groups exercise their power by the process of restricting access to resources (Prilleltensky, 2008)

**Discrimination:** actual positive or negative actions toward the objects of prejudice
Microaggressions in the classroom

“Racial microaggressions are brief and commonplace daily verbal or behavioral indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial slights and insults and potentially have a harmful or unpleasant psychological impact on the target person or group” (Sue, 2003, p. 39).

- Setting low expectations for students from particular groups, neighborhoods, or feeder patterns.
- Using inappropriate humor in class that degrades students from different groups.
- Singling students out in class because of their backgrounds.
- Complimenting non-white students on their use of ‘good English.’

https://www.kickboardforschools.com/blog/post/what-are-racial-microaggressions-in-schools
Merging Worldviews

Worldview includes a person’s frame of reference that brings him or her to the work. These experiences include a person’s cultural and ethnic background, family of origin, and all other aspects of oneself that influence the lens through which one views the world. This is an important aspect of reflection and includes noticing the impact of one’s assumptions, which are in part a function of a person’s worldview.
Leadership for Equity

**EQUALITY**

The assumption is that everyone benefits from the same supports. This is equal treatment.

**EQUITY**

Everyone gets the supports they need (this is the concept of “affirmative action”), thus producing equity.

**JUSTICE**

All 3 can see the game without supports or accommodations because the cause(s) of the inequity was addressed. The systemic barrier has been removed.
Race is the socially constructed meaning attached to a variety of physical attributes.

Racism can be defined as the belief and enactment that racial differences produce an inherent superiority (e.g. blue eyes, kids are more intelligent).

Institutionalized Racism is when institutions remain unaware, dismiss or perpetuate a dominate racial believe.

Anti-Racism means actively fighting racism and its effects in your community.
School communities, structures, policies, leadership that support inclusion

- Diverse experiences and cultures of the parents
- Receptive and responsive classroom environments
- Humility about our histories, knowledge, experience, privilege
- Curiosity and continued learning—a willingness to change
- Remediation when it doesn't work, when we make mistakes, when we get it wrong
- Resources, supports, training, and education
Poll Question: Single Choice
Which of these three questions are most applicable to your school community?

1. How is discrimination manifested in your school, our community?
2. Are some of us unconsciously influenced by deep seated bias that could go back to how we were raised?
3. How do our biases (conscious and unconscious) affect our interactions with kids and their families as we teach?
Today’s Presenter Maria E. Restrepo-Toro, BNS, M.S.  
C-TLC Project Director Dr. Christine Mason
A Courageous Conversation…
(Singleton & Linton, 2006)

*Engages* those who won’t talk.

*Sustains* the conversation when it gets uncomfortable.

*Deepens* the conversation to a point where a meaningful action occurs.
Four Agreements of Courageous Conversations
(Singleton & Linton, 2006)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=woEh1blQFKs

1. Stay engaged.
2. Speak your truth.
3. Experience discomfort.
4. Expect and accept non-closure.
Monitoring to the conversation

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sgjr-XcW4KE

The compass points are used to anchor the conversation.

They help people to reflect on their feelings, beliefs, need for action or knowledge-based perspective.
Courageous Conversations in Education

Instagram deleted our post again (and again without explanation—it’s just gone). Y’all can try to keep silencing us but please know that this will not stop us or our work. We will continue to name whiteness and white supremacy whenever we see it, including right now through the censoring of our content.

Update: We spoke with Instagram.
Courageous Conversations for the Whole School Community

Newton Public Schools in Massachusetts

• All families invited to Courageous Conversations workshops.

• Training and safe spaces for students to have Courageous Conversations at school.

• Teacher training during PD days.
Courageous Conversations in Schools: Academic Impact

Del Roble Elementary School in San Jose, California

- API improved by 43 points overall.
- 59-point improvement for Latino students
- 51-point improvement for Asian students
- 23-point improvement for White students
When to Have Courageous Conversations at School

1. During a professional development session after staff have been trained.
2. During morning meetings, homeroom, or advisory courses after students have been introduced to the four agreements.
3. During all school assemblies, especially in response to a problem effecting a large number of students (i.e., bullying, the suicide of a student, other injustices)
4. At school board meetings, state or federal government agencies, and other places where decisions about funding and staffing get made.
5. In meetings with parents.
6. At restorative justice circles, especially if the offense was motivated by some kind of prejudice.
When is a good time for courageous conversations in the school?

insights & Elaboration

Today’s Presenter Maria E. Restrepo-Toro, BNS, M.S.
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Keep Learning

1. Watch [Courage conversations about Race](#) by Glenn Singleton.

2. Use the [Courage Conversation Compass](#).

3. Use the [Four Agreements of Courageous Conversations](#) to conduct one in your community (Adapted from Glenn E. Singleton & Curtis Linton).
New England MHTTC Principles of Resilience and Recovery
https://mhttcnetwork.org/centers/new-england-mhttc/home
maria.restrepo-toro@yale.edu

Mission: To use evidence-based means to disseminate evidence-based practices across the New England region.

Area of Focus: Recovery-Oriented Practices, including Recovery Support Services, within the Context of Recovery-Oriented Systems of Care.

Ensuring Inclusion: To ensure the responsiveness of our work, we will actively develop and maintain a network of government officials, policy makers, system leaders, administrators, and community stakeholders, providers, researchers, youth and adults, and family members from each of the six states to guide the New England MHTTC activities.
Resilience & Recovery

Resilience and recovery are based on respect.

Resilience and recovery emerge from hope.

Resilience and recovery are family- and person-driven.

Resilience and recovery occur via many pathways.

Resilience and recovery are community-based and promoted through collaboration.

Resilience and recovery are holistic.

Resilience and recovery are supported by peers and allies.

Resilience and recovery are supported through relationships and social networks.

Resilience and recovery are culturally-based and influenced.

Resilience and recovery are supported by addressing trauma.

Resilience and recovery involve individual, family, and community strengths and responsibility.

Learn more at https://mhttcnetwork.org/centers/new-england-mhttc/home
Courageous Conversations: A partnering tool to achieve equity in schools
Key Texts for Courageous Conversations

GLENN E. SINGLETON
SECOND EDITION
COURAGEOUS CONVERSATIONS ABOUT RACE
A Field Guide for Achieving Equity in Schools

MORE COURAGEOUS CONVERSATIONS ABOUT RACE
GLENN E. SINGLETON
Key Texts for Courageous Conversations

Read more about Courageous Conversations in Schools

Courageous Conversations in the Classroom Part I: A Partnering Tool to Achieve Equity in Schools

Courageous Conversations in the Classroom Part II: Empowering Students to Have Difficult Conversations

Courageous Conversations in the Classroom Part III: Discussing Racial Inequity in the Elementary and Secondary Classroom
Upcoming Events

**MAY 27**

**Communicating Death and Dying to Latino Families during a Pandemic**
Talking about death and dying is always difficult, but communicating to families during pandemics

**MAY 27**

**Ambiguous Loss: Grieving in the Time of COVID-19, Followed by Live Q&A Session**
About the Event: Life, as we know it just a few weeks ago, has been completely turned upside down.

**MAY 28**

**The Developmental, Academic & Emotional Effects of Trauma: How the ACEs Study Informs the...**
*Note: This workshop will be delivered in two 90-minute Zoom sessions with a break in between Parts*

Visit [www.mhttcnetwork.org/newengland](http://www.mhttcnetwork.org/newengland) to register.
Childhood-Trauma Learning Collaborative (C-TLC)

Is your school trauma-informed? Are you/your colleagues looking for mental health resources to better support your students? Join the Center for Educational Improvement (CEI) for a series of online events hosted by the New England Mental Health Technology Transfer Center (New England MHTTC).

Our complimentary webinar series is designed to strengthen mental health supports that address the needs of children who have experienced/are at risk of experiencing significant trauma.
Childhood-Trauma Learning Collaborative (C-TLC)

Next Sessions
June 1 &
June 15
4:00 p.m.
Webinar

What will schools be like next year? Visioning for the Future of Education: A 3-part webinar series
Discussion Leader: Chris Mason, Ph.D., Executive Director Center for Educational Improvement

June 16
4:00 p.m.
Webinar

Trauma-Informed Yoga in Schools
Dana Asby, M.A., M.Ed., Director, Innovation and Research Support Center for Educational Improvement
Questions?

E-mail: newengland@mhttcnetwork.org

Presenter: Maria E. Restrepo-Toro, BNS,M.S. maria.restrepo-toro@yale.edu

To learn more about us https://mhttcnetwork.org/centers/new-england-mhttc/home