

What is Trauma?

Experiences that overwhelm an individual's capacity to cope.

"Trauma results from an event, series of events, or set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or threatening. And that has a lasting adverse effects on the individual's functioning and physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being." –SAMHSA (spell out), 2012

TYPES OF TRAUMA

1

Acute

A single traumatic event

- Car accident
- Witnessing or experiencing an act of community violence (shooting, stabbing, robbery)
- Natural disaster
- Terrorism
- Traumatic death

2

Chronic

Ongoing and/or repeated exposures to traumatic events

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect
- Abandonment
- Bullying
- Chaotic living conditions

3

Complex

Multiple and chronic exposures to traumatic events, most often interpersonal

4

Historical

Cumulative emotional and psychological wounding across generations, including the lifespan, which emanates from massive group trauma

- Racism
- Genocide
- Adverse neighborhood conditions

Screening for Trauma

Part A of this standard evidence-based tool is used to identify trauma exposure. Part B (not shown) identifies symptoms. The data you will see in this training was gathered using these tools.

Male ☐ Female ☐ Grade:.....

Part A: People may have stressful events happen to them. Read the list of stressful things below and circle YES for each of them that have EVER happened TO YOU. Circle NO if it has never happened to you.

Do not include things you may have only heard about from other people or from the TV, radio, news, or the movies. Only answer what has happened to you in real life. Some questions ask about what you SAW happen to someone else. And other questions ask about what actually happened to YOU.

SAMPLE:

a. Have you EVER gone to a basketball game? (Circle YES or NO)	Yes	No
---	-----	----

Have any of the following events EVER happened to you? (Circle Yes or No)

1. Have you been in a serious accident, where you could have been badly hurt or could have been killed?	Yes	No
2. Have you seen a serious accident, where someone could have been (or was) badly hurt or died?	Yes	No
3. Have you thought that you or someone you know would get badly hurt during a natural disaster such as a hurricane, flood, or earthquake?	Yes	No
4. Has anyone close to you been very sick or injured?	Yes	No
5. Has anyone close to you died?	Yes	No
6. Have you had a serious illness or injury, or had to be rushed to the hospital?	Yes	No
7. Have you had to be separated from your parent or someone you depend on for more than a few days when you didn't want to be?	Yes	No
8. Have you been attacked by a dog or other animal?	Yes	No
9. Has anyone told you they were going to hurt you?	Yes	No
10. Have you seen someone else being told they were going to be hurt?	Yes	No
11. Have you yourself been slapped, punched, or hit by someone?	Yes	No
12. Have you seen someone else being slapped, punched, or hit by someone?	Yes	No
13. Have you been beaten up?	Yes	No
14. Have you seen someone else getting beaten up?	Yes	No
15. Have you seen someone else being attacked or stabbed with a knife?	Yes	No
16. Have you seen someone pointing a real gun at someone else ?	Yes	No
17. Have you seen someone else being shot at or shot with a real gun?	Yes	No

Thank You



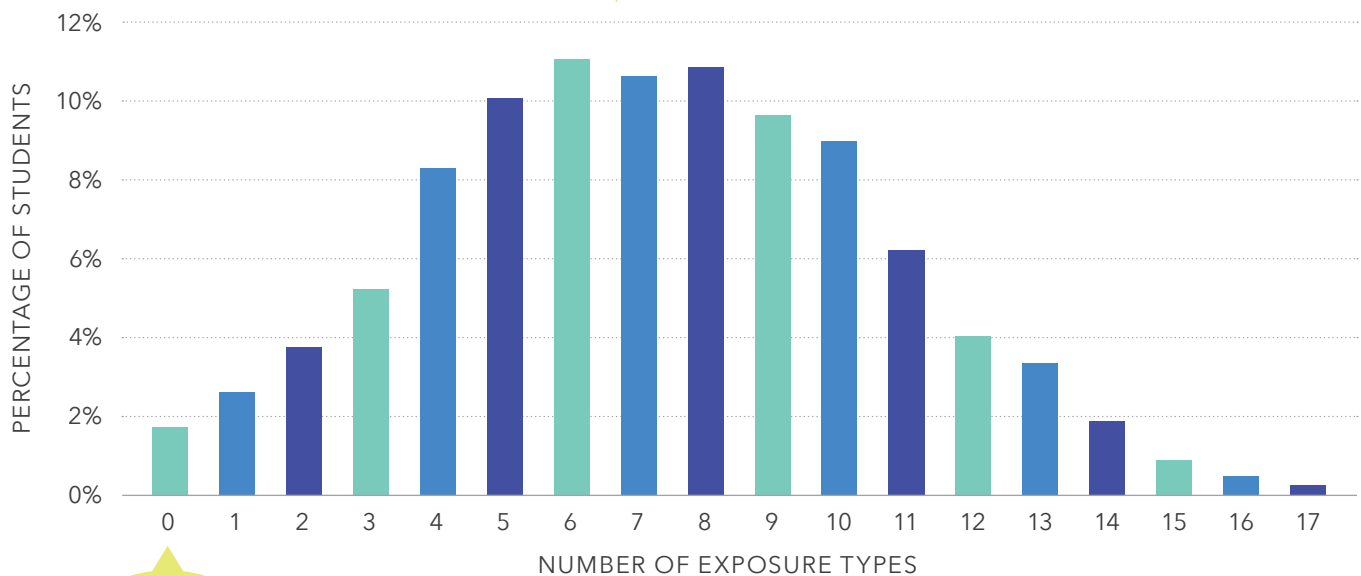
BEING TRAUMA INFORMED allows you to better understand your students and what supports they need which, in turn, makes your teaching more effective.

Students' Trauma Exposure

Traumatic Exposure Among Students

Data from nearly 3,000 students from Providence and Central Falls elementary and middle schools

On average, students were exposed to over **7 different types** of trauma.



Less than **2% of students** haven't had any exposure.



Nationally, **1 out of 4** school-aged children have experienced a traumatic event.

OVERVIEW OF EXPOSURE TYPES

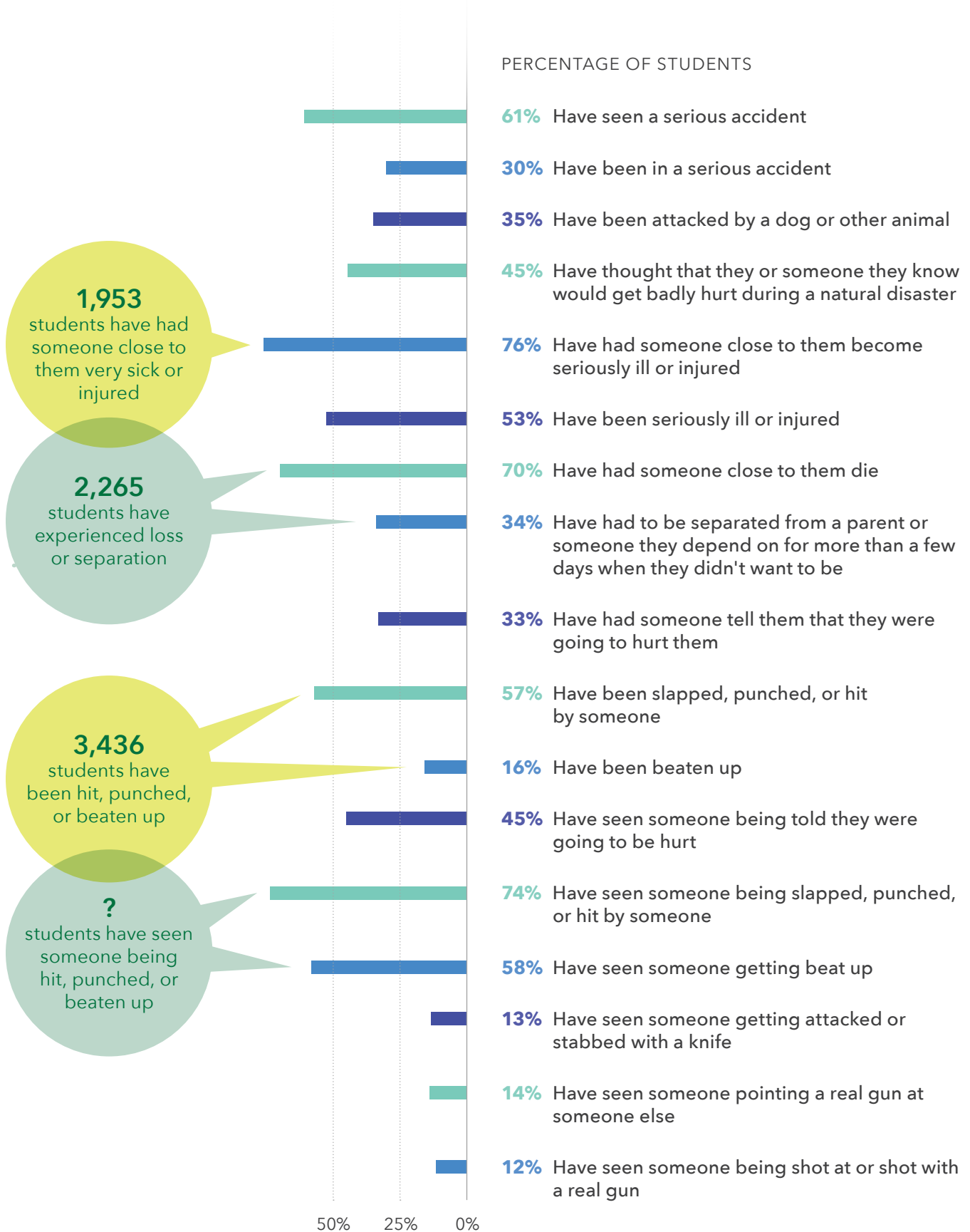
78%
Separation and Loss

86%
Fight Culture

45%
Natural Disaster

Types of Traumatic Exposure









Details from the same group of students



Impacts of Trauma

ERIK ERIKSON'S Stages of Psychosocial Development

Since the stages build on one another, trauma at a young age can affect the ability to successfully navigate later stages.

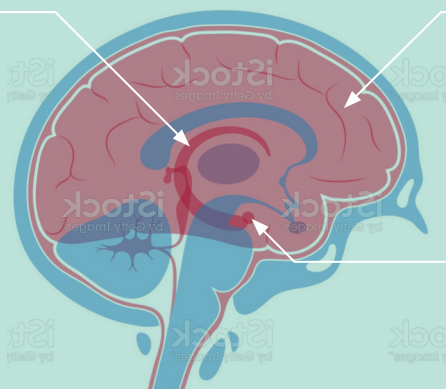
	TYPICAL		TRAUMA
MATURITY	ego integrity		despair
MIDDLE ADULthood	generativity		stagnation
YOUNG ADULthOOD	intimacy		isolation
ADOLESCENCE	identity		role confusion
SCHOOL AGE	industry		inferiority
PRESCHOOL	initiative		guilt
EARLY CHILDHOOD	autonomy		shame / doubt
INFANCY	trust		mistrust

IMPACTS ON THE BRAIN

Hippocampus

major role in memory and mood

TOXIC STRESS: impairment in understanding and emotion



Prefrontal Cortex

usually a check to the amygdala

TOXIC STRESS: loss of neurons, less able to function

Amygdala

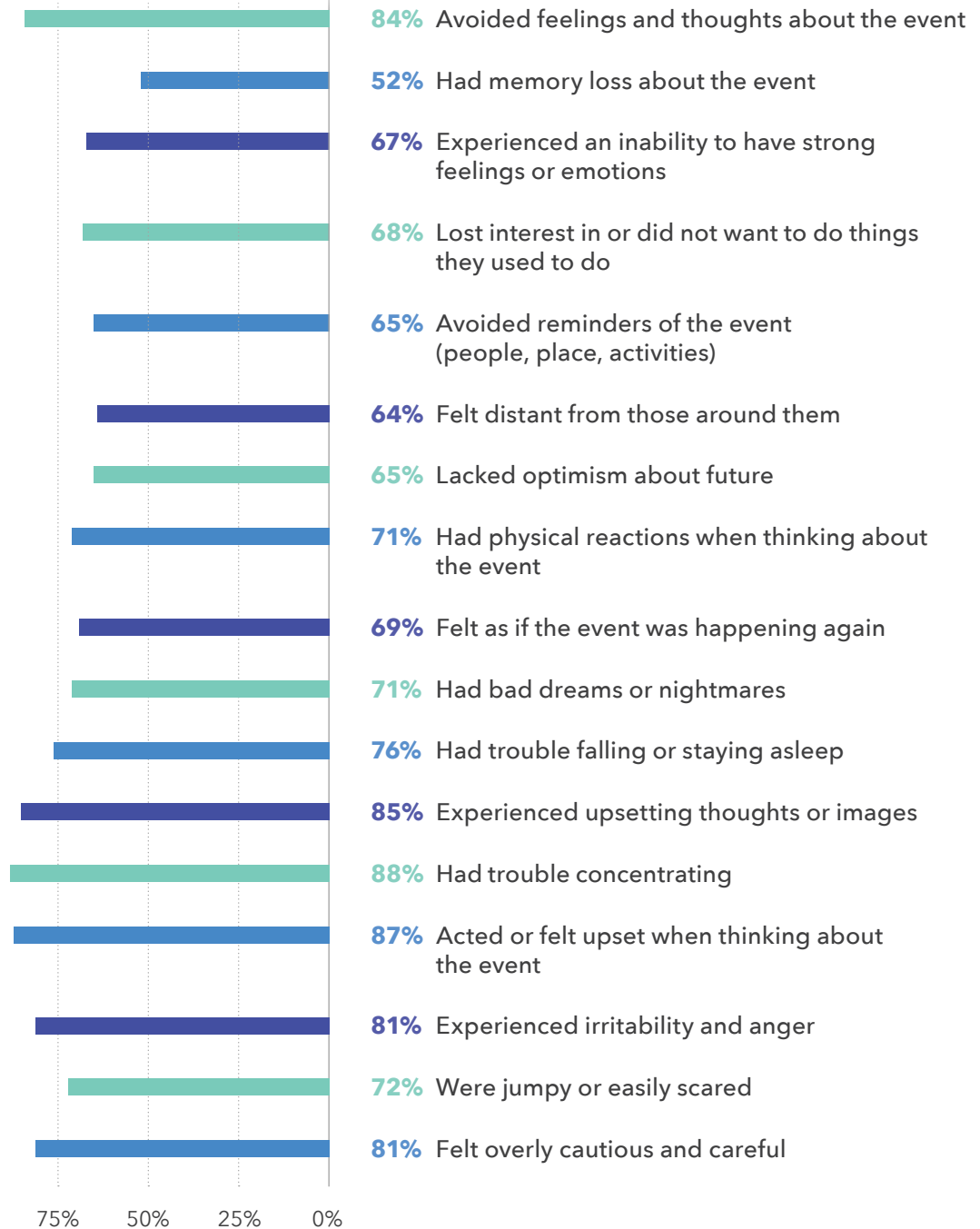
activates the stress response

TOXIC STRESS: enlargement

Trauma Symptoms

A subset of 550 students - who were being treated for trauma - were asked if they'd experienced any trauma symptoms in the past two weeks

PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS



Symptoms you may see in your classroom



WOULD YOU be able to notice these symptoms in the classroom? How might you recognize a response to trauma in one of your students?

Implications for Learning



Trauma affects the communication between the brain's left and right hemispheres. When the cognitive and the emotional sides of the brain aren't well integrated, the brain has difficulty communicating that the brain and body are safe.

Cognitive Impacts

- Reduced ability to concentrate, memorize and engage
- Less experience with executive functioning
- Decreased reading ability
- Decreased communication skills
- Feelings of frustration with school
- Increased absenteeism
- Increased Special Education referrals

Emotional Impacts

- Difficulty with self regulation
- Difficulty describing feelings
- Difficulty communicating wishes and desires
- Often feel self critical, anxious, worried, ashamed and rarely experience joy
- Difficulty forming relationships
- Negative worldview

Effects on Concentration

Students being treated for trauma were asked "How often have you had **trouble concentrating** in the last two weeks?" and they responded:

30%
almost
always



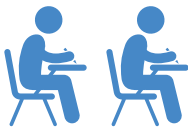
25%
half the
time



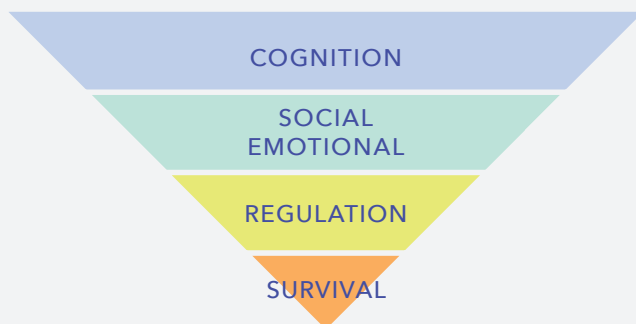
34%
once in
a while



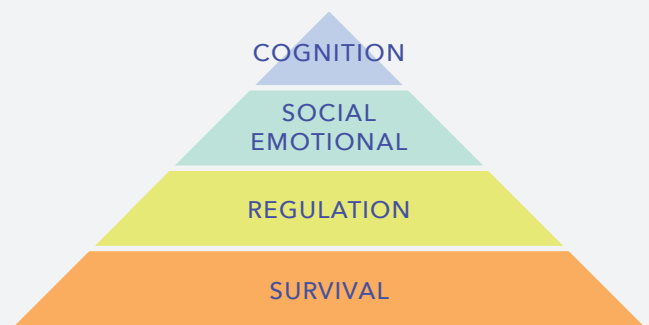
11%
not
at all



WHAT have your students lived experiences caused their brains to focus on? What coping mechanism have they developed? What would allow for future learning?



Typical Development



Developmental Trauma

Classroom Symptoms



Fight or Flight Response

A hyperaroused student may appear:

- Inattentive
- Not able to follow directions
- Argumentative
- Aggressive
- Behavioral outbursts
- Rapid speech

Freeze Response

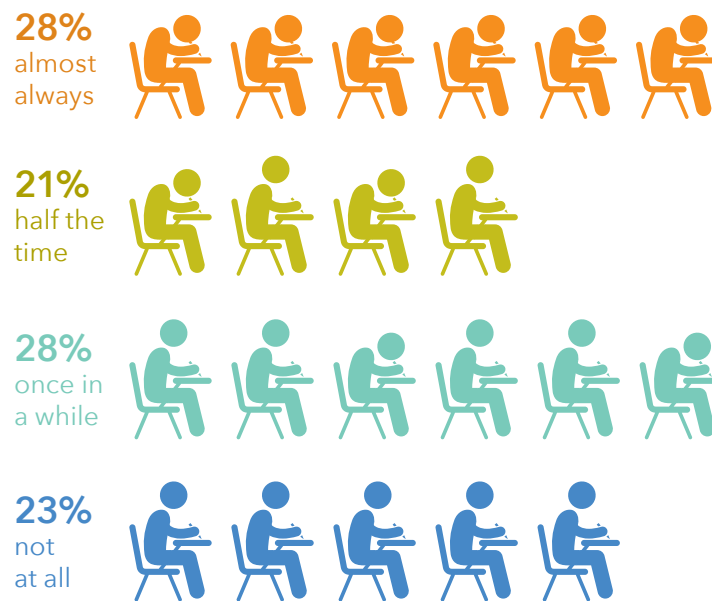
A dissociative and under-aroused student may appear:

- Day dreaming
- Spacing out
- Shutting down
- Depression
- Withdrawal
- Perfectionism
- Hypervigilance
(aware of everything in the room)

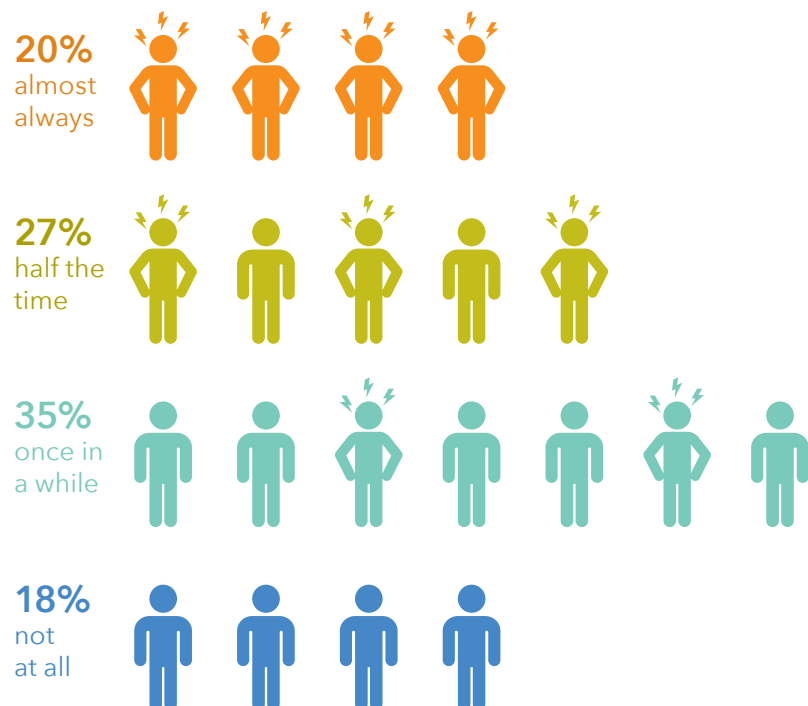


A Closer Look at Symptoms in the Classroom

Students being treated for trauma were asked "How often have you had trouble **falling or staying asleep** in the last two weeks?" and they responded:



When asked "How often have you been **feeling irritable** or having fits of anger in the last two weeks?" they responded:



FOCUS ON THE BASICS by responding to behavior with inquiry rather than accusation, building relationships with students, and inquiring about absences.