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**Judge from Massachusetts**

*"I am seeing younger and younger youth coming before my bench, with no parent(s) present in my court room. We as a nation are not protecting our children. We are protecting the rights of their parents to damage their children without consequences. We as a nation are paying a high price. No accountability for damaging a child! No active early interventions or preventions for our children! As a judge, I am sentencing our damaged youth to prison. I watch them leave my court room handcuffed, alone, and without family or other support! "*

This was 18 years ago.  
What has changed?

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**Zero-tolerance policies...aren't working**



- Out-of-School Suspensions and Expulsions are given for mundane and non-violent infractions.
- Two decades, Study shows no evidence that removing students from school, improves school safety or student behavior.

New York (2001) 29,000 student suspensions – (2011) 71,000 student suspensions

Pipeline to Prison...Minority and Poverty students disproportionately suspended from school ...leads to prison

Suspended Education  
Southern Poverty Law Center, 2010  
SAPL 2008, Smith & Rowlett

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A common belief...all students are to



- Attend school daily
- Focus on academics
- Be motivated & engaged
- Behave appropriately
- Hand in their homework
- Pass all of their classes

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Dr. John Medina, author of *Brain Rules*



- Toxic stress impacts the brain's ability to learn.
- The brain is flooded with the chemical "*Cortisol*". Cortisol is for any time that we find ourselves in a "*Fight, Flight, or Freeze*."
- The brain cannot physiologically take in new knowledge or problem-solve.

www.Its-out-of-the-students-control.com

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Students that come to school with toxic stress...



- Academic learning is not always a priority
- Students who are not connected to a "caring adult relationship" will begin to disengage and fade away
- These are the very students we mislabel and push out of our school system
- Many of these students dropout quietly and unnoticed

—Wehrlage & Rutter

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### How Trauma Impacts School Performance

- Lower GPA
- Higher rate of school absences
- Increased drop-out rate
- Higher suspensions and expulsions
- Performing below grade level in Reading.
- Impacts memory
- Reduces ability to focus and organize
- Hinders processing of information, some can not do abstract concepts...state math standard
- Interferes with problem solving and fitting into the traditional classroom.

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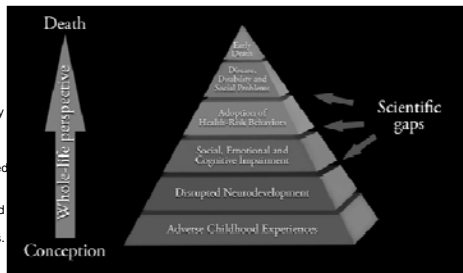
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### ACE Study: a paradigm shift

The ACE Study takes a whole-life perspective, as indicated on the orange arrow leading from conception to death. By working within this framework, the ACE Study began to progressively uncover how adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) are strongly related to development and prevalence of risk factors for disease and health and social well-being throughout their life spans.




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### What are the 10 Adverse Childhood Experiences?

1. Child sexual abuse
2. Child emotional abuse
3. Physical neglect
4. Emotional neglect
5. Mentally ill, depressed or suicidal person in the home
6. Drug-addicted or alcoholic family member
7. Witnessing domestic violence against the mother
8. Loss of a parent to death or abandonment, including abandonment by divorce
9. Child physical abuse
10. Incarceration of any family member

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## Adverse Childhood Experiences

- The greatest single predictor for
  - Health
  - Attendance
  - Behavior
  - Academic failure/after special education.
- The relationship between academic achievement and health status appears much less related to income than to ACEs.



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## Lincoln High School

“Trauma Informed Model”

Implementation  
2010

Paradigm Shift  
Letting go of traditional practices

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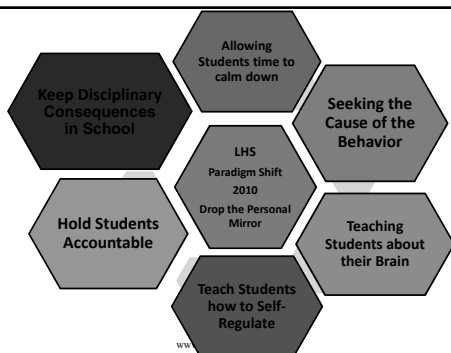
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Take the mirror away .



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Use a *trauma lens* to better understand a student's behavior

A shift in perspective from "What is wrong with this student?" to "What has this student been through?"



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Students that survive trauma and grow to be successful. Identify one single variable in their success. They were connected to a caring adult who believed in them and cared about them.



*Teachers were the most frequently endorsed adult that made a powerful impact on their direction in life.*

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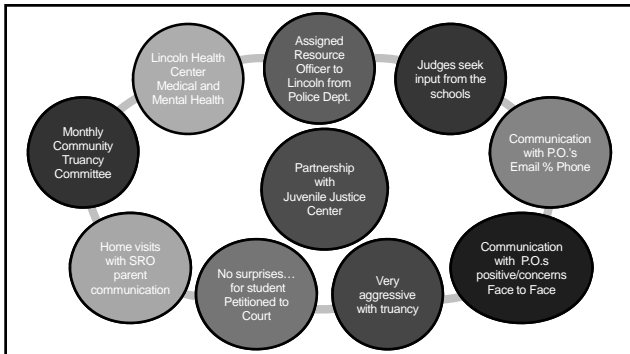
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Impact on school discipline and state assessments  
2009-2013

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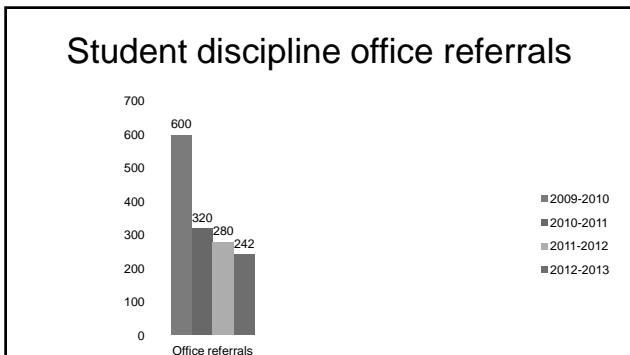
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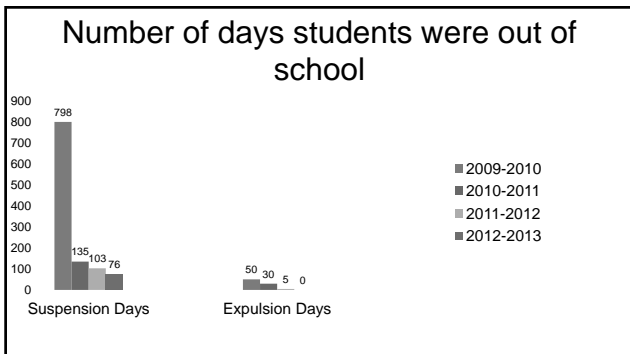
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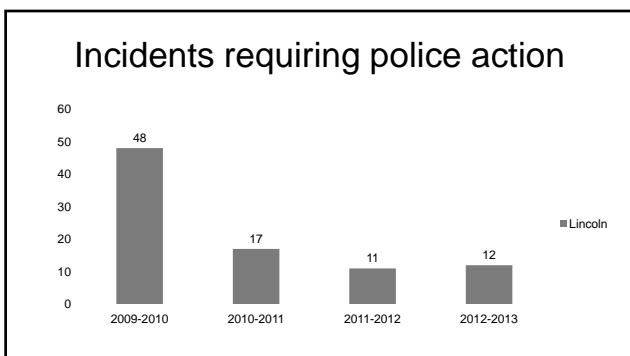
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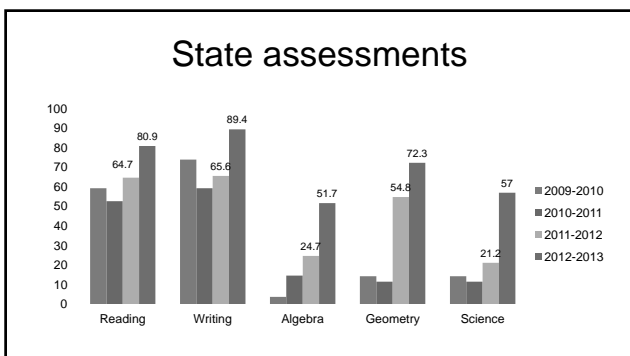
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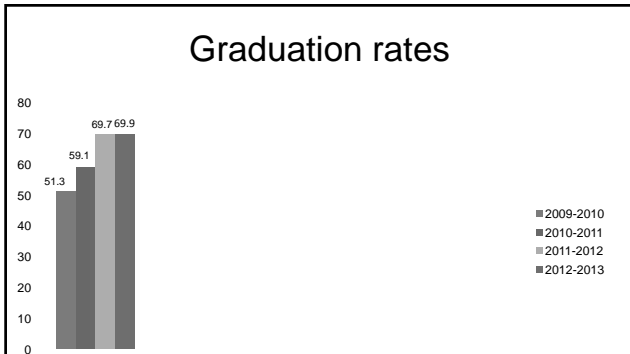
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What we cannot argue anymore is that there's nothing we can do...  
We can change our approach.  
18 years from now...what will we look like?

Paul Tough, How Children Succeed

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### Children's Resilience Initiative

Empowering community understanding of the forces that shape us and our children

Website: [www.resiliencetrumpsaces.org](http://www.resiliencetrumpsaces.org)

Children's Resilience Initiative

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