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TRAUMA INTERVENTION IN THE AFTERMATH OF SCHOOL SHOOTINGS

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About Me

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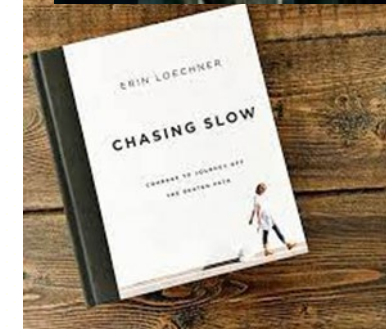
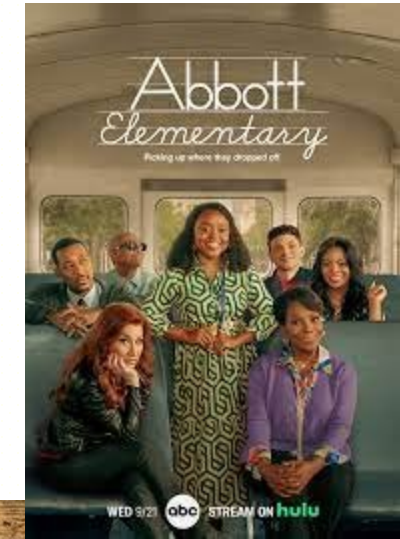
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Overview

- Introduction and Overview
- What are the experiences of School Shooting Survivors?
- What resources are public schools offering?
- Trauma-Informed Care in the Aftermath of School Shootings
- Summary and Conclusions
- Questions and Discussion



The background of the slide is a blurred photograph of a library. In the foreground, the spines of several books are visible, with one book in sharp focus on the left. The background shows rows of bookshelves filled with books, creating a sense of depth and a scholarly atmosphere.

Major Concepts Defined



Major Concepts

- Schools: K-12 Public Schools in the United States (U.S.)
- School Shooting: a form of mass shooting involving an armed attack on an education institution, such as a school which includes incidents where students and/or adults are the perpetrators
- Violence: actual, attempted, witnessed or threatened fight or assault
- Trauma: a deeply distressing or disturbing experience
- Trauma intervention: trauma-specific interventions or treatments that are designed specifically to address the consequences of trauma and to facilitate healing

Malcolm Gladwell Discusses School Shootings





Relevance and Significance

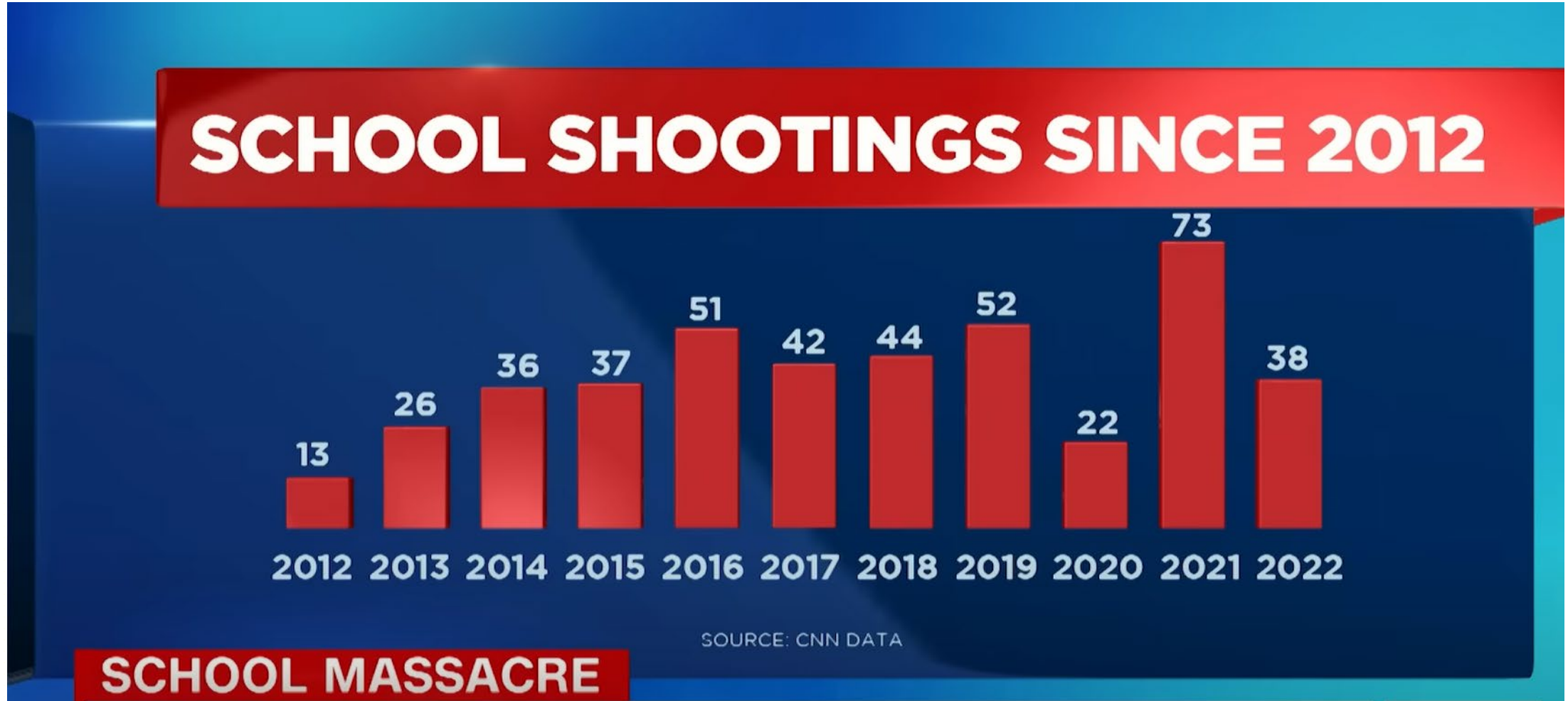
- National Center for Injury Prevention and Control identified school violence as a public health problem (Center for Disease and Control, 2016).
- Exposure to school violence can lead substance abuse, emotional disturbances and disorders, and suicide (Center for Disease and Control, 2016; Love & Cobb, 2012; Mendelson, Tandon, O'Brennan, Leaf, & Ialongo, 2015).
- United States (U.S.) is now the leading industrialized nation in the world for school shooting occurrences (Grabow & Rose, 2018).



School Shootings 2008 - 2022



School Shootings 2012 - 2022



Source: CNN

The background of the slide is a photograph of a library. In the foreground, the spines of several books are visible, slightly out of focus. In the background, rows of bookshelves filled with books stretch into the distance, also blurred. The lighting is soft and natural, creating a calm and scholarly atmosphere.

What are the experiences of school shooting survivors?

A Phenomenological Overview of School Staff Perspectives

(Alexander & Harris, 2020)



Four Primary Themes



Perception of Support

- Emotional Support
- Community Support
- Tangible Support



Trauma Intervention

- Counseling
- Bonding Activities



Unintended Negative Consequences

- Teacher and Student Attrition
- Strained District Relationships



Barriers to Trauma Intervention

- Funding
- Training
- Time Constraints



Perception of Support



Perception of Support

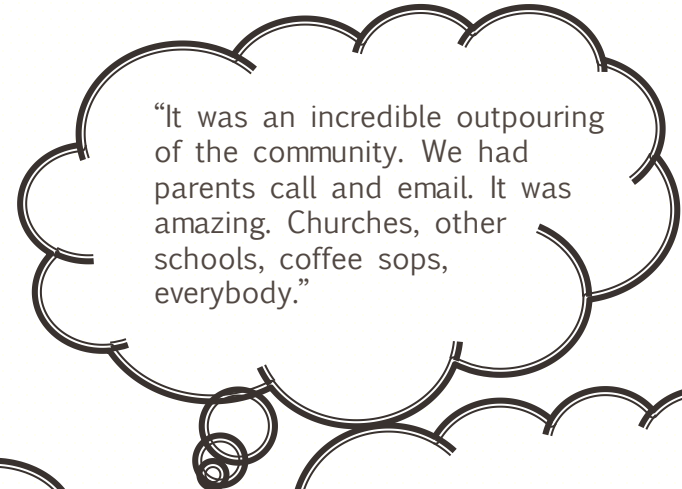
- Emotional Support
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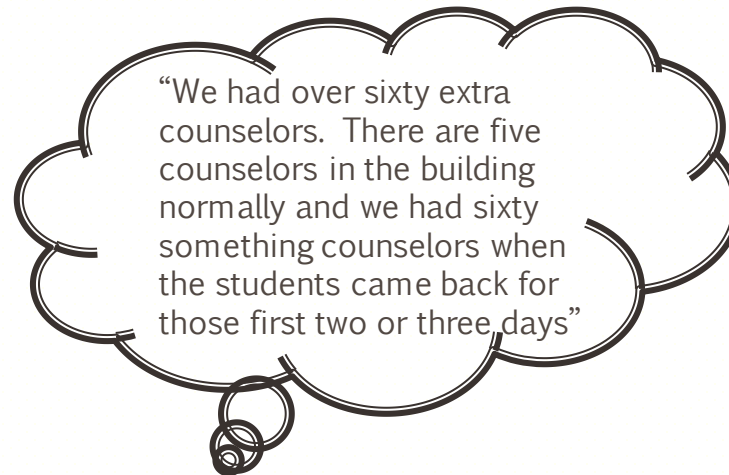
Perception of Support from School



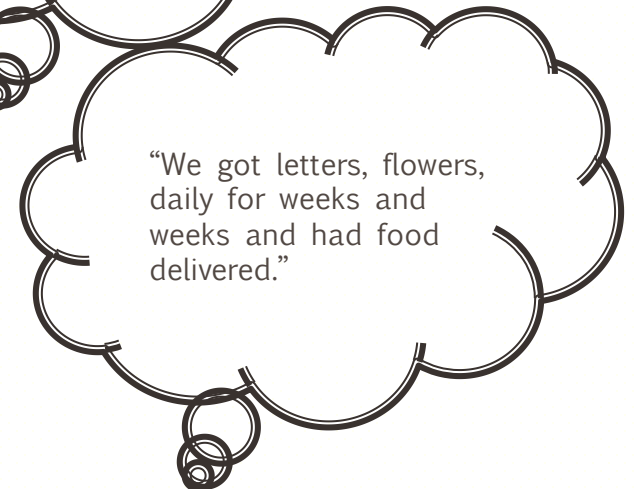
Positive Outlook on Healing Process



“It was an incredible outpouring of the community. We had parents call and email. It was amazing. Churches, other schools, coffee sops, everybody.”



“We had over sixty extra counselors. There are five counselors in the building normally and we had sixty something counselors when the students came back for those first two or three days”



“We got letters, flowers, daily for weeks and weeks and had food delivered.”



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Barriers to Trauma Intervention

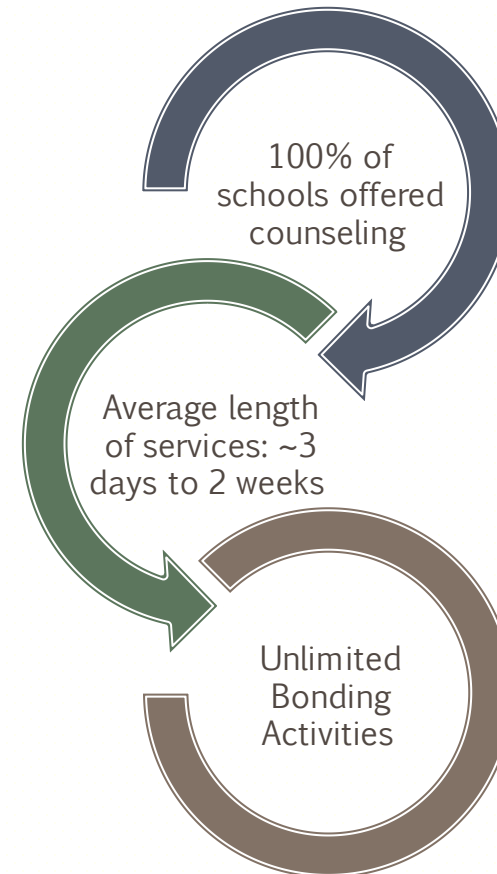
- Funding
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Trauma Intervention

Counseling
Bonding Activities

Trauma Intervention





Some of the murals that have gone up in Uvalde in memory of children who were killed at the mass shooting at Robb Elementary School.
Jake Morgan/TPR



Mourners stand during a candlelight vigil for the victims of Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School shooting in Parkland, Florida on Feb. 15, 2018. *Rhona Wise—AFP/Getty Images*

Bonding Activity Examples



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Barriers to Trauma Intervention

- Funding
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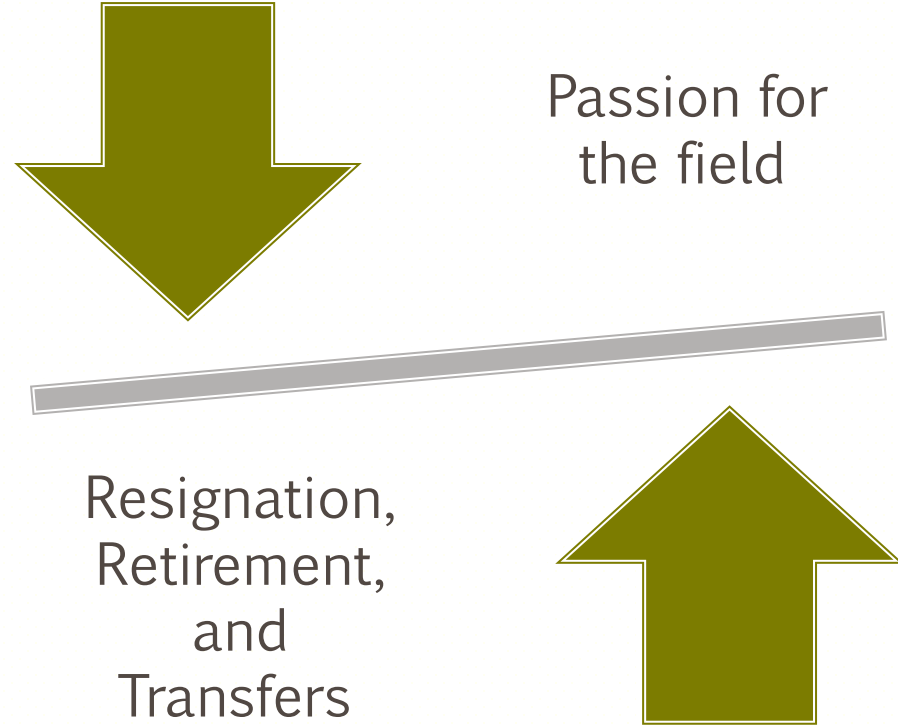


Unintended Negative Consequences



Unintended
Negative
Consequences

Teacher and
Student Attrition
Strained District
Relationships





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Barriers to Trauma Intervention

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Barriers to Trauma Intervention



Barriers to Trauma Intervention

- Funding
- Training
- Time Constraints

“Our district recently had to write a grant to get another counselor in the building to just work with the students who were close friends with the victims or the students who had a hard time coming back to school right away.”

“We need to build it into a schedule. If you don’t build it in its not going to happen. We’re just so slammed with the workload.”

“We didn’t have a plan in place. We were required to do an active survival training and they say don’t worry about what you’re going to do after just run and then figure out what you’re going to do after. I guess they are talking about have a better plan now but I don’t know what that plan is.”



What resources
are U.S. public
schools providing?

*Public School Trauma Intervention for
School Shootings: A National Survey of
School Leaders
(Alexander, 2021)*



Results

▪ Trauma Intervention/Crisis Plans

- 47.4% agreed or strongly agreed their school possessed a written trauma and/or crisis plan that describes procedures to be performed in the event of a school shooting
- 16.9% agreed or strongly agreed that their school had a plan that describes trauma intervention strategies to be used in the event of a school shooting
- Approximately 83% were unsure or disagreed that their school's plan included trauma intervention strategies that can be used following a school shooting

▪ Trauma Intervention Strategies in Public Schools


- 86.1% agreed that their school possesses a mental health counselor on campus
- Two themes for open-ended survey question:
 - Prevention Strategies
 - Peer mentoring
 - Anti-bullying policies and programs
 - Intervention Strategies
 - Mental health services
 - Restorative Circles



Crisis/Trauma Intervention Plans

*Instances of School Shootings are
Down, Now What? : A Review of
Trauma Frameworks for Public School
Use*

Alexander (2022)



Major Trauma Intervention Concerns after a School Shooting



Length of Time Services are Provided



Unprepared Staff and/or Service Providers



Lack of spiritual care/meaning-making experiences



Three Trauma Frameworks

Long Term Care: Framework for Psychosocial Support

- **Concern:** Acute Care only
- Beneficial Supports/Services:
 - Individual and Group Counseling
 - Support groups
 - Community-led initiatives (e.g., vigils, painting murals)
 - School-led projects and assemblies
 - Mentors
 - Support persons
 - Trauma Training

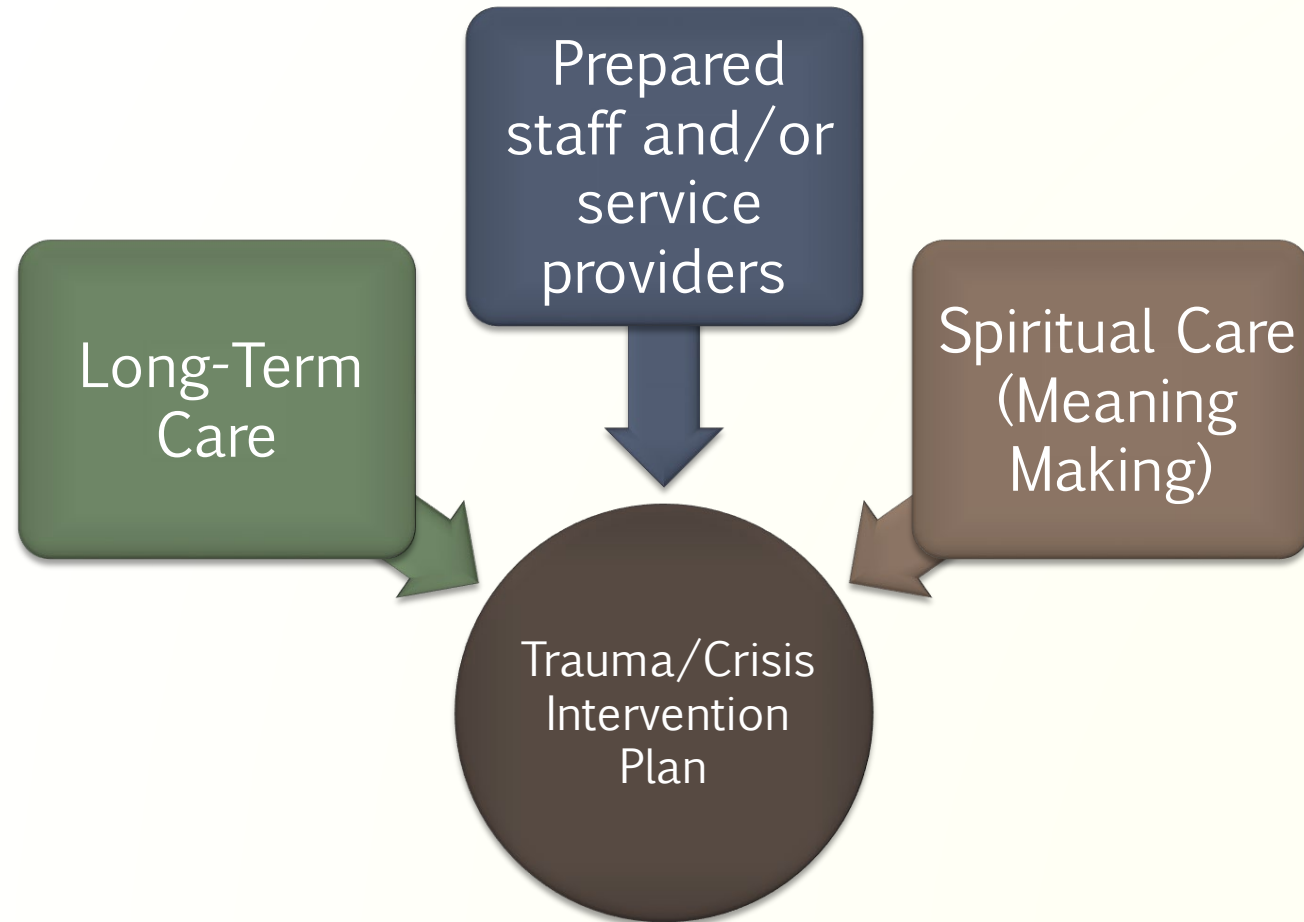
Prepared Staff: Psychological First Aid Framework

- **Concern:** Lack of prepared staff and/or service providers
- School staff and faculty are looked to as change agents in school shooting scenarios
- In 27% of school shooting cases, the shooter surrenders to administrators, faculty, or school staff (Lee, 2013)

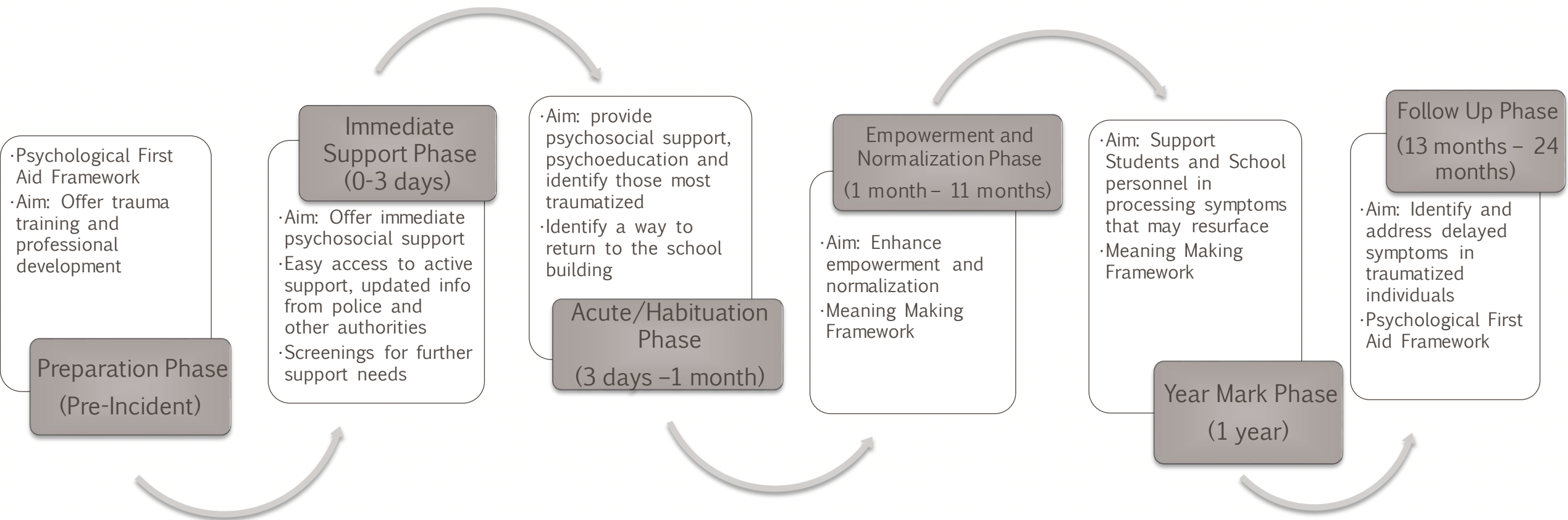
Spiritual Care: Meaning Making Framework

- **Concern:** Spiritual care and needs are often not addressed following school shootings
- Spiritual needs following a school shooting are prevalent among survivors.
- Trauma, loss, and grief can threaten one's beliefs about good and evil, the nature of their God, and place in the world

Combined Trauma Framework Approach



School Crisis Intervention Plan for Trauma (SCRIPT): Combined Framework Approach





Resources and Guidance



Psychological First Aid Trainings

- National Child Traumatic Stress Network
<https://learn.nctsn.org/course/index.php?categoryid=11>
 - Psychological First Aid (PFA) Online (Offered in English and Spanish)
 - Skills for Psychological Recovery (SPR) Online (Offered in English and Spanish)
- Johns Hopkins Center for Public Health Preparedness
<https://www.jhsph.edu/research/centers-and-institutes/johns-hopkins-center-for-public-health-preparedness/training/online/mental-health-trainings.html>
 - Mental Health Preparedness - Psychological First Aid



School Shooting Resources

- [Parent Guidelines for Helping Youth after the Recent Shooting](#)
- [Age-Related Reactions to a Traumatic Event](#)
- [Helping Youth Coping with 4th of July Celebrations after a Shooting](#)
- [Assisting Parents/Caregivers in Coping with Collective Trauma](#)
- [Coping after Mass Violence](#)
- [For Teens: Coping after Mass Violence](#)
- [Creating School Active Shooter/Intruder Drills](#)
- [Parent Guidelines for Helping Youth After Mass Violence Attack](#)
- [Psychological Impact of Mass Violence](#)
- [Tip Sheet for Youth Talking to Journalists after Mass Violence](#)
- [**Psychological First Aid for Schools \(PFA-S\) Field Operations Guide](#)



School Shooting Resources

- [Talking to Children about the Shooting](#)
- [Helping Youth after Community Trauma](#)
- [**Psychological First Aid for Schools \(PFA-S\) Field Operations Guide Recommendations for School Staff](#)
- [Helping School-Age Children with Traumatic Grief: Tips for Caregivers](#)
- [Helping Teens with Traumatic Grief: Tips for Caregivers](#)
- [Helping Young Children with Traumatic Grief: Tips for Caregivers](#)
- [**Providing Psychological First Aid: Health-Related Professionals](#)
- [**Providing Psychological First Aid: Principals and Administrators](#)
- [**Providing Psychological First Aid: Support Staff](#)
- [**Providing Psychological First Aid: Teachers](#)
- [Guiding Adults in Talking to Children about Death and Attending Services](#)



School Shooting Resources

- [Parent Guidelines for Helping Youth After Mass Violence](#)
- [Teaching Guidelines for Helping Students after Mass Violence](#)
- [Tips for Parents on Media Coverage of a Shooting](#)
- [**Psychological First Aid for Schools](#)
- [PFA Mobile](#)
- [PFA: Parent Tips for Helping Adolescents](#)
- [PFA: Parent Tips for Helping Infants and Toddlers after Disasters](#)
- [PFA: Parent Tips for Helping Preschool-Age Children after Disasters](#)
- [PFA: Parent Tips for Helping School-Age Children after Disasters](#)
- [Psychological First Aid \(PFA\): Field Operations Guide 2nd Edition](#)
- [Creating Supportive Environments When Scary Things Happen](#)



School Shooting Resources

- [Talking to Children When Scary Things Happen](#)
- [Talking to Teens When Violence Happens](#)
- [Restoring a Sense of Safety in the Aftermath of a Shooting: Tips for Parents and Professionals](#)
- [After a Crisis: Helping Young Children Heal](#)



Summary and Conclusions

- Trauma intervention in public schools may not be widely practiced.
- Data suggests that there are not consistent policies, cultures, and values among public schools for trauma intervention related to school shootings.
- Findings suggest need for improved:
 - Education of public-school employees on schools' trauma plans
 - Education on how to engage in trauma intervention strategies
 - Access to support services in the event of a school shooting
 - Mental health services and support services

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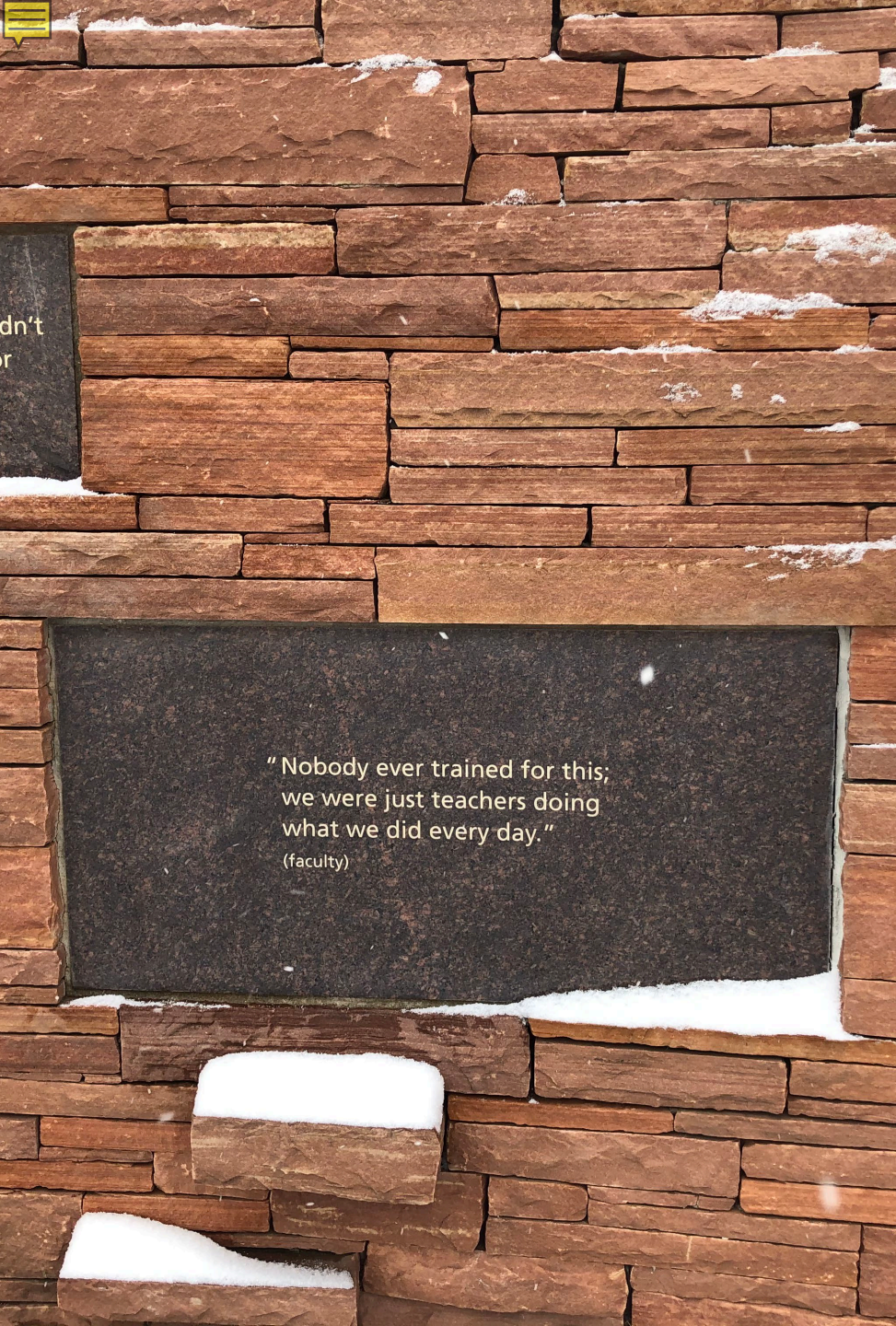
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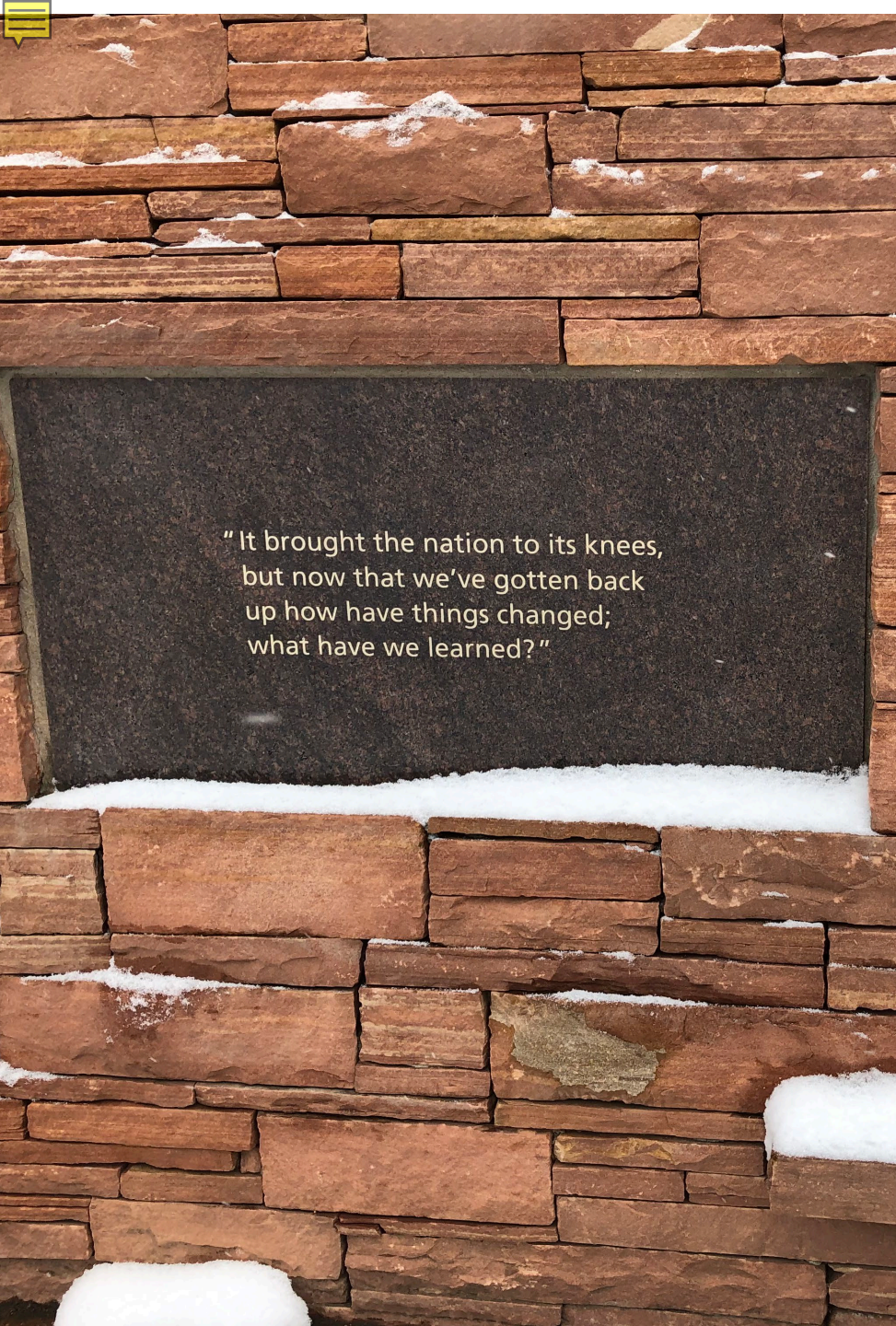
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A photograph of a brick wall with a dark plaque containing a quote. The quote is: "Nobody ever trained for this; we were just teachers doing what we did every day." (faculty). The wall is made of reddish-brown bricks, and there is some snow on the ground in front of it.

"Nobody ever trained for this;
we were just teachers doing
what we did every day."
(faculty)



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"A kid my age isn't supposed to go to that many funerals."

(student)



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Let's Unpack That...

Questions
& Comments?



Thank you!

