

Towards Intentionality in Civil Rights

Attending to Positive Mental Health of Students



**McDonald-Merrill Ketcham Memorial Lectureship and Award
for Excellence in Law and Medicine**

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Learning Objectives

- **Build awareness** of oppressive conditions in schools that compromise student's civil rights.
- **Reflect** on key practices to support positive mental health for students.



Turn & Talk: What is the biggest factor contributing to negative mental health in schools?



Socioeconomics

COVID-19

Access to Mental Health Services

State & District Policies

Family Structure & Support Level

Cascading and Collective Trauma: Root Causes Of Negative Mental Health in Schools



COVID Pandemic



Economic Recession




Race-Based Violence Against BIPOC and Religious Communities



Extreme Weather Catastrophic Events

School-Based Trauma



Students can be traumatized in school by oppressive policies, structures, and instructional and curricular practices, and everyday interactions.

(Gaffney, 2019; Kumashiro, 2015)

Oppressive Conditions in Schools

Routine microaggressions and cultural appropriation toward students of Color; happens under the guise of free speech or for the edification of other students, than their white peers (McGee & Stovall, 2015).

Black students are more likely to be disciplined for harassment however, Black students are disproportionately likely to be victims of harassment or bullying in school on the basis on their race, sex or disability than their white peers (U.S. Department of Education, 2018).

Muslim high school students” who experience greater frequency and severity of hassles at school report higher levels of psychological distress” (Oberoi & Trickett, 2018, p. 344).

Students of Color who identify as LGBTQ+ experienced higher frequencies of victimization than white LGBTQ+ students, based on race/ethnicity (Kosciw et al., 2016) and 75 percent of transgender students felt unsafe at school because of their gender expression (Leadership Conference Education Fund, 2022)

Students of Color are more likely to attend school where more than 50% of teachers were absent for more than 10 days (U.S. Department of Education, 2016).

Worldwide, 130 million girls are out of school and 60 million girls are sexually assaulted on their way to or at school every year (Okunola, 2023).

Asset-Based Solutions

De-pathologizing traumatic stress reactions helps us focus on the system.

Instead of praising people for being 'resilient', change the systems that are making them vulnerable.

Muna Abdi

(Nusslock,& Farah, 2022)

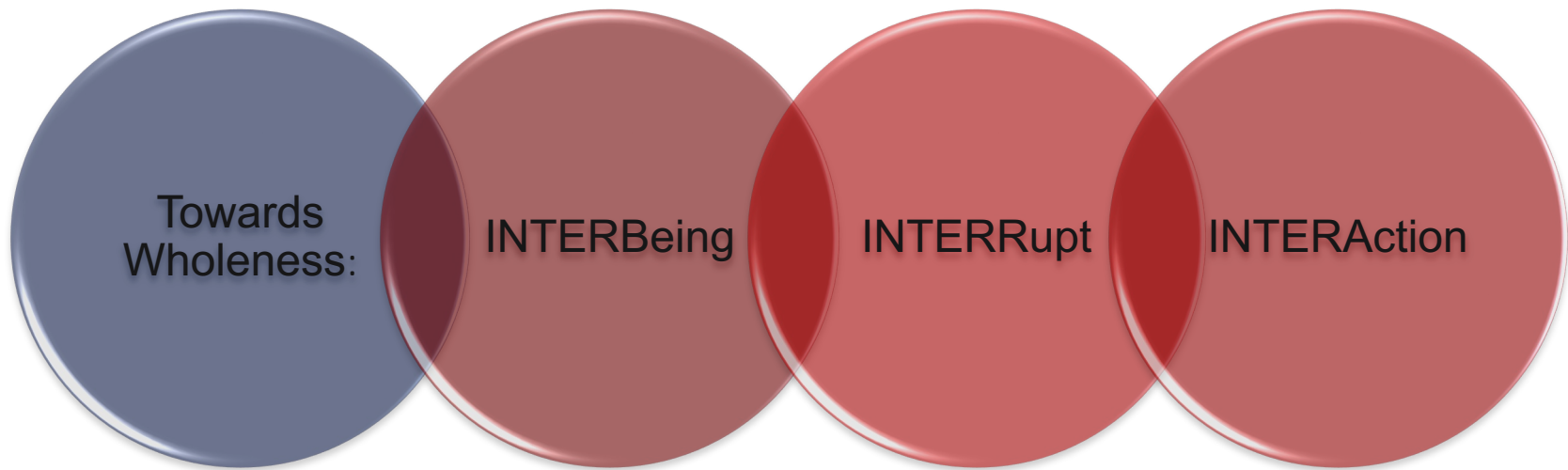
Pedagogies of Wholeness Defined

Pedagogies of Wholeness are a form of asset pedagogies that provide direct responses to the cumulative and collective traumas both educators and students are experiencing both in and outside the classroom. It is a way of being, relating, learning, teaching, and knowing that embraces our wholeness—of bodymindspirit, of our collective bodies in the classroom and beyond, and the inextricable connection between the past, present, and future.



(Cariaga, 2018; Kyser et al., 2022)

Framework of Wholeness



(Rendón, 2012; Kyser, et al., 2022)

The Connection: Students' Mental Health and Civil Rights' Law

By practicing pedagogies of wholeness, we can realize students' civil rights and promote positive mental health in schools

Engage in action, policy, practice, resource or language that dismantles the production of a racial or identity hierarchies

Educate school community about discrimination consequences in school: review harassment and discipline policies (Hasse et al., 2019)

Model inclusive behavior, language, and expectations (Ragozzino & O'Brien, 2009)

Implement holistic approaches which recognize and address the complex identities and experiences that shape each individual (Hasse, et al., 2019)

Further Reading

Equity Dispatch
Special Issue

Did You Know | Why It Matters | For Equity Now

Centering BodyMindSpirit in Equitable Education: Towards Pedagogies of Wholeness

[Graphic image description: Four overlapping circles representing the MAP Center's Pedagogical Framework of Wholeness. Each circle has a phrase or word in it, from left to right: Towards Wholeness; INTERBeing; INTERRupt; and INTERAction.]

[Educators] who embrace the challenge of self-actualization will be better able to create pedagogical practices that engage students, providing them with ways of knowing that enhance their capacity to live fully and deeply.

- hooks, 1994, p. 22



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Thank you for your participation!

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