

# Traumatized Child:

## The Effects of Stress, Trauma and Violence on Student Learning

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### Introduction

Welcome to *Traumatized Child: The Effects of Stress, Trauma and Violence on Student Learning*, an interactive computer-based instruction (CBI) course, designed to help you identify and effectively teach students affected by stress, trauma and/or violence. This course teaches you to recognize the signs of stress, trauma or violence in students. It also discusses the specific factors that exist in families and communities where stress and violence are common. A major emphasis in this course is on helping the participant understand the special learning needs of the student who is experiencing stress, trauma or violence in his/her life and how to meet his/her needs in the regular classroom. Working with parents and community agencies is also emphasized.

This computer-based instruction course is a self-supporting program that provides instruction, structured practice and evaluation all on your home or school computer. Information on installation and technical support can be found, and will be covered in detail, in the User Guide section of your computer software.

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### Course Materials

*Traumatized Children: The Effects of Stress, Trauma and Violence on Student Learning (software package)*

Author: Joan S. Halverstadt, M.Ed., School Counselor

Publisher: Virtual Education Software, inc. © 2004

**There is a \$25 replacement fee for CD-roms.**

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### Academic Integrity Statement

The structure and format of most distance-learning courses presume a high level of personal and academic integrity in completion and submission of coursework. Individuals enrolled in a CBI distance-learning course are expected to adhere to the following standards of academic conduct.

#### Academic Work

Academic work submitted by the individual (such as papers, assignments, reports, tests) shall be the student's own work or appropriately attributed, in part or in whole, to its correct source. Submission of commercially prepared (or group prepared) materials as if they are one's own work is unacceptable.

#### Aiding Honesty in Others

The individual will encourage honesty in others by refraining from providing materials or information to another person with knowledge that these materials or information will be used improperly.

***Violations of these academic standards may result in the assignment of a failing grade and subsequent loss of credit for the course.***

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## Level of Application

This course is designed to be an informational course with application to educational settings. The intervention strategies are designed to be used for the remediation of students experiencing stress, trauma, or exposure to violence, ranging in age from approximately three to eighteen years. Some alterations may be needed if working with specific populations such as gifted, ESL or special education.

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## Course Objectives

- 1) To understand the educator's role in supporting and accommodating students who have special learning needs due to exposure to stress, trauma or violence in their lives
  - 2) To understand the educator's role in protecting and supporting vulnerable students
  - 3) To recognize the symptoms of stress, trauma and violence
  - 4) To understand how stress, trauma or violence affects brain development and learning
  - 5) To understand the causes of stress, trauma and violence in families and society
  - 6) To understand the special learning needs these students bring to the classroom
  - 7) To gain techniques for supporting students and families affected by stress, trauma or violence
  - 8) To learn intervention techniques applicable to the classroom setting
  - 9) To gain a wider knowledge of available outside resources and support systems
  - 10) To understand the educator's role in the intervention and prevention of violence
  - 11) To explore violence prevention resources and curricula
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## Course Description

This course is designed to help classroom teachers, school counselors and other educational personnel gain strategies to reach and teach students who have been affected by stress, trauma and/or violence. Participants will learn the signs and symptoms of stress and trauma. Participants will explore how stress, violence and trauma affect a student's learning, cognitive brain development and social-emotional development. The short- and long-term consequences of being exposed to stress, trauma or violence, as well as the social and family causes, will be reviewed. Participants will learn the dynamics of domestic violence and community violence. The educator's role in the intervention and prevention of violence will be discussed.

The course is divided into four chapters. Each chapter discusses a particular topic of stress, trauma or violence. There will be numerous "checkpoint" questions inserted throughout the reading, which are designed to help students review the content and apply it to their own educational setting. The chapters are sequential and should be completed in the order in which they are presented. At the completion of each chapter, there will be an examination covering the material. Students must complete the examination before proceeding to the next chapter. In some of the chapter examinations, questions will involve case studies to provide further practice in the application of knowledge. This sequential approach to learning will help all participants gain a better understanding of what they have learned as they proceed through the course. This course is appropriate for educators seeking training in working with toddlers through adolescents, as well as those who work directly with families.

Although this course is a comprehensive presentation of the educational issues surrounding stress, trauma and violence, there certainly is a wealth of research. Many topics of which are not covered in the scope of this course. The instructor highly recommends that you augment your readings from this course with further research to gain a fuller understanding of the complexities of this subject. However, the material presented in this course will give you a broader understanding of the topics of stress, violence and trauma. It will also give you information to apply directly to your work with students in the classroom and community.

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## Student Expectations

As a student you will be expected to:

- Complete all four chapters covering *The Effects of Stress & Trauma on Student Learning*, showing a competent understanding of the material presented.
- Complete all four chapter examinations, showing a competent understanding of the material presented.

- Complete a review of any chapter on which your examination score was below 70%.
  - Retake any chapter examination, after completing an information review, to increase that final examination score to a minimum of 70% (**maximum of 3 attempts**).
  - Complete all course journal article and essay writing assignments with the minimum word count shown for each writing assignment.
  - Complete a course evaluation form at the end of the course.
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## **Chapter Topics**

### ***Chapter 1 - The Effects of Stress on Student Learning***

This chapter will discuss the effects of stress on student learning. The causes of stress and how children react to stress will be presented. School stress and coping skills for dealing with stress will also be discussed.

### ***Chapter 2 - The Effects of Trauma on Student Learning***

This chapter will discuss the effects of trauma on student learning. The way in which childhood trauma affects the brain development of young children will be a special focus. Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome in children will be discussed, as will strategies educators can use in the classroom to accommodate students who have special learning needs due to exposure to trauma.

### ***Chapter 3 - The Effects of Violence on Student Learning***

The focus of this chapter will be the dynamics of family violence, especially domestic violence, and violence in the school, including bullying, and violence in the community/culture, including violence in the media. The ways in which children react to family violence and how exposure to family violence influences a child's overall development are discussed, as are students' learning needs. The role of the teacher and the school in supporting families who are dealing with violence is emphasized. In addition, a discussion of strategies for how educators can include violence prevention curricula in their program and plans for dealing with school violence is included.

### ***Chapter 4 - The Effects of Family on Student Learning***

This chapter discusses family dynamics and structure including divorce, single parents and stepfamilies. Also covered will be teen parents, adoptive families and grandparents raising grandchildren.

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## **Examinations**

At the end of each course chapter, you will be expected to complete an examination designed to assess your knowledge. You may take these exams a total of three times. After your third attempt, each examination will lock and not allow further access. Your final grade for this course will be determined by calculating an average score of all chapter exams. This score will be printed on your final certificate. As this is a self-paced computerized instruction program, you may review course information as often as necessary. You will not be able to exit any examinations until you have answered all questions. If you try to exit the exam before you complete all questions, your information will be lost. You are expected to complete the entire exam in one sitting.

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## **Writing Assignments**

This course has two required writing components:

### **TO SAVE YOUR ESSAYS:**

**Macintosh:** When you select the question or article you wish to write on, simple text or text edit will automatically be launched. When you are finished, simply click on FILE>SAVE. **Do not select SAVE AS.** You do not need to give the document a name before saving. When you are done, select FILE>QUIT. **You must quit before you write another essay.**

**Windows:** When you select the question or article, notepad will automatically launch. When you are finished, click on FILE>SAVE. **Do not select SAVE AS.** You do not need to give the document a name before saving.

### ***1) Essay Requirement: Critical Thinking Questions***

There is a *critical thinking question* for each chapter or section. You will do research on the question and write a brief essay upon relating it to the course content (and your personal experiences when possible). To view the questions, click on ESSAY REQ, then on CRITICAL THINKING QUESTIONS. You will see the questions, one for each chapter or section. Click on the question you would like to work on; this will bring up a screen where you can enter your essay. You must write a minimum of 500 words per essay.

## 2) **Essay Requirement: Journal Articles**

This task requires you to write a review of three journal articles of your choice on a topic related to this course. You may choose journal articles outside the instructor's selected list, provided the content of the article relates to the course and you provide the journal name, volume, date and critical information so that the instructor can access and review that article. You must write a minimum of 200 words for each essay. To view the instructor list of journal articles and write your essays, click on ESSAY REQ. The VIEW ARTICLE button will lead you to a document, listing articles the instructor recommends for your research. In the dialog box below that, click on JOURNAL ARTICLE ASSIGNMENT; this will expand the folder, which contains links to the screens where you can write your reviews. When you are ready to stop, click on FILE>SAVE. You may go back at any point to edit your essays. For more information on the features of this assignment, please consult the HELP menu.

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### **Instructor Description**

Joan Halverstadt has been a school counselor since 1994 working with at-risk preschool and elementary aged students. Ms. Halverstadt has over thirty years of experience working in early childhood education with children and families, including working with children affected by family issues, abuse or trauma. She also teaches graduate education counseling and special education courses for teachers and counselors. She received her School Counseling Educational Staff Associate Degree from City University, her Masters in Education Degree from George Mason University, and her BA in Psychology and Elementary Education from Whitman College.

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### **Contacting the Instructor**

You may contact the instructor by emailing Joan at [joanh@virtualeduc.com](mailto:joanh@virtualeduc.com) or calling her at 509-891-7219, Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. PST. Phone messages will be answered within 24 hours. Phone conferences will be limited to ten minutes per student, per day, given that this is a self-paced instructional program. Please do not contact the instructor about technical problems, course glitches or other issues that involve the operation of the course.

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### **Technical Questions**

If you have questions or problems related to the operation of this course CD, please try everything twice. If the problem persists please check our support pages for FAQs and known issues at [www.virtualeduc.com](http://www.virtualeduc.com) and also the Help section on your course disk.

If you need personal assistance then email [support@virtualeduc.com](mailto:support@virtualeduc.com) or call (509) 891-7219. When contacting technical support, please know your course version number, it is printed on the CD label, your operating system and be seated in front of the computer at the time of your call.

### **Minimum Requirements**

#### *Macintosh Operating Systems*

Mac OS 9.x or OS 10.x, 256MB of RAM and 5MB of free hard disk space, 15" or larger color monitor with a minimum resolution of 800x600, CD driver 4x minimum speed and a printer connected to your computer.

#### *Windows Operating Systems*

Windows 2000, XP Home, Professional or newer, 256MB of RAM and 5MB of free hard disk space; 15" or larger color monitor with a minimum resolution of 800x600, CD driver 4x minimum speed and a printer connected to your computer.

Please contact VESi if you have any questions about the compatibility of these systems.

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**Refer to the addendum included with your software package regarding Grading Criteria, Course Completion Information, Items to be Submitted, and where to send your completed information.**

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