

# Collier County Public Schools

## HANDLE WITH CARE REFERENCE

### WHAT IS HANDLE WITH CARE?

**Handle with Care** is a just-in-time intervention situational to the student who has experienced a recent traumatic event.

### HOW ARE STAFF ALERTED?

Teachers assigned to the student are alerted by the principal/designee in two ways:

1. A **Handle with Care** icon will appear next to the student's name in Focus.
2. An email will be received.  
**Subject Line:** Handle with Care  
**Message:** ID# and student initials



### WHO ENTERS THE INFORMATION IN FOCUS?

The school psychologist or assistant principal selects **Handle with Care** and the type of trauma from the dropdown list.

### WHEN DO TEACHERS RECEIVE FURTHER INFORMATION?

The psychologist or assistant principal conducts a 5-minute stand-up meeting with the student's teachers to:

1. Verbally share need-to-know information about the recent traumatic event;
2. Review signs of distress and trauma sensitive interventions; and
3. Advise them of who to call for help if signs of distress worsen or persist after 2-3 weeks.

### WHAT ARE SOME COMMON SIGNS OF DISTRESS?

- Loss of appetite
- Frequent headaches/stomach aches
- Withdrawal
- Irritability/Easily startled
- Trouble focusing on classroom work
- Diminished interest in activities
- School Refusal
- Constant state of alert
- Inability to experience joy
- Outbursts of anger
- Regression in behavior
- Difficulty concentrating or remembering
- Recurring conflicts with peers
- Significant change in personality

### WHAT ARE TRAUMA SENSITIVE INTERVENTIONS?

Stress and trauma can make a student feel overwhelmed, unsafe, and unavailable to learn. But if the student has access to these key supports, then he or she will feel safer, more resilient, and more available to learn.

There is much evidence to suggest that creating a safe and supportive school environment, building secure attachments, and developing a student's non-cognitive skills can lead to student stability and success.

- Provide a physically welcoming and emotionally safe classroom
- Make positive emotional connections with students
- Develop predictable classroom routines with advance warning to students of any changes
- Use visual prompts for multi-step directions
- Incorporate "movement breaks" to help reframe the brain
- Provide frequent opportunities for students to demonstrate success
- Create opportunities for students to make choices
- Address behavior issues as learning opportunities and teachable moments
- Learn student triggers and how to avoid them
- Model emotional control and respectful relationships when communicating with students
- Ask students to repeat verbal instructions
- Use more written instructions

### WHO DO I CALL FOR HELP?

If signs of distress persist after 2-3 weeks, or sooner if signs worsen, contact your school counselor or school psychologist to request assistance.