

# UNDERSTANDING HOW TRAUMA SHOWS UP IN THE CLASSROOM (PT. 1)

Teaching with CLASS Podcast

Season 5 Episode 2

Guest: Megin Ruston



Welcome to the first of a two-part resource on the complexities of childhood trauma and its profound effects on young minds. Megin Ruston, a seasoned early childhood educator and adoptive mother, shares her wealth of knowledge and personal insights on this critical topic.

## + Understanding Trauma

- **Definition** by the National Institute of Mental Health: Childhood trauma is an emotionally painful or distressing experience that results in lasting mental or physical effects. This can include abuse, neglect, witnessing violence, loss of a loved one, or other distressing events.

## + Effects of Trauma on the Brain

- **Amygdala:** Responsible for the fight, flight, freeze, or fawn response.
- **Hippocampus:** Involved in memory formation.
- **Prefrontal Cortex:** Governs decision-making and rational thinking, which is still developing into young adulthood.

## + Stress Response and Chronic Stress

- How traumatic events trigger the release of stress hormones like cortisol, leading to a state of constant dysregulation if exposure to trauma is prolonged.

## + Regulation and Dysregulation

- **Regulated State:** Calm, capable of higher-order thinking, and ready to learn.
- **Dysregulated State:** Out of-sync sensory systems, elevated heart rate, fast breathing, tense muscles, and difficulty calming down or learning.

## + Role of Caregivers in Regulation

- **Other Regulation:** Infants and toddlers rely entirely on caregivers for regulation.
- **Co-Regulation:** Older toddlers begin to learn regulation with the support of caregivers.
- **Self-Regulation:** Preschoolers start to self-regulate but still need adult support.

## + Impact of Trauma on Sensory Systems and Behavior

- Children who have experienced trauma may have altered sensory systems and responses, making traditional behavior management strategies less effective.

## + Importance of Individualized Strategies

- Knowing each child's unique needs and responses is crucial for effective regulation and support.

This podcast episode and resource delves into the complexities of childhood trauma, aiming to equip educators with the knowledge and tools needed to support young children effectively. Be sure to join us for the next episode as we continue this important conversation.

To listen to this episode and read the transcript, visit <https://info.teachstone.com/blog/understanding-how-trauma-shows-up-in-the-classroom>

