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## **LPPS launches innovative initiative to increase resiliency, reduce impact of childhood trauma in students**

*Resilient Schools Project creates culture supporting whole student,  
teaches how to overcome adversity and trauma*

**LINCOLN PARK, Mich.** – **Lincoln Park Public Schools** today announced the official launch of its **Resilient Schools Project**, which is demonstrating early success in helping students bounce back and redefine themselves in the wake of trauma and adversity. The district's partnership with national expert **Dr. Caelan Soma** and the Starr Global Learning Network is a heavy investment in trauma-informed decision-making and resilient-focused strategies. This has resulted in a reduced number of violent acts among students in all grade levels.

The Resilient Schools Project is the result of LPPS' application of **Dr. Robert Adna** and **Dr. Vincent Feliti's Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study**. Deeply rooted in brain research, the ACE study surveyed more than 17,000 people about their exposure to childhood trauma and looked for relationships between exposure and numerous health, social and behavioral problems later in life.

"The Resilient Schools Project is years in the making, and we have made a huge investment in transitioning Lincoln Park into a district that focuses on the whole child," said **Terry Dangerfield**, Lincoln Park Public Schools superintendent. "By focusing on student needs, we are able to make sure they are poised for success in the classroom and the real world. As educators, we tend to focus on test scores and achievement in the classroom, but if a student's personal needs aren't met, there is no way we can expect them to be successful in the classroom."

Childhood traumatic events come in many forms, including physical and sexual abuse, neglect, domestic violence, substance abuse, parental separation or divorce, and the incarceration of a parent or household member. Whether a single event or something that occurs regularly, these experiences can also impact health and overall performance later in life.

Childhood trauma has been linked to high-risk behaviors like smoking, alcohol and drug abuse, promiscuity and severe obesity, as well as depression, heart disease, cancer, chronic lung disease and shortened lifespan. However, there is compelling research that shows a person can overcome the negative effects of childhood trauma through a strong commitment to resilience.

"What happens during childhood matters, and traumatic childhood experiences have been proven to have long-lasting negative effects on the brain," said **Nicole Chubb**, Lincoln Park Public Schools Director of Special Education. "By meeting students where they are physically, mentally

and emotionally, LPPS has created a culture focused on the individual needs of students and teaches strategies for overcoming adversity and trauma.”

With the Resilient Schools Project, LPPS has created a culture shift in which teachers adjust their mindset to consider why a student is behaving a certain way, rather than simply focusing on the behavior they are displaying.

“We know that each of our students has their own unique experiences and challenges outside of school,” Dangerfield said. “The Resilient Schools Project opens the door to teaching them the power of resilience and how to overcome the negative impact of traumatic experiences, no matter how impossible it may seem at the time.”

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