

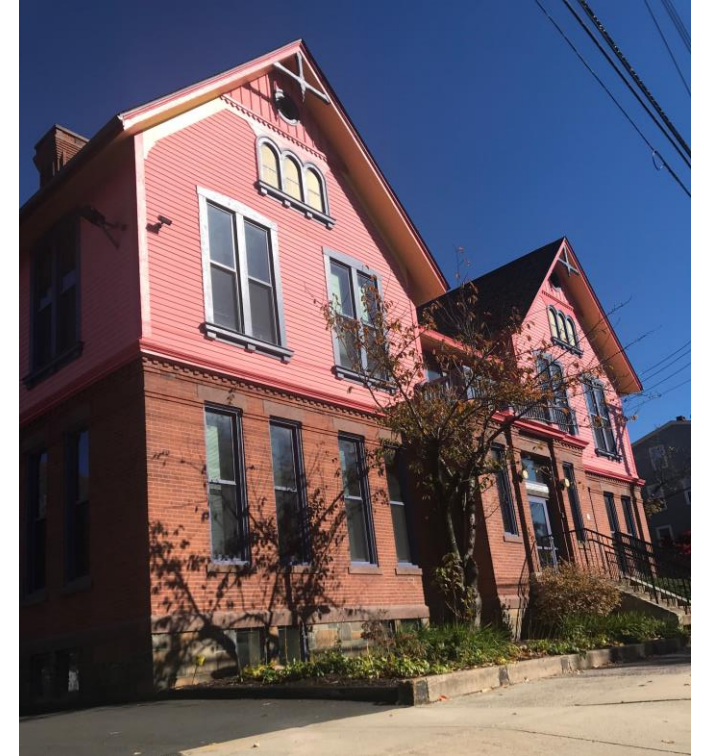
The Recovery Efforts in Newtown: Real Lessons Learned



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Vice President of Community
and School Based Services

ABOUT CLIFFORD BEERS

- Founded in 1913 by New Haven resident Clifford W. Beers
- Offers programs/services to over 5500 children and families annually
- Convenient, effective care
 - clinic-based; school and community-based; home-based
- Affiliate member of the National Childhood Traumatic Stress Network
- Engaging **everyone** (schools, lawmakers, providers, child-focused organizations) to adopt trauma-informed practices
 - moving from *What's wrong with this child?* to ***What happened to this child?***



MOVING FORWARD



Facts about the Sandy Hook tragedy

- Friday, December 14, 2012
- Timeline of the tragedy
- Twenty 1st graders and six educators were killed
- All students and staff were evacuated to nearby Sandy Hook Firehouse
- The school was demolished in 2014 and re-built in 2016



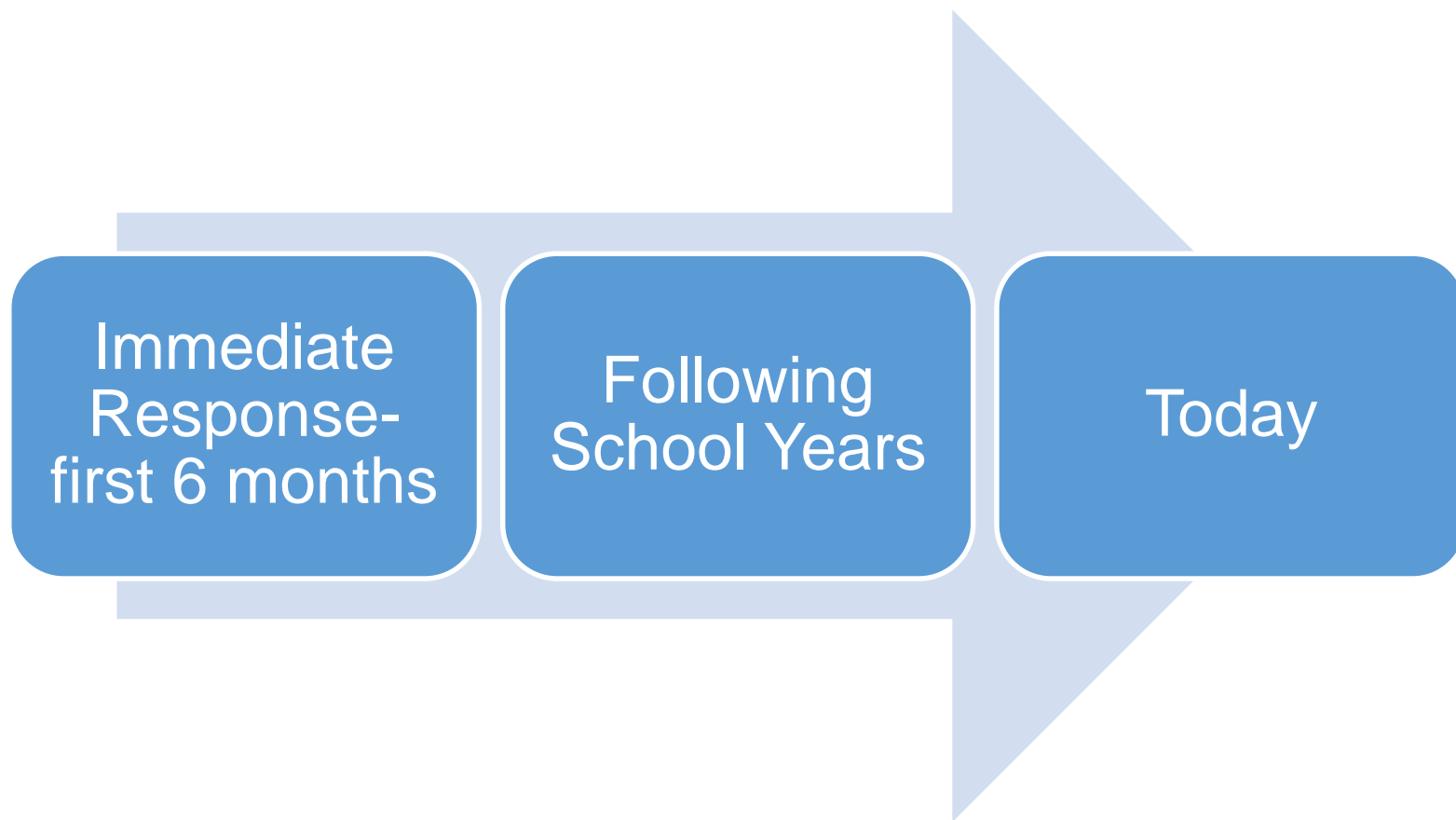
MOVING FORWARD



The Guardian

clifford
beers

MOVING FORWARD



Multi-Level Intervention Options

Tier 1 – General Population-based Interventions

Psychoeducation, resiliency-based

Psychological First Aid

Tier 2 – Specialized Interventions

Trauma/Grief-focused, short-term, strength-based

SPR, CBITS, TF-CBT, CFTSI

Tier 3 – Specialized Community-Based Interventions

Psychiatric services, long-term treatment



MOVING FORWARD

Key Elements of our Support

Student Support	Staff Support
Assigned Clinician by grade level	Access to all staff communication
Flexible Referral plan	Before, During and After school
Screening and Assessment	Access to a floating substitute
Individual Tx and Parent Support	Psychoeducation
Two Tiered Group Plan	Wellness Activities
Parent- Teacher conferences	Community Consultation
Community Collaboration	Safeguard staff confidentiality

The first six months

- Joined recovery efforts at the Sandy Hook School in January
 - Embedded in one specific classroom
- Identified two more clinicians – for student and staff support by March
- Joint planning with the DBHRN team for their exit
- Partnership with Yale Trauma Center until the end of that school year

Other Considerations

- Victim family and survivor family support
- Management of communication and the media
- Handling of donations (monetary and other)
- Collaboration with other similarly impacted communities
- Development of the Newtown - Sandy Hook Community Foundation

Sandy Hook Recovery Team

- The mission of the Sandy Hook Recovery team is to mobilize and support the Sandy Hook community to recover and thrive
- Public health/ multi-tiered models of intervention to recovery from trauma

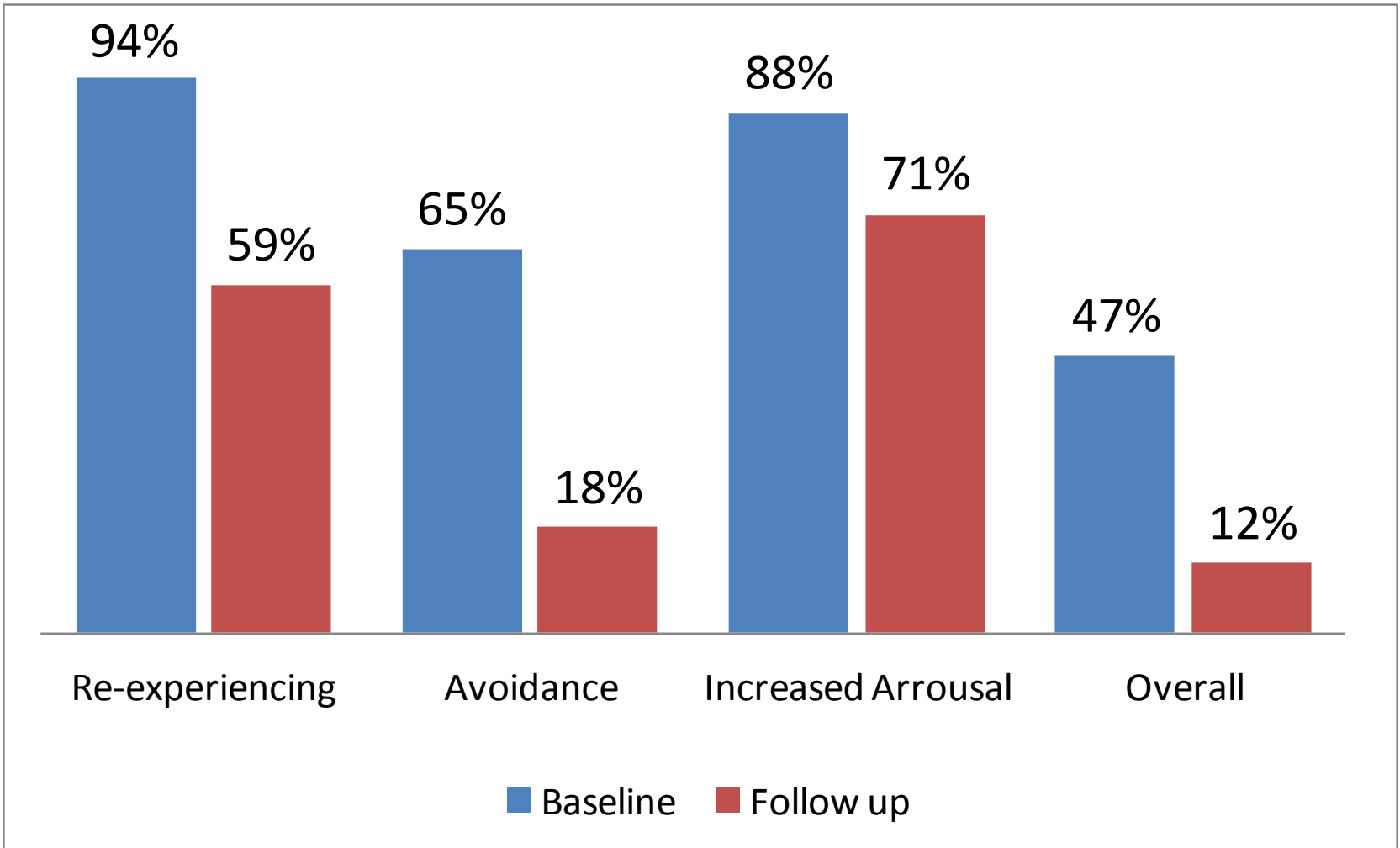
Services Provided for Students

- Crisis intervention
- Trauma-focused assessment and supports
- Teacher consultation and classroom observation
- Individual student sessions
- Parent consultation and supports
- Classroom wide activities
- School-based group services
- Referral for outside services

Year 1 – Whole School Approach

- Embedded in the fabric of Sandy Hook School
- Services broadly available
- Clinicians assigned by grade level
- Flexible referral/ identification process
- Formalized screening process (CPSS and UCLA PTSD RI)
- Individual treatment
- Parent support
- Group intervention

Trauma Symptoms	%
Anxious/ nervous/ jumpy	68%
Difficulty sleeping	60%
Irritable or grouchy	59%
Difficulty Concentrating	59%
Fits of Anger	59%
Clingy or worried about separation	59%
Depressed/ upset or sad	58%
Intrusive thoughts	58%
Avoidance	57%
Somatic complaints	56%
Aggression	55%



Year 1– Support for Staff

- Embedded in the fabric of Sandy Hook School
- Schedule flexibility
- Safeguards staff confidentiality
- Promotes professional success
- Individual consultation and intervention
- Group based supports and wellness activities
- Referral and linkage to external supports

Year 2- Student Specific

- Transition from a whole school to child specific
- Sandy Hook and Reed Intermediate School
- Partnership with District Recovery Director
- Trauma screening and assessment continues
- Two-tiered group plan
- CBITS/ BounceBack! broadly implemented
- Social skills/ lunch bunch groups
- Parent consultation and support

Year 2- Staff support

- Staff support only at Sandy Hook School
- Professional strategies to mitigate the effects of trauma and promote resiliency
- Wellness activities (mindfulness / in-school Weight Watchers)
- Assist staff with processing next steps professionally
- Transition of staff support clinician

Year 3

- Sandy Hook School only
- Reduced staffing
- New referrals still identified
- Robust group intervention plan
- Parent forums
- Transition planning and letting go of the former 1st grade class
- Further redefining staff support with multiple agency involvement

Year 4

- New funding identified
- Move back to Sandy Hook campus
 - Sandy Hook School open house events
- New referrals still identified
 - Increased service to younger siblings now entering the school
- Shift away from EBP groups to mindfulness groups
- Staff support continues
- Planning for the anniversary on the same campus as the shooting

Year 5

- Sandy Hook School only
- Consultation as needed to other schools
- New referrals still identified
- Reduced staffing - no longer providing staff support
- Planning for milestone anniversary – 5th year
- Next SY and considering our exit

Year 6- current school year

- Transition to the middle school
 - Re-connecting with the former 1st graders
- Consultation to other schools as needed
- New referrals still identified
- Planning for Clifford Beers exit and district staffing

Significant Events

- Re-location to Monroe (January 2013)
- New school leadership (Summer 2013)
- Bomb threat (October 2014)
- Anniversary response planning for each year
- Untimely death of a student (February 2015)
- Transition back to Sandy Hook campus (August 2016)
- Re-connecting with the most impacted class (August 2018)
- Impact of other school shootings

Supervising the Recovery Team

- Staff selection
- Routine contact
 - Use of technology for check-in's with staff
- Don't forget the basics (supplies, IT, schedule, school calendar)
- Respect the “insider/outsider” dynamics
- Remaining flexible, adaptive and available
- Importance of on-site team support
- Pay attention to secondary traumatic stress

Lessons learned ... and still learning.

- Build relationships
- Communication
- Trauma education logistics
- Logistics and measuring impact
- Sensitivity to trauma triggers and anniversary preparation
- Managing team wellness, transitions and departures
- Capacity building and sustainability planning



Questions/Reflections



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Resources

- Trauma/Grief resources: www.NCTSN.org
- Web resources
 - PFA Online: <http://learn.nctsn.org>
 - CBITS: www.cbits.org
 - TFCBT: www.tfcbt.musc.edu
 - Helping Heroes: www.helping-heroes.org
- Mobile apps (Apple & Android versions)
 - PFA Mobile
 - Sesame Street
 - PTSD Coach

