

“At What Point do You Ask a Suicidal Teen to do Their Math Homework?”

How Los Angeles Teachers are Navigating the Impacts of Community Violence and Trauma

The effects of children’s exposure to community violence and trauma are far reaching and impact children’s learning and behavior. This study aims to assess Los Angeles teachers’ training on violence and trauma to predict awareness of and difficulties with trauma in the classroom. Survey results indicate that in-service training and level of awareness of trauma in the classroom predicted teachers’ level of awareness and difficulty with trauma in the classroom. Analysis of open-ended questions indicate that while teachers believe that their “role as an educator is more than just teaching” they feel restrained in their ability to effectively address trauma.

Sample

59%

Average percent of student body exposed to trauma, based on teacher’s perception.



53%

Average percent of student body exposed to community violence, based on teacher’s perception.



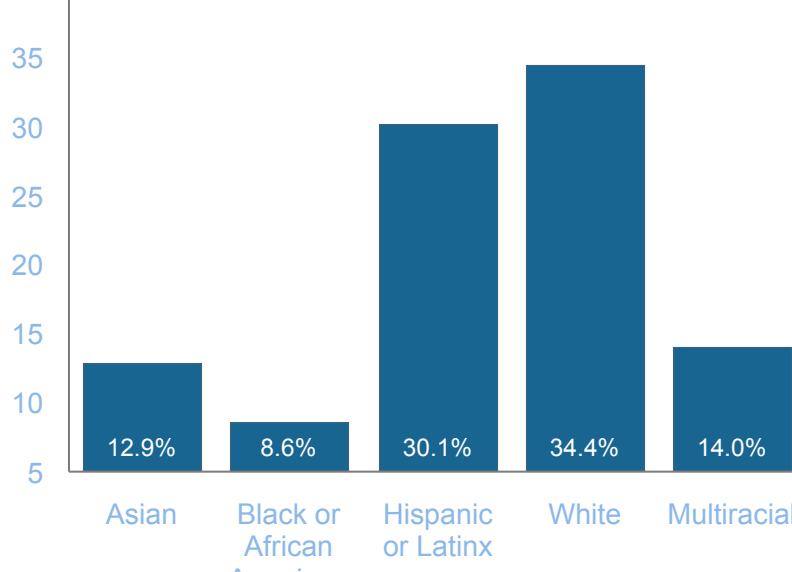
82%

of the sample teach at public schools

Majority grew up in **California** (75.53%), 22% of which grew up in **Los Angeles**.



Race/Ethnicity



MAJORITY TAUGHT HIGH SCHOOL **31%**, ELEMENTARY SCHOOL **22%** AND MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOL **23%**

MEAN YEARS OF EXPERIENCE **2.44 YEARS**

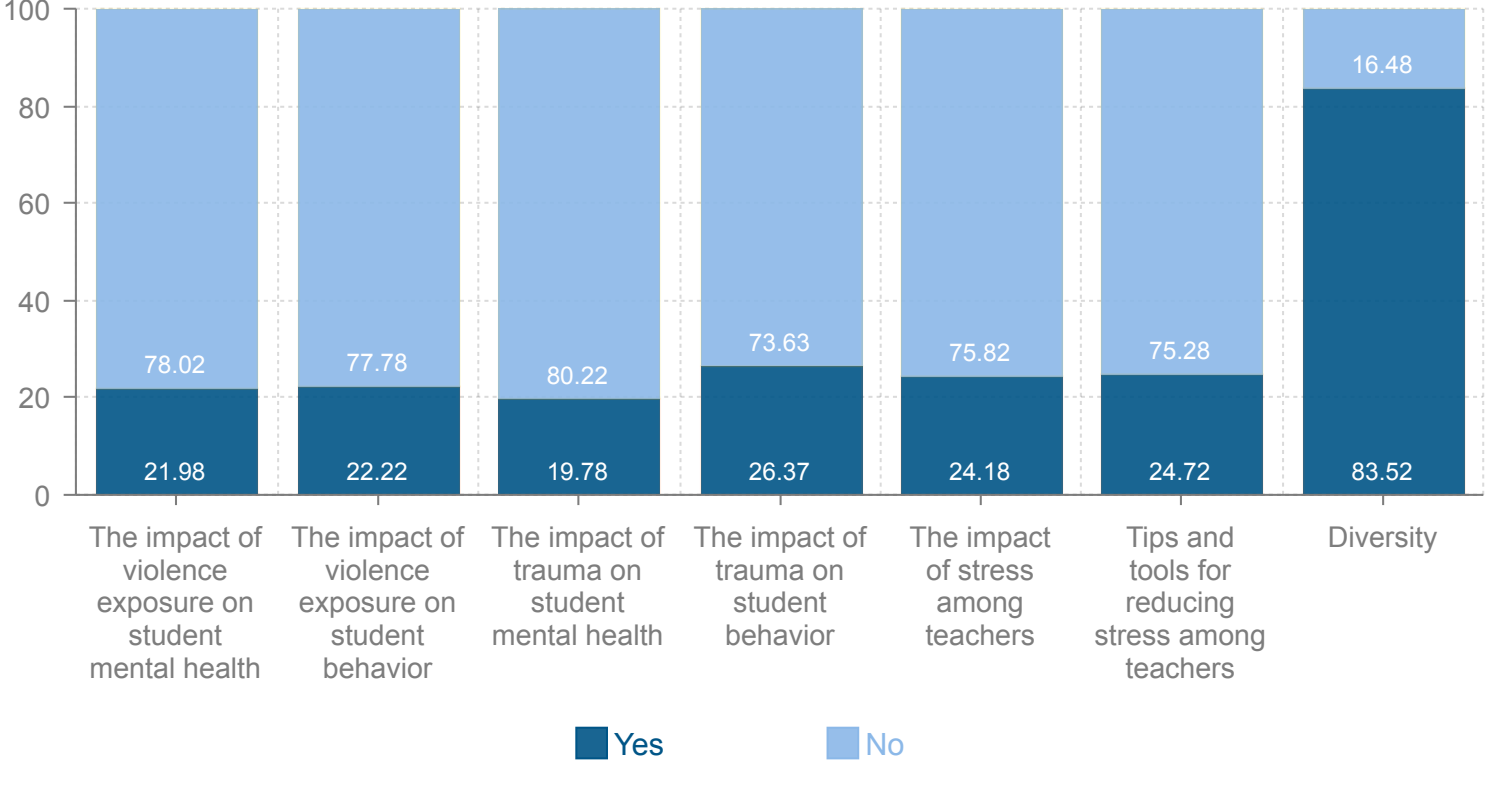
39

Mean age of respondents

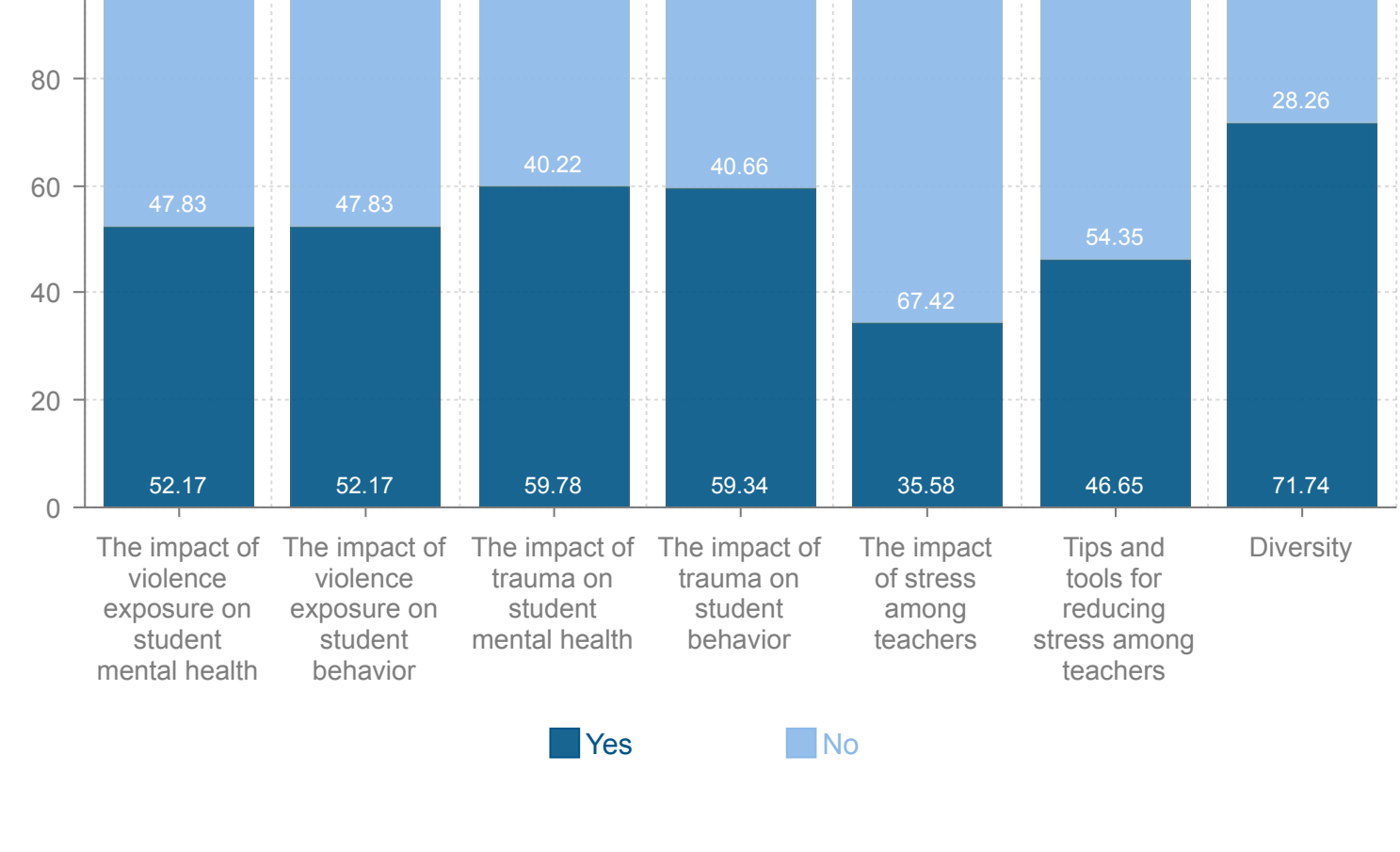


Majority of respondents identified as female (**78.72%**)

Training Received Pre-Service

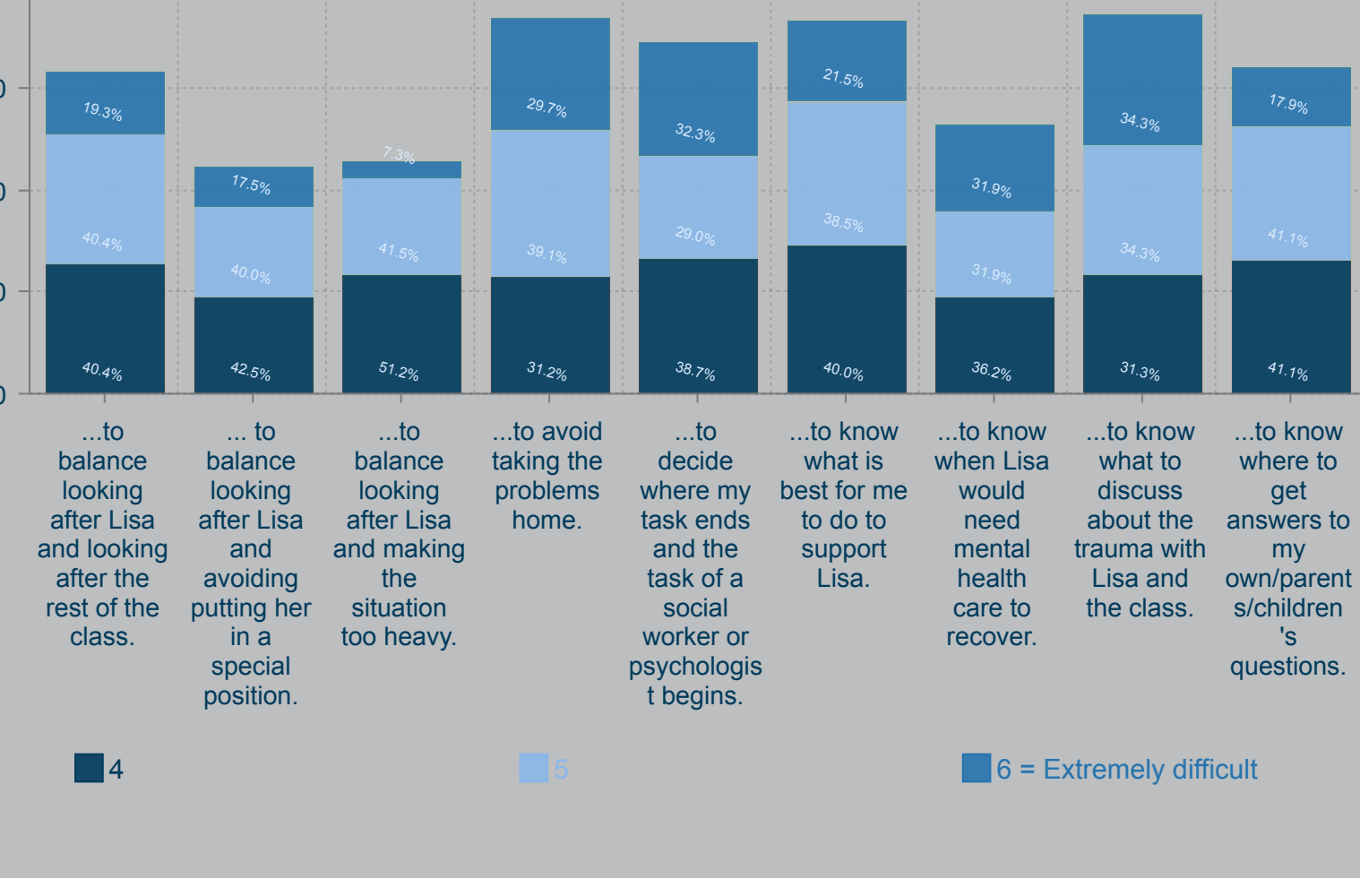


Training Received In-Service



Descriptive data and ratings for Teachers' Difficulties with Supporting Children After Trauma Scale

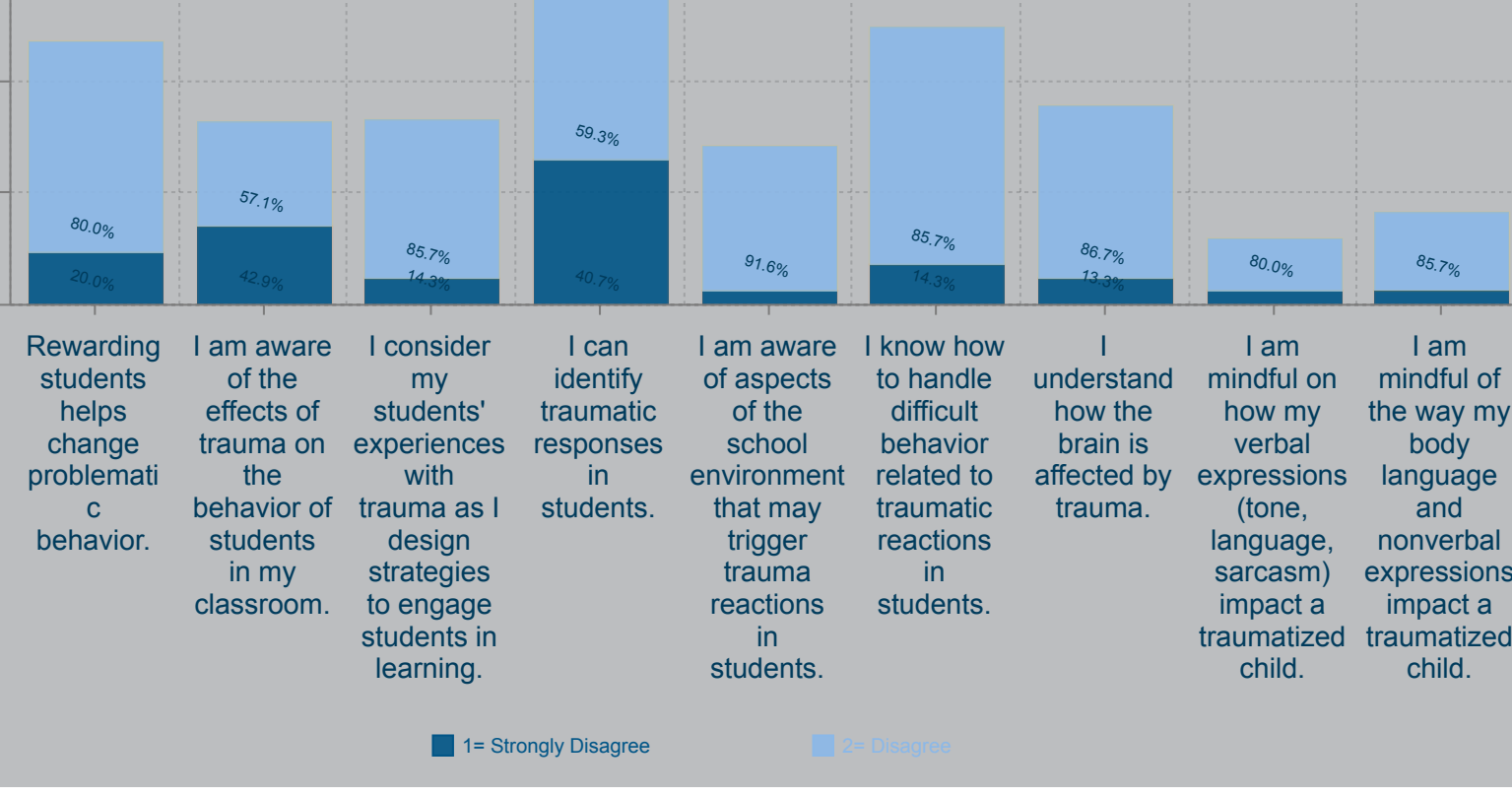
For me, with children like Lisa it is (not difficult at all to extremely difficult)...



In the multiple regression analysis the model predicting teacher awareness was significant (p< .05). The model explains 11% of the variance in the total teacher awareness scores. Within the model, the only significant predictor was the in-service training that was received (p<.01). For every .08 increase in in-service training there is a one point increase in teacher awareness.

Descriptive data and ratings for Teaching Traumatized Students Scale

1= strongly disagree to 5= strongly agree



In the multiple regression analysis it can be seen that the model was significant (p< .05). However, the predictors in the model only explained 10% of the variance in the total scores of the teacher difficulty scale. The only significant predictor was participant’s scores on the trauma awareness scale (p< .01). For every .5 decrease in the teacher’s mean awareness score there is a 1 point increase in teacher’s level of difficulty working with students after trauma.

What do you believe are your greatest strengths when working with students exposed to violence or trauma?



"My role as an educator is more than just teaching."

"Knowing how to deal with trauma is somewhat meaningless if the student doesn't trust you."

What do you believe are your greatest challenges when working with students exposed to violence or trauma?



"What can I do given my role?"

"In a school with a high percentage of students experiencing trauma, the amount of need in a single classroom can make it hard to meet the needs of each student and also promote learning and engagement with the course material. With students who experience continual trauma who are receiving services but also continuing to experience the effects of trauma in their daily lives, it can be hard to know when it's time to push a student academically versus give them space."

What information do you think is necessary for teachers to receive in either pre-service or PD to make them successful working within violent communities or with traumatized students?



"A toolkit of manageable strategies."