

Flight, trauma, school



Presentation to increase awareness
for the specific situation of refugees



Source



.This presentation is a summary of the booklet:

.Flucht, Trauma, Schule

.Hintergründe und Handlungshilfen für Lehrkräfte

.by: Natalie Schwendy, Marianne Rauwald, Gesa Fritz, Universum Verlag

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.The booklet gives us background information on the specific situation of refugees, traumas and their difficulties in participating in a regular school life.

Content



1. Introduction
2. Flight and trauma
 - typical stress symptoms
3. Recommendations for school and teaching
4. Awareness and care for the teaching staff
5. Emergency exercises

1. Introduction



.Our school system has experienced the entry of hundreds of thousands of students from the most diverse backgrounds like: Syria, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iran, Irak, Eritrea, Somalia and many others.

.The integration into our school system is an essential aspect to ease the integration into society.

.Teachers are confronted with the following obstacles:

.1. different age groups, school systems, experiences, methods, illiteracy, no school experience at all.

.2. children and youngsters have been victims of severe traumatic experiences on their flight.

2. Flight and trauma



- Most refugees leave their homes due to extreme emergency situations.
- The majority of refugees is currently from countries which are suffering from war, civil wars or failed states which are ruled by war lords who disobey law and order. Their policies are characterized by terror and violence.
- A normal daily life with school, labour, leisure time, playing with friends etc. is not existent.
- Many have experienced or have been witnesses to air raids, abandoning of their (destroyed) homes, loss of parents, siblings and other family members and friends due to violence, killings, displacements, poverty and death as a result.
- No perspective no indication that there might be the possibility for a brighter future.

2. Flight and trauma during the flight



The decision to leave their home countries is not the end of the traumatic experiences described:

- .On their way to the safe haven Europe many have to endure much more:
- .The road to Europe is long and dangerous. It can last for years.
- .Women and children are the most vulnerable group.
- .They are threatened by violence and criminal exploitation. They have the least means to defend themselves.
- .The trek is often interrupted by longer stops in which they are being exploited as cheap labour forces, and living in unhealthy living conditions or camps.
- .Deserts and seas must be crossed and many pay this

Quantity of traumatic incidents



Häufigkeit von traumatischen Ereignissen

Ereignis	1		2		3
	PDS (%)	M-CIDI (%)	Übereinstimmungen (%)	Kappa	PTBS nach M-CIDI (%)
Total	40 (100)	40 (100)	-	-	16 (40.0)
Unfall	14 (35.0)	21 (52,5)	62.5	.26	1 (2.5)
Naturkatastrophe	15 (37.5)	14 (35.0)	87.5	.73	-
Gewalt (auf eigene Person)	28 (55.0)	25 (62.5)	-	-	2 (5.0)
Gewalt (Zeuge)	22 (70.0)				
Vergewaltigung (Familie)	1 (2.6)	0 (0.0)	97.4	-	-
Vergewaltigung (fremd)	7 (17.5)	3 (7.5)	85.0	-	-
Sex. Kontakt unter 18 J.	8 (23.5)	2 (5.0)	82.4	-	-
Krieg	14 (35.0)	13 (32.5)	67.5	.27	3 (7.5)
Gefangenschaft	14 (35.0)	20 (50.0)	75.0	.50	1 (2.5)
Folter	17 (42.5)	12 (30.0)	82.5	.63	5 (14.3)
Krankheit	4 (10.0)	1 (2.6)	87.2	-	-
Leichen sehen	-	23 (57.5)	-	-	2 (5.0)
Anderes	15 (39.5)	13 (32.5)	63.2	21.0	2 (5.0)

Anmerkungen: 1 Häufigkeit von traumatischen Ereignissen bei Asylbewerbern in Deutschland anhand zweier Testverfahren. 2 Fälle von PTBS nach Ereignissen (In der Tabelle sind jeweils die Nennung der beiden Testverfahren „Posttraumatic Diagnostic Scale“ (PDS) und „Münchener Version des Composite International Diagnostic Interview“ (M-CIDI) dargestellt.) 2 Übereinstimmungen konnten in dieser Kategorie aufgrund der mangelnden Kompatibilität der Instrumente nicht berechnet werden. 3 Fälle von PTBS nach Ereignissen. (nach: Gäbel, 2006)

Experiences after the flight



- fear from deportation
- culture shock
- living in housing areas or camps with lack of privacy
- experience of racism
- physical violence
- feeling of estrangement in either culture

Final remarks



.As almost each child on the flight had made traumatic experiences the possibility to suffer from traumatic disturbances is very high.

.But!!: experiencing traumatic situations does not necessarily lead to post traumatic stress disorders.

.Voluntary flight?

.Although flight is hardly somebody decides voluntarily, it is for some children even harder, as the family decides to send the child or children.

Most diagnosed disorders of children and youngsters



.PTSD (Post traumatic stress disorder)

.Frequency

.1,3% to 1,6% of children and youngsters in Germany suffer from PTSD

.The risk of suffering from PTSD between 19%-54% with underaged refugees.

.Criterias

.A traumatic situation is a stress or threatening situation in which one has to act but is not able to may the cause for the inactivity are outer or inner reasons.

.Confrontation with traumatic situations (death, danger of death, threat of losing one`s physical integrity, helplessness, impotence, horror)

Most diagnosed disorders of children and youngsters



Age specific reactions

children til the age of 6

- .Loss of skills already aquired
- .Shivering, clinging to persons of trust, going numb
- .Fear of darkness, loneliness, fear of unknown persons or animals
- .Unrest in the night, disturbed sleep
- .Longing for help by crying (weeping) or screaming
- .Post traumatic play (the traumatic experience is repeated again and again in a play/game)

Most diagnosed disorders of children and youngsters



Children age 6 to 10 years

- .Loss of already acquired skills
- .Moaning and clinging
- .Nightmares and unrest at night
- .Fears which have not existed before
- .Aggressive behaviour
- .restless behaviour (leads often to ADD diagnosis) and going numb
- .Not age adequate behaviour (thumb-sucking)
- .Competitive behaviour among siblings or other children for attention
- .Concentration problems, learning problems
- .Problems in school caused by inadequate behaviour, learning problems or avoiding (absenteeism)
- .Loss of interest and retreat from peers
- .Psychosomatic complaints (head aches, stomach pain, exemes)
- .Unhappiness up to depression

Most diagnosed disorders of children and youngsters



Children age 11 to 16 years

- .Nightmares and sleep disorders
- .Rebellious behaviour and refusal of chores at home or in school
- .Problems in school (inadequate behaviour, fights, retreat, school absenteeism etc.)
- .Concentration problems
- .Psychosomatic complaints (head aches, stomach pains, exemes etc.)
- .Loss of interests and retreat from friends and peers
- .Feeling of loneliness
- .Feeling of not having a future or fear of the future
- .Seeking refuge in legal or illegal drugs, alcohol
- .Depression, suicidality

Most diagnosed disorders of children and youngsters



Depression

.Frequency

- .with German children and youngsters between 1-4%
- .underaged refugees between 3% and 30%

.Core Symptons

- .Depressed or sad mood
- .loss of interest, loss of happiness
- .reduced motivation or increased exhaustion

.Additional symptoms

- .Loss of self confidence, feelings of guilt, reduced intellectual and concentration skills,
- .Reduced (in some cases increased) appetite, suicidal thoughts or actions

Recommendations for school



.1. Understand of symptoms

.Symptom as a form of self healing (sleeping in the save class room to find the rest not received in a night full of nightmares etc)

.Not the reactions of children and youngsters are beyond the norms of our society but the dreadful experiences made by them.

.appreciative and emphatical attitude of teachers

.patience and understanding. (sanctions can lead to other or even more massive symptoms)

.2. Enable positive experiences in relations

.positive relations and social inclusion strengthen the resilience of traumatized children.

.Respect, appreciation, prevention of bullying and discriminating behaviour.

.The experience of a reliable appreciative and trusting relation between teacher and student is a correcting experience for the traumatized child.

.The teacher must be aware that the relation to the traumatized child is accompanied by crisis. Teachers must be aware that these crisis are symptoms of the trauma

Recommendations for school



- .3. Reconstruction of a feeling of safety and control
 - .- predictability (regulations, structures, rituals and agreements)
 - .- Transparency and information
 - .- freedom of decision and participation
 - .- respect for basic demands (hunger, thirst, toilette etc.)
 - .- protection against violence (violent situations can lead to uncontrolled aggression. Means are deescalation and mediation)
- .4. Support of positive experiences
 - .- more positive experiences against the negative experiences of the past. (sometimes accompanied by the feeling of guilt)
 - .- humour and positive emotions and patience!



Thank you for your attention!