

# Seeking School-Based Support

## Tips for Parents

- Start advocating early to meet children's educational needs
- Encourage parents to educate themselves on what works best for their child
- Build parent-teacher partnerships (see more information below)
- To establish comfort for the child, do a walkthrough of the school before their first day
  - Walk their route, visit the classroom, meet the teacher, etc.
- Reframe “success”
  - Manage expectations for a child's grades, and refocus on what defines success
  - Prioritizing a child's wellbeing over grades

## Building Parent-Teacher Partnerships

- Build relationships with the teacher, administration, front office, etc.
- Keep steady and open communication with teachers and staff
- Encourage parents to fill out parent questionnaires (if offered)
- Add value to what teachers can offer by providing context and strategies that work for the child
  - Instead of giving details about the child's trauma, simply state that the child has faced adversity.
  - Example: “My child has experienced some serious adversity, and I want you to know that their development is affected by that.”
- Offer information on behaviors that might arise and behavior management techniques
- Request clarification from teachers on assignments
- Develop an understanding of how to best prepare the child for learning

# Seeking School-Based Support

## Beneficial Perspectives for Parents and Teachers

- Prioritize the child's wellbeing over grades
- Recognize, understand, and be therapeutic when dealing with the child
- Consider how a child's discomfort and lack of social skills may be present in school behaviors
- Recognize that sensory experiences could be triggering for the child
  - Consider how stimulation of light, sound, etc., at school can trigger past trauma
  - Remember that a child may not understand why they are responding this way
- When addressing behaviors, aim to identify what is driving the behavior
  - i.e. fear, stress, emotion attached to trauma
  - Aim to regulate behaviors rather than punish the child
- Consider how a child feels when they are struggling in school
  - School may feel like being asked to "go to this room every day for 8 hours and feel stupid"