

Dealing with ACEs in Schools

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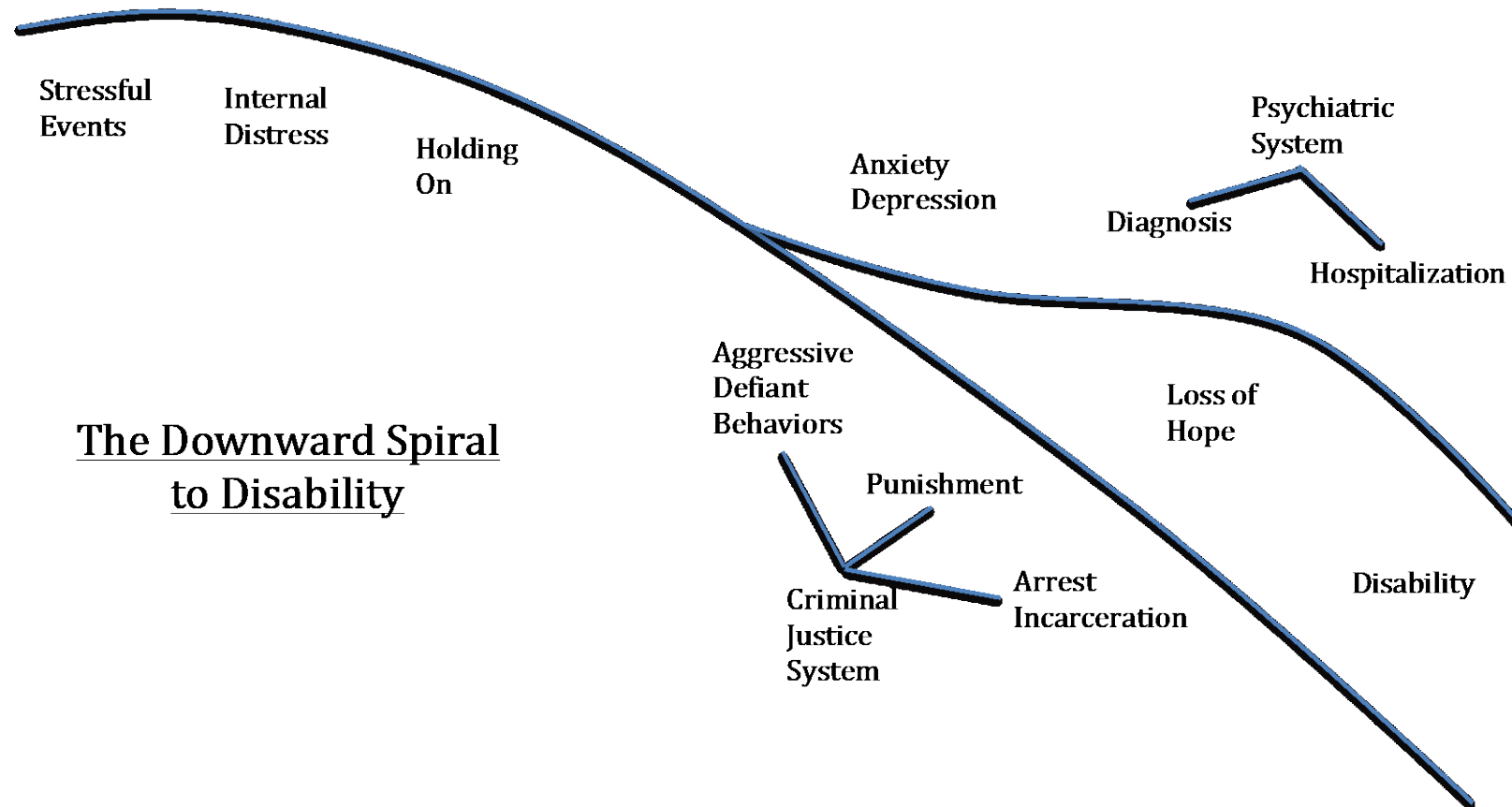




Let's Do Our ACEs Score!

- <http://www.mentimeter.com/>

Toxic stress is the single major cause of youth disengagement



Waiting is a formula for failure.

Attending to the Emergencies only maintains the status quo.

Looking Elsewhere for the Problem

- We can replace all the teachers, buy new books, find a new curriculum, fire the superintendent, or redesign school buildings...
- But the problem and challenge will still remain.
- Because the problem is walking into our schools each and every day inside the worried minds of our children.

Key Executive Functions

- **Attention/Concentration** – ability to stay focused on a task
- **Cognitive Inhibition** – ability to push aside other thoughts during the process

STROOP TEST

- **Working Memory** – ability to keep necessary information in your mind

Stroop Test

Yellow

Red

Blue

Green

Purple

Tan

Red

Blue

Yellow

Pink

Blue

Orange

Purple

Gray

Black

White

- I hate myself; I am ugly
- I am stupid; I am alone.
- My family doesn't have enough money to buy food this week.
- I don't know where my dad is living.
- I wonder where the gunshots were coming from last night.
- I'm not going to make it.
- Please don't hit me again.
- My mom goes to the hospital tonight for surgery.

So how does toxic stress and trauma show up
in the school setting?

Example 1

One: The teacher asks a student to move to another seat to break up the conversation between her and another student. The student becomes upset and refuses. The teacher insists and raises her voice, saying, “Move now or else.” The student throws her books on the floor and runs out of the room.

Example 2

Three: A kindergartner is restless and roams around the class, grabbing objects from the shelves, or off of other students' desks, and then refuses to give them back when the teacher tells him to. She then grabs each toy or object out of his hand and attempts to redirect him to his seat or a side area where he can be, without toys. He becomes more aggressive and has to be escorted out of the classroom by another staff, who stays with him in a special room with just a desk.

Helpful Approaches

- Being Positive – PBIS
- Not Being Punitive – Restorative Practice
- Teaching skills – Socioemotional learning
- Mindfulness training – meditation and yoga

The Miss Kendra Program



A Public Health Approach

- Early Intervention
- Comprehensive coverage
- Low intensity, inexpensive methods
- Reliance on the public, not experts
- Integration into norms of societal behavior

Toxic Stress does not immediately show itself in a child's behavior.





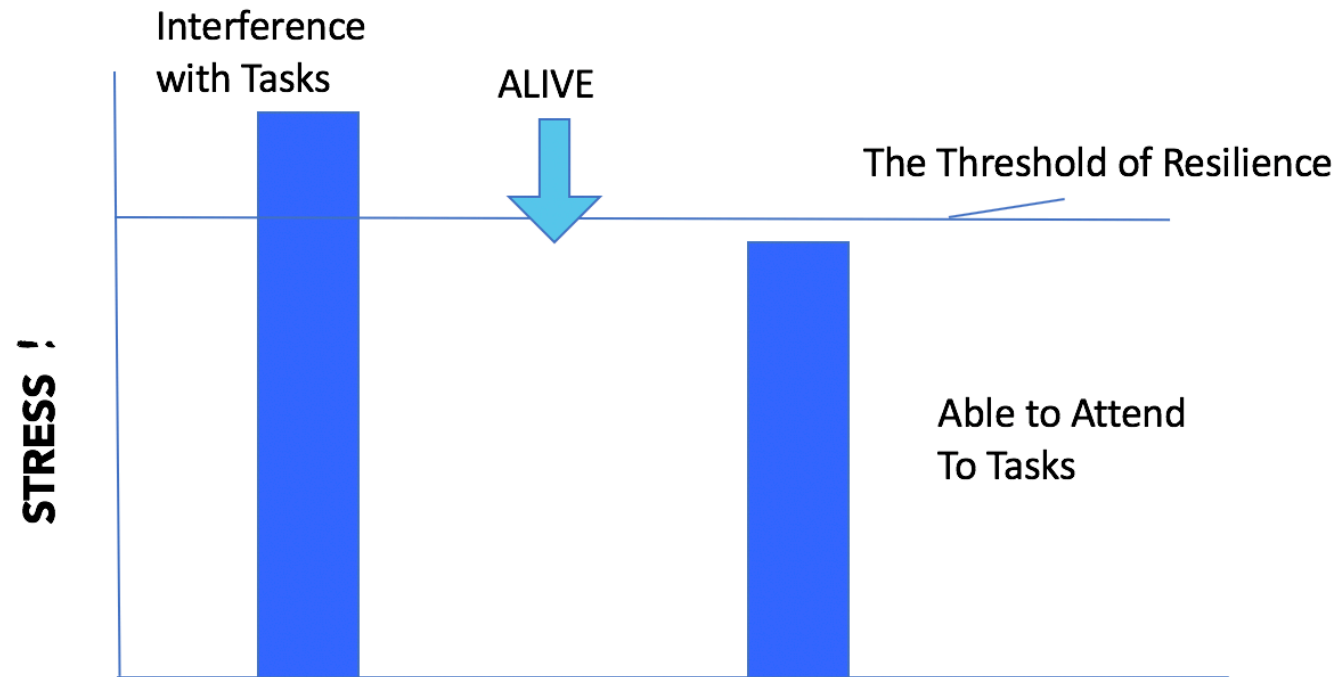
Ask Every Child

Not just the poor child.
Not just the at-risk child.

Every child.



We do not need to eliminate trauma



Only need to bring students' stress down to under their threshold of resilience.

Principles of Intervention



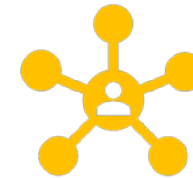
Create

Create multiple opportunities each day for students to signal that they have worries that are bothering them.



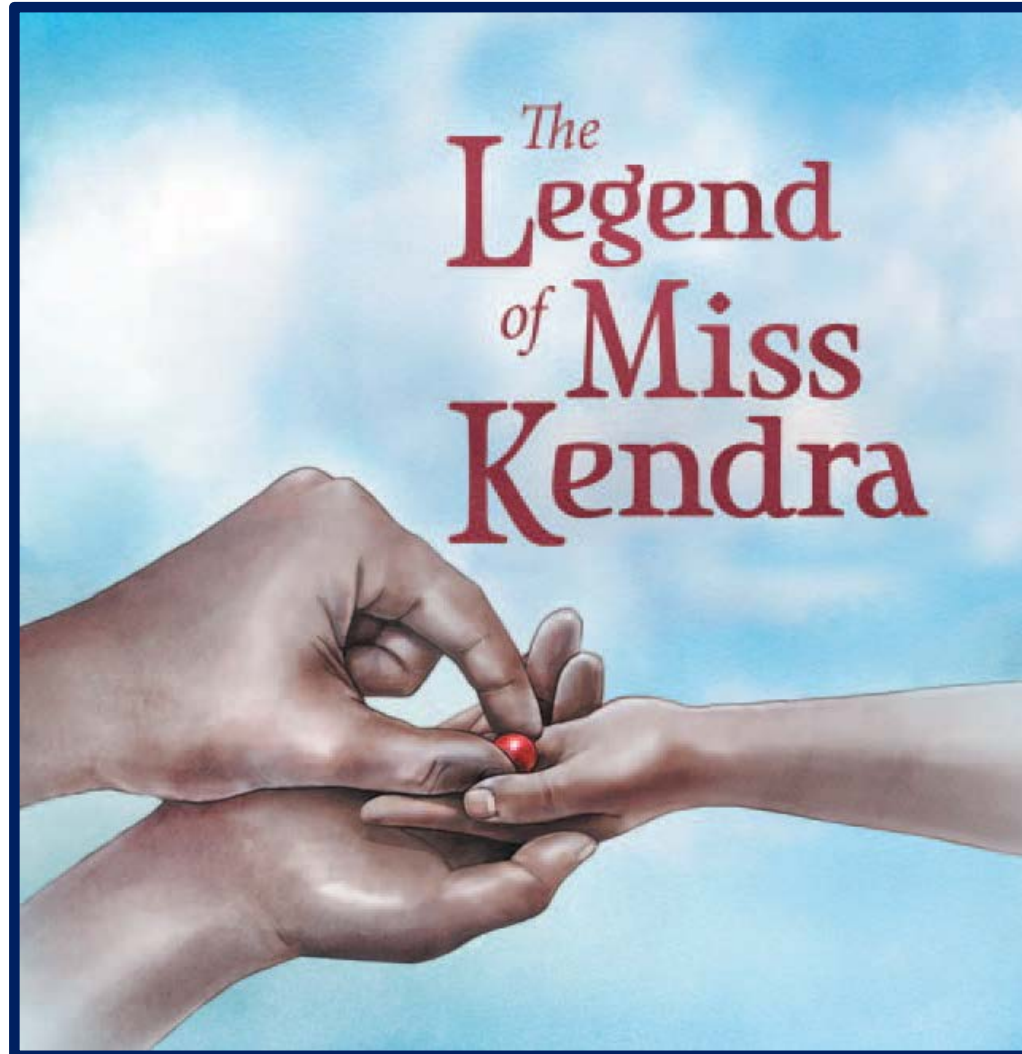
Foster

Foster a no-blame atmosphere where open conversations about stressful events can occur.



Consolidate

Consolidate the students, parents, teachers, administrators, and community as a team to collectively face what is really happening.





Imagining Miss Kendra

Letters to Miss Kendra



“Mommy and Daddy and Titi saved me when somebody broke in.”



Dear MS. Kendra my family
is always fighting
it scares me. some
times I feel sad
about it. I wish it
would stop could
you help me. P

Dear Miss Kendra
My grandmo bide and I am sad
she got shot in a tank



Dear miss kendra

12-18-12

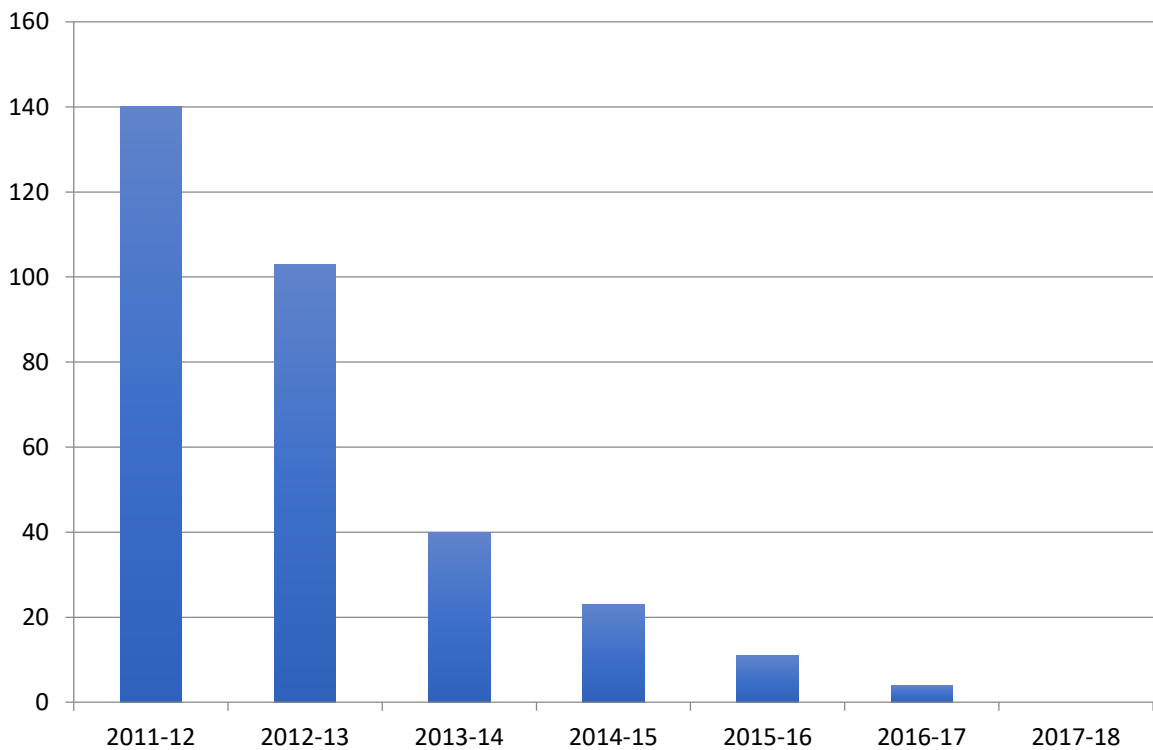
I am sorry for your lost and we both have something in coment one thing is we both have a lost my lost was my father I don't really think about his death but when I see other kids with there dad and mom it makes me feel sad and his birth day was Sunday the 16th I'll never forget him because he will always be in my heart will I am finishing my lette I hope you right back

love



A Sampling of Outcomes

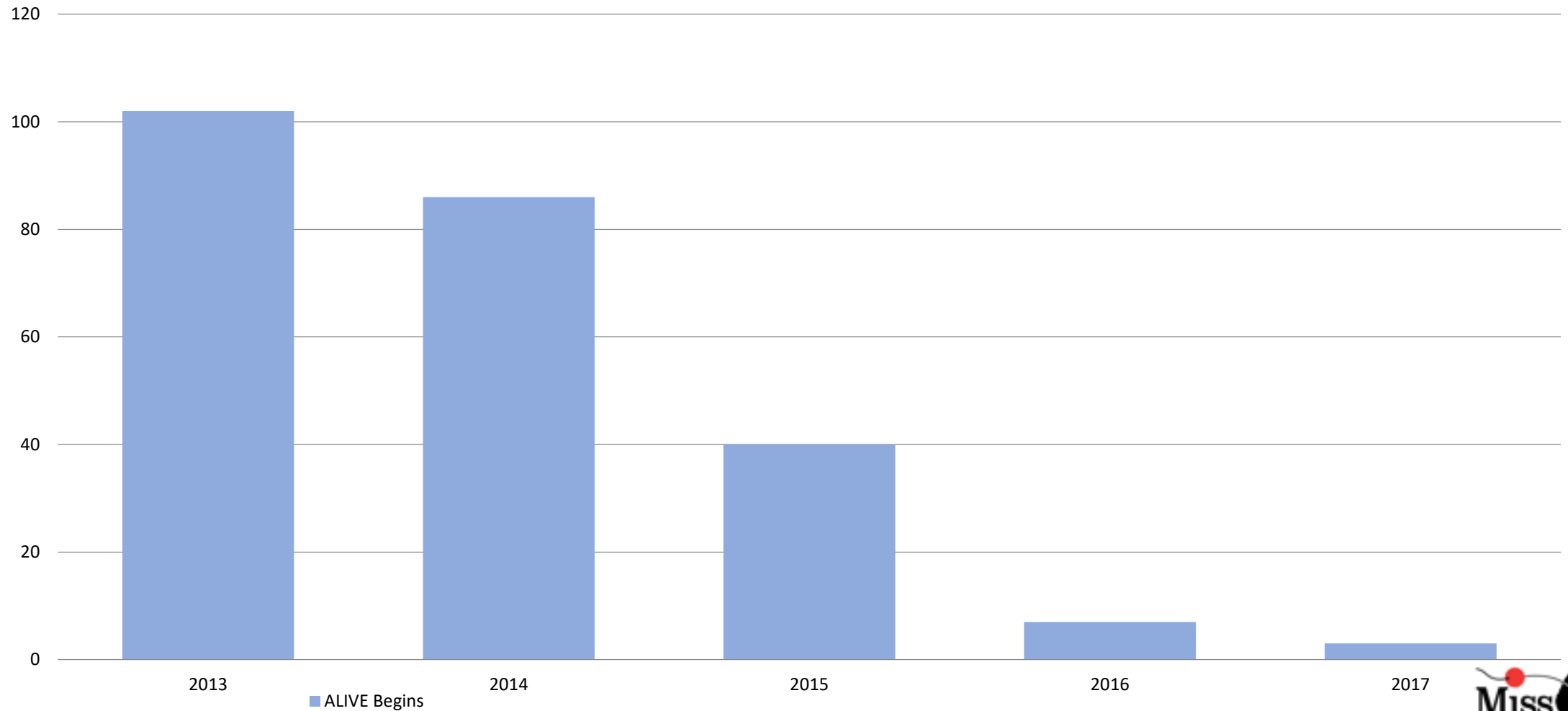
Truman Elementary
Suspensions per year (320 students K-5)



Zero suspensions last year.



Suspensions per year at DiLoreto Elementary

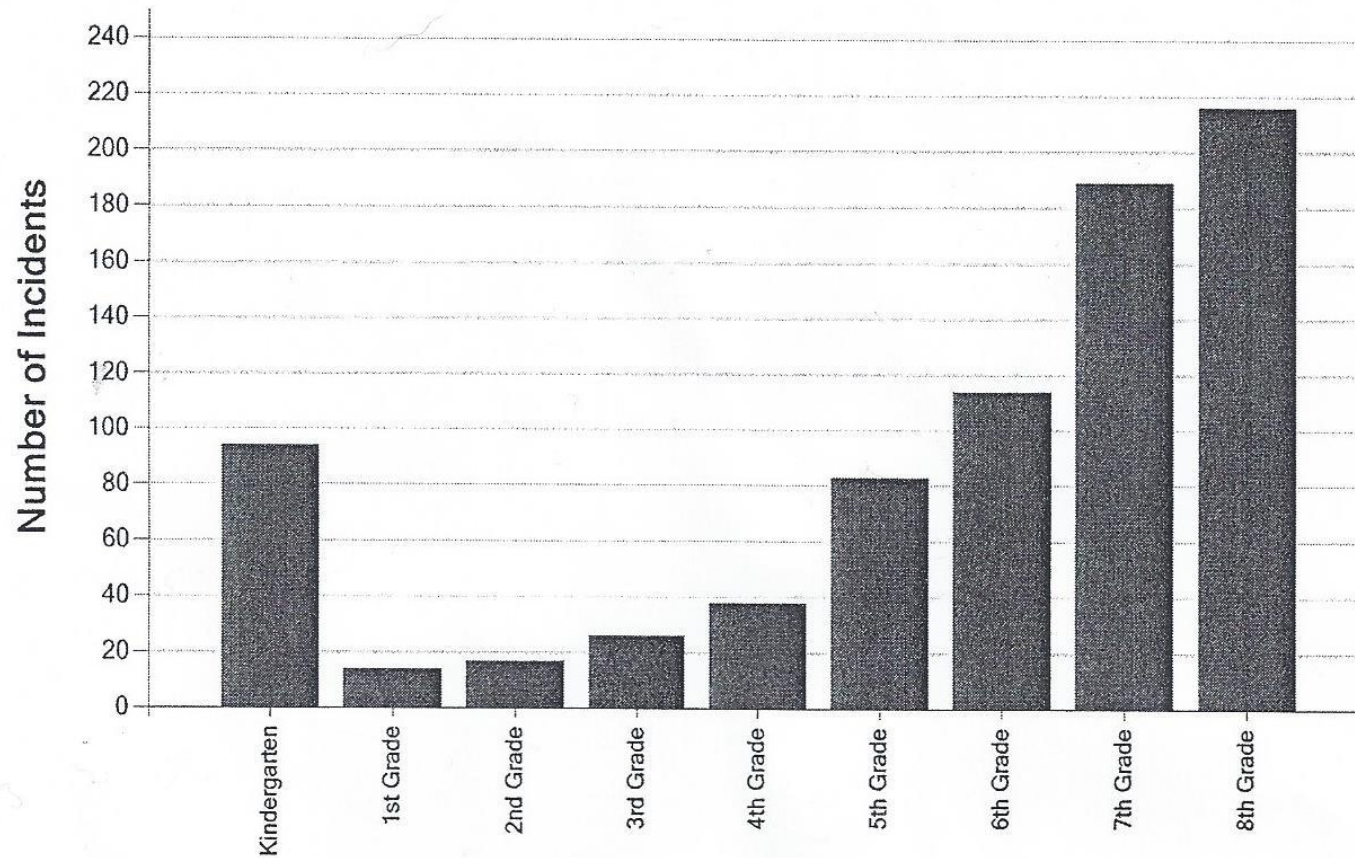


Incidents By Grade

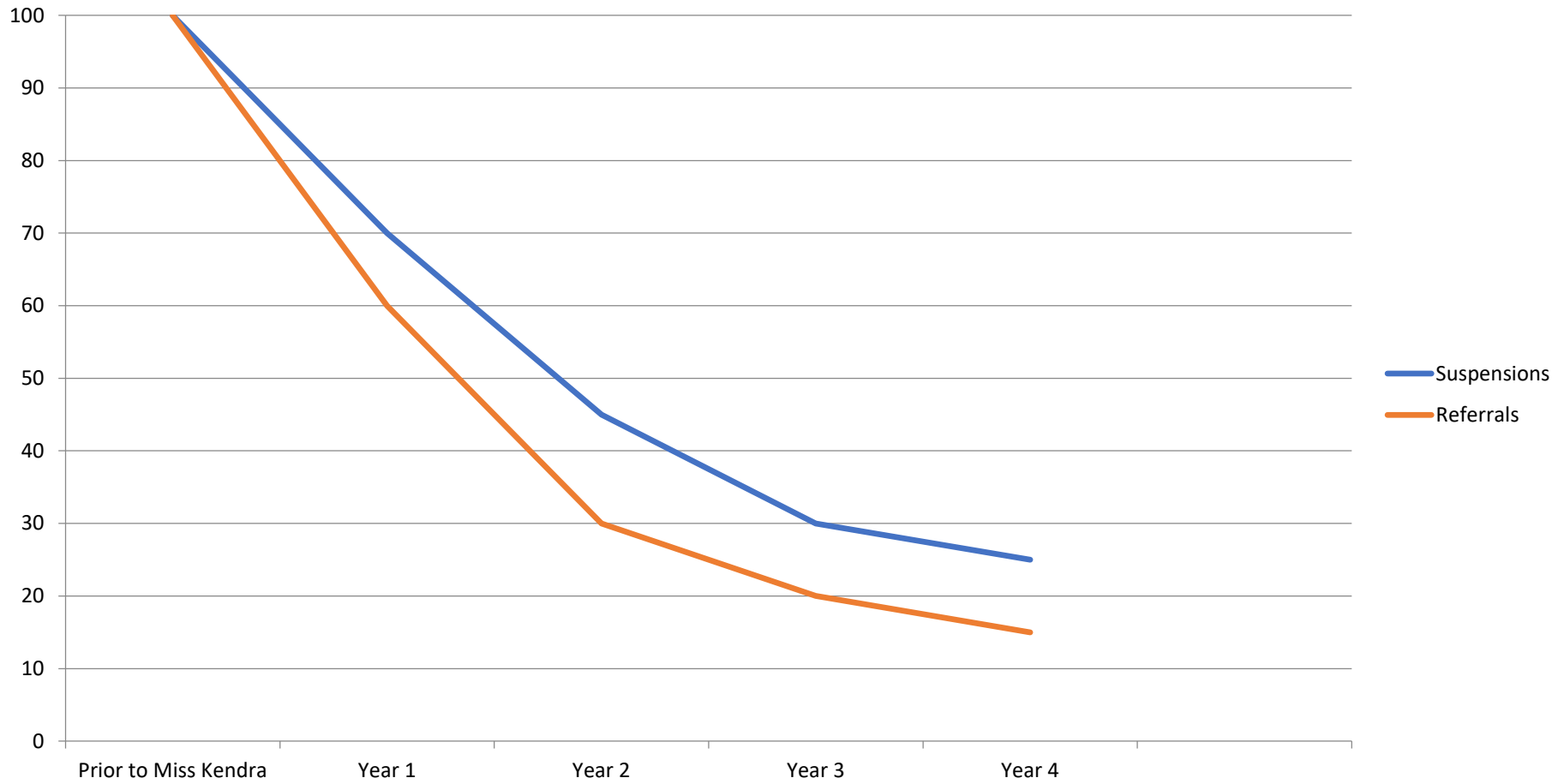
Academic Year, 2018-2019



Bishop Woods



Aggregate Data from Miss Kendra Programs



ALIVE challenges established attitudes

- This is a school and I am not a therapist.
- Talking about things makes them worse.
- Children lie and make things up to get attention.
- We should not snoop into the private lives of our students' families.
- Addressing traumatic events directly will re-traumatize and/or dysregulate the children.

Miss Kendra Program

- 12 years
- 35,000 different students, K-12
- 75,000 Letters to Miss Kendra
- Over 800 different teachers
- Over 50 different schools

- And 1 million headaches, 2 million smiles,
and countless beautiful moments!



**“
If only someone
had noticed...
If only someone
had asked!”**



Thank You!

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