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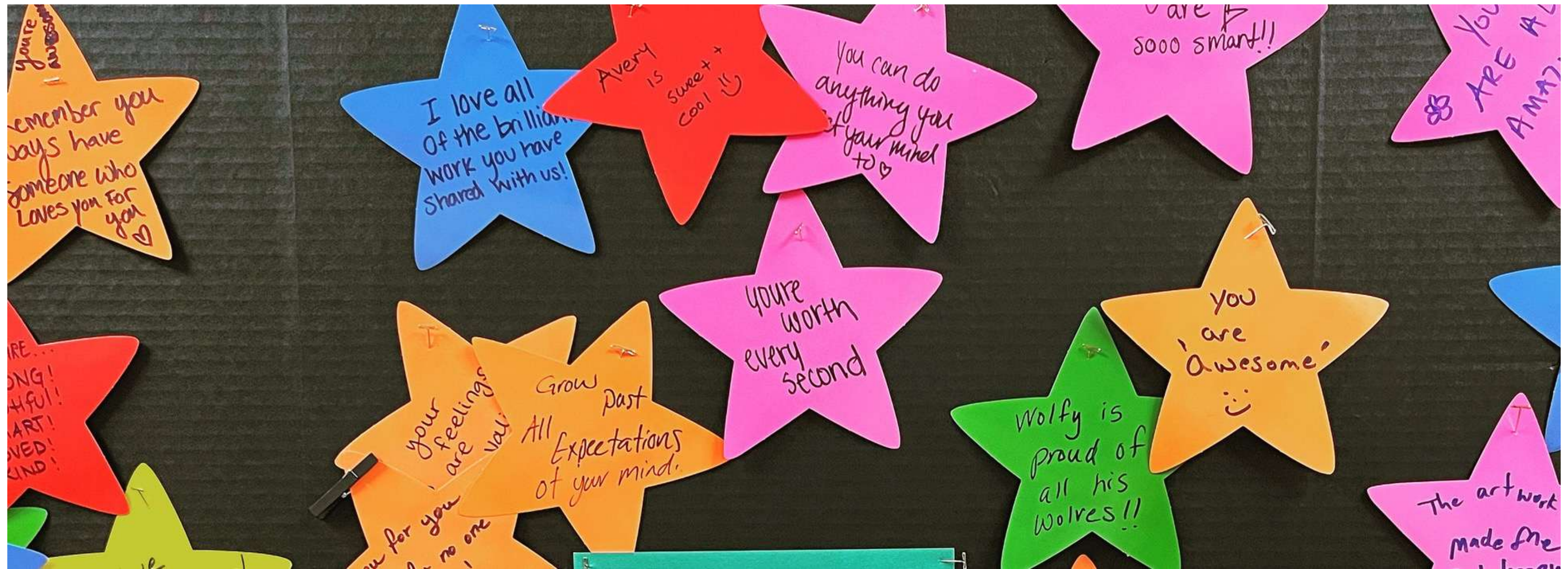
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Unleashing Creativity for Health & Wellbeing: The HEART Project

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IRB approved and grant funded





DISCLOSURE

We have no financial relationships with the manufacturer(s) of any commercial product(s) and/or provider(s) of commercial services discussed in this CME activity

We do not intend to discuss an unapproved/investigative use of a commercial product/device in our presentation.

The HEART Project Team

We would like to acknowledge the custodians of this land and the land where our research took place. We honor the Elders of these lands past, present, and emerging.

Recognizing the importance of reciprocity, this community-based participatory research project was implemented in partnership with the elders of a Northern Plains Tribe.





MONTANA

Kootenai
National Forest

Flathead
National Forest

Helena-Lewis
and Clark
National Forest

Custer Gallatin
National Forest

Yellowstone
National Park

BLACKFEET
INDIAN
RESERVATION

FLATHEAD
RESERVATION

NEZ PERCE
RESERVATION

FORT PECK
INDIAN
RESERVATION

CROW
RESERVATION

FORT BERT
RESERVATION

Cranbrook
Fernie

Lethbridge

Maple Creek

Weyburn

Estevan

Okane

Pullman

Whitman
National Forest

Boise

Caribou-Targhee

Great Falls

Hayre

Lewistown

Glasgow

Williston

New Town

Sidney

Glendive

Dickinson

Medora

Miles City

Billings

Hardin

Bozeman

Butte

Cody

Sheridan

Buffalo

Gillette

Sturgis

Rapid City

AIM

The aim of this research project was to facilitate cultural responsiveness and trauma-informed practices in classrooms serving Indigenous children.



Focus Question

How does student well-being relate to school effectiveness?



This image is publicly accessible through the school's social media

Circle the way you feel.

Today I feel...

Happy Joyful Confident Focused Excited Energetic

Sad Angry Upset Worried Nervous Tired Lonely

What went well for you this week? CIRCLE ONE

School



Home



Friends



Family



What could have been better for you this week? CIRCLE ONE

School



Home



Friends



Family



After our activity today I feel...

Circle the way you feel.

Happy Joyful Confident Focused Excited Energetic

Sad Angry Upset Worried Nervous Tired Lonely

One thing I liked today was.....



Breathing



The Activity



The Story



Nutrition



Working with Adults

One thing I would like to do more of is ..

THE HEART PROJECT



- Health Education and Art for Resiliency Teaching
- Community - Based Participatory Research Method
- Two-Tiered Intervention Approach

Student Interventions

- Meditation/ Deep Breathing Routines
- Nutrition Education
- Self-expression of well-being through the medium of art
- Indigenous children's literature emphasizing cultural values

Educator Interventions

- Professional Development: culturally responsive/ trauma-informed teaching strategies
- Classroom observations
- Teacher feedback and coaching



HEART Intervention Program

- Breathing and Meditation
- Resiliency Read- Aloud
- Healthy Moment
- Art and Creativity Project
- Share and Student Check-In

RESULTS

Participants:

- Schools - 6
- Educators - 51, 22 research participants
- Students – 425, 8-13 year-olds

Duration:

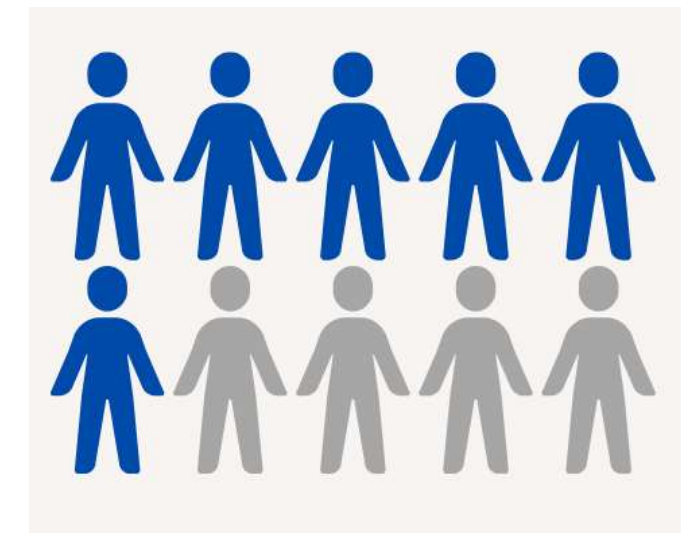
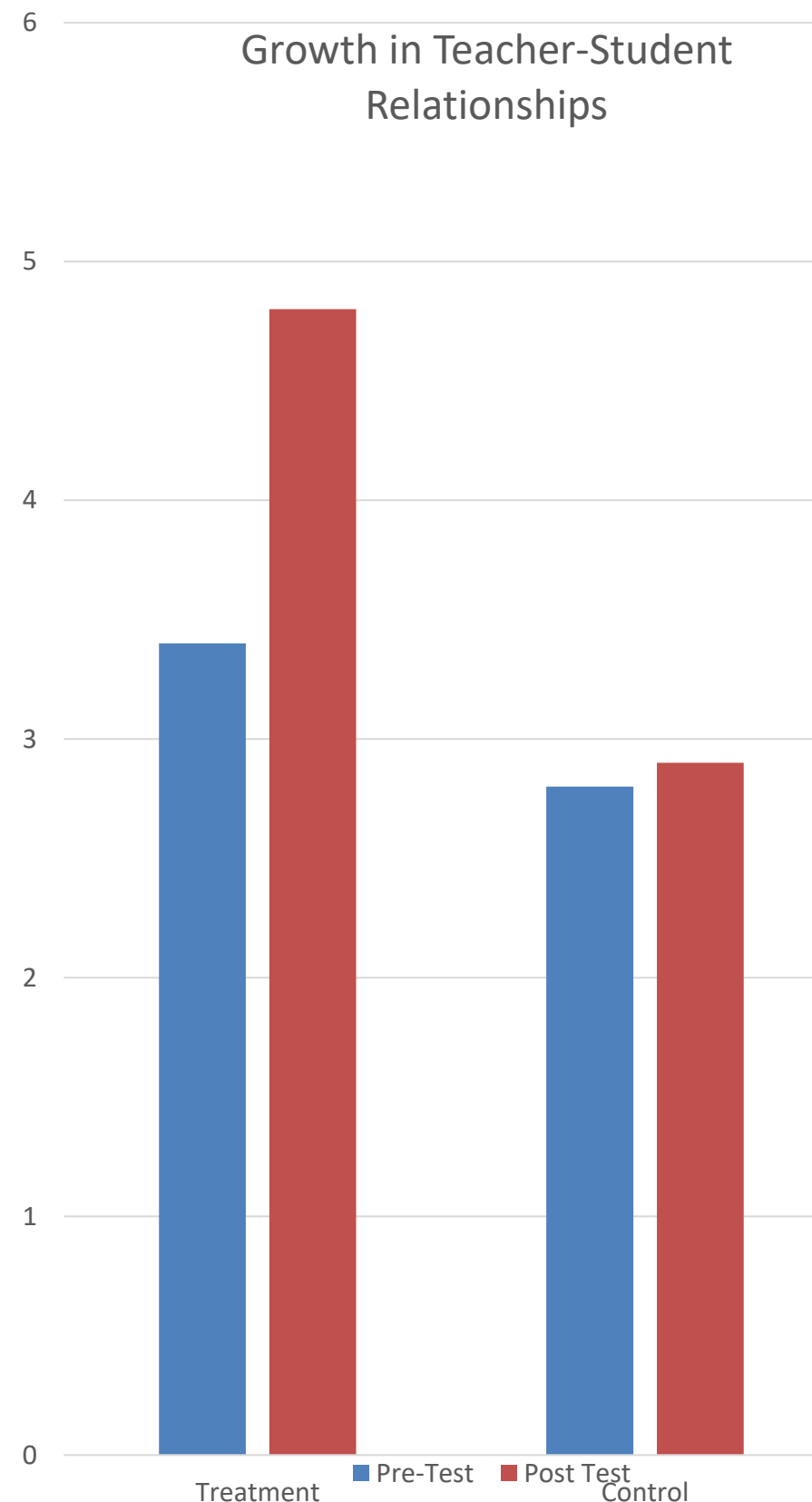
- 4 years

Qualitative data:

- Semi-structured interviews
- Observations
- Field Notes

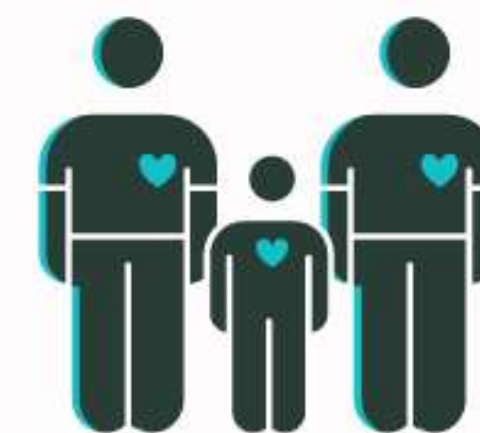
Quantitative Data

- Observational Rubric
- Student Surveys
- Artifacts



Pre-Intervention: 6 out of 10 students reported disliking school.

Teacher/Student relationships are correlated with overall classroom climate and student resiliency.



"My family came to see my art. It made me proud to show my Elders"

Families reported enjoying the art show and noted growth in their student's emotional development.

Significance

- It is the school setting that provides the greatest opportunity for students to feel they have autonomy over their health, offering opportunities for self-expression of health-harming behaviors with supportive health education in a safe environment.
- Creating strategies to support the emotional, physical, and psychological needs of children affected by trauma is essential.
- The classroom environment impacts the long-term health and well-being of students, teachers, and the community.
(Zajacova & Lawrence, 2018).



Adult & Educator Training

Our Ancestors Walk With Us



Informational Materials Include:

- Videos
- Infographics
- Research
- Professional Development Modules



Historical Trauma

Historical trauma impacts all aspects of the learning environment, yet not all effects of historical trauma are negative.

[Learn More](#)



Trauma-Informed Teaching

Trauma-informed teaching practices provide the mechanisms for all students to be successful in the classroom.

[Learn More](#)



Culturally-Responsive Instruction

Instruction built around the shared beliefs of a community can provide a powerful model for learning.

[Learn More](#)

Adult & Educator Training

Key Highlights:

- Professional Development
- Multiple options to meet your time parameters
- Differentiated activities to adapt to your audience
- Covers:
 - Historical Trauma
 - Intergenerational Trauma
 - Culturally Responsive Pedagogy
 - Practical Strategies for Teaching and Learning



HEART TOOLKIT

be kind to everyone
Stick up for people
never give up
believe in yourself and everyone else
never be a bully
be anyone you can't be
Perfect



Includes:

- Curriculum
- Examples of Projects
- Book List
- Vital Signs Observational Tool
- Student Check-In Sheet
- Professional Development Modules
- Videos
- Research

Heart Toolkit Access



THE HEART PROJECT

Hello and welcome! We're delighted to share the beautiful work teachers and students are doing to create resilient communities across the rural and Tribal lands of the North American Northern Plains.

Our Mission



*“Trauma leaves an imprint within
each individual. It’s something that a
student always carries with them, and
yeah, it definitely affects our
classrooms”*

Non-Indigenous Classroom Teacher - 2023



CONTACT US



Travel South Dakota. (2025, March). *Feathers, Beads, and Fringe*. <https://www.travelsouthdakota.com>

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