



RESILIENT OAKLAND COMMUNITIES AND KIDS (ROCK): Identifying Triggers in Your Teaching Practice

This self-reflection tool is used as part of the ROCK trauma informed professional development series to help teachers and staff identify triggers in their teaching practice.

Oakland Starting Smart and Strong (OSSS) developed the ROCK program to build knowledge about protective factors and resilience, trauma and its impact on children's health and learning, and classroom-based trauma informed practices for early childhood educators. It also supports self-awareness in adults about their own experiences with trauma, and teaches self-care strategies they can use to support their well-being.

ROCK is an ongoing teacher training framework drawing from evidence-based Trauma Informed Practices for children, adults and systems, that includes in person and virtual group trainings, Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), educator coaching, yoga and self care resources. ROCK also has tools for educators, including this self-reflection trigger assessment tool and a [checklist of trauma-responsive classroom strategies](#).

ROCK lifts up the collective skills, knowledge and cultural assets of individuals and agencies within Oakland as critical expertise. Partners have included Oakland Unified School District, City of Oakland Head Start/Early Head Start, New Teacher Center, Early Learning Lab and childhood social emotional and/or trauma informed practices experts, Dr. Julie Nicholson, Julie Kurtz (Center for Optimal Brain Integration), Dr. LaWanda Wesley, Shawn Bryant and Melissa Luc.

For more information, please visit <https://www.oaklandsmartandstrong.org/rock.html> or contact info@oaklandsmartandstrong.org.

A note on language and terminology: Language and understanding about trauma and emotional regulation continues to grow and evolve. We recognize that the terminology within this tool (including the word "trigger") may not be the most up-to-date language. This tool was originally created in collaboration with early childhood educators; we will continue to center their leadership in future revisions.

OSSS Resilient Oakland Communities and Kids Collaborative; 2017, revised 2023



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Identifying Triggers in Your Teaching Practice

Please read each item and answer honestly; indicate your level of agreement with each item from 1-5 (with 1 being the least and 5 being the most).

1	2	3	4	5
Does not bother me at all	Makes me feel a little uncomfortable	Makes me feel stressed	This upsets me	I'm going to explode!

I am triggered...







	1	2	3	4	5
1. by loud noises.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. when I have to wait for something.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. when my daily routine is changes.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. when someone whines.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. when other people are talking near me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. when I don't understand what someone is saying to me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. when someone starts to talk with me unexpectedly.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. when someone asks me for help.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. when a colleague gives me feedback.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. when I'm exhausted.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11. when someone tells me to correct a mistake.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12. when some disagrees with me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13. when working with a coach.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14. when talking with families.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
15. when being observed.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
16. when I see students are having a conflict.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
17. when someone points out a mistake I made.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
18. when I disagree with a colleague or supervisor.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
19. by deadlines or time pressures.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
20. when others touch me (i.e, handshake, pat on the back etc.).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



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1 Does not bother me at all	2 Makes me feel a little uncomfortable	3 Makes me feel stressed	4 This upsets me	5 I'm going to explode!

I am triggered...

	1	2	3	4	5
21. when I don't finish something on time.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
22. when I am confused about a task/activity.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
23. when I have to follow specific instructions.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
24. by violence in the school community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
25. when my supervisor gives me feedback.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
26. by fears of deportation for my students and their families.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
27. when my students are homeless or housing insecure.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
28. when being rated by an evaluator.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
29. when language barriers prevent me from communicating.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
30. by not having time to reflect and talk with my colleagues about my teaching practice.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
31. when working with a mental health consultant.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
32. when my supervisor gives me constructive criticism.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
33. when I feel different than everyone around me (i.e., race, gender, language spoken, diet, disability, etc.).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
34. by not having adequate staff coverage.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
35. when I don't understand a certain idea or concept.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
36. when teased by others.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
37. by asking for help.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
38. when I have to do something new or different.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
39. when my students are hungry.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
40. other(s):	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



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Now that you have finished rating these items, identify your **BIGGEST TRIGGERS**. These are items that you scored a “5” (or perhaps a “4”). Write those down below and be as specific as you can. For example, if certain noises make you want to “explode”, describe the specific noise that makes you feel this way.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

After reflecting on these triggers:

- *How might these triggers affect your work with young children? with your team?*
- *What can you do to prepare for your workday knowing you may become triggered while at work?*
- *What strategies can you use when you're triggered in order to continue effectively supporting your students?*