

**MEDIA RELEASE**

DATE: (Of the release)

CONTACT: (Name and contact information)

**LOCAL EDUCATORS AND DOCTORS PAIR UP TO DISCUSS EFFECTS OF TOXIC STRESS ON STUDENTS’ LIVES**

 (NAME OF CITY WHERE EVENT OCCURED) – More than 100 members of the (Local Education Association), (school administrators) and community members gathered together to discuss the effects of toxic stress on students and what we might do as a community to help improve their lives.

 The group watched *Paper Tigers*, a documentary that provides an intimate look into the lives of students at Lincoln High School, an alternative school that specializes in educating traumatized youth. The film examines the inspiring promise of Trauma Informed Communities – a movement showing great promise in healing youth struggling with the dark legacy of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and chronic “toxic” stress.

 Science shows that the brains of children who live in a constant heightened state of fight or flight due to problems caused by poverty, living conditions, violence or substance abuse in the home actually change and prevent learning from occurring.

 When schools, like the one in Walla Walla, Wash., featured in the film, concentrate on addressing the issues caused by ACEs, grades and graduation rates actually improved. Students in the film ended up thriving rather than failing.

 The Illinois Education Association and the Illinois Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics know this is true and are trying to spread the message across the state so that our schools can partner with communities to create learning environments that are trauma informed.

 Doctors note that children who score high on ACEs testing (see [www.ACEStoohigh.com](http://www.ACEStoohigh.com)) will become adults who experience higher rates of addiction, health problems and learning issues, which can lead to early disease, death or prison.

 (Educators, doctors and community members) then held a panel discussion after the movie screening to discuss local experiences and what we might be able to do to do better for our children.

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