



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

**SXSW EDU® WELCOMES OPRAH WINFREY AND DR. BRUCE PERRY AS THE OPENING KEYNOTE AT THE 2021 ONLINE EVENT**

*Co-Authors of “What Happened to You” Address Childhood Trauma and How It Impacts Who We Become*

**February 9, 2021, AUSTIN, Texas** - [SXSW EDU](#) is pleased to announce that Oprah Winfrey and Dr. Bruce Perry, the co-authors of the upcoming book *What Happened to You* (Flatiron Books out April 27), will open the 2021 virtual event as the keynote session on Tuesday, March 9, 2021 at 9:30am CT.

The fireside chat will feature global media icon and philanthropist, Ms. Oprah Winfrey and world-renowned brain development and trauma expert, Dr. Bruce Perry, M.D. Ph.D. Together they will explore the impact of childhood trauma on who we become, the decisions we make, and how healing must start with one question “what happened to you?” Ms. Winfrey and Dr. Perry focus on understanding how shifting the approach to trauma and allowing understanding of the past allows for an opening of the door to resilience and healing in a proven, powerful way.

“When I first heard Dr. Perry speak about trauma-informed education, it served as a fundamental shift in the way I approached my school in South Africa. I knew I wanted to learn more, study more, and share his work with as many people as I could. I look forward to our conversation at SXSW EDU with educators who understand the long-term impact of addressing trauma from this lens,” said Ms. Winfrey.

Dr. Perry commented, “The more healthy relationships a child has, the more likely they are to recover from trauma and thrive. Relationships are the agents of change and the most powerful therapy is human love.”

The exchange of ideas around mental health and education has continued to evolve over the years at SXSW EDU — and science and education have worked to support the “whole learner.” Ms. Winfrey and Dr. Perry’s keynote comes at a particularly pertinent moment as students are experiencing a number of socially disruptive events from the pandemic and climate change to civil and racial unrest.

“SXSW EDU is committed to tackling issues that our community is facing every day,” said SXSW EDU Founder and Executive Producer Ron Reed. “The subject of mental health and trauma is one that is top of mind to learners, educators, and parents everywhere — and we are honored to have Ms. Winfrey and Dr. Perry deliver the opening keynote at this year’s virtual event with such a critical discussion. SXSW EDU always aims to provide high caliber presentations that capture the essence of what is influencing the state of education.”

Ms. Winfrey’s career has included one indisputable hallmark — the ability to create an unparalleled connection with people around the world. As host of the top-rated, award-winning “The Oprah Winfrey Show,” she entertained, enlightened, and uplifted millions of viewers for twenty-five years. Ms. Winfrey’s accomplishments as a global media leader and philanthropist have established her as one of the most influential and admired public figures in the world today.

Dr. Perry is the principal of the Neurosequential Network, senior fellow of the ChildTrauma Academy and an adjunct professor in the Departments of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at the Feinberg School of Medicine at Northwestern University in Chicago, and the School of Allied Health, College of Science, Health and Engineering, La Trobe University, Melbourne, Victoria Australia. Over the last 30 years, Dr. Perry has been an active teacher, clinician, and researcher in children’s mental health and neurosciences, holding a variety of academic positions. He is a world-renowned author of several powerful books and more than 500 journal articles.

For more information on SXSW EDU Online, please visit the [SXSW EDU website](#).

**About SXSW EDU:**

The SXSW EDU® Conference & Festival cultivates and empowers a community of engaged stakeholders to advance teaching and learning. The annual event affords registrants open access to engaging sessions, immersive workshops, interactive learning experiences, film screenings, early-stage startups, business opportunities, and networking. SXSW EDU is a component of the South by Southwest® family of conferences and festivals that has grown from 800 to over 8,000 registrants in the last decade. Join the passionate and innovative community at SXSW EDU Online, March 9-11, 2021. For more information, please visit [sxswedu.com](#).

**Press Credentials:**

The deadline for press accreditation is tomorrow, Wednesday, February 10, 2021. To register, please go to [sxswedu.com/press](#).

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