

1

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



2

---

---

---

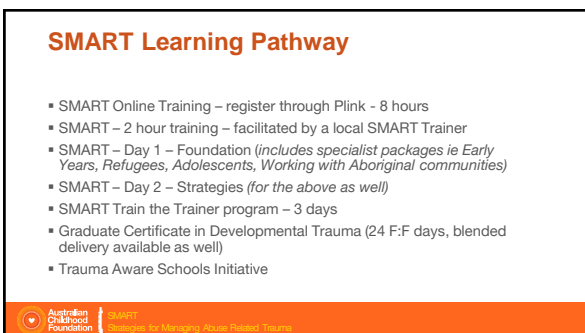
---

---

---

---

---



3

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Introductions**



- Name
- Role

*What are you passionate about in the work you are doing, with children and young people who have experienced trauma?*

Image source: ©2011 ACF

Australian Childhood Foundation | SMART Strategies for Managing Abuse Related Trauma

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

4

**Outline of our day**



- 9.00am Start
- 10.45am – 11.00am Morning Tea
- 12.45pm – 1.15pm Lunch
- 3.15pm – Evaluations
- 3.30pm Finish

Image source: ©2011 ACF

Australian Childhood Foundation | SMART Strategies for Managing Abuse Related Trauma

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

5

**Session outline**

- **examine** brain development in children
- **define** complex abuse related trauma
- **understand** the impact of trauma on children’s and young people’s development and functioning
- **develop** strategies for working with traumatised children
- **discuss** whole school or service approaches to supporting traumatised children

Australian Childhood Foundation | SMART Strategies for Managing Abuse Related Trauma

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

6

### Key learning outcomes – success criteria

- **develop** an enhanced understanding of complex abuse related trauma, with a particular focus on its effects on brain functioning.
- **apply** a framework for assessing the impact of complex abuse related trauma on children and young people.
- **build** on practice skills to apply key models of intervention which promote recovery for children in an education setting.



7

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Principles guiding this session



Your emotional safety is paramount

8

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### SMART PRACTICE



9

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Safety and relationships are key**

It is important to remember that safety – feeling and being safe and having safe, connected and attuned relationships are key to supporting a child or young person who has experienced trauma.



Image source: ©2011 ACF

Australian Childhood Foundation | SMART Strategies for Managing Abuse Related Trauma

10

---

---

---

---


---

---

---

---

**Stress....**



- POSITIVE** Brief increases in heart rate, mild elevations in stress hormone levels.
- TOLERABLE** Serious, temporary stress responses, buffered by supportive relationships.
- TOXIC** Prolonged activation of stress response systems in the absence of protective relationships.

Australian Childhood Foundation | SMART Strategies for Managing Abuse Related Trauma

11

---

---

---

---

---

---


---

---

**Defining trauma**

**Trauma** is not what happens to you,  
but what happens **inside** you

(Gabor Mate 2018)



Australian Childhood Foundation | SMART Strategies for Managing Abuse Related Trauma

12

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**The growing brain.....**  
How much does a brain weigh?




Image source: ©2011 ACF

Australian Childhood Foundation | SMART Strategies for Managing Abuse Related Trauma

13

---

---

---

---

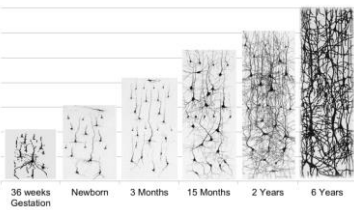
---

---

---

---

**Neural Circuit Formation in the Early Years**



36 weeks Gestation    Newborn    3 Months    15 Months    2 Years    6 Years

Australian Childhood Foundation | SMART Strategies for Managing Abuse Related Trauma

14

---

---

---

---

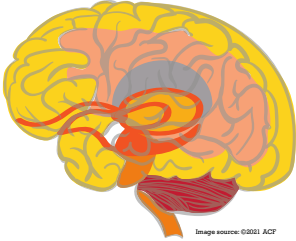
---

---

---

---

**Brain development**



**Cortex**  
Reasoning/judging centre  
3-6 years

**Limbic System**  
Emotional centre  
1-4 years

**Cerebellum**  
Motor centre  
Birth-2 years

**Brain Stem**  
Basic survival functions  
Pre-birth-8 months

Image source: ©2011 ACF

Australian Childhood Foundation | SMART Strategies for Managing Abuse Related Trauma

15

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Where trauma affects the brain

**Amygdala**  
Survival response centre within the limbic lobe that becomes enlarged and more sensitive the more it is activated through responding to threats

**Hippocampus**  
Consolidates memory by providing the context/ sequential data for episodic memories. Goes offline if trauma overwhelms and disrupts cortex.

**Corpus Callosum**  
Bridge between the 2 hemispheres. Chronic stress can damage and thin down this bundle of neurons

**Cerebellum**  
Difficulties with balance, gross and fine motor skills, spatial awareness

**Brain stem**  
Dysregulation, increase heart rate, breathing and sleep difficulties

Australian Childhood Foundation | SMART Strategies for Managing Abuse Related Trauma

16

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Neuronal connections

- The neural system has the ability for one neuron to communicate with up to 10,000 other neurons
- The newborn brain has approximately 100 billion neurons

Image source: ©2018 ACF

Australian Childhood Foundation | SMART Strategies for Managing Abuse Related Trauma

17

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Experiences Build Brain Architecture

Three Core Concepts in Early Development

NATIONAL SCIENTIFIC COUNCIL ON THE DEVELOPING CHILD  
Center on the Developing Child | HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Australian Childhood Foundation | SMART Strategies for Managing Abuse Related Trauma

18

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Strengthening neuronal connections

Provide opportunities for repeated experiences

- Ensure students have an opportunity to practice tasks over and over
- Provide encouragement when tasks are achieved as this will connect to the brains' reward system
- Include lots of physical activities that are repetitive – playing musical instruments, skipping, dancing etc
- Model positive relational connections, emotion, fun and relational attunement




Image source: ©2011 ACF

Australian Childhood Foundation | SMART Strategies for Managing Abuse Related Trauma

19

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Growing and regulating the brainstem

Provide activities which are rhythmical and synchronous with others:

- Rhythmic sounds - stories, songs, rhymes & music
- Rhythmic movement
- Rhythmic touch






Image source: ©2011 ACF

Australian Childhood Foundation | SMART Strategies for Managing Abuse Related Trauma

20

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Growing and regulating the cerebellum

Provide activities which have support and balance, develops gross and fine motor skill elements and are synchronous with others

- Balancing activities
- Stretching – aligning the spine activities
- Spine/lumbar support
- Throwing and catching objects
- Writing, drawing, colouring, making






Image source: ©2011 ACF

Australian Childhood Foundation | SMART Strategies for Managing Abuse Related Trauma

21

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Growing and regulating the amygdala

Provide activities that support emotional and social connection, understand the implicit memory needs and that calm and connect

- Explicit emotional literacy teaching
- Calm, sensory supportive environments
- Support the child, reassure
- Stay present – provide safety




Image source: ©2021 ACF

Australian Childhood Foundation | QUANT | Strategies for Managing Abuse-Related Trauma

22

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Growing and regulating the hippocampus

Provide activities that support memory retention and recall and review and repetition

- Practice activities and learning skills over and over
- Reinforce learning through repetition
- Provide playful opportunities to learn
- Use visuals to assist

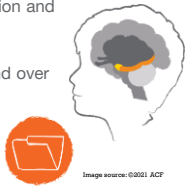


Image source: ©2021 ACF

Australian Childhood Foundation | QUANT | Strategies for Managing Abuse-Related Trauma

23

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Growing and regulating the cortical areas

Provide activities that connect the cortical areas, through choice, problem solving, planning and voluntary movement

- Play thinking and choice games
- Map out and plan activities together
- Break down problems to work through
- Allow choice and options
- Use voluntary movement activities




Image source: ©2021 ACF

Australian Childhood Foundation | QUANT | Strategies for Managing Abuse-Related Trauma

24

---

---

---

---

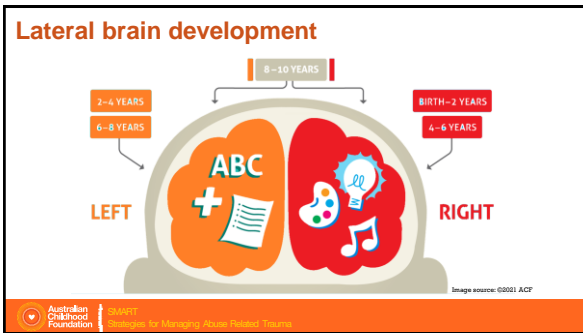
---

---

---

---





25

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Attachment and the right brain

- Neuroimaging studies show areas of the right hemisphere lighting up in the brains of parents & infants during non-verbal interactions. (Schore, 2003)
- A secure attachment relationship facilitates right brain development and promotes efficient affect regulation.

Image source: ©2021 ACF

Australian Childhood Foundation | SMART Strategies for Managing Abuse-Related Trauma

26

---

---

---

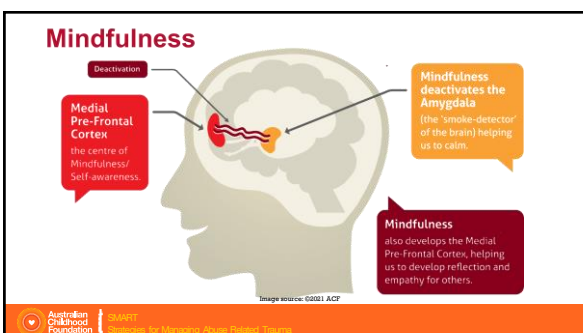
---

---

---

---

---



27

---

---

---

---


---

---

---

---

**Stop...Pause...Play**



**HOW TO BE MINDFUL**

**STOP**  
 What do you see, hear, and feel? If possible, make sure your feet are firmly on the ground.

**PAUSE**  
 Focus on your breath. Breathe in slowly, right down into your belly, then exhale completely. Take 5 more slow breaths, being aware of each breath as you exhale. After several such breaths, you will find that your heart rate has slowed down, your breathing is deeper and you will feel calmer. If so, the next breath that returns your body and allows you to feel calmer and that clearly.

**PLAY**  
 Engaged in your child the way you want to. When you are in this calm state, you will probably be better able to respond in a thoughtful or considered way to your child. You will also be more likely to stay connected to what is going on for your children. You will be more aware of their experience of the situation and how they might be feeling.

Image source: ©2021 ACF

Australian Childhood Foundation | QMATT Strategies for Managing Abuse-Related Trauma

28

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**The importance of play**

“ Play is a neural exercise and I have never met a child who is able to resist being part of this type of exercise ”  
 Theresa Kestley

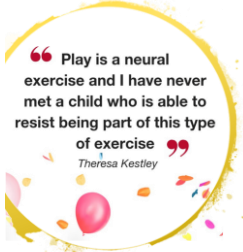


Image source: ©2021 ACF

Australian Childhood Foundation | QMATT Strategies for Managing Abuse-Related Trauma

29

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Neuroplasticity**




Image source: ©2021 ACF

Australian Childhood Foundation | QMATT Strategies for Managing Abuse-Related Trauma

30

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Interpersonal attunement

- When people are in relationships, the ability of one to regulate him/herself, affects the other's ability to regulate
- The child's arousal shapes, and is shaped by, relationships

Child's movement in her/his window of tolerance

Movement in my window of tolerance

Image source: ©2021 ACF

Australian Childhood Foundation | QUANT | Strategies for Managing Abuse-Related Trauma

31

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Attunement, misattunement & repair

'good enough' parenting (Ed Tronic)

Matching State Approx 30%

Rupture

Mis - Match Approx 70%

Repair Learning

Matching State Approx 30%

Rupture

Mis - Match Approx 70%

Repair Learning

Matching State Approx 30%

Australian Childhood Foundation | QUANT | Strategies for Managing Abuse-Related Trauma

32

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Attunement, misattunement & repair

(Ed Tronic)

In even the healthiest relationships, rupture is inevitable and can have positive effects. Children learn:

*'Life isn't perfect. We can recover from mistakes'*  
*'I can change my feelings'*  
*'Together we can face the world'*

Prolonged rupture without repair causes a cascade of negative psychophysiological effects. Children learn:

*'I am helpless'*  
*'You can't be trusted'*  
*'The world is threatening'*

Image source: ©2021 ACF

Australian Childhood Foundation | QUANT | Strategies for Managing Abuse-Related Trauma

33

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Reframing our approach

Rather than asking:

***"What are you doing?"***  
and  
***"How can I stop it?"***

Ask: ***"What are you trying to tell me?"***  
and  
***"What do you need from me?"***




Image source: ©2021 ACF

Australian Childhood Foundation | SMART Strategies for Managing Abuse-Related Trauma

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

34

### Repair in practice

***'What you did is not ok,  
but you are still a good person  
and I still love you'***



Image source: ©2021 ACF

Australian Childhood Foundation | SMART Strategies for Managing Abuse-Related Trauma

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

35

### Building safety and connection

- Children effected by trauma need stable, safe, consistent environments and relationships to help them to be calm and open to learning
- Safety = predictable and consistent routines, relationships and responses



Image source: ©2021 ACF

Australian Childhood Foundation | SMART Strategies for Managing Abuse-Related Trauma

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

36

**Neuroception of safety: predictability**

Predictability is a metaphor for safety.

**“The removal of threat is not the same as the presence of safety”**  
(Porges, 2014)

Australian Childhood Foundation | SMART Strategies for Managing Abuse-Related Trauma

37

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Building predictability**

Predictability is achieved by:

- Reliable routines e.g. bedtime story/song, start to day
- Using visual cues to help children prepare for the day – sequencing...better to use photos of the actual child, than clipart
- Preparing children for what’s coming next
- Talking to baby/child about your intentions
- Same staff & caregiver/s every day




Image source: ©2021 ACF

Australian Childhood Foundation | SMART Strategies for Managing Abuse-Related Trauma

38

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Transitions**

List all the transitions you expect children to traverse in one ordinary day

- **How many are essential?**
- How can you provide safe passage for children through the transition?
  - Safe Person
  - Safe Activity
  - Safe Place

Australian Childhood Foundation | SMART Strategies for Managing Abuse-Related Trauma

39

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Building safety and connection**

Managing transitions and change is extremely difficult for traumatised children

- transitions are experienced as a threat
- they feel a lose of their sense of safety
- they may revert to survival mode

**How can you help children to feel safe during TRANSITIONS?**

Australian Childhood Foundation | QUANT | Strategies for Managing Abuse Related Trauma | 40

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

40

**Calming and regulation**

- Traumatized children find it difficult to regulate their own feelings of stress/distress.
- The best way to help the extremely dysregulated child is to remain calm and regulated yourself.



Image source: ©2021 ACF

Australian Childhood Foundation | QUANT | Strategies for Managing Abuse Related Trauma | 41

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

41

**Quality and best practice**

As educators there are particular skills that are central to quality and best practice:

- **Relationships and Connections**
- **Child led practice**
- **Positive interactions**
- **Consistent approach**
- **Compassionate Practice**

Australian Childhood Foundation | QUANT | Strategies for Managing Abuse Related Trauma

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

42

**Engagement with safety**

- understand & respect the child's need for distance in relationship
- increase your tolerance for 'stuckness' and 'crisis'
- practise mindfulness
- use phrases like: 'I noticed that...', 'Isn't that interesting!'
- practise self-care and seek support
- practise calming techniques

(Laraine Fisher)




Image source: ©2021 ACF

Australian Childhood Foundation | QUANT | Strategies for Managing Abuse-Related Trauma

43

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Trauma- based behaviour and you...**

- Don't take the child's behaviour personally
- Don't take the parent's behaviour personally
- Be aware of what presses your own buttons
- Get comfortable with discomfort!



Image source: ©2021 ACF

Australian Childhood Foundation | QUANT | Strategies for Managing Abuse-Related Trauma

44

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Deep listening**

**'To listen in reciprocal relationships with no judgment, just to try to understand'**

(JUDY ATKINSON 2017, the Value of Deep Listening-The Aboriginal Gift to the Nation)



Image source: ©2021 ACF

Australian Childhood Foundation | QUANT | Strategies for Managing Abuse-Related Trauma

45

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Summary – Be a safe harbour**

*'Be my anchor when I'm all at sea'*  
**PREDICTABLE PERSON**

*'Ferry me to calmer waters'*

**SING-SONG VOICE**  
**RHYTHMIC, REPETITIVE ACTIVITY WITH OTHERS**  
**SENSORY INPUT**




Australian Childhood Foundation | SMART Strategies for Managing Abuse-Related Trauma | 46

46

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Day 2 Strategies – what's coming up in our next session...**

In Day 2 you will

- Be introduced to the Polyvagal Theory and the concept of the Window of Tolerance.
- Explore the different arousal levels and consider supportive strategies for each.
- Explore further the meaning of the behaviours we see in our students.
- Build a toolkit of strategies, focusing on the SMART Audit Tool



47

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Holding hope**



Image source: ©ACF 2011

What are your hopes for the children you work with?

What are your hopes for your school?



48

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



**Thank you for your participation...**

We appreciate your feedback!




Image source: GACF 2021

**Australian Childhood Foundation** QUANTY  
Strategies for Managing Nurse Related Trauma

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

49