


Regulation & Trauma Responsive Planning

Renmark Primary School
November 2021
Melissa Powney



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The Australian Childhood Foundation acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the traditional custodians of this land and we pay our respect to their Elders past, present and future.




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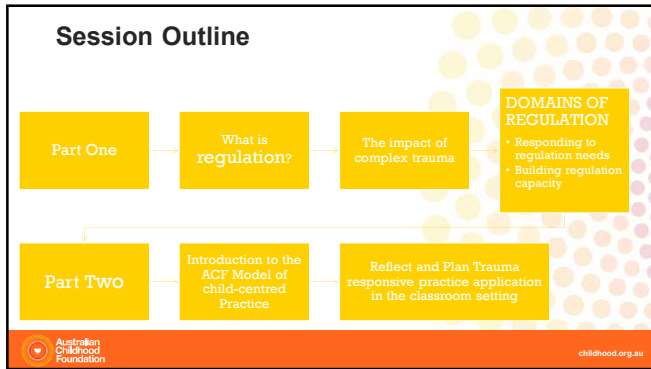
Learning Outcomes

1. Understand what is meant by regulation, and how it is impacted by complex trauma
2. Consider self-regulation from a developmental framework
3. To be able to assess the potential impacts of abuse related trauma on the child or young person
4. To gain a knowledge of the strategies and activities that we may use in the classroom to assist a child or young person manage the impacts of abuse related trauma



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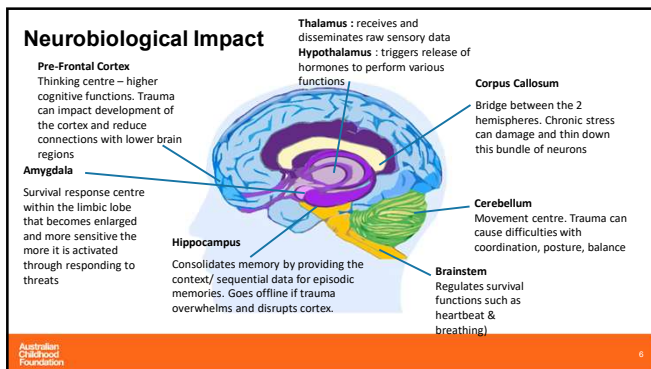
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Revision

Jot down your top 5 key messages to summarise your understandings about trauma

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Regulation

Observation
Understanding
&
Response



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Think back to a time...



- When you felt well regulated.
How do you know you were well regulated?
- When you felt dysregulated and someone co-regulated you.
What did they do that helped?
- During a difficult day at work you self-regulated.
What skills did you draw on to be able to do this?

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Self regulation: “the ability to monitor and control our own behaviour, emotions, or thoughts, altering them in accordance with the demands of the situation.”

(Littlefield-Cook & Cook, 2009)

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When we are regulated ...

"...we are in a position of mental and physical integration where our thoughts and emotions are influencing each other to remain focused, moderate, and stable.



We are able to be aware of the demands of the present moment, consider options, and respond in a sensitive and complete manner.

(Bomber & Hughes, 2013, p. 44)



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"When regulated, it is as if we have a thermostat that keeps us grounded and focused on maintaining a moderate range of emotion where we function at our best.



When we are dysregulated, our thermostat is broken and we are subject to intense emotional expressions, distracted thinking, and impulsive actions."

(Bomber & Hughes, 2013, p. 45)



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Regulation Domains

- Emotional
- Cognitive
- Physiological
- Relational
- Behavioural



Bring to mind a child...



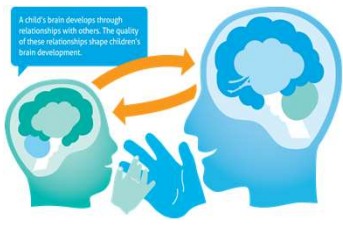
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Impact of complex trauma on the development of self-regulation

- Neurobiological impact
- Physiological Impact
- Ongoing environmental influences
- Early care-giving experiences


A child's brain develops through relationships with others. The quality of these relationships shape children's brain development.



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What do you see?



Before we can engage in social behaviour and learning we must first feel safe.
(Porges, 2015, p.115).



(Image from van der Kolk, 2015, p.108)

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Image source: <http://www.cornishockey.com.au/12002>

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Ongoing environmental influences

Many children continue to live in high stress environments:

- Ongoing parental substance use / mental health
- Exposure to domestic violence
- Unpredictability
- Basic needs met inconsistently
- Unstable placements
- Difficult contact visits with parents
- Separation from siblings



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Regulating Emotions

- Normal developmental expectations
- Indicators of dysregulation
- Capacity building



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Regulating Emotions

Normal Developmental Expectations
What can we expect at what age?

Indicators of Dysregulation
Age-appropriate vs problematic

Capacity Building
Co-regulating strong emotions
Enhancing positive emotions
Promoting emotional literacy



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Cortisol

Can help:




- your body respond to stress or danger – **fight, flight, freeze, submit response**
- increase your body's metabolism of glucose
- control your blood pressure
- reduce inflammation

KEY
 ■ irregular curve
 ■ normal curve

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Polyvagal Theory and Protective Responses (Porges, 2012)

Behavioural Functions	Body Functions
 Social Engagement Soothing and calming Indicates safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Lowers or raises vocalization pitch * Regulates middle ear muscles to perceive human voice * Changes facial expressivity * Head turning * Tears and eyelids * Slows or speeds heart rate
 Mobilization Fight or Flight Active Freeze Moderate to extreme danger	Hyper arousal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Increases heart rate * Sweat increases * Inhibits gastrointestinal function * Narrowing blood vessels- to slow blood flow to extremities * Release of adrenaline
 Immobilization Collapse or submission Death feigning Increased pain threshold Conserves metabolic resources Life threatening situations	Hypo- arousal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Slows heart rate * Constricts bronchi * Stimulates gastrointestinal function

Evolution

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Before we can engage in social behaviour and learning we must first feel safe.

Stephen Porges, 2015




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Building Capacity

1. Enhancing positive emotions
2. Co-regulating strong emotions
3. Promoting emotional literacy and body awareness




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Regulating Physiology

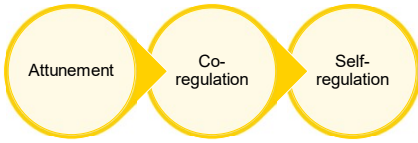
- Sensory processing
- Indicators of dysregulation
- Building capacity



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Developmental continuum




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The Rhythm of life




Heart beat



Rhythm



Rhyme






Intonation

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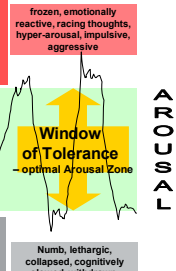
Understanding and teaching students about the WOT

Hyperarousal Fight Flight Active Freeze	
Social engagement When we feel and are safe we will be able to: - Play well - Engage well with others and our environment - Think well and make decisions	
Hypoarousal Feigned death Flop Collapse	

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SMART Strategies for Managing Abuse Related Trauma

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Changes in Arousal States

Affect: Shame, anger Thought: "I'm a screw up, this is unfair" Behaviour: Hitting, running away Sense of self: "I am bad, I am broken" Consciousness: Hyper-focused, narrow, rigid		Frozen, emotionally reactive, racing thoughts, hyper-arousal, impulsive, aggressive
Affect: Joy, pleasure Thought: "This is fun, I'm good at this" Behaviour: Increased, sustained effort Sense of self: "I'm competent, I can do this" Consciousness: Focused and flexible	Window of Tolerance -optimal Arousal Zone-	A R O U S A L
Affect: Shame Thought: "I don't care, I can't do it" Behaviour: Collapsing, spacing out Sense of self: "I am bad, I am broken" Consciousness: Diffuse, spacey	Numb, lethargic, collapsed, cognitively slowed, withdrawn, distant	

(Ogden, Minton, Pain 2006)

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What zone am I in?

Use tools to get in the green zone.

5 I am not safe. I need to leave before anyone gets hurt.

4 I am losing control. I need a ChaiVice break to calm down.

3 I am not fully in control. I need to take deep breaths.

2 Things are ok. I can handle it.

1 I feel super.

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PACE

- **Playful** – light, open, hopeful, spontaneous.
- **Accepting** – unconditional acceptance of the experience of the young person (feelings, emotions and thoughts).
- **Curiosity** – non-judgemental, active interest in the young person's experience, as well as behaviours to learn what is triggering them.
- **Empathy** – about past hurts and present challenges. A 'felt' sense of the young person, which is actively experienced and communicated.

Dan Hughes (2009)

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Safe seating


Safe places

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8 senses

1. **Visual**
2. **Auditory**
3. **Olfactory** (smell)
4. **Gustatory** (taste)
5. **Tactile System** (touch)
6. **Vestibular** (sense of head movement in space)
7. **Proprioceptive** (sensations from muscles and joints of body)
8. **Interoception** (awareness of basic primary functions – hunger, toileting, breathing)




Vision Olfaction Gustation
Audition Somatosensory Vestibular Proprioception

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Olfactory

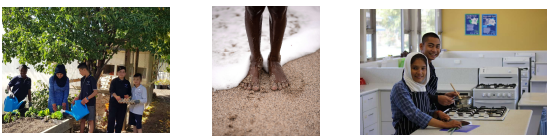


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Sensory triggers – sensory soothers

What are the sensory triggers?




Where are the opportunities for sensory soothing?

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Body Mapping


- cool or cold
- Warm or hot
- Pain or pleasure
- Sadness or happiness
- Anger or loving
- Fear or courage
- Weakness or strength
- Tight, holding parts or relaxed, free, soft areas
- Agitated areas or peaceful parts
- Parts you don't like or favourite parts



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Activities to support body awareness



Round – straight	Light – strong
Sit – stand	Under – over
Small – large	Yes – no
Freeze – melt	In – out
Push – pull	Tall – short
Wide – narrow	Loud – soft
Left – right	Up – down
Hot – cold	Happy – sad
Fast – slow	Fast slow

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Building Capacity

1. Implement consistent routines throughout the day to support hormone systems establishing rhythmic cycles.
2. Support students to practice *awareness of and response to* their physiological needs – thirst, hunger, stretching, etc. Don't be afraid to prompt! **HALT**
3. Provide a range of sensory experiences throughout the day. Be a keen observer, look for clues as to a child's preferred sensory modality, what seems to calm, and what seems to trigger. Facilitate conscious awareness of these sensations to help the child develop their own awareness, as this will help them develop the skills to regulate their own needs in this area.
4. Consider the physical learning and play environments e.g. lighting, seating, pictures, smells, sounds, colours, textures, distractions.

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Regulating Cognition

- Attention
- Awareness
- Concentration




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Attention & Concentration

- Keeping the cortex online
- The role of the "Superior Colliculus"
- Focused attention and sensory attention
- Left and Right Brain
- Brain breaks



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Impulse Control

RED BLUE GREEN

YELLOW ORANGE PURPLE

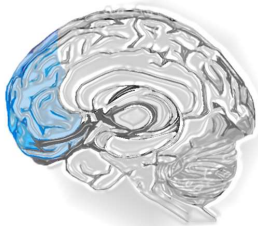
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Keeping the Cortex online

- Only possible if brain/body perceive safety and survival system can relax (therefore: meet safety needs as first priority).
- Encourage regular breathing exercises throughout the day – this not only calms the alarm system but also ensures enough oxygen is getting to the cortex
- Keeping our cortex online is HARD WORK! Include regular brain-breaks throughout the day and break up cortically-challenging subjects/tasks with creative/active tasks



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Fidget ideas



Deep pressure



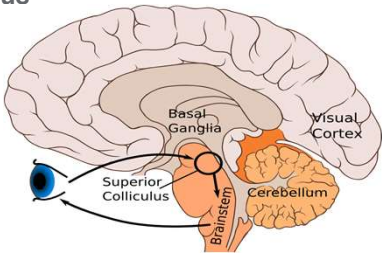
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Superior Colliculus

Sits just below the Thalamus. Triggers a behavioural response to environmental stimuli – primarily head and eye movements in response to sights and sounds.

- How might this function get in the way of learning?
- How can we utilise this function to enhance learning?




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Relational Regulation

- Noticing the need for connection
- Noticing the need for space
- Having appropriate strategies for getting these needs met




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Activity

- Think of a time when you needed "space" and haven't been able to have it. Try to remember how this felt emotionally, how it felt in your body, how it affected you mentally, and how you managed this.
- Think of a time when you needed connection. How did this feel? What did you do about it?
- **Discuss in groups** – how do we know when we need space or when we need connection?



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Regulating Behaviour

"Challenging behaviour occurs when the demands of the environment exceed a kid's capacity to respond adaptively."

Ross Greene




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What leads to dysregulated behaviour?

1. Dysregulation in other domains (unmet needs)
2. Under-developed Impulse control




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Increasing sense of Safety

Physical environment: Consider sensory factors – what promotes calm? What might trigger defensive/threat response?

“Human” environment: How do we use our voice, face and bodies to communicate safety? Do our interactions with students embody empathy and acceptance? Do our relationships prioritise predictability and consistency?




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Capacity Building

1. Match supports to developmental level
2. Support regulation capacity in other domains
3. Support the development of impulse control
4. Model, teach, acknowledge appropriate behaviours

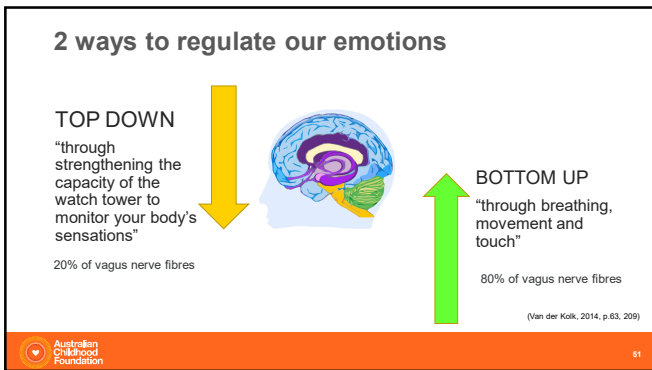


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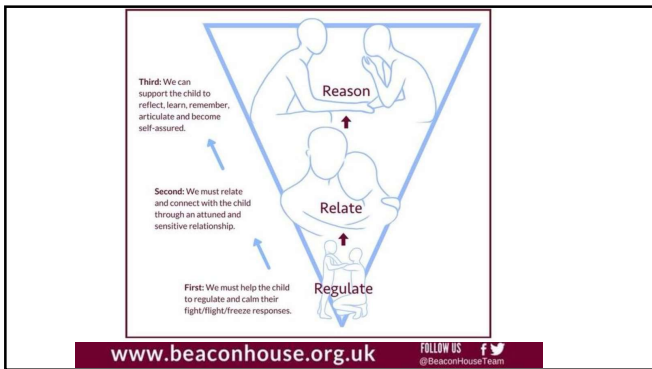
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Overview of Strategies to build capacity

<p>EMOTIONAL Build emotional literacy during moments of calm Validate and CO-REGULATE strong emotions</p> <p>PHYSIOLOGICAL Increase awareness of bodily sensations/reactions Support identifying & meeting physical needs Provide a variety of purposeful sensory activities Provide a range of micro-environments</p> <p>BEHAVIOURAL Assess and meet needs across other 4 domains Develop impulse control</p>	<p>COGNITIVE Use running themes to link content across subjects Limit unnecessary distractions (visual and noise audit)</p> <p>RELATIONAL Tune into cues re tolerable levels of interaction Support facilitated social interactions with peers</p> <p><i>Children need permission, opportunities, resources and support to practice their regulation skills</i></p>
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Trauma Responsive Practice Planning



REFLECTION



ACF MODEL OF PRACTICE




APPLICATION AND PLANNING

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Holding the child at the centre...



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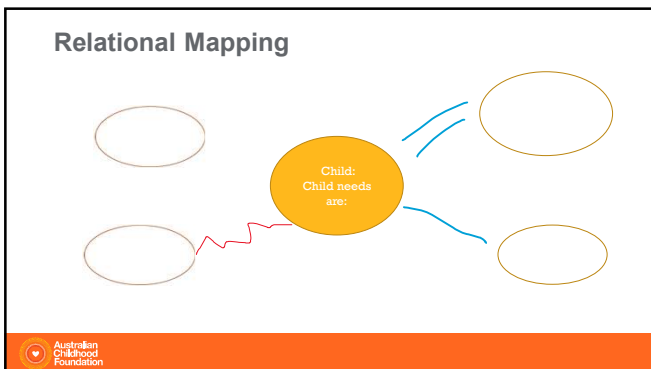
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I need safe and attuned relationships

I need connection to my culture

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Children and Young People's Relational Needs

Children and young people who have experienced relational trauma require relationships that can compensate for their earlier experiences.

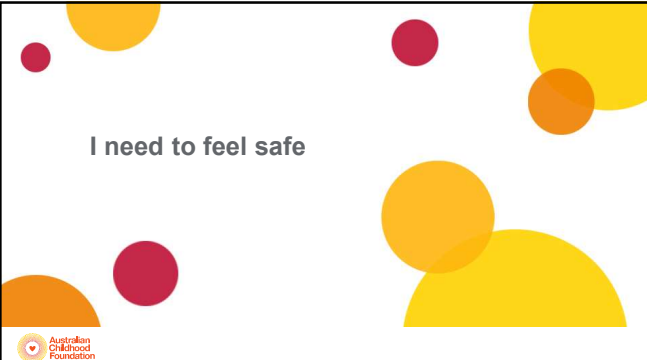

This includes adults and peers in their network who:

- have the capacity to engage with them
- Have the capacity to stay connected
- Are consistently available
- Expect different things of them/the relationship

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I need to feel safe

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Safety is connected to predictability

(Porges, 2012)

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What might predictability look like in practice?

- for students
- for families
- for staff
- systemically

relationships	physical environment
routines	instructions
learning tasks	behavioural expectations

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Self Care



Why does it matter?



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Finding it difficult to stay (want to be) connected?

<p>Well-Connected Brain Utilizing the front part of the brain</p>  <p>Open Flexible and Adaptive</p>	<p>Stressed out Brain Utilizing the more primitive middle region of the brain</p>  <p>Closed and Rigid</p>
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What are the impacts of stress in the classroom?

- Increased protective/defensive responses – reduced team cohesion, poor morale, less collaboration
- Impacts for students: teachers have reduced capacity for attunement, tolerance, problem solving. Students stop experiencing safety in therapeutic relationship. 'Blocked care'
- Impacts of rigidity – resistance to any changes (staff meetings changing format, new policies)
- Impacts of chaos – paperwork not completed, 'contagious anxiety'
- Reduced productivity, increased sick leave, poorer outcomes

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Why does how I'm doing matter?

In relationships, one's ability to regulate one's window of tolerance will affect the other's ability to regulate their own window of tolerance

Child's movement in her/his window

Movement in my window

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The role of Mindfulness in Self Care

Deactivation

Medial Pre-Frontal Cortex
the centre of Mindfulness/Self-awareness.

Mindfulness deactivates the Amygdala (the 'smoke-detector' of the brain) helping us to calm.



Mindfulness also develops the Medial Pre-Frontal Cortex, helping us to develop reflection and empathy for others.

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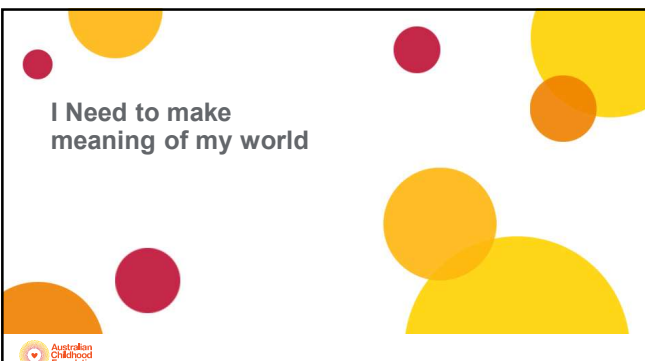

Staying regulated

- IN THE MOMENT:**
 - Physically (regulate our body systems)
 - Mentally (keeping our cortex online)
- AFTER THE MOMENT:**
 - Debrief (social engagement system!)
 - Physically - regulate body systems
- BEFORE THE MOMENT** (and all the time)
 - Effective self care
 - Organisational culture

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I Need to make meaning of my world

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Self Concept: Internal working models


	Positive internal working model	Negative internal working model
View of self	I am lovable I am worthy	I am unlovable I am unworthy
View of the world and relationships	Others are responsive Others are loving Others are interested in me Others are available to me The world is relatively safe	Others are unavailable Others are neglectful Others are rejecting Others are unresponsive The world is unsafe



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How do you or the school support positive meaning making opportunities for:

- The child's identity
- Their relationships
- Their worldview




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Meaning making


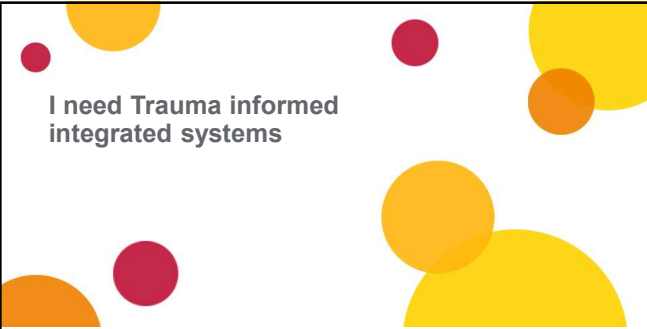
In making meaning we want the child to understand who they are despite their experiences of trauma

And for them to know they are ok, they are loved, they are accepted no matter what trauma symptoms are being expressed.



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I need Trauma informed integrated systems



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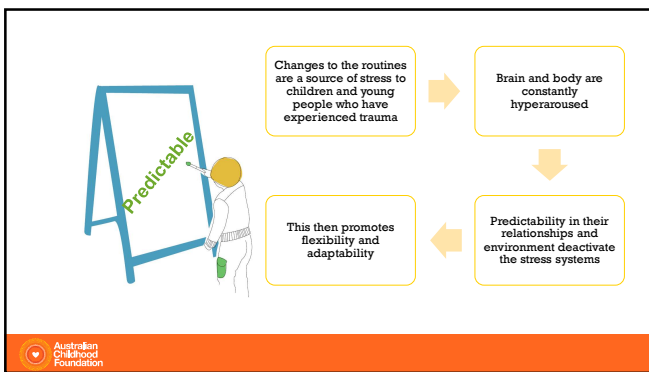
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Collaboration

- Supporting children and young people takes considerable time, energy and is most effective in collaboration with key adults holding the child in the centre of their plans
- Consider establishing a care team around the child you are supporting. Who needs to be involved? What would it look like? How often would you meet? What roles would each member have? What would the processes of accountability be?

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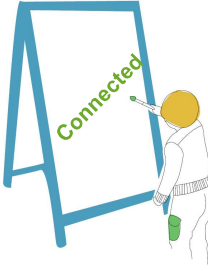


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- Traumatised children and young people rely on a limited set of behavioural routines to respond to the challenges of their context.
- These routines are sourced in the history of their physiological reaction to trauma and the experiences of relationships through which these reactions were interpreted and responded to.
- Strategies which promote adaptability in children and young people are those which are able to maintain multiple meanings for behaviour and remain open to multiple options for interventions.

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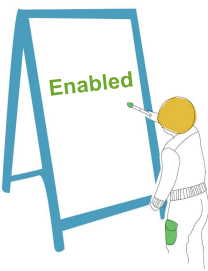
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- Traumatized children and y/people develop insecure and unstable templates for forming and being in relationships.
- They have distorted or confusing internal maps to help them navigate intimacy.
- They avoid engaging fully in relationships for fear of being hurt or rejected again.
- Strategies to support traumatized children and young people emphasise relationships with safe and consistent adults and peers as the foundation for change.

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- Traumatized children and y/ people find the process of understanding themselves difficult. They are challenged in their capacity to identify their feelings, understand them and communicate them to others.
- They struggle to piece together a coherent narrative about their qualities, their attributes and their talents.
- Strategies for responding to traumatized children and y/ people in the school context will enable them to make linkages between and give meaning to their experiences of their past & present, feelings, thoughts and actions.

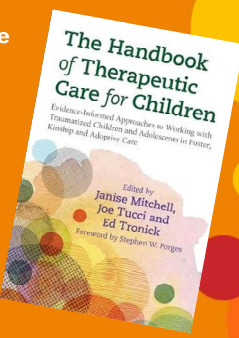
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A valuable resource

Includes chapters from:

- Martin Teicher
- Ed Tronick
- Allan Schore
- Bruce Perry
- Dan Hughes & Jon Baylin
- Kim Golding
- Cathy Malchiodi
- Joe Tucci
- Janise Mitchell
- Glenda Kickett
- Noel Macnamara



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Thank you for your participation!

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 Training enquiries:
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<http://www.livesinthebalance.org/educators-schools>

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