

Creating Safety

Trauma Aware Schools Initiative
Hendon Preschool
June 15th 2022 3.30pm - 5.00pm
- online training/consultation

Trainer: Carolyn Grace

Australian Childhood Foundation | SAMFT
Specialists in Managing Rotor Pollen, Trauma

1

The Australian Childhood Foundation acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the traditional custodians and owners of this land and waters. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present and to the children who are their leaders of tomorrow. We acknowledge their history and living culture and the many thousands of years in which they have raised their children to be safe and strong.

Australian Childhood Foundation

2

Key learning outcomes

- Explore the Window of Tolerance as a framework to guide observation, reflection and action, and provide an understanding for arousal
- Reflect on strategies to support regulation and dysregulation
- Understand the concept of the neuroception of safety and how to create safety

Image source: GACF2021

Australian Childhood Foundation | SAMFT
Specialists in Managing Rotor Pollen, Trauma

3

Neuroception and safety

Relationships shape our sense of self and safety

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

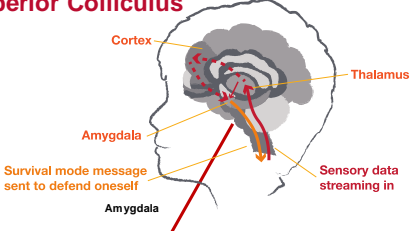


Image source: GACF2021 Pages, 2015, p.119. Image source: GACF2021

Australian Childhood Foundation SAFE! Strategies for Managing Abuse Related Trauma

4


Superior Colliculus



Superior Colliculus

Australian Childhood Foundation SAFE! Strategies for Managing Abuse Related Trauma

5



Implications in our learning environments

Australian Childhood Foundation SAFE! Strategies for Managing Abuse Related Trauma

6

Polyvagal Theory and our protective responses




Behavioural Functions Body Functions by Stephen Porges

Social Engagement Soothing and calming Indicates safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lowers or raises vocalisation pitch • Regulates middle ear muscles to perceive human voice • Changes facial expressivity • Head turning • Tears and swells • Slows or speeds heart rate
Mobilisation Fight or Flight Active Freeze Moderate or 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
Immobilisation Collapses 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

Australian Childhood Foundation QMNT Resources for Managing Abuse Related Trauma

7

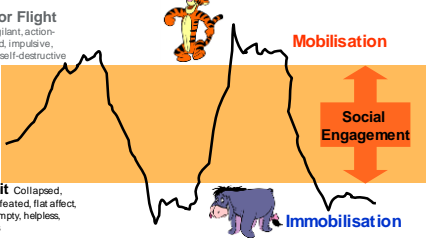
Understanding and teaching students about the WOT

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	

Australian Childhood Foundation QMNT Resources for Managing Abuse Related Trauma

8

Understanding arousal levels



Fight or Flight
 Hypervigilant, action-orientated, impulsive, reactive, self-destructive

Mobilisation
 ↑
Social Engagement
 ↓
Immobilisation


Submit
 Collapsed, weak, dejected, flat affect, numb, empty, helpless, hopeless

Australian Childhood Foundation QMNT Resources for Managing Abuse Related Trauma Adapted from Ogden, Minton, Pain 2008

9


Overhooting your Window of Tolerance:

- Upset and hyped up
- Angry and agitated
- Frustrated
- Heart beating fast
- Tense and can't think clearly
- Unable to regulate your emotions




Within your Window of Tolerance:

- Feeling safe, calm and peaceful
- Happy and able to think clearly
- Ready to learn
- Identified and control
- Mindful and able to regulate your emotions



Underhooting your Window of Tolerance:

- Fad and tired
- Demotivated with no energy
- Feel empty and withdrawn
- Don't want to listen, talk or play
- Can't think about learning



Making Space for Learning – Action Research Project - St Thomas More School, Elizabeth Park, S.A.

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

10

Strategies for intervention working with protective responses



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

11

Social engagement

What does living in window of tolerance look like for each child?

What do you do to widen their window of tolerance?



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

12

Line of My Day

I had Coco Pops for breakfast

English was boring

I didn't want to go to school today

Joko said hi to me after school

I see all tired when my brother woke me up

My favourite teacher was away today

We had a great game of basketball and my team won

Joko teased me and mum bought us takeaway for tea

If you had to draw your day with one continuous line, how would you draw it?

Image source: GACF2021

Australian Childhood Foundation | SMART | Resilience for Managing Abuse Related Trauma

13

Strategies for Social Engagement – staying within their Window of Tolerance

- Building safety and connection
- Routine and predictability
- Repair after rupture
- Strategies for arousal
- Use of self – Social Engagement

Image source: GACF2021

Australian Childhood Foundation | SMART | Resilience for Managing Abuse Related Trauma

14

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: GACF2021

Australian Childhood Foundation | SMART | Resilience for Managing Abuse Related Trauma

15

Building safety and connection

How can you help children to feel safe during TRANSITIONS?

- How can you provide safe passage for children through the transition?

Safe Person
Safe Activity
Safe Place



Image source: GACF2021

Australian Childhood Foundation | SMART | Strategies for Managing Abuse Related Trauma | 16

16

Creating Safety - routine and predictability

Predictability is achieved by:

- Reliable routines e.g. bedtime story/song
- 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 caregiver/s every day




Image source: GACF2021

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

17

Transitions

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

- How many are essential?

Managing transitions and change is extremely difficult for traumatised children

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




Image source: GACF2021

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

18

Repair in practice – repair after rupture

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



Image source: ©2011 ACF

Australian Childhood Foundation | SMART | Strategies for Managing Abuse Related Trauma | 19

19

Strategies for arousal

1. Mobilisation

- Rhythm
- Containing
- Grounding





2. Immobilisation

- Orientation to space
- Orientation to senses
- Engaging the spine

3. Social Engagement

- Prosody
- Breathing

Australian Childhood Foundation | SMART | Strategies for Managing Abuse Related Trauma | 20

20

**Use of self - Social engagement:
engaging muscles from heart to head**

For children who have experienced relational trauma, social engagement through eye contact is perceived as threatening and may elicit defensive responses. Other facial muscles can be safely engaged - e.g. middle ear (Porges)

- prosody
- use story-telling voice/upper register pitch
- singing/music
- use breathing techniques to regulate heart beat

Australian Childhood Foundation | SMART | Strategies for Managing Abuse Related Trauma | 21

21

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

25

Understanding behaviour

Rather than asking ***"What's wrong with you?"***, ask, ***"I wonder what happened to you?"***

- What is the behaviour telling me?
- What might have triggered this behaviour?
- How does this behaviour serve to protect the child/young person and help him/her survive?
- What is the impact on me?




Image source: ©ACF2021

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

26

Understanding the feelings and needs beneath the behaviour




Image source: ©ACF2021

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

27

Holding Hope



What are your hopes for the little people you work with?

What are your hopes for your Centre?

Image source: GACP 2021

Australian Childhood Foundation | QUNET | [Helping to Manage Abuse Risks | Terms](#)

28

Thank you for your participation!

Keep in touch with us....



www.childhood.org.au

Image source: GACP 2021

Australian Childhood Foundation | QUNET | [Helping to Manage Abuse Risks | Terms](#)

29
