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# Trauma Responsive Practice with Children

## Rocky Bay July 2023



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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.



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## An overview of the Australian Childhood Foundation

We are a Force for Childhood, making an impact in Australia & New Zealand for nearly 40 years



### We Help Children Heal

On their own, children do not recover from the devastating impact of abuse, neglect and family violence. They need specialised support to heal. We provide therapeutic services to children.



### We Keep Children Safe

We build the ability and confidence of individuals and organisations to protect children. We provide parents with education and support to help them raise happy, safe and loved children.



### We Stand Up for Children

We advocate for changes to laws and policies that help to make all children safer. We work to strengthen community attitudes that prioritise the rights of children to love and safe relationships.



### We Create Understanding for Children

We educate and support adults who look after and work with children to be better able to understand and respond to their needs.



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## Our Education Services

Access our latest offerings:  
[https://professionals.childhood.org.au/  
training-development/](https://professionals.childhood.org.au/training-development/)

- Our Education Services co-create and amplify knowledge that changes children's lives for the better, by creating networks of learning in partnership with professionals and organisations working with children and young people.
- Our efforts include:
  - Accessible learning opportunities for professionals: a range of self-paced modules and virtual classrooms covering trauma prevention, relational healing and evidence-based approaches to best practice.
  - Customised organisational education: tailored training packages designed to support ongoing staff development, including Train The Trainer options for long-term success.
  - Accredited training: our unique Graduate Certificate in Developmental Trauma



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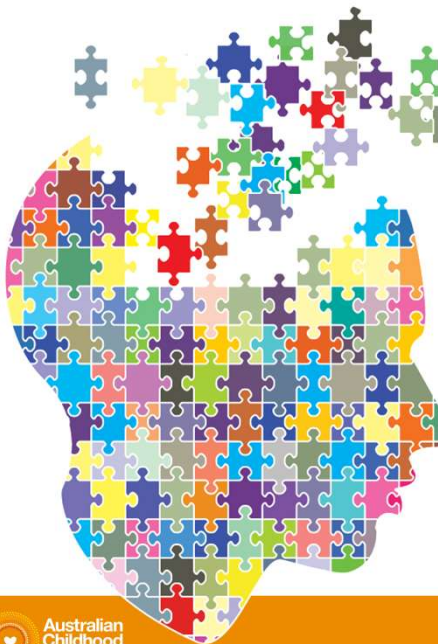
## Our Safeguarding Services

- Over a decade, Safeguarding Services have partnered with over 300 organisations nationally and internationally to strengthen the capacity of institutions to keep children and young people safe.
- We offer a suite of standard and customised solutions that meet national and state Child Safe Standards, aimed at creating organisational culture change.
- We draw on best practice from the Foundation's experience and our network of partners, and evidence, including our recent Safeguarding Evaluation by the Centre for Social Impact.

Access our latest offerings:  
<https://professionals.childhood.org.au/safeguarding-children-services/>

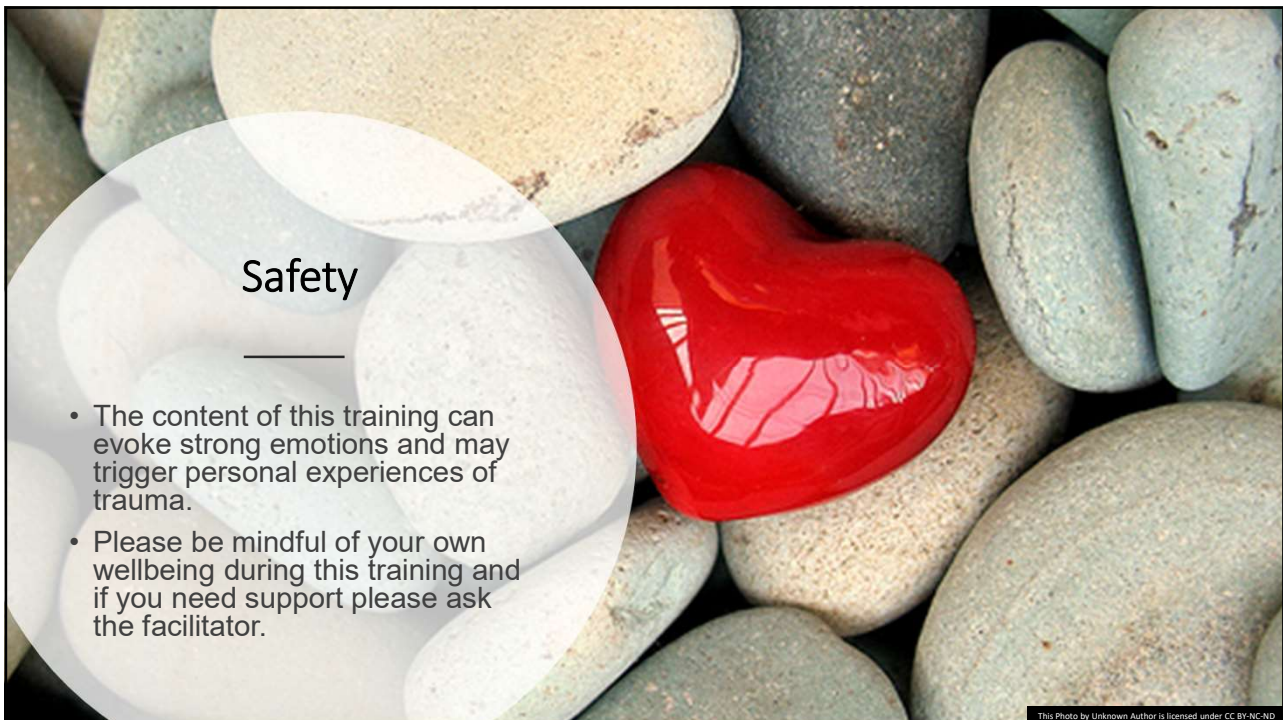


## Learning together



- Participation welcome
- Listen respectfully when others are talking
- Hands up or ask if there is space when you have questions or comments
- Confidentiality
- Take care of your own well being





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## Learning outcomes

- Review your understanding of neurobiology and the impacts of trauma on development and explore a conceptual model of trauma-informed work with children who have experienced developmental (relational) trauma.
- Be supported to translate theory to practice. Participants will be aided to identify and contextualise strategies for working with children who have experienced complex trauma to their work setting.
- Ensure a staff wellbeing approach is included in a trauma informed practice model.

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# ACF Trauma Responsive Model



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# I need to feel safe....



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## I need safe and attuned relationships...

Relationships shape our sense of self and safety

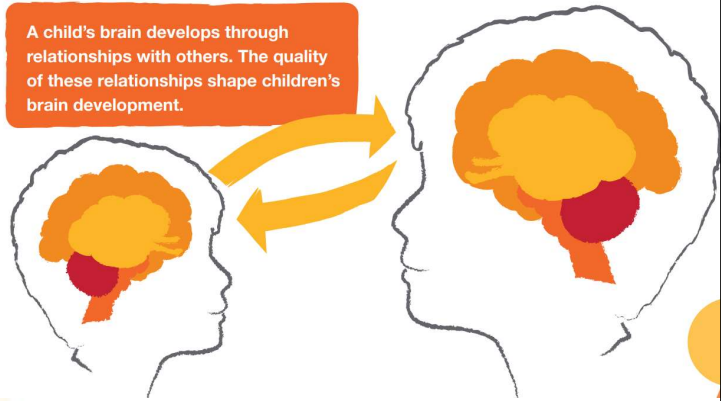
**"I am because we are"**

African proverb

"A person's core self - the self that is shaped by early attachment patterns - is defined by who the parental object both perceive him to be and deny him to be"

*Bromberg 2001, page 57*

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



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-  Safety, containment, nurture and warmth, co-regulation
-  Soft mutual eye gaze, kind eyes,
-  Shared attention and focus
-  Nurturing touch, skin to skin
-  Sweet soothing sounds and rhythmic movements
-  Synchronised movements and facial gestures
-  Pleasure, smiles, play, laughter
-  Alternating quiet and arousing activities

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## Attachment and Epigenetics



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I need to make  
meaning of my/the  
world?



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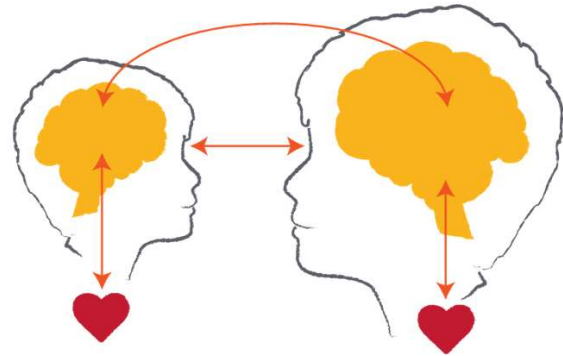


## Theory of regulation- Allan Schore

### The Right hemisphere in relationships

First 18 months Right brain to right brain neurosequential development in relationship.....

'Interactive neuropsychobiological regulators'



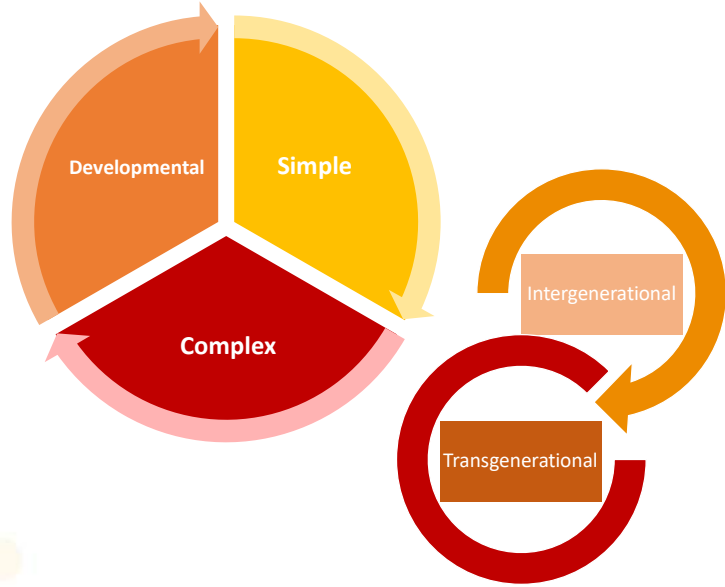
Allan Schore attachment trauma and the effects of neglect and abuse on the brain



## Defining trauma

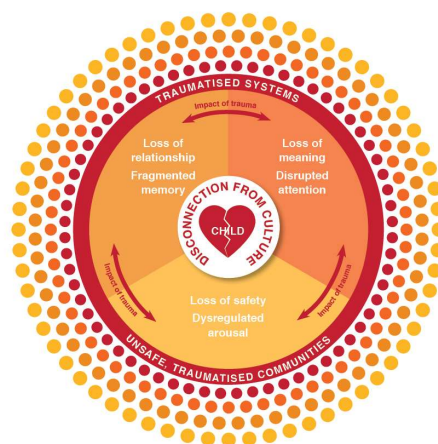
Any single, ongoing or cumulative experience which:

- is a response to a **perceived threat**, usually to survival
- **overwhelms** our capacity to cope
- feels/is **outside our control**
- often evokes a **physiological** and **psychological** set of responses based on fear or avoidance



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## Trauma impacts



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# The impact of alcohol on the developing brain



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## Trauma and the brain

Image source: ©ACF 2020

**Hypothalamus**  
Links the nervous system to the endocrine system via the pituitary gland. It synthesizes and secretes hormones to control body temperature, hunger, thirst, fatigue, sleep, and circadian cycles.

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

**Thalamus**  
Sensory receptor within the diencephalon. Receives and passes on sensory data to be further processed by other areas of the brain. Chronic trauma can lead to sensory processing difficulties

**Cerebellum**  
Balance and coordination, motor skills may be impacted by trauma

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

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

**Prefrontal cortex**  
Responsible for executive functions, such as judgement, reasoning, and self awareness. PFC development and integration impacted by chronic trauma/stress

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## Trauma impacts

Trauma can impact all elements of adolescent's development: brain, body, memory, learning, behaviour, emotions, relationships and their view of themselves

Image source: ©ACF 2021

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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. **Introception** (awareness of basic primary functions – hunger, toileting, breathing)

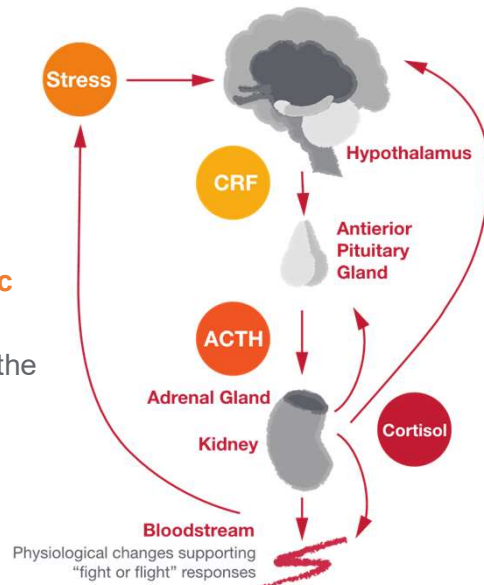
Vision Olfaction Gustation  
Audition Somatosensory Vestibular Proprioception

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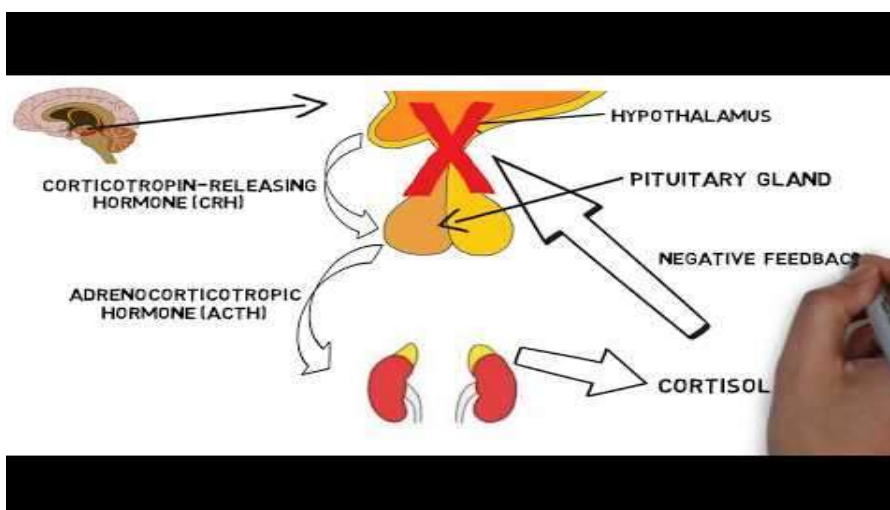
## Hypothalamic (Diencephalon) / Pituitary / Adrenal Axis

1. The hypothalamus secretes the hormone **corticotropin-releasing factor** (CRF), which rouses the body.
2. CRF travels to the pituitary gland.
3. The pituitary gland secretes **adrenocorticotrophic hormone** (ACTH).
4. ACTH circulates in the bloodstream, traveling to the adrenal gland.
5. The adrenal gland releases **cortisol**, another hormone.
6. Cortisol stimulates many reactions in your body, including a rush of energy and alertness.



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## Brain-Body implications of chronic stress - HPA Axis



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## Trauma and loss

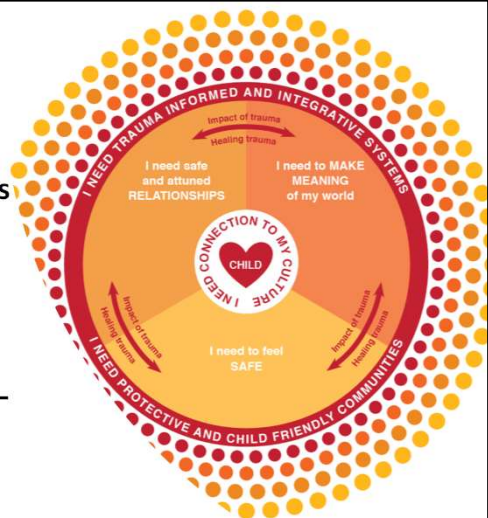
Developmental traumas such as family violence or child sexual abuse can lead to experiences of loss on multiple levels for children. These include a loss of:

- sense of safety and connection
- predictability and familiarity
- contact
- Routines
- belongings
- Connection to culture, belonging & identity



## Trauma Responsive Principles

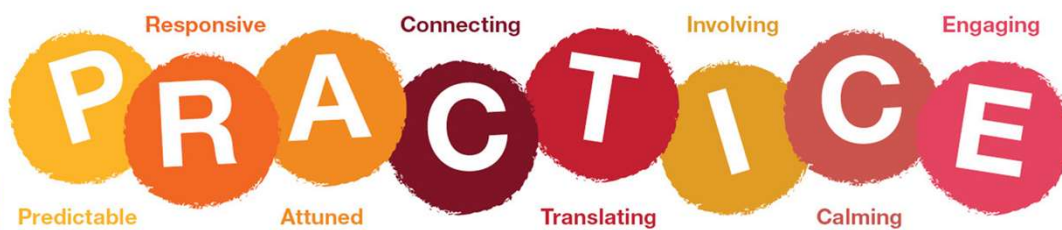
- Shared understanding neurobiology of **trauma and its impact on child development**
- Promoting **safety**
- Ensuring **cultural humility**
- Healing happens in **relationships**
- Having a sense of control/power in **decision making – having a voice, empowerment/** strength based
- **Integrating** care (collaboration)
- Belief in **hope based recovery**
- Worker **Self care** (NCTIC cited in Steele & Kuban, 2013:53)





## Trauma Responsive PRACTICE

- Children and young people and families we work with have experienced both current, historical and generational trauma
- Trauma impacts how people access services
- Responses to trauma are adaptive – without a trauma lens, behaviours can be seen as ‘antisocial’ or ‘maladaptive’
- Trauma survivors require specific, tailored interventions that minimise re-traumatisation and understand individual needs and responses to trauma

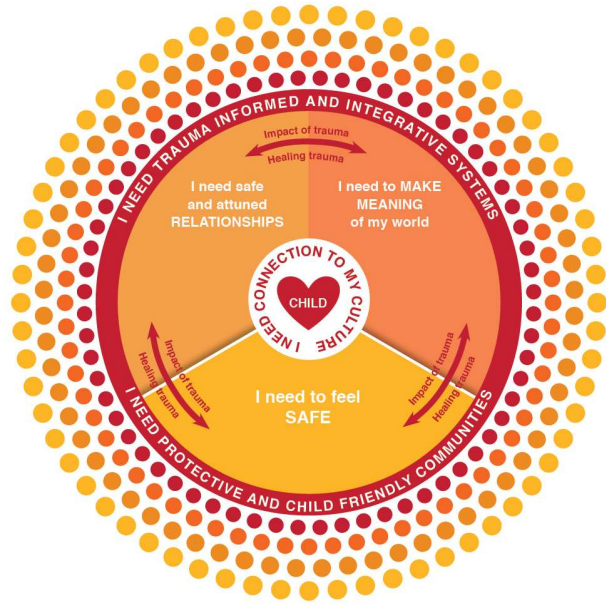


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Embedding  
safety and  
supporting  
regulation

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I need to feel SAFE...



Activity

How do you support safety for the children or young people you are working with?







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## The social engagement system

by Stephen Porges



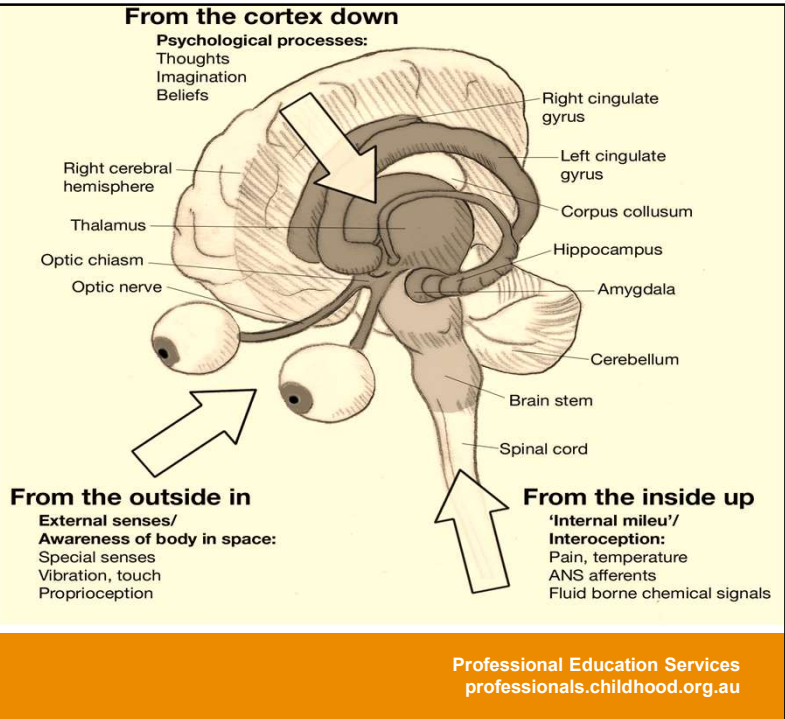
| Behavioural Functions   | Body Functions  |
|---|---|
| <b>Social Engagement</b><br>Soothing and calming<br>Indicates safety  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lowers or raises vocalisation pitch</li> <li>• Regulates middle ear muscles to perceive human voice</li> <li>• Changes facial expressivity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

 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lxS3bv32-UY> professionals.childhood.org.au

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## Neuroception – ‘detection without awareness’

- Faulty neuroception....
- Familiarity may lead to
- Finding that which is dangerous to be safe
- Finding that which is safe to be dangerous



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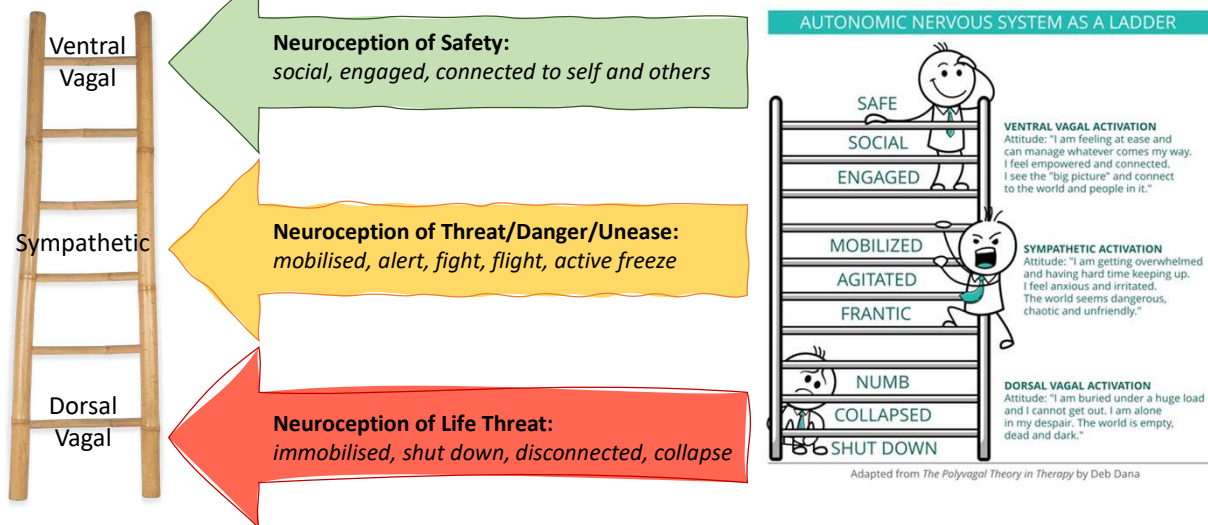
## Impact of trauma on arousal



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## A polyvagal perspective.....Deb Dana's Autonomic Ladder



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## Protective responses can present as

### Mobilised Responses

(fight, flight, active freeze):

- Hypervigilant
- Edgy/jumpy
- Irritable – easily annoyed
- Poor recovery from distraction
- 'silly', loud, over-excitement
- Unsettled, restless
- Outbursts, aggression
- Defensive, taking things personally
- Inflexible, 'controlling'
- Sensitive to sensory input

### Immobilised Responses

(collapse, withdraw, dissociate):

- Flat, numb affect
- Disengaged, disinterested
- Withdrawn
- Frequent "boredom"
- Lethargic, unmotivated
- Disconnected from peers
- Primitive self-soothing
- Hygiene issues
- Wetting or soiling
- Low appetite

Discuss



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## Strategies to promote neuroception of safety

**Physiological safety**

**Relational safety**

**Environmental safety**

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## Working with protective responses

**Social Engagement**

- Prosody
- Breathing
- Connection

**Mobilisation**

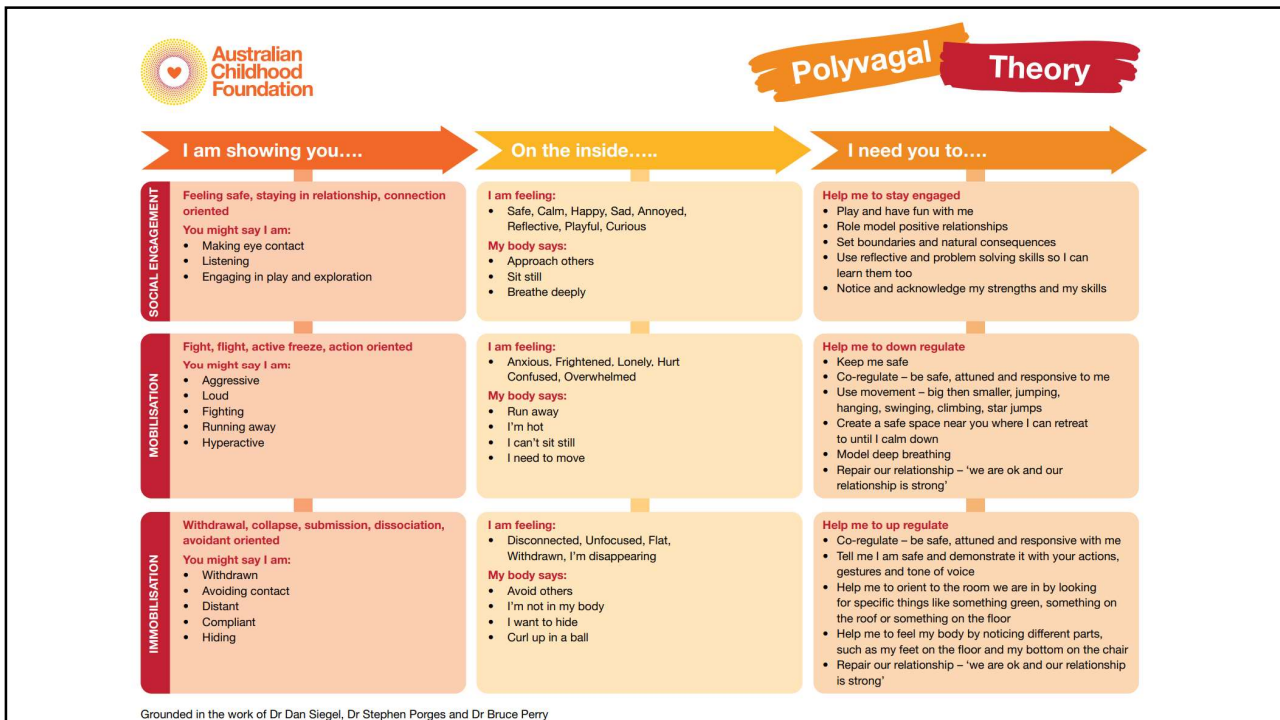
- Rhythm
- Containing
- Grounding

**Immobilisation**

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

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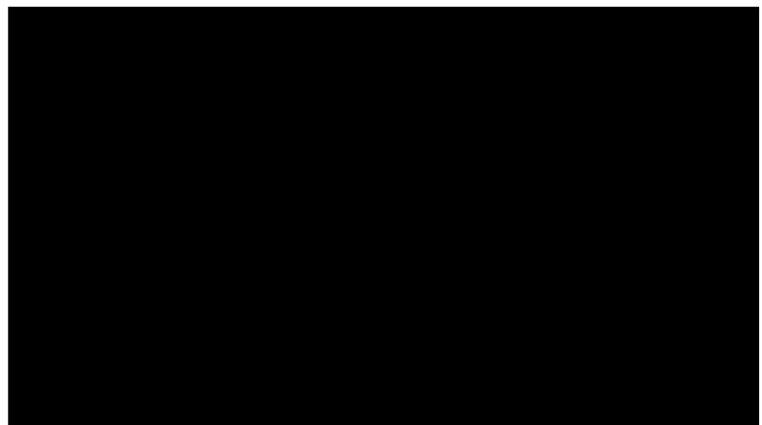
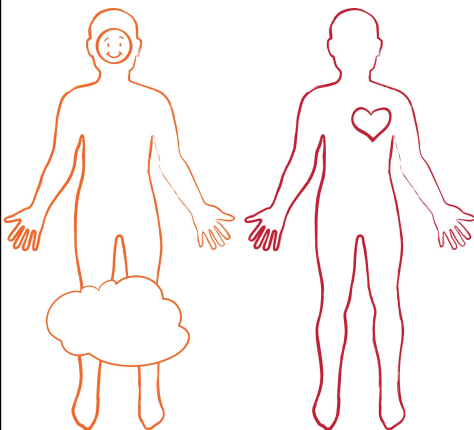


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## Activity - Soothing through the senses



## Guided meditation Body Scan - Progressive muscle relaxation







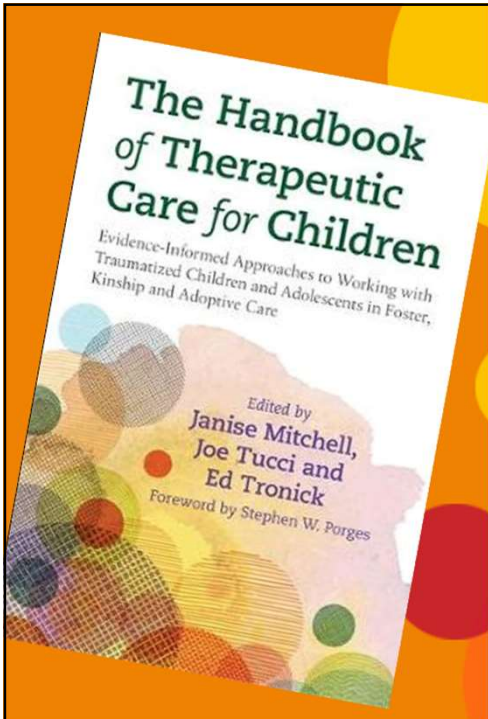
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**I need safe and attuned  
RELATIONSHIPS**

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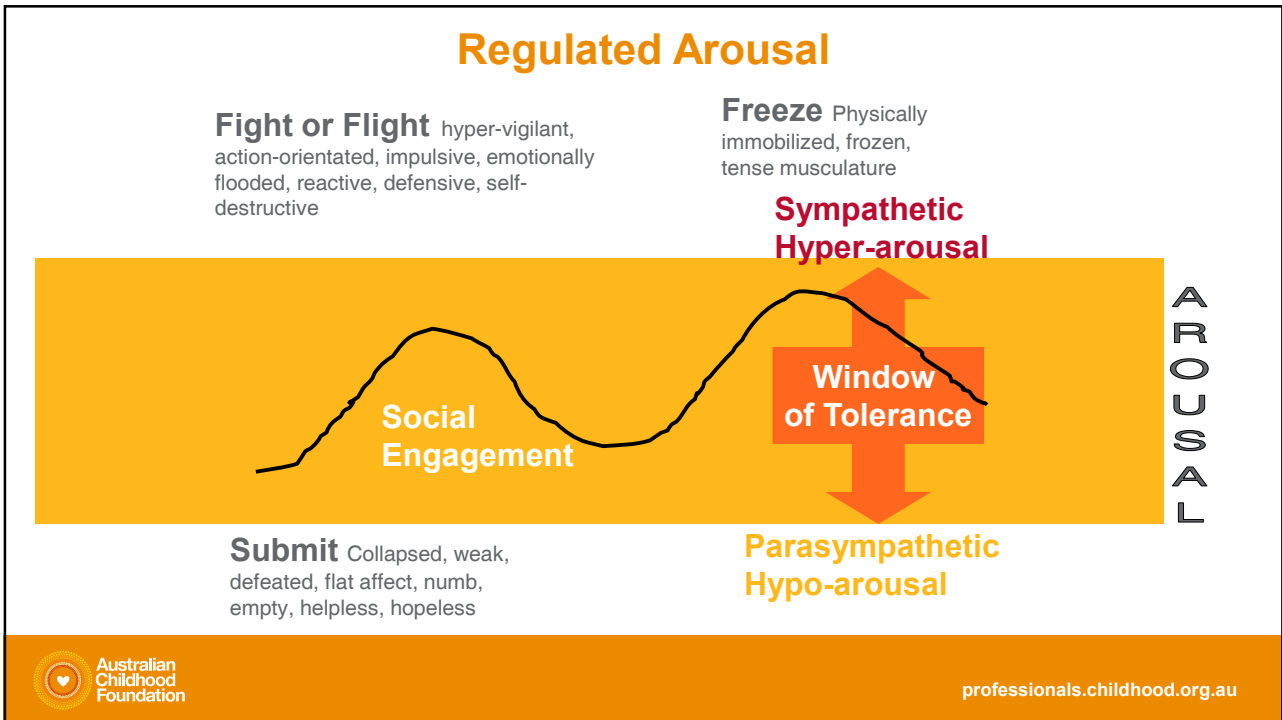
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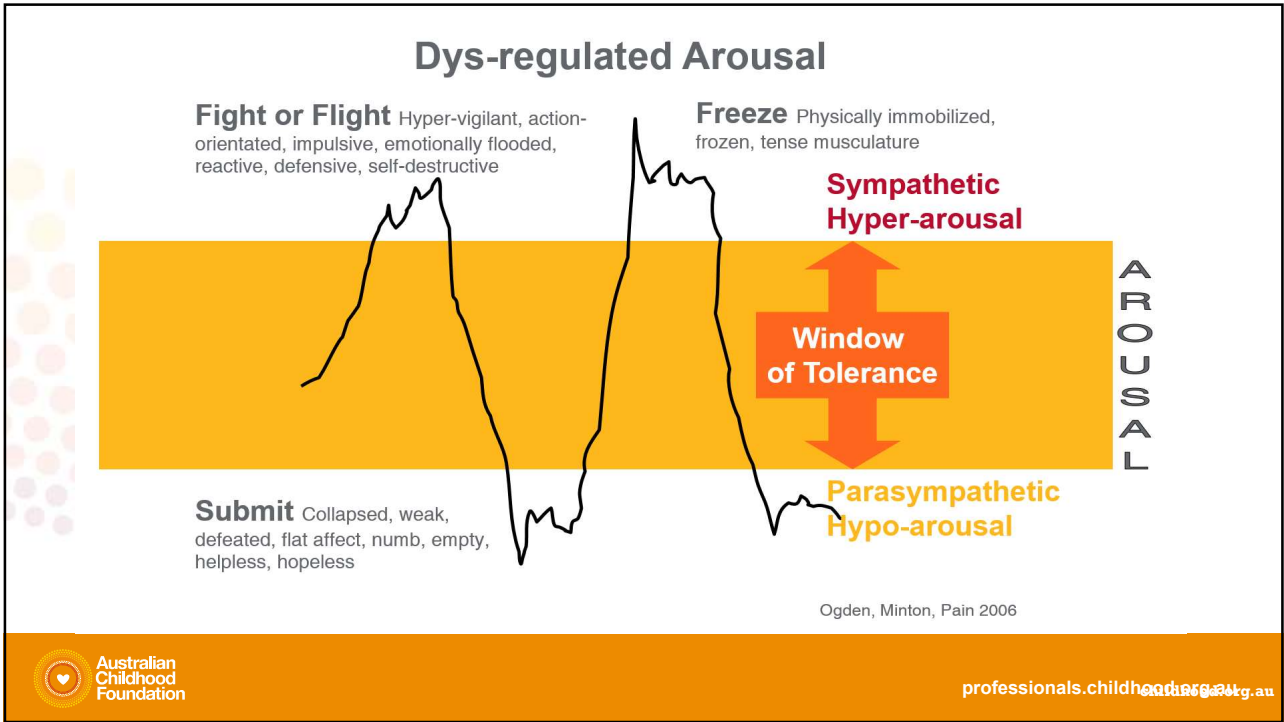
## Relational safety.....

- “....Relational safety is both the goal of intervention and a major resource in the healing process. Relationships which heal are trustworthy and enduring. They offer predictability. They stabilise. They regulate. They interpret and re-interpret identity. They allow new meanings to emerge which are based in the grounded visceral experience of comfort. They brace and allow resistance to old neural activation to take hold, reinforcing them gently and allowing them to grow. They recruit our phylogenetically new systems to connect and stay connected. They help to create new memories of care and trust. They support the generation of narratives that make the world feel less dangerous and help children feel more capable....(Tucci, Weller and Mitchell, 2018)”.

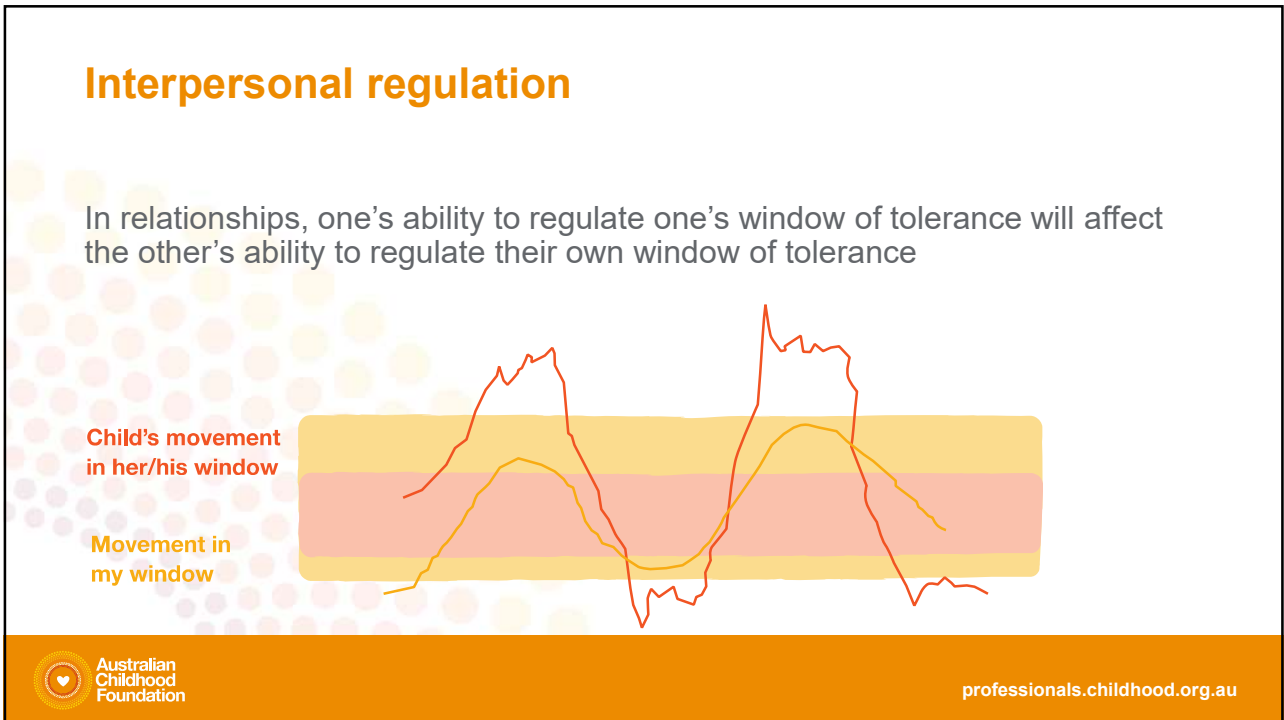
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## The Autonomic nervous system...



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**“For years mental health professionals taught people that they could be psychologically healthy without social support, that “unless you love yourself, no one else will love you.”**

**...The truth is, you cannot love yourself unless you have been loved and are loved. The capacity to love cannot be built in isolation”**

Bruce D. Perry, *The Boy Who Was Raised as a Dog: And Other Stories from a Child Psychiatrist's Notebook*



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## Rupture and repair

*What you did is not ok, but you're still a good person  
and our relationship is still strong.'*



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## Connecting with Empathy

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## Blocked Trust

Blocked trust is a child's way to adapt to very poor care – **it's a survival state**. Blocked trust is blocking the pain of rejection by:

- Negative bias
- Dissociating
- Suppressing social emotions
- Provisioning – self reliance
- Manipulating
- Resisting authority – aggression, 'defiance'
- Story telling – fantasy
- Lying behaviours



## Relationship is the key! .....5 Brain systems that support parenting – Dan Hughes

### Parental Approach System

- Get close to the child without becoming defensive.

### Parental Reward System

- Enjoy interacting with the child.

### Parental Child Reading System

- Understand the mind of the child.

### Parental Meaning Making System

- Make sense of our experiences with the child and our social life.

### Parental Executive System

- Regulate interpersonal conflicts between approach and avoidance, pro-social and defensive reactions.

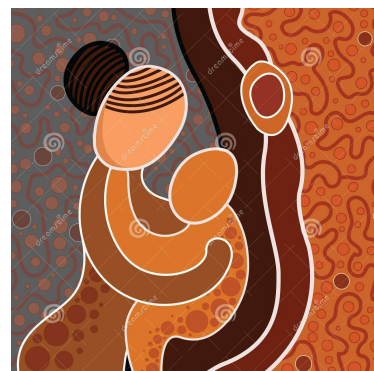
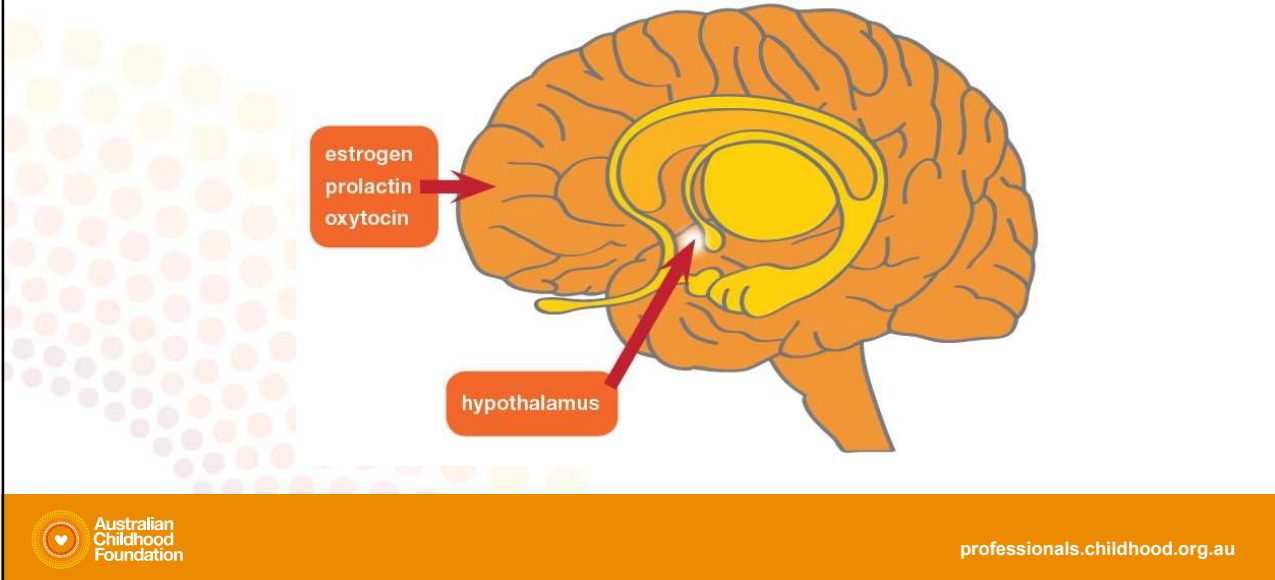


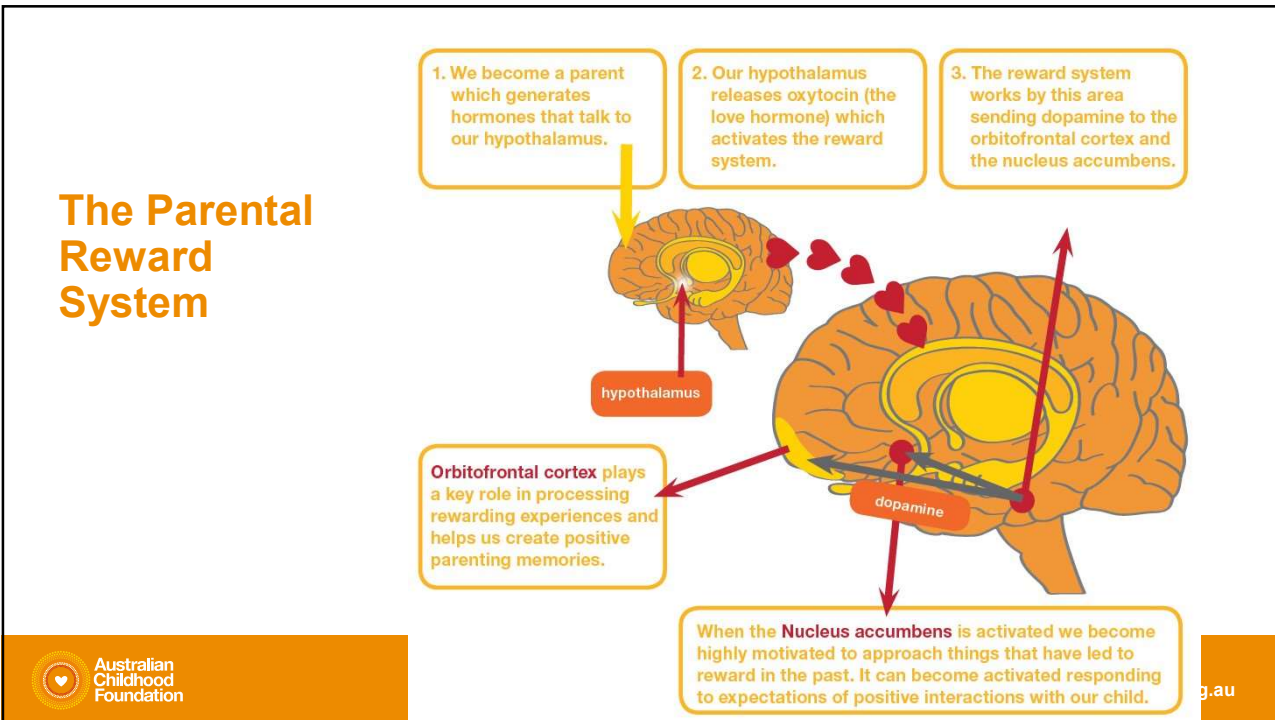
Image source: Dreamtime

## The Parental Approach System



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## The Parental Reward System



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## Mutual Joy

How do you enjoy spending time with your child?

What does this teach us and remind us about ourselves?

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## Squiggle and Swap Drawings

Let's do some squiggle drawings together. We'll need some paper and at least two pens or pencils to play.

I will draw a squiggle on my page and then pass it to you. You can draw a squiggle on your page and then pass it to me.

Let's look at the squiggle the other person draw for us and see if it reminds us of anything. Then we can draw our pictures building on the squiggle on our page.

When we are finished, we can show each other our drawings. Should we go again?

Some examples of squiggle drawings made by children

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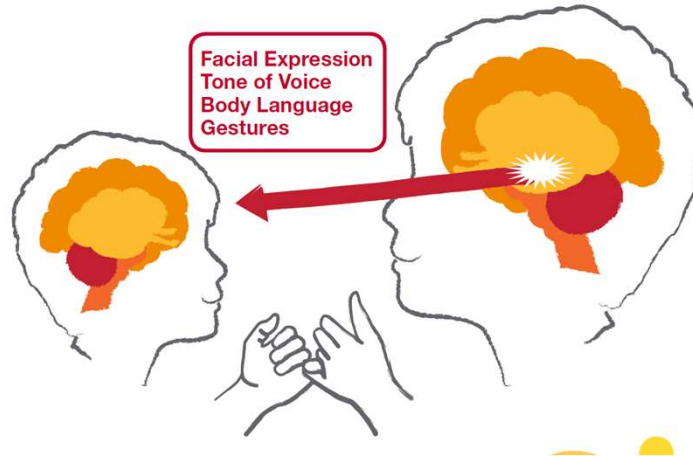
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Embracing relationship  
Short and often activity times built into your day

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## Parental child reading System



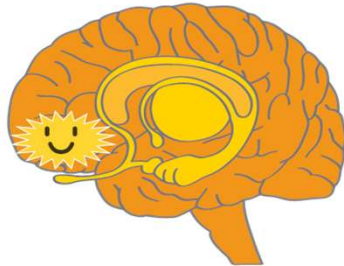
## Psycho-education and Reflection for caregivers



This section contains four reflection prompts in thought bubbles, accompanied by icons: a house, a lightbulb, a person holding a sign, and a person's head. The prompts are: 'Where do your ideas about parenting come from?' (with a house icon), 'What do you notice about yourself as a parent?' (with a person's head icon), 'How does understanding more about brain development help you understand your child?' (with a lightbulb icon), and 'How will this understanding influence your parenting approach?' (with a person holding a sign icon). The sign says 'Stay Calm'.

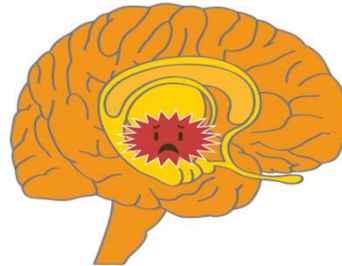
## The Parental Meaning Making System

**Well-Connected Brain**  
Utilizing the front part of the brain



Open Flexible and Adaptive

**Stressed out Brain**  
Utilizing the more primitive middle region of the brain



Closed and Rigid



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For Carers -Your child is like a butterfly who is ready to stretch their wings and fly. As they unfurl you can see that written on them is all the beauty and qualities that they have inside ready to be seen by others.

### Some reflective questions for consideration

- What beauty have you always known is inside your child?
- What have you learned about your child's unfurling wings throughout this sharing process?
- Is there anything you appreciate now about your child that you might not have been as aware of at the beginning of our involvement?

### Activity

Note down some of your child's qualities on the butterfly wings template. You might use words and/or pictures. (Tell them to the worker and get the worker to note them down if you aren't in a position to note them down yourself). You could use the following prompts for ideas:

**What strengths does your child have?**

**What do you love about your child? I love that you..**

**What makes your child special? You are special because..**

**What qualities do you admire in your child? I admire..**

Your child might like to bring colour to their wings as things are discussed and written down. Your child might like to also draw or paint in a background for their butterfly.



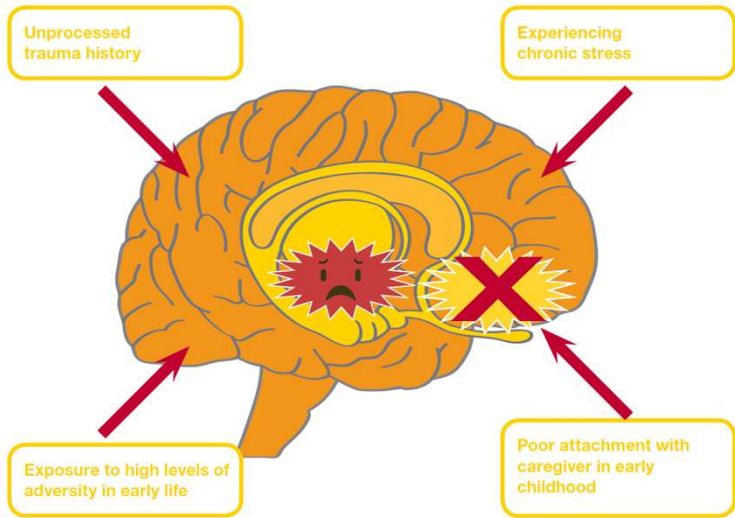
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## The Blocked Executive Parenting System




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Mindfulness does not need to be without movement

### Adventures in Nature

#### Ideas for Day Time Walking Explorations




**Traditional Custodians**  
As you set off on your walk you might want to talk about how you are on the land of first nations people that have shared a connection with this place for tens of thousands of years. How amazing is that! Do you know who the Traditional Custodians of your area are? There are some websites that might give you a hand to find out if you aren't sure- <https://austts.gov.au/whose-country> and <https://austts.gov.au/explore/map-indigenous-australia>

**Feathered Friends**  
Look out for birds on your walk. Do you know much about the birds that live in your local area? What bird songs do you know? Visit Birdlife Australia <https://birdlife.org.au/> to learn more about common birds in your area. You might also like to take part in the annual Aussie Backyard Bird Count, a citizen science event which happens every October.

**Micro Creatures**  
Keep your eyes out for any tiny creatures you might see on your walk. They might fly by or move along the ground or be hiding in secret crevices as they notice some big giant's feet approaching. I wonder what the littlest of creatures might be doing with their day as we notice them? Are they hunting for food or looking for shelter or on their way to visit a friend? Are they part of a group or on their own? How do they move from place to place? Can we follow their trails?

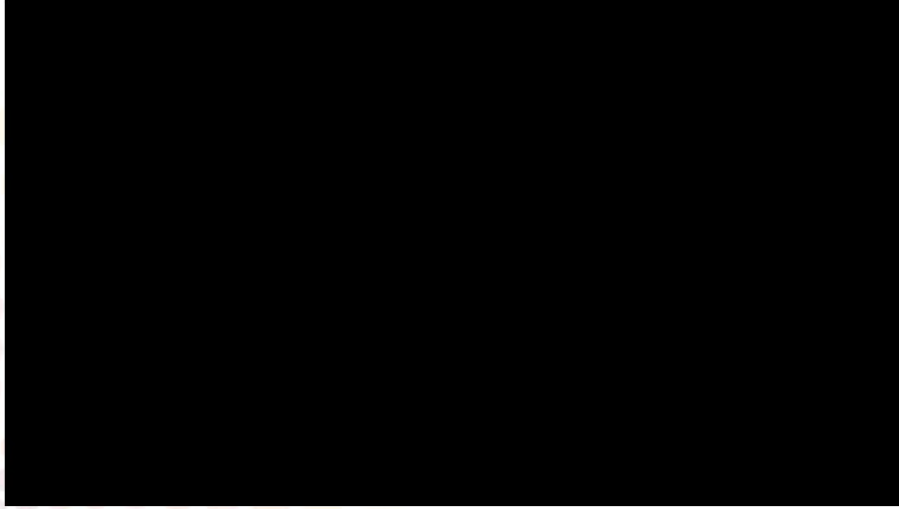
**Tree Time**  
Pick a big tree and sit at the base of it and look up into its branches. What animals might live in this tree? Can you see any? Close your eyes and listen to the sounds of the tree. Feel how the tree supports your back and touch its bark with your hands. What smells are you aware of as you sit by the tree? How long do you think this tree has been alive? What change has it seen happen around it in its lifetime?

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## P.A.C.E video – Dan Hughes



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## Empathy – a strength and a vulnerability

*If empathy is to 'walk a mile in someone's shoes' we need to ensure we step out of those shoes at the end of the mile or we will wear those shoes all the time....and that is vicarious trauma.*

- Somatic empathy (Rothschild 2004)
- Limbic resonance
- Cortical empathy



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## Empathy – Brene Brown



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Evwgu369Jw>

## Practice reflections...what do your relationships look like?

Take a moment to think of all the interactions you have over the course of a day, a week, a month, a year with all the people you share your life with.

- If you were to make a list of these things what would it look like?
- How would these people describe you?
- What qualities would they identify in you?
- What would they say is helpful about you? Why?

How do you create safe attuned relationships with young people?

# The Power of Relationships

## A Reflective Activity for Parents/Carers

Recalling who helped us feel special or important when we were children can reconnect us to aspects of relationships that made us feel warm and glowing on the inside. When you were a child, was there an adult (other than a parent/carer) who stood out as important to you?

- What did the person do to make you feel special and important?
- How did you respond to them whenever you saw them?
- What messages did they give you about you? How did they do that?
- What do you carry with you from them still?
- What do you think they may have received in return from you? How did they know that?
- What changes did this person support you to make? How did they do that?
- How would your story be different if they had not been in your life?

Relationships are powerful and can help children to feel special and important in a way that can stay with them into adulthood.

Can you think about something that you could do to help a child in your world feel special and important today?



Children and young people learn about the world around them, others and themselves from key people in their lives.

In relationships, we form beliefs about what we know to be true of ourselves and the world around us that we carry into adulthood.

Parents and carers have unique opportunities to change the experiences of children through the power of their relationships. It is never too late to help children feel special and important.



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## A dance of feeling and meaning making... beginning with:

- Enjoy being with each other.
- Be animated when showing feelings.
- Try to 'read' the child's feelings and show that you get it.
- Stay with what is happening here and now.
- Try to get some back and forth happening (in play or talking).
- Use your story telling voice (tone of voice, pace of talking, rhythm, melody and facial expression)
- Help the child make sense of what is going on through story telling.



*Dan Hughes*

**Meaning  
making:  
Building  
understanding  
and belonging  
through stories**

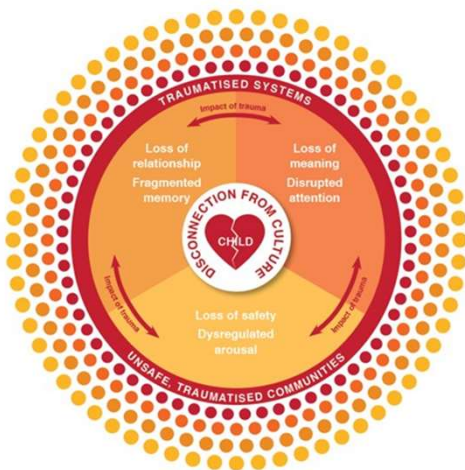


## I need to MAKE MEANING of my world



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## Trauma response patterns...effects of trauma on behaviour



To cope with trauma children use initial adaptive responses to survive

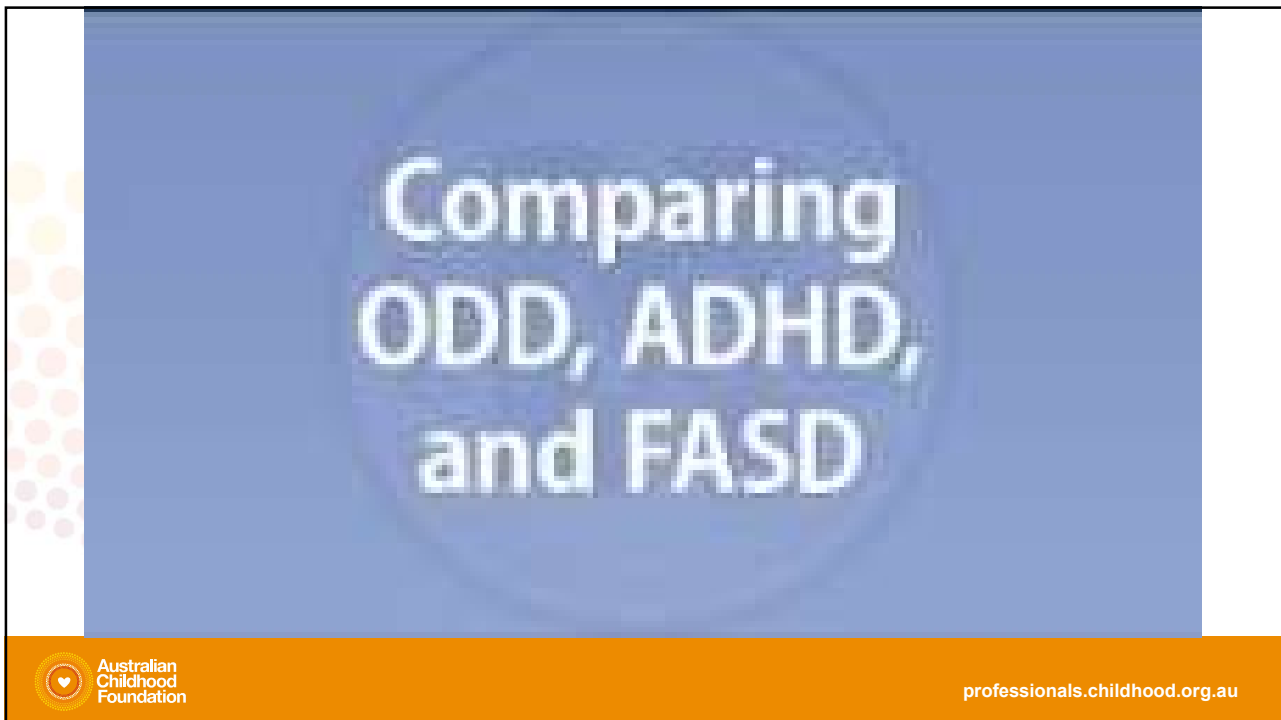
This is reasonable as a once off occurrence, but, if they continue they can become maladaptive patterns of behaviour

These responses will be different for an individual child at different developmental stages

Often a combination of appropriate developmental behaviours and maladaptive patterns of behaviour emerge

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## Behavioural – narratives of trauma

- **Behaviour tells a story!**
- Traumatized children's behaviour can be difficult and complex for parents, teachers and carers to understand, manage and shape
- However, it is functional and almost always makes sense given their specific experiences of trauma
- Children's behaviour is the manifestation of the impacts of trauma outlined in the previous sections

Sometimes when we are angry, there are other emotions under the surface

Icebergs are giant floating pieces of ice found in the coldest parts of the ocean. What you can see from above is just a tiny part. Most of the iceberg is hidden under the surface.

Angry

Anger, Straight Ahead!

Watch Out!

Embarrassed Annoyed Disgusted Rejected Scared

Wounded Attacked

Shame

Let's go deeper!

Alone

Guilt

Grief

Insecure Disappointed

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## WORDS MATTER

TRAUMA SENSITIVE LANGUAGE WITH CHILDREN

Behaviour is often an expression of the way that children and young people have experienced their past relationships. They show their hurt and pain through what they do. The way that the behaviour is described can shape the way they see themselves and the way that others interact with them.

It is important that we do not use words that further alienate or disadvantage children and young people. Negative and unhelpful words can serve to blame children for their past experiences of trauma. It can lead to harmful labels being ascribed to children that they can never be rid of. We should use language that positively interprets their needs and suggest ways that children and young people can be better connect to the important people in their lives. Preferable language holds the expectations of adults to understand and react to children's needs rather than placing the responsibility for change with the child.

| NEGATIVELY CHARGED LANGUAGE | WHAT MIGHT BE HAPPENING IN THE MOMENT   | PREFERABLE LANGUAGE   |
|-----------------------------|---|---|
| DISRESPECTFUL AND RUDE      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Urge to push bad feelings away</li> <li>Testing strength of connection</li> <li>Seeking belonging with peers</li> <li>Sense of shame</li> <li>Sense of danger</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Distressed</li> <li>Afraid</li> <li>Frustrated</li> <li>Uncertain</li> <li>Threatened</li> </ul>   |
| DEFIANT                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fearing separation from caregiver</li> <li>Fearing change or transitions</li> <li>Attempting to establish predictability</li> <li>Trying to predict the level of safety of adult behaviours</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Afraid</li> <li>Anxious</li> <li>Shutdown</li> <li>Feeling out of control</li> <li>Needing distance</li> </ul>   |
| MANIPULATIVE                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Using early survival patterns that previously kept them safe</li> <li>Imitating early adult role models</li> <li>Difficulty articulating feelings</li> <li>Attempting to keep adults at a distance</li> <li>Seeking support when they feel endangered</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Needing safety</li> <li>Resourceful</li> <li>Self-soothing</li> <li>Trying to engage</li> <li>Expressing uncertainty</li> <li>Feeling overwhelmed</li> </ul> |

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## Self Concept: Internal working models

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

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## Building understanding of behaviour – child and caregiver

- When we feel understood, we become open to trying to understand others
- Always consider the underlying function of a caregiver’s behaviours and reactions, as much as the child’s
- Help caregivers to wonder about their child’s inner world
- Develop openness and curiosity about behaviour
- If we can understand what drives a behaviour, we can work out how to respond to it
- If we can meet the need that is driving a behaviour, the behaviour can start to reduce
- **Some clues:** is the behaviour a fight/flight/freeze/withdraw response? Is it related to hunger/tiredness? Is it a bid for connection or space?



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## Therapeutic messaging through the lens of a butterfly

**Butterfly**  
The final process of leaving the cocoon takes time. If someone were to help open a cocoon, it could mean that the butterfly might never fly, because their wing development depends upon coming out in a special way.  
**Therapeutic Message:** Those around a child can influence change as caring companions, but they cannot affect direct change. A child will come to know themselves as transformed when they have experienced what they need to experience. There are no short-cuts.

**After hatching**  
The caterpillar is an eating machine. It is very hungry from the start. Many caterpillars grow so fast they need to shed their skin because they need more space for further growth.  
**Therapeutic Message:** Children grow through relational nourishment provided by those around them. They take in relational messages and internalise them. They hold these messages within themselves and take shape as they continue to grow inside of their own expanding skins.

**Inside Changes**  
When a caterpillar transforms in its cocoon it doesn't just grow wings to adorn its caterpillar body, it breaks down into a jelly like substance before it re-organizes into a butterfly.  
**Therapeutic Message:** We all need to let our shields down and be vulnerable as we engage in transformative processes. As we soften, it is easier to re-form and take on a new shape.

**Cocooning**  
Most caterpillars/butterflies stay inside of their cocoons for between 5 to 21 days. If they are in places like deserts, some will stay in there for up to three years waiting for supportive conditions outside.  
**Therapeutic Message:** Children's therapeutic transformations will take as long as they need to take and that is ok. When the environment around the child is ready, children will become prepared to engage with it in transformed ways.

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## Building strength and belonging through stories

- Develop family traditions and rituals
- Story telling
- Family/Child story book
- Help families explore their history



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# HEART BUTTONS

**Feeling connected when we are apart**

Parting for kinder, or school, or whatever reason can be hard.  
 What if we drew a little heart on the back of each other's hands?  
 I will draw you a heart and then blow a kiss onto it to seal in my love.  
 You can draw a little heart or spot on the back of my hand  
 and blow a kiss onto it to seal in your love.  
 These are our heart buttons, and they are connected by love.  
 No matter where we are, all we have to do is press our  
 heart buttons if we miss one another and we will be connected.  
 When I press my button, I will think of a fun time  
 we had together and send you some love.  
 You can do the same.

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Activity idea for children who feel insecure and anxious about relational permanence

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# I need TRAUMA INFORMED and INTEGRATIVE SYSTEMS

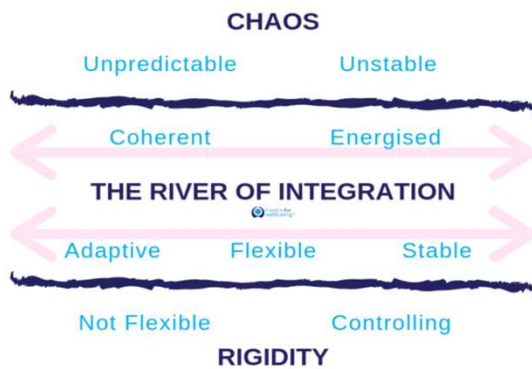


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# Wellbeing – The River of Integration

(Dan Siegel)



Adapted from - Siegel, D. (2009). Mindsight - The New Science of Personal Transformation. NSW, Australia: Scribe Publications.



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## How do we take care of ourselves?

### Staying regulated during client work:

- **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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### The Four Ms:



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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

**The Handbook of Therapeutic Care for Children**  
*Evidence-Informed Approaches to Working with Traumatized Children and Adolescents in Foster, Kinship and Adoptive Care*  
Edited by Janise Mitchell, Joe Tucci and Ed Tronick  
Foreword by Stephen W. Porges

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