

**The webinar will begin
at 3.45pm**



1

**Making SPACE For Learning
Webinar 2.**

**Tailoring Approaches and
Strategies to Your Students
(TLI & MYLNS)**

**Department of Education Vic.
7 September 2023**



**Australian
Childhood
Foundation**

2

Webinar protocols

This webinar is being recorded

- Session and questions will be recorded
- Questions that cannot be answered in the session will be taken on notice.

To use the chat function

- **Everyone** in the chat is the default.

To contact us

- tutor@education.vic.gov.au
- mylns@education.vic.gov.au



3

3

Australian Childhood Foundation acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Custodians of the land and waters across Australia in which we share. We pay our respects to Elders past and present and to the children who are leaders of tomorrow. We acknowledge the histories and living cultures and the many thousands of years in which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have raised their children to be safe and strong. We recognise and accept it is the oldest continuous living culture in the world and that their sovereignty has never been ceded.

We are an inclusive, safe and respectful organisation which celebrates diversity and actively supports the inclusion of children, young people and adults from LGBTIQ+ communities, people with disabilities, people from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds and people with diverse religious beliefs or affiliations.



4

The Australian Childhood Foundation



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 traumatised children to be better able to understand and respond to their complex needs.

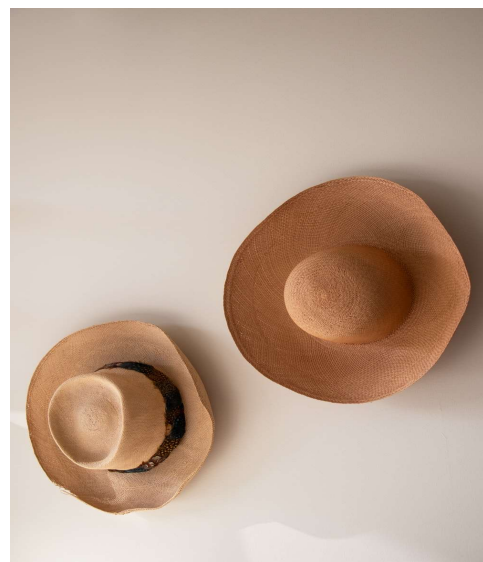


5

Safety

The content of this training can evoke strong emotions and may stir up personal experiences of trauma.

- Your emotional safety is important to us
- This training may evoke strong emotions and memories
- Please let someone know
- Take a break
- Your colleagues are here to support you.
- If you need support please ask the facilitator.



professionals.childhood.org.au

6

We acknowledge you....and what you bring....

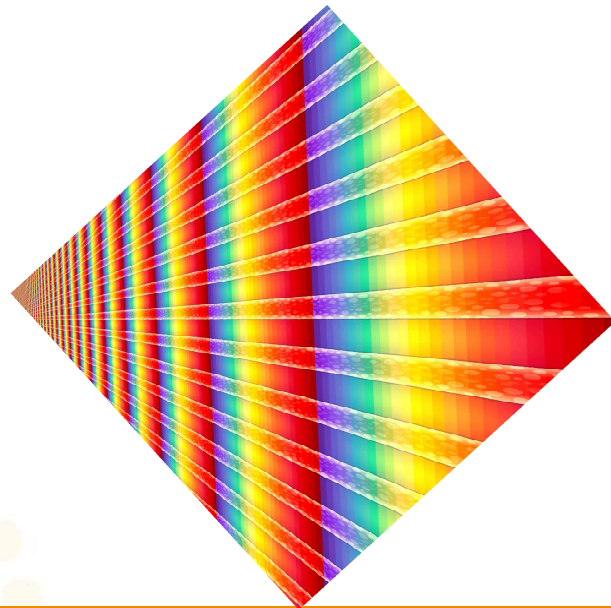
- Knowledge
- Practice skills
- Experience
- Passion
- Compassion
- A desire to bring about change



7

Reflection

- Colour and breathing



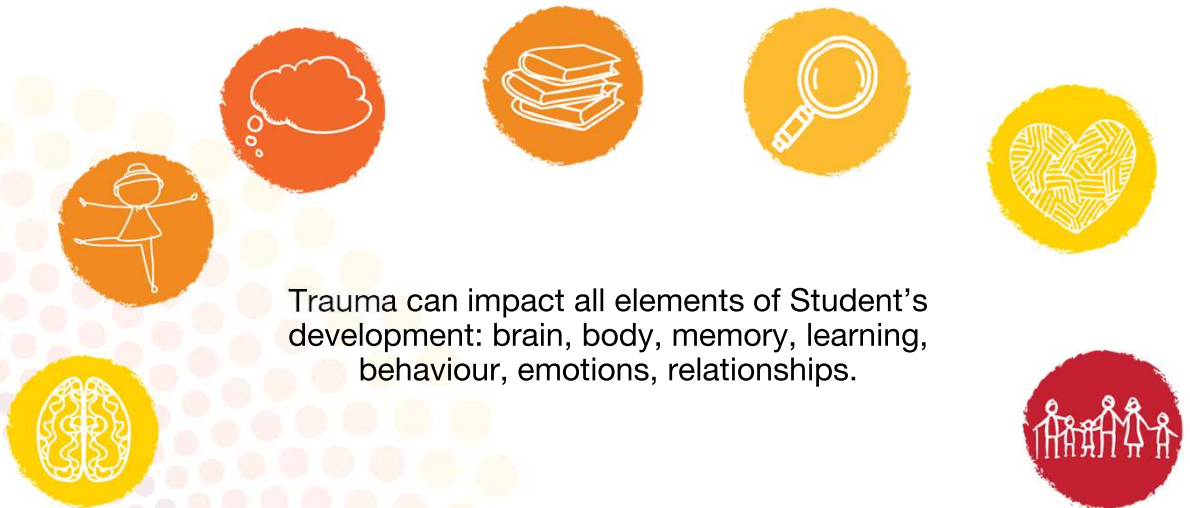
8

Review - Brain development



9

Review- Trauma



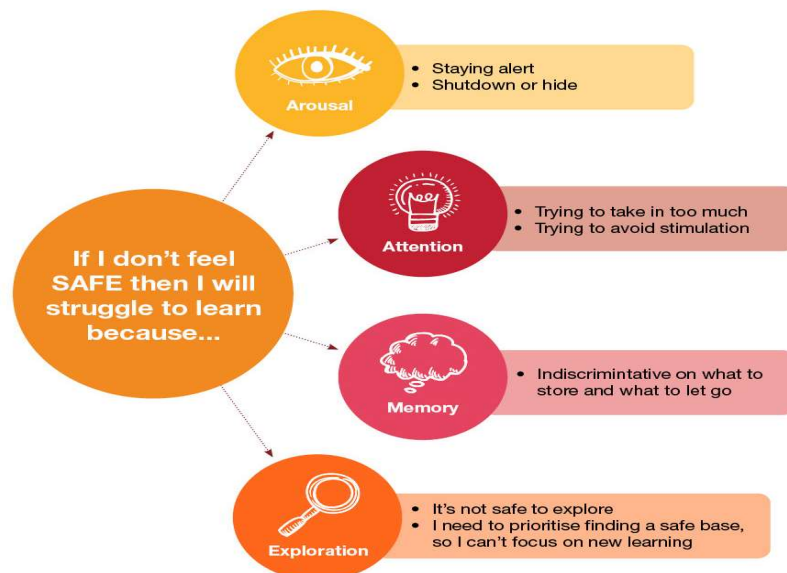
10

Reflection

- Who on staff has engaged in trauma informed practice and can assist us to build our capacity?
- What more do I need to understand about our learners?
- What would you like more information on?

11

Safety



12

What does safety look like at school?

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

Dr Steven Porges



Australian
Childhood
Foundation

professionals.childhood.org.au

13

An introduction to the Polyvagal theory and neuroception

Cues of risk and safety are continually monitored by our nervous system.

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

(Porges, 2015, p.115).

<http://lewisinstitute.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/img-strategies2.jpg>






Australian
Childhood
Foundation

professionals.childhood.org.au

14


Safety is the pre-requisite to connection

Social engagement
Feeling safe, staying in relationship,
connection oriented

Mobilised
Fight, flight, active freeze,
action oriented

Immobilised
Withdrawal, collapse,
submission, dissociation,
avoidant oriented




professionals.childhood.org.au
(Porges, 2009)

15

Polyvagal theory and Protective Responses

by Stephen Porges

Behavioural Functions	Body Functions
<p>Social Engagement Soothing and calming Indicates safety</p>	<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 eyelids • Slows or speeds heart rate
<p>Mobilisation Fight or Flight Active Freeze Moderate or extreme danger</p>	<p>Hyper arousal</p> <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
<p>Immobilisation Collapse or submission Death feigning Increased pain threshold Conserves metabolic resources Life threatening situations</p>	<p>Hypo - arousal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slows heart rate • Constricts bronchi • Stimulates gastrointestinal function



professionals.childhood.org.au

16

What trauma or stress response can look like

Cognitions & Behaviours:

- Asking lots of questions
- Bravado (speech or actions)
- Attention, concentration and memory difficulties
- Black & White thinking, negative thoughts
- Generalised worries
- Rigid thinking & behaviours
- Compulsions/ repetitive behaviours

Mobilised Responses:

- Hypervigilant
- Edgy/jumpy
- Irritable – easily annoyed
- Poor recovery from distraction
- ‘silly’, loud, over-excitement
- Unsettled, sleep difficulties
- Outbursts, aggression
- Defensive, taking things personally
- Increased expectations of self and others
- Inflexible, ‘controlling’
- Sensitive to sensory input

Immobilised Responses:

- Flat, numb affect
- Disengaged, disinterested
- Withdrawn
- “boredom”
- Lethargic, unmotivated
- Disconnected from peers
- Developmental regression – e.g. with abilities to self-soothe, self-care/hygiene, toileting
- Changes to appetite

Safe & Unsafe States of Being



In this state we feel unsafe

We are active and mobilised without a sense of safety

- We fight, or flee, or our bodies actively freeze with tensed muscles.

We feel Safe in these states

We are active and mobilised with a sense of safety

We are socially engaged

We come to be still with a sense of safety

- Sometimes known as the 'Play Zone' in this state our bodies are active as we socially engage with others.
- Our bodies feel calm and relaxed.
- We feel in synch and connected with others.
- We are orientated towards each other with welcoming voices & open faces.
- We find pleasure in stillness.

In this state we feel unsafe

Our body slows into an immobilised state without a sense of safety

- We are withdrawn, submissive, collapsed, numb.

Social Engagement

Tell Tale Signs

We feel **safe** in this state.

- Our bodies are calm and relaxed.
- We engage in mirroring and reciprocation with each other.
- We are orientated towards one another with engaged, open faces.

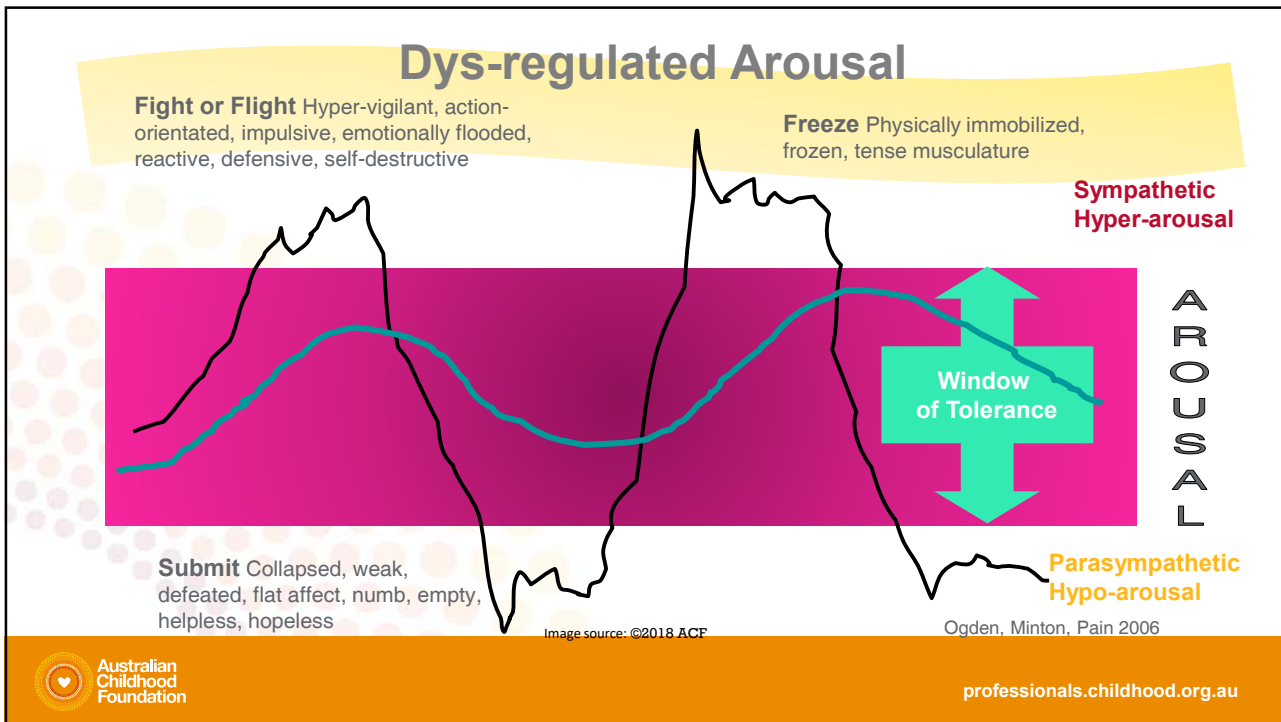


Social engagement system

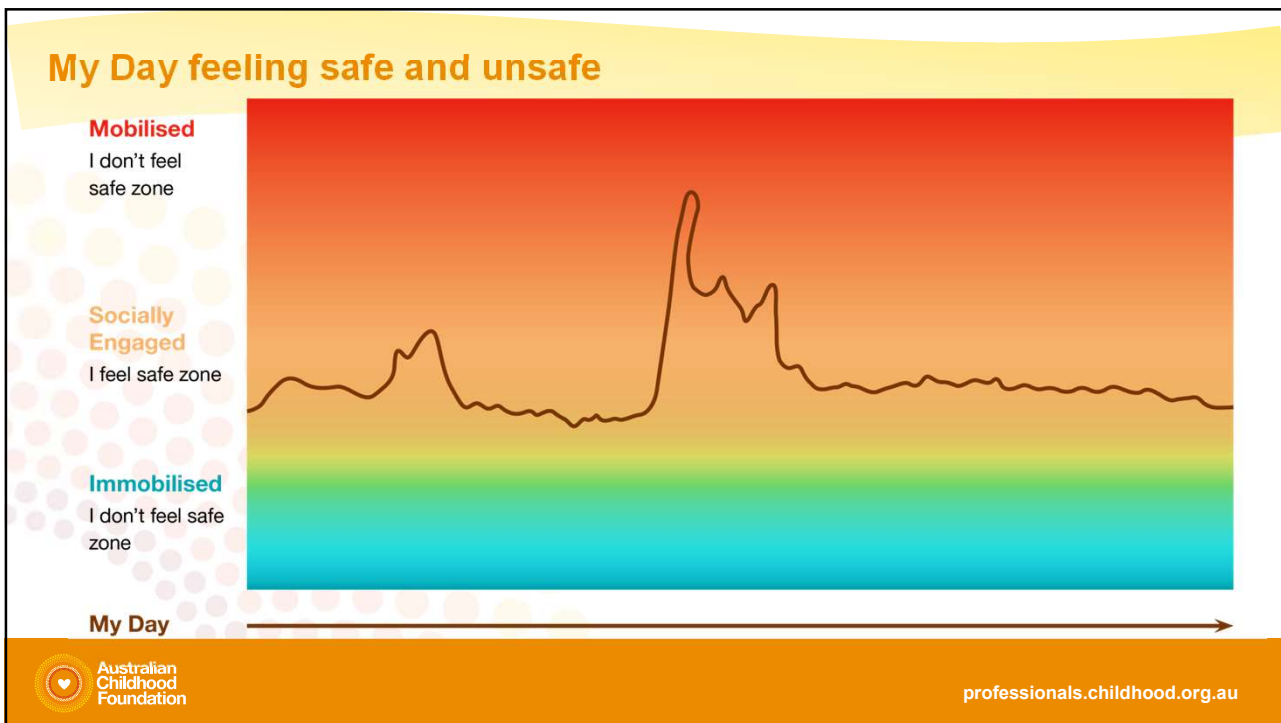
- Gaze is soft
- Other facial muscles relaxed
- Head turning
- Prosody of voice
- Breath attuned
- Heart attuned

- See the safety and connection
- Hear the safety and connection
- Feel the safety and connection

engagement is possible




21



22


Tell Tale Signs * Our bodies are filled with energy, and we need to move.

Mobilisation




Play & Exploration


We experience a blend of mobilisation and social engagement in a **safely mobilised state**.



Fight or Flight or Active Freeze

We are mobilised **without a sense of safety** in this state.



 Australian Childhood Foundation

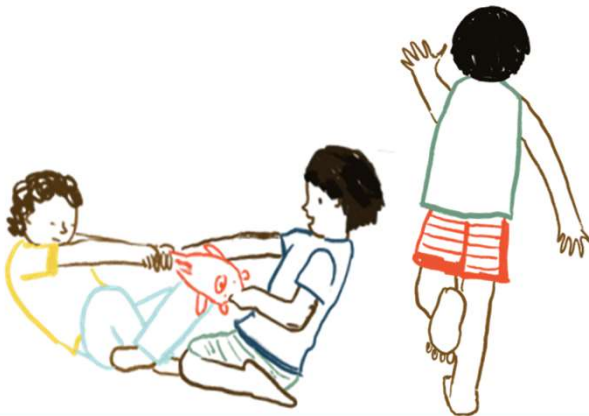
professionals.childhood.org.au


23

Mobilisation without felling safe

Tell Tale Signs in the Classroom * Our bodies are filled with energy, and we need to move.

- Hypervigilant
- Edgy/jumpy
- Irritable – easily annoyed
- Poor recovery from distraction
- 'silly', loud, over-excitement
- Unsettled, sleep difficulties
- Outbursts, aggression
- Defensive, taking things personally
- Increased expectations of self and others
- Inflexible, 'controlling'
- Sensitive to sensory input




 Australian Childhood Foundation

professionals.childhood.org.au

24

Immobilisation



Tell Tale Signs * Our bodies are slowed right down


Being still with others for pro-social reasons, like sharing a hug. We find pleasure in stillness. This is an intimate state.

We experience a blend of immobilisation and social engagement in a **safely immobilised state.**

Withdrawn, submissive, collapsed, numb

We experience immobilisation **without a sense of safety** in this state.

A blue double-headed arrow points from the 'safely immobilised state' text to the 'without a sense of safety' text.

 Australian Childhood Foundation


professionals.childhood.org.au


25

Immobilisation –without feeling safe

Tell Tale Signs in the Classroom * Our bodies are slowed right down

- Flat, numb affect
- Disengaged, disinterested
- Withdrawn
- “boredom”
- Lethargic, unmotivated
- Disconnected from peers
- Developmental regression – e.g. with abilities to self-soothe, self-care/hygiene, toileting
- Changes to appetite



 Australian Childhood Foundation

professionals.childhood.org.au

26


Ways to engage and stimulate the vagus nerve

1. Breathe deep
2. Sing
3. Massage
4. Cold water immersion
5. Exercise
6. Listen to Autonomous sensory meridian response tracks
7. Connect with others
8. Laugh




Reflection and questions

STAGED ADAPTIVE ENABLED



PREDICTABLE CONNECTED

SPACE is the central acronym of the program. It includes 5 domains to help educators better understand the needs of children who have experienced trauma and ways to support them in the educational setting.

 Australian Childhood Foundation

professionals.childhood.org.au

29

Circle of Strategies: Staged



The diagram is a circular graphic with a central blue circle containing a heart icon and the text "TOP DOWN STAGED" and "Children's brains need support to grow and learn". Below the heart is "BOTTOM UP". Surrounding this center are 12 segments, each with an icon and a label: Attunement with others, Exploration of words and numbers, Novelty, Play / Fun, Body focussed activities, Repetitive actions, Rest, Rhythmic practice, Sensory inputs, Breathing exercises, Mindfulness, and Explore interests.

 Australian Childhood Foundation

professionals.childhood.org.au

30

Staged

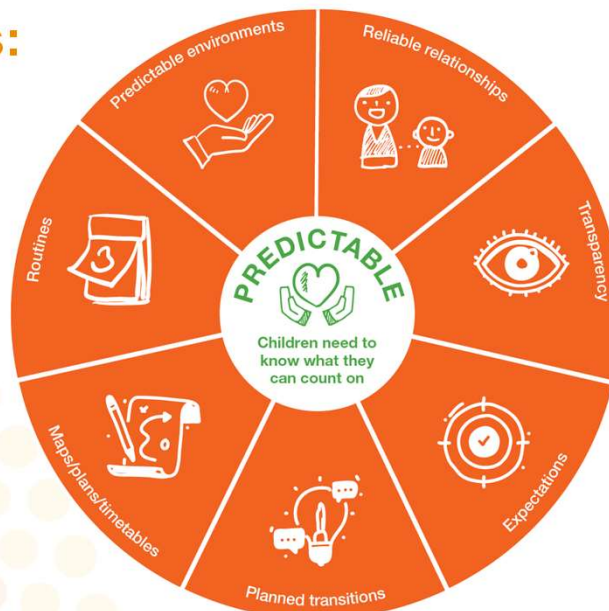


The brain develops sequentially based upon survival. Sophisticated functions only emerge after basic functions are consolidated. Safety experienced both psychologically and physiology are imperatives for growth and development.

Consider how your school provides a sense of safety and belonging?

31

Circle of Strategies: Predictable



32

Predictable

What might predictability look like in practice?

- For students
- For families
- For staff
- Systemically

relationships

physical activities

routines

instructions

learning tasks

behavioural expectations

33

Predictable

Predictable you

- “I’ve come to a frightening conclusion that I am the decisive element in the classroom. It’s my personal approach that creates the climate. It’s my daily mood that makes the weather. As a teacher, I possess a tremendous power to make a child’s life miserable or joyous. I can be a tool of torture or an instrument of inspiration. I can humiliate or heal. In all situations, it is my response that decides whether a crisis will be escalated or de-escalated and a child humanised or dehumanised.”

Hiam Ginott

34

Predictable

- Changes to routines and uncertainty can be a source of stress to student
- Predictability in students' relationships and activities modulates their stress systems
- This then promotes flexibility and adaptability

I feel better when I know what is coming next.

35

Circle of Strategies: Adaptive



36

Adaptive

- Most of us have a set of behavioural routines that we draw from to respond to challenges when they emerge. These routines are likely based in what has helped us get by in the past and the experiences of relationships through which these routines were interpreted and responded to.
- To broaden children's behavioural repertoires and promote increased adaptability we need to maintain multiple meanings for the behaviour and remain open to multiple options for interventions.

Adaptive

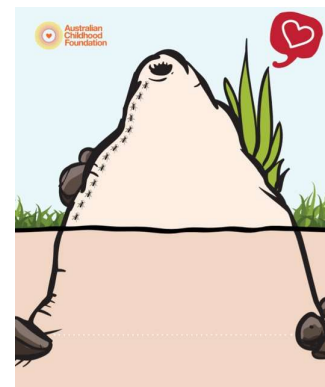
Behaviour is communication

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.

Behaviours are functional and almost always makes sense given their specific experiences of trauma.

Openness and curiosity about behaviour is an important response.





39

Connected

- Children's relational templates for forming and being in relationships take shape as they grow. They learn what to expect and how to navigate relationships through their experiences of connection with those around them.
- Strategies to support children as their relational templates continue to develop emphasise relationships with safe and consistent adults and peers as the foundation for healthy, strong social and emotional functioning.

I need to feel like I am connected.

I need to feel safe.

I need safe connections in my life.

 Australian Childhood Foundation

professionals.childhood.org.au

40

Connected

What is Relational Safety in the environment, classroom, office or tutor room?

Accompaniment is an experience for a child that offers emotional reciprocity, validation, care and comfort. In this experience they feel heard, met, felt and understood.

“Children internalise the people who understand and comfort them, so that they often have the felt sense of accompaniment when they are alone.”

Bonnie Badenoch



professionals.childhood.org.au

41

Connected

Safety is a central whilst being a complex concept in this training.

It holds a range of meanings for us and for the children, families and communities that we work with

What does a safe space feel like for you?

How do you inhabit it?

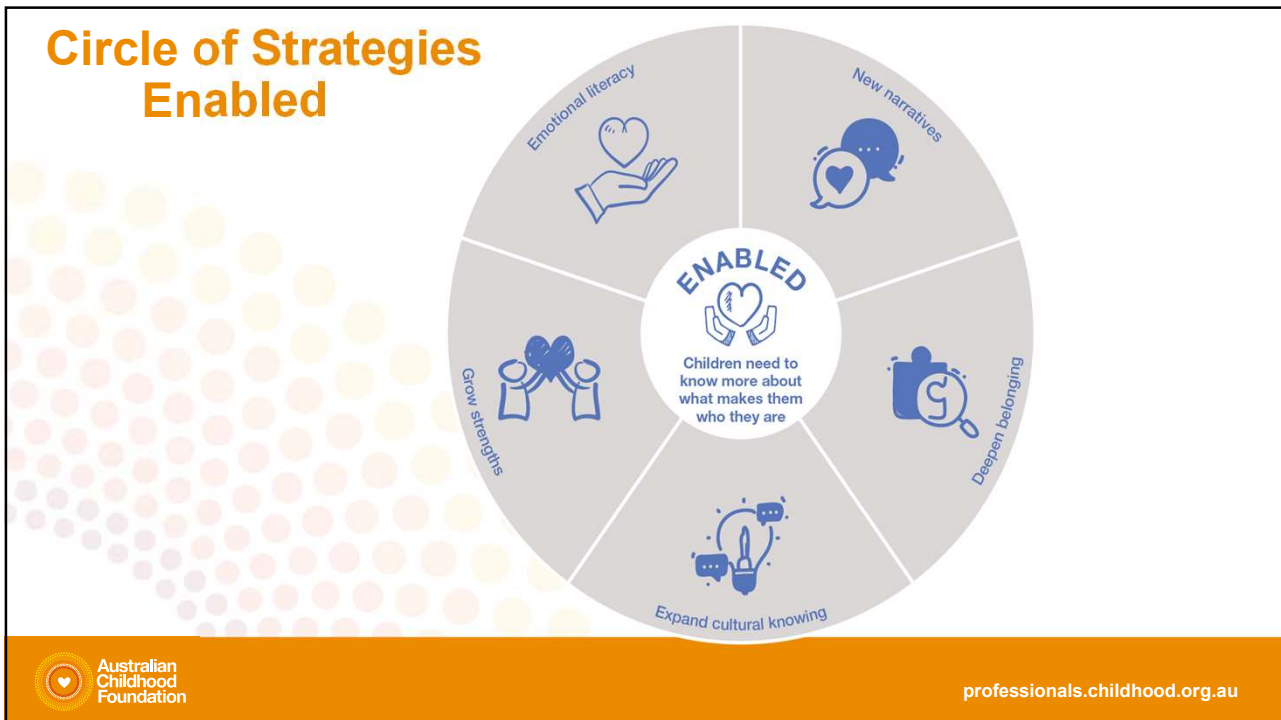
What do you bring to it to make it feel safe?

What/ who else is inside the space that contributes to the safe nature of it?



professionals.childhood.org.au

42



43

Enabled

- Engaging students in the process of understanding themselves can build social and emotional learning.
- When students know about their qualities, their attributes and their talents they can feel good about themselves.
- Knowing about their own special story helps students to build a coherent self-narrative.

I grow stronger as I learn more about what makes me, me.

Australian Childhood Foundation

professionals.childhood.org.au

44

Staged: approaches



Introduce neurobiology and psychoeducation through curriculum and a common language that teaches children and staff around their brain's functions:

- What can impact upon our learning ie: Amygdala (not feeling safe) over or under arousal.
- What can help us to be 'ready to learn'?

Predictable

- Build in predictable processes for informal and formal consultation, collaboration and review opportunities that support your vision:
- Delegate clear times, and frequency that staff can meet to share successes/ learnings and reflections with one another
- Display the expectations and desired outcomes clearly

Children's learning is understood developmentally

The classroom offers a safe base

Language is understood as a vital means of communication

Transitions are significant in the lives of children

Nurture is important for the development of self-esteem

All behaviour is communication

6 Principles of Nurture UK research, statements utilised in Prospect Primary School (2023)

Adaptive



Students must find ways to keep themselves safe based upon survival that might present in relational behavior's that are difficult to understand. It is a child's search for comfort and attempt to seek safety.

Educators are supported through resources and relationship to have opportunities to explore what lies underneath student's behavior.

Educators are supported to maintain multiple meanings for behaviour and remain open to multiple options for intervention.

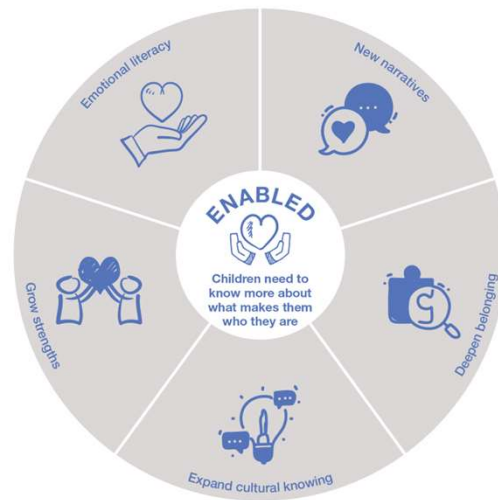
Connected



- Provide connecting and co-regulation activities for students and their peers to participate in together: ie: a Zumba night, a drumming session, or a take-home craft activity idea.
- The school and educators provide a neural safe and connected environment, physically and emotionally.
- Develop with students safe places and emotional anchors within the school. Don't forget the educators! Who are their emotional anchors?
- *You understand self-regulation and use this when engaging with students.*

Enabled

- Each student is enabled to learn, feel seen and reach their potential.
- Embed initiatives such as emotional check ins, 'wellbeing ID cards' and other emotional literacy and body awareness activities that are facilitated in every classroom.
- Encourage diversity and acknowledge different perspectives and compassionate responses.



49

Please take a minute to share your reflections today

- One idea
- Thoughts for further exploration



50

Q and A

- Questions
- Queries
- Shared thoughts



- To ask a question you can:
 1. Use the raise hand function
 2. Send a question to 'everyone' in the chat for a facilitator to share.





Australian
Childhood
Foundation

professionals.childhood.org.au

51

Next session

 VIRTUAL



Trauma Informed Practice: Practical Strategies for the...

Wed, 13 Sep
3:45 PM - 4:45 PM

Primary, Secondary
Professional Learning

Tutor Learning Initiative
Professional Learning



Australian
Childhood
Foundation

52

Resources and contact

Contact details

- tutor@education.vic.gov.au
- mylns@education.vic.gov.au
- drichards@childhood.org.au

Resources

- <https://professionals.childhood.org.au/making-space-learning-resources/>



53