



1



2



3



4

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

Australian Childhood Foundation professionals.childhood.org.au

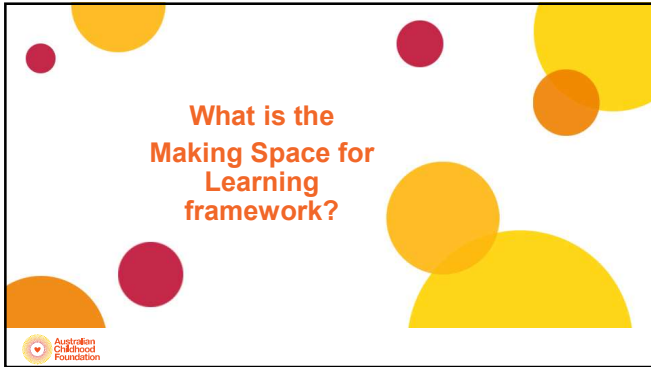
5

Relationships shape our sense of self and safety

- Relationships are the most important factor in our development and in healing from experiences of trauma
- Secure relationships are central to how a student experiences themselves and others

Australian Childhood Foundation

6



7



8

SPACE in Action

1. Draw a symbol that represents something novel about yourself that you are willing to share.
2. Walk around the room and stop when you have met someone who is far away from where you were sitting and share your symbol. Do not return to your spot until completing two further actions...
3. Tell your partner how you know which seat you were sitting in previously. I.e: Did you leave any reference points for yourself? Like your coat/bag...did you mentally count how many rows before you moved?
4. Imagine now that you couldn't go back to your original seat. Where would you move to and why? What do you consider or what rules do you have around where your most comfortable to sit in a space like this?

Australian Childhood Foundation professionals.childhood.org.au

9

Predictable

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




I feel better when I know what is coming next.

Australian Childhood Foundation Professional Education Services
childhood.org.au/training

10

What might predictability look like in practice?



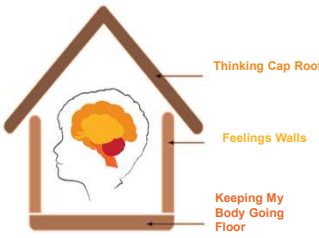
- Build routines and predictability wherever possible
 - Prepare children and young people for what is coming next eg: giving countdowns to transitions
 - Visual timetables are useful
- Think about how to do transitions throughout the day
 - Play and fun
 - Planned brain breaks
- Give plenty of information and time building up to changes

Australian Childhood Foundation professionals.childhood.org.au

11

Staged

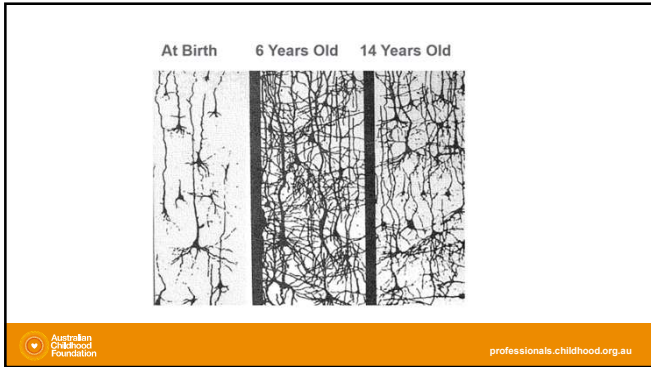
- Brain development is sequential
- One of the ways our brain develops is vertically, from the bottom to the top
- Some neurodevelopmental delays such as those effected by trauma can cause brain changes. However with the right support the brain can be repaired through neuroplasticity.



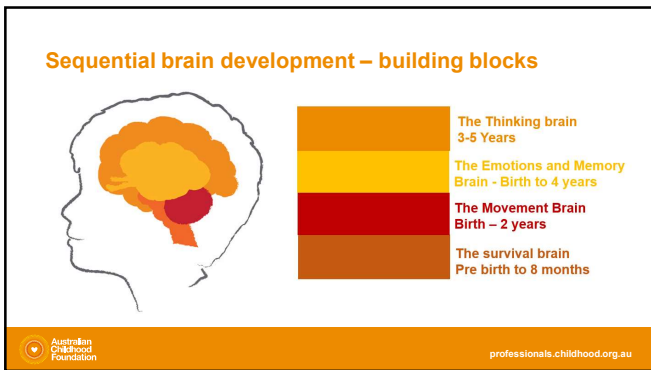
My brain grows upwards, step by step.

Australian Childhood Foundation professionals.childhood.org.au

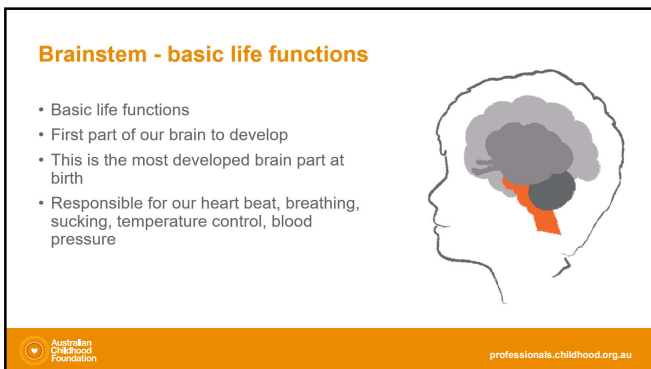
12



13




14



15

Cerebellum- movement and balance

- Helps us to know where our body is in space
- Helps us with our posture and balance
- Helps us not to fall over and to control our movements
- Has its own connective pathways between the 2 halves- cerebellar vermis



Australian Childhood Foundation professionals.childhood.org.au

16

Strategies for healing...Desktop drumming




Australian Childhood Foundation professionals.childhood.org.au

17

Diencephalon - sorting & sending centre

- This area of the brain develops mainly after birth
- It sorts out messages coming into the brain and sends them
- It uses hormones to send signals to body
- Hormonal signals tell your body what it needs, eg. food, water, love

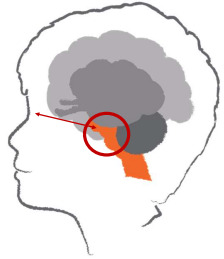


Australian Childhood Foundation professionals.childhood.org.au

18

Superior Colliculus

- Processes visual threats – looming objects identified by cells in the retina of the eye
- Retinal neuronal input received by Superior Colliculus which engages the body in **Avoidance and defensive behaviours**




Australian Childhood Foundation professionals.childhood.org.au

19

Limbic lobe- emotional gateway

- The part of the brain that helps us attach an emotion to an experience or memory
- This part of the brain is particularly involved with the emotions of fear and anger
- Also heavily involved in attachment processes
- This area develops mainly after birth



Australian Childhood Foundation professionals.childhood.org.au

20

Understanding the needs

- I need support to connect with how I'm feeling in my brain and body
- I need help to express how I am feeling in my emotions and in my body.

Healing Goal:
Help students to be more in touch with their feelings as they relate to language, bodily sensations, and behaviours

What do my sensations mean for me?

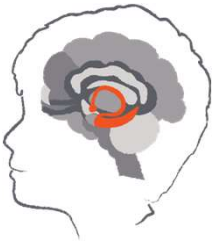
<p>Body Sensations</p> <p>Aching, Dull, Drenched, Sharp, Blurred, Electric, Nauseous, Light, Heavy, Smooth, Breathtaking, Emergent, Soft, Aisy, Brittle, Bruised, Burning, Buzzy, Open, Pounding, Spinning, Big, Hot, Cold, Drenched, Pulsing, Throbbing, Tight, Tingling, Twitchy, Itchy, Dry, Itchy, Shaky, Dizzy, Full, Fuzzy, Hefty, Puffy, Picky, Wobbly, Rushed, Numb, Tense, Loose</p>		<p>Emotions</p> <p>Happy Sad Scared Worried Disgusted Surprised Angry Calm</p>
--	---	---

Australian Childhood Foundation

21

Hippocampus – Brain’s historian

- Explicit memory system
- Develops approximately 2-3 years of age
- Provides context to memory and embeds long term memory




Australian Childhood Foundation
professionals.childhood.org.au

22

Amygdala – smoke alarm

- Detects threat
- Develops from birth
- Learns by association
- Involved in implicit memory processes




Australian Childhood Foundation
professionals.childhood.org.au

23





Cerebral cortex- complex thinking

- The largest part of the brain
- Associated with higher brain function such as thought and action
- Examples of functions:
 - Reasoning
 - Logic
 - Judgement
 - Voluntary movement



Australian Childhood Foundation
professionals.childhood.org.au


24

Key Brain Area	Potential impact of trauma	
Brainstem & Diencephalon	May experience fast or slower heart rate Shortness of breath or breathing difficulties Sleep disturbances and unsettledness Sucking and swallowing and digestion difficulties May feel hot or cold or not notice changes in temperature Becomes overwhelmed and cannot sort through information	
Cerebellum	Difficulty in maintain posture & balance Lack of awareness of their body in space Poor fine or gross motor skills	
Limbic Lobe	Receptive communication- struggle to read/ understand others Expressive communication- may themselves struggle to express emotions. Oversensitivity or under-sensitivity to threat Struggle to recall information Difficulty in placing time and dates to memories	
Cortex	Unable to or limited ability to: Use foresight and anticipation Organise and plan decisions well Use impulse control Be enthusiastic, motivated or persistent with activities	

30

Strategies for building healthy brain development

Brainstem & Diencephalon	Basic survival & sensory processing	Pacification or stimulation. Activities in the child's preferred sensory modality
Cerebellum	Coordination of movement	Using music, rhyme and movement activities
Limbic	Emotional processing	Building relational connection through plays, animals, games
Cortex	Thinking processes	Linking experiences and sensations to words and descriptions
Prefrontal cortex	Analytical and abstract thinking	Challenges and safe risk taking activities


 professionals.childhood.org.au

31

Hemispheric integration


Left Hemisphere

- Evaluates language content
- Optimistic hemisphere
- Understands beginning, middle and end
- Learns from the past and expects the future
- Looks for patterns



Right Hemisphere

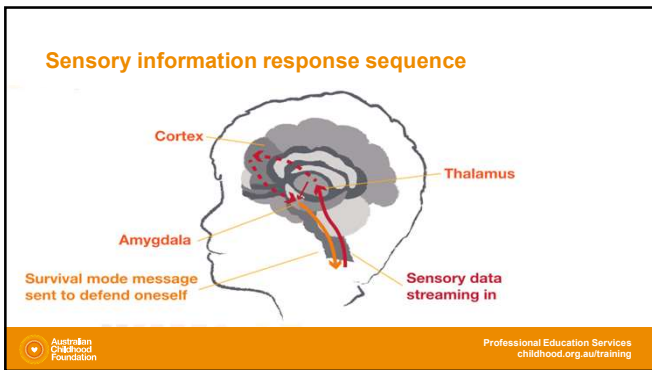
- In the present moment
- Eye contact
- Facial expression
- Tone of voice
- Posture
- Gesture
- Intensity
- Is mute
- Grasps the whole

 professionals.childhood.org.au

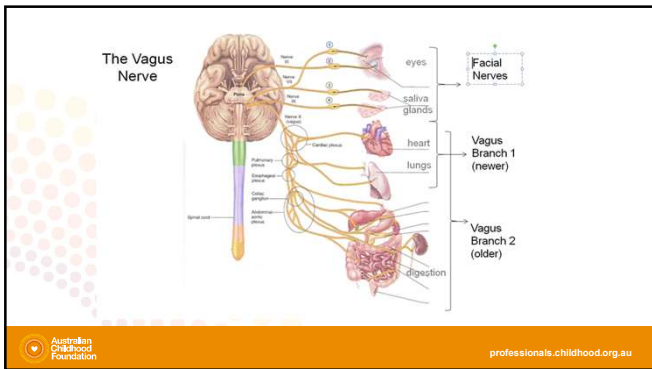
32



33



34



35

Polyvagal theory and protective responses

By Stephen Porges

Behavioural Functions	Body Functions
Social Engagement Soothing and eating Indicates safety	• 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
Mobilisation Fight or Flight Active Freeze Moderate or extreme danger	Hyper arousal • Increases heart rate • Sweat increases • Inhibits gastrointestinal function • Narrowing blood vessels - to slow blood flow to extremities • Release of adrenaline
Immobilisation Collapse or dissociation Death feigning Increased pain threshold Conserves metabolic resources Life threatening situations	Hypo - arousal • Slows heart rate • Constricts bronchi • Stimulates gastrointestinal function

Australian Childhood Foundation Professional Education Services
 childhood.org.au/training

36

Strategies to promote neuroception of safety

Australian Childhood Foundation professionals.childhood.org.au

37

When I am terrified

- Containment- help me feel back in my body
- Grounded- Help me feel present in the Here and Now.
- Present- Stay with me, help me know I am not alone in my distress


Notice and name

5 things you can see
 4 things you can hear
 3 things you touch/sense
 2 things you can smell
 1 thing you can taste

Australian Childhood Foundation

38

Adaptive

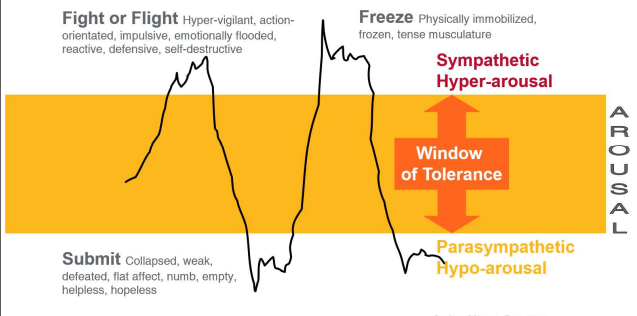


- To cope with trauma children use initial adaptive responses to survive
- This is reasonable as a once off occurrence, but, if they continue they can become maladaptive patterns of behaviour
- These responses will be different for an individual child at different developmental stages
- Often a combination of appropriate developmental behaviours and maladaptive patterns of behaviour emerge

Australian Childhood Foundation
professionals.childhood.org.au

42

Dys-regulated Arousal



Fight or Flight Hyper-vigilant, action-orientated, impulsive, emotionally flooded, reactive, defensive, self-destructive

Freeze Physically immobilized, frozen, tense musculature

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

Sympathetic Hyper-arousal

Window of Tolerance

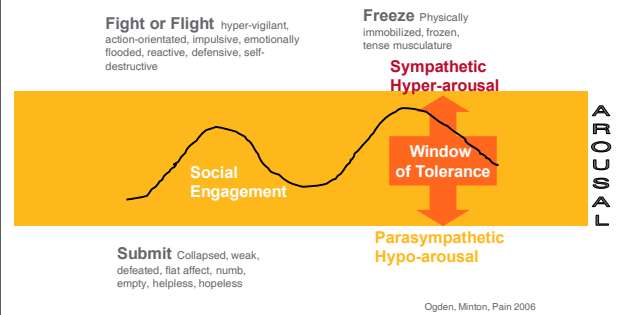
Parasympathetic Hypo-arousal

AROUSAL

Ogden, Minton, Pain 2006

43

Regulated Arousal



Fight or Flight hyper-vigilant, action-orientated, impulsive, emotionally flooded, reactive, defensive, self-destructive

Freeze Physically immobilized, frozen, tense musculature

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

Sympathetic Hyper-arousal

Window of Tolerance

Parasympathetic Hypo-arousal

Social Engagement

AROUSAL

Ogden, Minton, Pain 2006

44

Reflection Time

- During your teaching day are you more likely to become hyper or hypo aroused?
- 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?



Australian Childhood Foundation Professional Education Services professionals.childhood.org.au

45

Behaviour is Communication

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



Australian Childhood Foundation professionals.childhood.org.au

46

The Shield of Shame



Blame
"It was his fault!"

Deny
"I never did anything!"

Minimise
"He wasn't really hurt"

Rage
"You always blame me for everything!!!"


Australian Childhood Foundation Professional Education Services childhood.org.au/training

47

Connected

Strategies to support students 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 Professional Education Services
 childhood.org.au/training

48

Hand to Hand Attunement

Let's work together to hold an object up between our hands or fingers and *not let it fall*



We will need to synchronise our movements and attune to one another. What object feels right to hold between us? A big gum ball? A sports ball? A cushion? A balloon? A person? Let's try moving the object around. What is that like for you? As you move together, notice if one person is leading or if the movement initiation is swapping between you. Play around with this. When you become accomplished, add another object so you are using both of your hands to hold up two objects between you. What does it feel like to be in synchrony with another person?

Australian Childhood Foundation Professional Education Services
 childhood.org.au/training

49

What might Connected look like in practice?



- The student feels safe and connected
- Co-regulation occurs
- A feeling of connectedness is what you get when you feel like you belong in a group, when you are with others of your
- Attuned listening.


Australian Childhood Foundation professionals.childhood.org.au

50

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 Professional Education Services childhood.org.au/training

51

What might Enabled look like in practice?

- Creating safety
- Understand triggers
- Check in, tell and hearing their story
- Classroom approaches for individuals
- Flight, Fight, Active Freeze or Submit responses are assisted to enable learning.



Australian Childhood Foundation professionals.childhood.org.au



52



Plan together, share together

53

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

Well-Connected Brain Utilizing the front part of the brain	Stressed out Brain Utilizing the more primitive middle region of the brain
	
Open Flexible and Adaptive	Closed and Rigid

Australian Childhood Foundation | professionals.childhood.org.au

54

Experience Feeling safe in relationship




Australian Childhood Foundation | professionals.childhood.org.au

55

Safety in the classroom

- Create connection and sense of belonging
- Consider sensory environment
- Consider where each student is at in their nervous system as they enter – do they need to up regulate or down regulate to focus
- Include brain breaks and meaning-making or reflection opportunities
- Facilitate early opportunities for success
- Make things predictable and consistent
- Identify an 'emotional anchor' or key person for the student



Australian Childhood Foundation | professionals.childhood.org.au

56

Making SPACE for Learning – Site Audit Tool

This audit tool can be used to evaluate the policies and practices of a school that measure and engage different levels of the school structure to undertake trauma informed practice. In the following table, list strategies, policies or other processes currently undertaken that support traumatised students at your school.

	Whole Site	Staff	Classroom / Group	Small Group	Individual Student / Child
S Support					
P Professionals					
A Activities					
C Contextual					
E Enacted					

Australian Childhood Foundation
professionals.childhood.org.au

57

How do I access MSFL? & other Questions

Australian Childhood Foundation

58

Thank you!
For more resources
Please check out our website
www.childhood.org.au
Melissa Powney
mpowney@childhood.org.au

Australian Childhood Foundation

59
