

Understanding and responding to trauma

General
Day 2





 SMART PRACTICE

The Australian Childhood Foundation acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the traditional custodians and owners of the land and waters across Australia.

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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We acknowledge you and what you bring...

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




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MORNING → **Part 1: 9.00am - 11.00am**
 Review of the ACF Model of Practice & SMART PRACTICE Framework & PRACTICE element P
 PRACTICE elements – R & A
Morning Tea: 11.00am – 11.15am

MIDDLE → **Part 2: 11.15am – 12.45pm**
 PRACTICE elements – C, T & I
Lunch Break: 12.45pm – 1.15pm

AFTERNOON → **Part 3: 1.15pm – 3.15pm**
 PRACTICE elements – C & E
Wrap Up & Evaluations 3.15pm
 Finish: 3.30pm

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Learning together

Your emotional safety is paramount
 Our learning is about shared wisdom
 Curiosity and learning build our brains

Success Criteria

- **apply** the SMART PRACTICE Framework for assessing and responding to the impact of trauma on students.
- **build** a toolkit of practice skills to respond, which promote recovery and healing for students, using the Framework & the SMART Circle of PRACTICE

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Introductions

What is an interesting tidbit/fact about your name?

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PART 1:

Review
ACF Model of Practice
SMART PRACTICE Framework
SMART Circle of Practice
PRACTICE element – P

Introduce
PRACTICE elements – R & A

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Introducing the ACF Model of practice

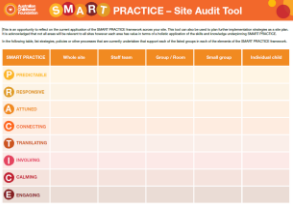
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Site Audit Tool – celebration and reflection....

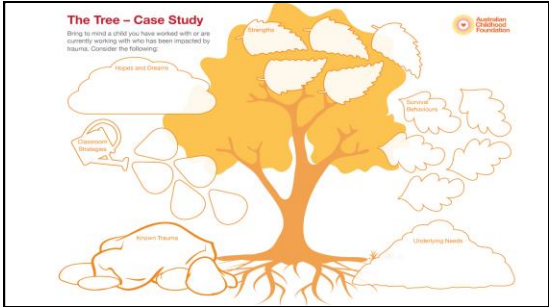
- Leadership – Whole Site and Staff
- Educators – Classroom/Group and Individual Student/Child
- Specialist Educators/SSO's/BSSO's – small groups and Individual Student/Child



Understanding SMART PRACTICE

For each of the elements of PRACTICE we invite you to:

- consider the main **PRINCIPLE** and **OUTCOMES**
- reflect on what the **NEEDS** are of students (as children/young people)
- understand the **PRACTICE GOAL**
- identify helpful and supportive **RESPONSES, ACTIVITIES** and **STRATEGIES**



Regulation response & strategy principles

- **Co-regulate** before expecting self-regulation
- **Determine** whether a student is hyper or hypo aroused before using certain strategies
- **Focus** on the principles of "bottom up" to regulate the higher parts of the brain and the body, and "top down" to regulate the lower parts of the brain and the body

Review - SMART Circle of PRACTICE

The diagram includes a brain silhouette with 'Cortical' and 'Subcortical' regions labeled. To the right is a circular diagram with a heart in the center, labeled 'TOP DOWN' and 'BOTTOM UP'. The circle is divided into segments with various icons representing different practices like 'Emotions', 'Thoughts', 'Physical', 'Social', 'Cognitive', 'Sensory', 'Behavioral', 'Academic', 'Life Skills', 'Self-Regulation', and 'Resilience'. The text 'SMART PRACTICE' is at the bottom left, and the Australian Childhood Foundation logo is at the bottom right.

SMART PRACTICE - PREDICTABLE

Principle:

- Students who have experienced trauma may experience any change as a potential threat. Even if the familiar is difficult and destructive, the familiar is safer for them than the unfamiliar.

Outcomes:

- Students will come to trust, and rely on their reference point(s) as an interpreter of their environment. They will respond in a less volatile way to changes in the classroom and build a platform for responding to change overall.
- Students will learn to use others as a resource to support them at school.



Understanding the needs - PREDICTABLE

- I need safe and attuned relationships
- I need a felt sense of safety

PRACTICE Goal:

Create environments that are routine and predictable and prepare students for change

PREDICTABLE responding - whole class and students

Being predictable... would your students be able to answer these questions?

- How you greet them each lesson?
- Do they know what's coming up in the lesson?
- Do they know the general routine of the lesson?
- Do they know where they will sit?
- Do they know how you will give them their instructions, tasks, work, feedback...?
- Do they know where to find what they need?
- Do they know what to do if they are struggling with a task? Do they know how you will react?



PREDICTABLE responding – whole class and students

SMART PRACTICE - Site Audit Tool

| SMART PRACTICE | Whole site | Classrooms | Yard | Yard group | Individual |
|------------------------|------------|------------|------|------------|------------|
| 1. PREDICTABLE | | | | | |
| 2. RELATIONSHIPS | | | | | |
| 3. COMMUNITY | | | | | |
| 4. PERSONAL COMPETENCE | | | | | |
| 5. BEHAVIOUR | | | | | |
| 6. WELLBEING | | | | | |

The circular diagram features a central heart with 'TOP DOWN' above it and 'BOTTOM UP' below it. The top half is labeled 'RESPONSES TO STRENGTHS & RESILIENCE' and includes icons for 'Emotions', 'Skills', 'Attitudes', and 'Values'. The bottom half is labeled 'RESPONSES TO NEEDS & VULNERABILITIES' and includes icons for 'Physical', 'Social', 'Emotional', and 'Cognitive'.

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PREDICTABLE responding – whole site and staff

- Policies & procedures
- Routines
- Classrooms
- Yard
- Excursions and incursions
- Evacuations and invacuations
- Supporting Children in Care

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Key takeaway messages

- Develop connection and belonging – RELATIONSHIPS are key – acknowledge strengths
- Reintegrate experiences of shame (eye contact)
- Experience trust and respect
- Develop a sense of personal competence
- Be predictable
- Regulate to engage - be present, be connected, be authentic

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A Guide to Managing Abuse Risk in Schools

SMART PRACTICE – RESPONSIVE

Principle:

- Students who have experienced trauma, will often display behaviour which is experienced as difficult or challenging by others but often makes sense in the context of their trauma. They find it hard to internalise external rules and consequences.
- Secondary reactions are experienced as threats and responded to as such by students

Outcomes:

- Students who have experienced trauma, will be less likely to over-react to limit setting.
- They will experience the present as different from the past and will feel personal exchanges are reaffirming to themselves.

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Understanding the needs – RESPONSIVE

- I need those closest to me to respond to me in a way that I need
- I need environments that support and respond to what I need

PRACTICE Goal:

Respond to students with the understanding that their past trauma will guide present behaviours, cognitions, and emotions.



RESPONSIVE responding – whole site and staff

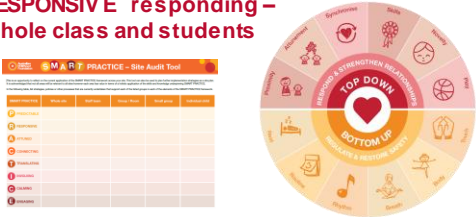
- Policies, procedures – especially Behaviour Management and Wellbeing Plans
- Classroom behaviour
- Yard behaviour
- Escalations
- Suspensions and Expulsions
- Returning to school



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RESPONSIVE responding – whole class and students



SMART PRACTICE - Site Audit Tool

| Element | Yes | No | Not Applicable | Not Applicable | Not Applicable |
|---|-----|----|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| 1. SMART PRACTICE is implemented across the school | | | | | |
| 2. SMART PRACTICE is implemented across all year levels | | | | | |
| 3. SMART PRACTICE is implemented across all classrooms | | | | | |
| 4. SMART PRACTICE is implemented across all playgrounds | | | | | |
| 5. SMART PRACTICE is implemented across all outdoor areas | | | | | |
| 6. SMART PRACTICE is implemented across all indoor areas | | | | | |
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| 10. SMART PRACTICE is implemented across all indoor areas | | | | | |

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SMART PRACTICE - ATTUNED

Principle:

- Students who have experienced trauma, do not easily know how they feel and have had limited experience of having their feelings recognised by others.
- Feelings are experienced as separate to their knowledge of themselves.

Outcomes:

- Students will be better at tracking their own feelings/concerns/worries.
- They will practice enjoying and marking experiences of positive feelings.
- Students will develop experiences of having their feelings validated.

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Understanding the needs – ATTUNED

- I need those around me to attune into me and my needs
- I need to make positive meaning about my world.

PRACTICE Goal:

Recognize & tune into trauma related cues displayed by the student
Respond so that student can make positive meanings about their world

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ATTUNED responding – whole site and staff

- Policies, procedures
- Behaviour and Wellbeing Plans – One Plans
- Suspensions and exclusions
- Re-entry meetings
- In the classroom



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ATTUNED responding – whole class and students

| SMART PRACTICE – Site Audit Tool | Yes | No | Not Applicable | Not Applicable | Not Applicable |
|--|-----|----|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| 1. Policies and procedures | | | | | |
| 2. Behaviour and Wellbeing Plans – One Plans | | | | | |
| 3. Suspensions and exclusions | | | | | |
| 4. Re-entry meetings | | | | | |
| 5. In the classroom | | | | | |



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SMART PRACTICE – CONNECTING



- Principle:**
- Students who have experienced trauma will often feel disconnected from their feelings, memories of experiences and their sense of identity.
 - They need supports to get in touch with how they're feeling, what they are feeling and linking their perceptions and experiences to their feelings.
- Outcomes:**
- Students will build capacity to express themselves in language.
 - They will come to know how their feelings are affected by past experiences and can be better supported to be in control of their feelings and reactions.



SMART PRACTICE – TRANSLATING

Principle:

- Students who have experience trauma will find it difficult to make stories about their day to day experiences because their memory and interpretive functions have been impaired.
- They struggle to make sense of their past, feel separate from their present and have no starting point for making their path into the future.

Outcomes:

- Students will build better memory for events and experiences, including their capacity to learn and retain information.
- They will build a base for being able to explore their history and begin to make conscious sense of their experiences.

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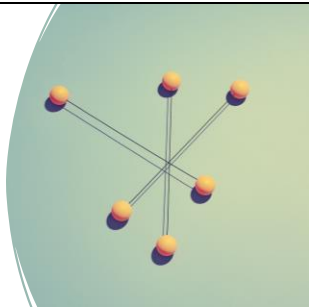


Understanding the needs - TRANSLATING

- I need you to help me understand why I respond or behave in the way I do...especially in my body
- I need you to help me remember what I need to do (both in my learning and in my emotional and body regulation)

PRACTICE Goal:

Aid students to interpret and organize their experiences



TRANSLATING responding - whole class and students

SMART PRACTICE – Site Audit Tool

| Category | Met | Not Met | Not Applicable | Not Done | Not Started |
|---------------|-----|---------|----------------|----------|-------------|
| 1. Safety | | | | | |
| 2. Health | | | | | |
| 3. Learning | | | | | |
| 4. Wellbeing | | | | | |
| 5. Community | | | | | |
| 6. Governance | | | | | |



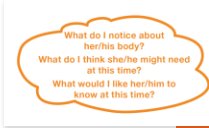

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TRANSLATING responding – whole site and staff

- Understanding a student's behaviour
- Helping a student to understand their behaviour
- Behaviour Management Plans
- One Plans
- IESP Applications
- Escalation Profiles
- Understanding arousal – Zones of Regulation Window of Tolerance
- Sharing of information
- Parent/Teacher days

What do I notice about her/his body?
 What do I think she/he might need at this time?
 What would I like her/him to know at this time?

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SMART PRACTICE – INVOLVING



Principle:

- Students who have experienced trauma, will find it difficult to make friends, having poorly developed maps to guide them.
- They often fail to constructively interpret social cues and will often feel isolated and different from their peers. They may use socially inappropriate behaviour to try to engage with peers and this often leads to ostracization.

Outcomes:

- Students will feel they belong and will be able to engage in appropriate behaviours as attempts to become part of a friendship group.
- They will be better able to understand social cues and will be less likely to feel peer interactions are threatening.

Understanding the needs - INVOLVING

- I need you to help me feel and be involved in activities in my class or at school
- I need you to help my friends understand what's happening for me.

PRACTICE Goal:

- Promote students' participation in relational activities



INVOLVING responding – whole class and students

SMART PRACTICE - Site Audit Tool

| Element | Response | Priority | Who | When | How |
|---------|----------|----------|-----|------|-----|
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INVOLVING responding – whole site and staff

- Policies, procedures
- Routines
- Classrooms
- Yard
- Excursions and incursions
- Extra curricular activities.

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PART 3:
PRACTICE elements – C & E

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SMART PRACTICE – CALMING

Principle:

- Students who have experienced trauma, find it difficult to shape or change their own feelings of stress/distress
- Trauma has impaired their cortical capacity to regulate sub-cortical functioning.

Outcomes:

- Students will feel more supported and connected to school community by feeling less blamed.
- They will not feel singled out because everyone is learning how to stay calm and will be able to come up with and use plans to stay calm or become calm that make sense to them.
- Education staff will be able to respond rather than react.

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Understanding the needs - CALMING

- I need you to respond to me in a way that makes me feel safe and ok
- I need my felt sense of safety restored through co-regulation

PRACTICE Goal:

- Assist students to attain a sense of calm and connection



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Detecting Safety with our Social Engagement System

- We feel safe together in this state.
- This is a calm behavioral state
- Often characterized by mirroring and reciprocity.
- Tell tale signs– people are orientated towards one another with engaged faces



Neuroception = the way our neural circuits quickly and implicitly work out if situations or people are safe or dangerous

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Detecting Safety with our Social Engagement System

| | | | | |
|--|---|---|--|--|
| | Mobilisation Fight, Flight, Active Freeze | I don't feel safe I am filled with energy I need to move I need to act now | Red faced, hot and sweaty Fast beating heart Muscles tensed Moving body, hard to find stillness | |
| | Social Engagement | I feel safe I am all set to play and explore I am ready to connect I am open to your ideas | Making Eye contact Orienting towards those around Listening Relaxed, loose, flowing body | |
| | Immobilisation Ting | I don't feel safe I am numb/d out I am sweating inside I am collapsed, weak, and distant | I have cold extremities Glaazed eyes, distant stare Slow movement Lethargic & passive body | |

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Mobilisation

| | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| SAFETY Play | DANGER Fight or Flight or Active Freeze |
| | |
| Neuroception of Safety | Neuroception of Danger |
| Access to Social Engagement System | No access to Social Engagement System |

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Immobilisation

| | |
|--|---|
| SAFETY Being still with others for pro-social reasons like sharing a hug. Finding pleasure in stillness. | DANGER Submission or collapse Dissociation |
| | |
| Neuroception of Safety | Neuroception of Danger |
| Access to Social Engagement System | No access to Social Engagement System |

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My Day feeling safe and unsafe

Mobilised
I don't feel safe zone

Socially Engaged
I feel safe zone

Immobilised
I don't feel safe zone

My Day

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CALMING responding—whole class and students

SMART PRACTICE – Self Audit Tool

| SMART Practice | How often | How well | How good | How good | How good |
|--------------------------------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| 1. Self-awareness | | | | | |
| 2. Self-regulation | | | | | |
| 3. Social awareness | | | | | |
| 4. Relationship skills | | | | | |
| 5. Responsible decision-making | | | | | |

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Brain and Body Break

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CALMING responding – whole site and staff

- Staff rooms
- Staff wellbeing areas
- How is self care promoted and encouraged at your site?
- How can this be incorporated each day?

Where is the calm for you?

Staff Self-care



SELF CARE STRATEGY FOR STAFF:

- Short meditation or focused activity first thing in the morning
- Focus on your breathing on your way to school
- Set intention for the day on the way to school
- Use breathing techniques to address tension
- Walking and standing focused activities during class
- Bring mindfulness to everyday tasks
- Listening to music

Principles for supporting for arousal



1. Mobilisation

- Rhythm
- Containing
- Grounding



2. Immobilisation

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



3. Social Engagement

- Prosody
- Breathing

Strategies - MOBILISED responses - Fight

What it might look like

- angry, aggressive, irritable
- confrontational, controlling, shouting
- blaming others, pushing others away, argumentative

Supportive responses

- help me stabilise my hyper-aroused nervous system
- use rhythm, containing and grounding
- match my energy before helping me calm down



Strategies - MOBILISED responses - Flight

What it might look like

- Anxious, silly, manic
- Running away, hiding, disruptive
- Difficulty with free play, silly voices, distracting

Supportive responses

- Be kind and patient when "finding" or collecting me
- Offer me an easy task/chore to do
- Help me settle my body – blankets, weighted bean bag or soft toy
- Encourage me to hang/hold/carry something heavy



Strategies MOBILISED responses – Freeze

What it might look like

- Arousal is high, but movement is inhibited
- May look confused or distracted
- Scanning the room/dilated pupils, wide eyes

Supportive responses

- Be curious about the freeze state: places that are less frozen than others?
- Gently facilitate movement e.g. Wiggling one finger
- Encourage the student to breathe
- Engage their senses





Strategies - IMMOBILISED responses - Flop

What it might look like


- low, sad, flat mood
- quiet, compliant
- alone, withdrawn

Supportive responses

- Orienting to the space/grounding exercises
- Orienting the senses
- Alignment- engaging the spine

Strategies for keeping students in their WOT.

- Routine and predictability
- Breath based activities
- Movement & Regulation activities
- Use of self – social engagement



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SMART PRACTICE – ENGAGING

Principle:

- Students who have experienced trauma, have insecure blueprints for forming, maintaining, understanding and being in relationships.
- Changing relational representations comes with repetitive opportunities to practice and experience difference in exchanges with others.

Outcomes:

- Students will learn to tolerate adults at school with different levels of intimacy.
- They will experience opportunities to review their relationship representations.
- They will practice maintaining connection with important adults and they will be more likely to feel safe.

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Understanding the needs - ENGAGING

- I need you to help me understand who I am, so I can engage with others – help me build the narrative of who I am.
- I need practice to be in relationships with others, through play, building my self-efficiency and for you to model what this can look like.

PRACTICE Goal:

Support students by building relationships with them that are respectful, compassionate and sustained



ENGAGING responding – whole class and students

SMART PRACTICE – Site Audit Tool

| Category | Item 1 | Item 2 | Item 3 | Item 4 | Item 5 |
|-------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| 1. Engagement | | | | | |
| 2. Relationships | | | | | |
| 3. Self-Efficacy | | | | | |
| 4. Social Skills | | | | | |
| 5. Emotional Regulation | | | | | |
| 6. Inclusion | | | | | |
| 7. Resilience | | | | | |



ENGAGING responding – whole site and staff

- Policies, procedures
- Professional Development to increase understanding
- Programs to engage students at school – such as the Alert Program, Lunchtime clubs, Breakfast Clubs
- Music across the whole school
- Sensory alert brain breaks for staff?



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- Checkout
- Feedback
- Keep in touch
- SMART Learning Pathway
- ACF & SMART Resources
- References




Check out

What are you taking back to your classroom/site?

- Strategy?
- Activity?
- New perspective?



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Feedback



SCAN ME

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Keep in touch with ACF and DfE

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SMART Learning Pathway

- SMART Online Training – register through Plink – self-paced
- SMART – 2-hour training – facilitated by a local SMART Trainer
- SMART PRACTICE – Day 1 – (includes specialist packages in Early Years, Refugees, Adolescents Working with Aboriginal communities)
- SMART PRACTICE – Day 2
- SMART Train the Trainer program – 2 days



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ACF & SMART Resources


- SMART training – register through PLINK
- Discussion papers – available on TLC Teams page
- Prosody Blog
<https://professionals.childhood.org.au/professional-community-network/>
- Other ACF Training
<https://professionals.childhood.org.au/training-development/course-list/>

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