



Fawbert & Barnard Infants School
Inclusion Parent Workshop 4

A trauma and attachment aware school
*Supporting pupils with trauma, loss and bereavement and big
life events (including COVID 19)*
Mrs Jones, Inclusion Lead
May 2023



The expectation that we can be immersed in suffering and loss daily and not be touched by it, is as realistic as expecting to be able to walk through water without getting wet.

(Rachel Remen, Kitchen Table Wisdom)



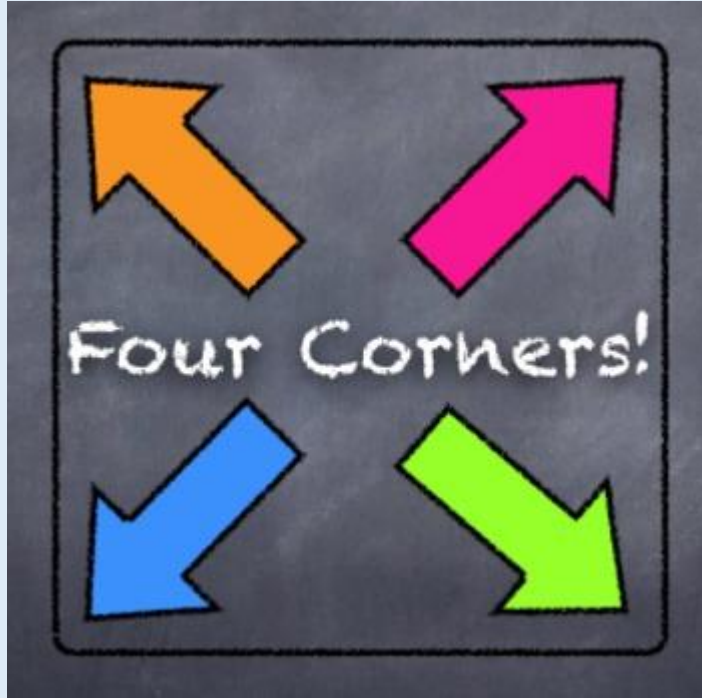
Aims of the session



- To increase confidence in supporting children when they are going through a loss, change or big life event.
- To understand how language can support children with feeling safe.
- To know where to go to access more support.
- To know what it means for F&B to be a trauma informed and attachment aware setting



How would you feel if...



How would you feel if those things that were most precious to you were taken away?

To children this could be:

- Contact meeting being cancelled
- A day where dad was due to be picking up has changed
- A play date has been cancelled.
- The weather means that trip to the park isn't happening.

All of this can lead to emotional responses which, if unsupported, can lead to negative behaviours.

How we want our children to feel...



What is trauma?



- In the last three years, the likelihood of young people having a mental health difficulty has increased by 50%

- **Now, five children in a classroom of 30 are likely to have poor mental health**

(Children's society 2022)



Trauma is often the result of an overwhelming amount of stress that exceeds a person's ability to cope

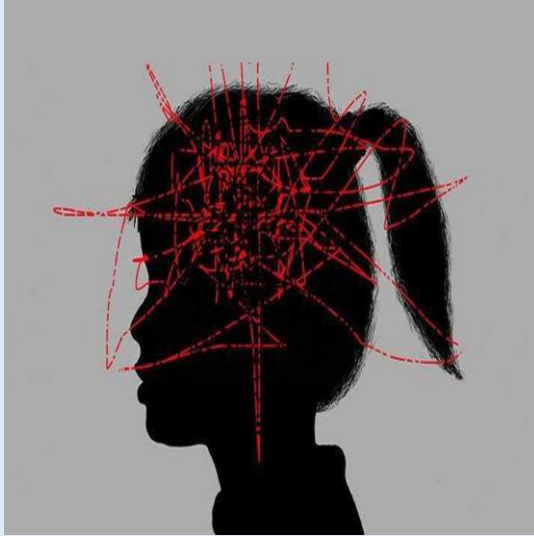
The memory of a traumatic event can be overwhelming

These memories can be triggered at any point in a person's lifetime by simple stimuli such as:

- Smell
- Sound
- Touch
- Or a Visual Reminder

These 'triggers' lead to children dysregulating and showing us how distressed they are through maladaptive behaviours

COVID 19



More than one in three children and young people are exposed to at least one potentially traumatic event by age 18.

(UK Trauma council 2022)



EVERY child has now experienced at least 1 trauma as a result of COVID.

Loss



Moving house

A friend moving away

Not being able to talk to someone as
much (due to work commitments)

A family separation

Not seeing someone as much as you
used to

A place with lovely memories no longer
being accessible

A bereavement

Losing a pet

A change in childcare

What is trauma?



- Is an acknowledgement we are first and foremost **hard-wired for survival**.

This **means** that much of what could be labelled as:

- mental ill health
- bad behaviour
- poor choices
- irresponsible decision-making

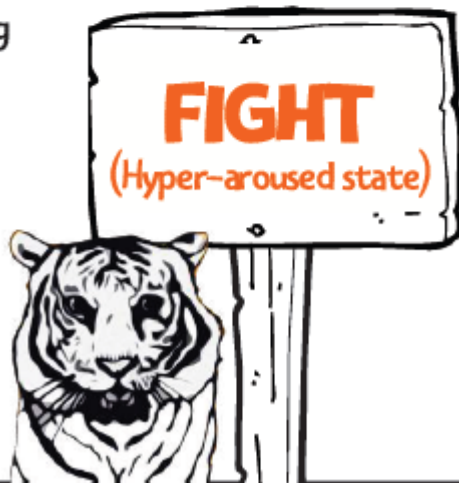
... are actually examples of survival instinct, out of context!

Survival in action - at home - the inner animals

- Hitting, kicking, punching, pinching, spitting, pushing
- Arguing with siblings or parents/carers
- Quietly not complying to rules, boundaries and expectations
- Saying "no" and resisting requests and expectations
- Showing anger and power in their facial expression or their body language

The Tiger

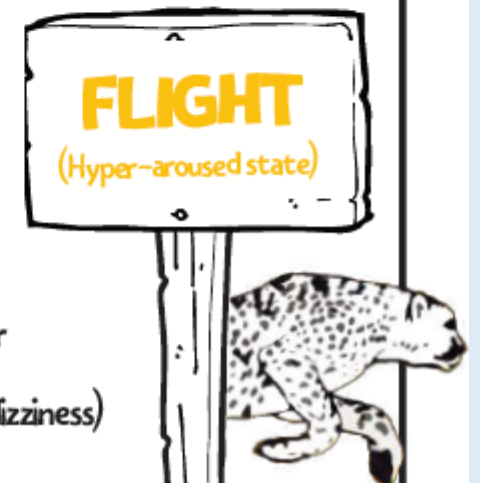
- Being impulsive and unpredictable
- Becoming angry, hostile or aggressive during transitions, for example, from home to school
- Lying about things, denying things, blaming others
- Being shouty and noisy
- Having physical symptoms of their distress (tummy ache, headache, dizziness)



- Running away
- Hiding behind and under things
- Being distracted from the 'task' at hand (e.g. brushing teeth, going to bed)

The Cheetah

- Avoiding eye contact
- Being quiet and not talkative
- Being overly-talkative to divert the parent/carers' attention from things that give them anxiety
- Keeping super busy to avoid intimacy or feelings
- Becoming 'silly', distracting or running away during transitions (for example, from TV time to dinner time)
- Having physical symptoms of their distress (tummy ache, headache, dizziness)

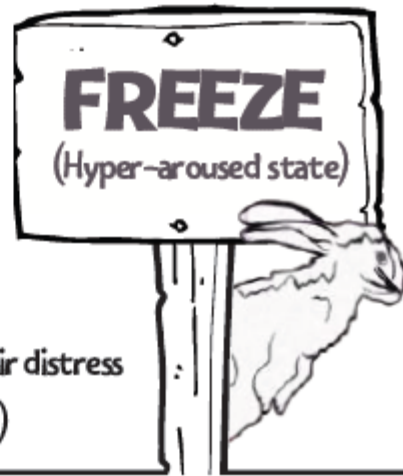


Survival in action – at home – the inner animals



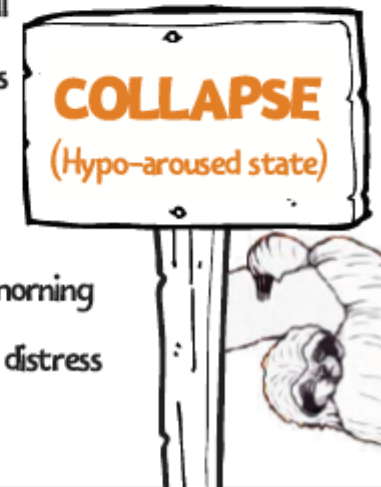
- Looking on edge and agitated
- Eyes wide open, scanning the environment
- Restless and fidgety or jumpy
- Not hearing instructions properly
- Not being able to play or laugh
- Being over-compliant to please their parents/carers
- Being non-compliant because they are too focussed on the "danger" to care about boundaries and expectations
- Not being able to start or complete chores or tasks, such as getting dressed
- Pre-occupied with the danger (e.g. a particular noise, or person)
- Becoming even more frozen during transitions.
- Becoming 'stuck' on one activity (such as homework) and not being able to move on from it.
- Having physical symptoms of their distress (tummy ache, headache, dizziness)

The Rabbit



- Slumped over or collapsed in a corner
- Appearing as if they are in a daydream
- Appearing as if they are not listening
- Appearing bored and disinterested
- Slowed down
- Appearing sleepy or drowsy
- Words are hard to find
- Eyes are glazed over or vacant
- They feel cold and shivery
- Their breathing shallows
- Unable to do any school work at all
- Unable to play and relate to others
- Rigid or floppy
- Homework does not get done
- They can't get out of bed in the morning
- Having physical symptoms of their distress (tummy ache, headache, dizziness)

The Sloth



Trauma and Stress



POSITIVE

Brief increases in heart rate, mild elevations in stress hormone levels.

TOLERABLE

Serious, temporary stress responses, buffered by supportive relationships.

TOXIC

Prolonged activation of stress response systems in the absence of protective relationships.

We all have exposure to stress, it is designed to prompt us to take action or to defend ourselves but also enables us to get out of bed or go to school.

E.G Car goes down a pot hole. Although horrible this is tolerable as we have support systems in place (e.g. phone husband / phone the AA).

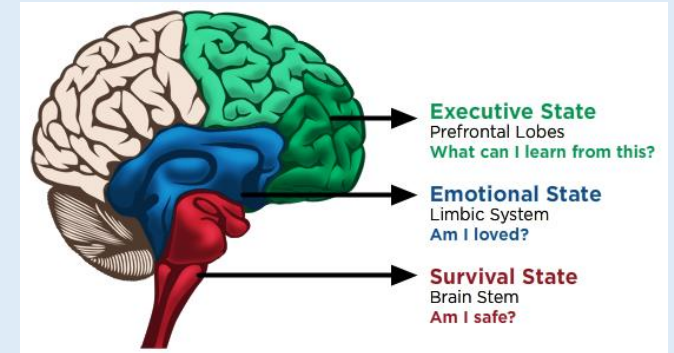
For children who have adapted to an environment which delivers stress on a regular basis, or who are going through an event that is causing them stress, their response to typical events may be more extreme.

What is happening in the brain?



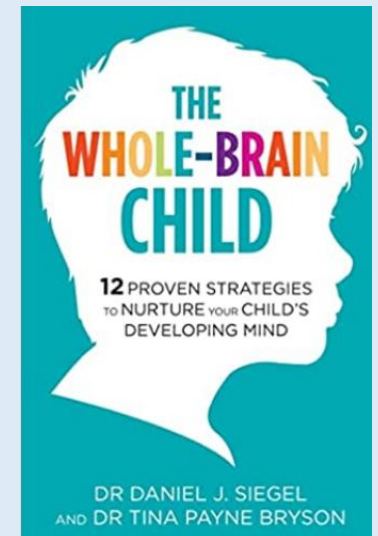
Thumb = the downstairs brain.
The location of big feelings.

Fingers = the upstairs brain.
The part used to think and plan.



Your upstairs brain (fingers) touches your downstairs brain (thumb) to regulate your emotions.

When a child 'flips their lid' their, their upstairs and downstairs brain aren't working together (touching).
The fingers fly up and **big feelings** are exposed.



What might you observe in a child who is finding things difficult?



- Forming and maintaining relationships
- Forming a positive self-image
- Managing/coping with stress
- Information retention
- Problem solving
- Disassociation - Freeze
- Aggression - Fight
- Run and Climb - Flight
- Overwhelmed - sights, sounds, touch
- Hypervigilance - on alert

Children who seem to go from 0-60 actually live at 59.9999

In the moment support (at home)



Spotting Fight Disrespectful, disregarding of others, pushing away friends, family members Argumentative, angry and aggressive, shouting, loud, noisy, confrontational Unable to follow house rules Immature, unable to concentrate on one thing Hot and bothered Lie or blaming Controlling, demanding, inflexible	Regulating Fight Deep breathing Really chewy foods Hanging, swinging, climbing Warm bath with lots of bubbles Warm milk or hot chocolate Hot water bottle Super soft blanket/toy Give me an 'important' task Create a safe space where I can go to self soothe Keep me safe	Spotting Flight Hyperactive, manic, chaotic, silly, baby talk, silly voices, loud, disruptive, clumsy, bumping into people Aggressive, threatening, stiffening up, clenching fists Running away escaping, disappearing, hiding Can't cope with free play or follow house rules Keeps super busy Needing to get to car, home, school, park first	Grounding Flight Keep me close by Deep breathing Tell me I'm safe Hanging Lap/Shoulder Pads Give me a familiar and easy chore Crunchy foods e.g. carrot sticks Happily and patiently find me Create a safe space for me to hide in Tug of war Warm milk or hot chocolate Hot water bottle and soft blanket/teddy
Spotting Freeze Bored, not interested. Distracted, not listening, day dreaming, staring into space Confused, forgetful Clumsy Subject change, talking about something else Not moving to where they've been asked Scanning the room Wide eyed, dilated pupils	Grounding Freeze Stay with me, don't leave. Wonder where I've gone and invite me back. Tell me I'm safe. Watching TV Deep breathing Spinning on a swing, climbing, hanging, rolling or cycling down a hill, jumping on a trampoline Digging in mud or sand Hot chocolate and toast Warm bath and warm towel Soft blanket/teddy	Spotting Collapse Unhappy, low mood Alone, withdrawn, removing myself Fidgety but not disruptive, anxious. Never questioning or asking questions. Yes or no answers - doing just enough to avoid being noticed, unable to think. Never drawing unnecessary attention Quiet and passive, compliant Easily bullied	Grounding Collapse Lap/Shoulder Pads Playing with lego or play-doh Give me small repetitive things to do Tell me I'm safe, spend some quiet time with you Hot chocolate and a crunchy biscuit Deep breathing Swinging Soft blanket & TV Warm bath and a warm towel Warm pyjamas

What can help?



Attachment-Regulation-Competency (ARC)

Skills for organisation,
problem solving and
learning

Skills for expressing &
sharing emotions to
others

Understanding and
knowing self unique,
and how we relate to
others.

Naming emotions

Taming emotions

START HERE: Supporting attachment by responding calmly to the child's needs.
Being calm and kind with empathy helps reduce the child's anxiety and teaches
children how we deal with big emotions

Modelling to make them feel safe 😊

**This is Zones of
Regulation!**

**Teaching the children
how to name and tame
emotions.**

What would you do if...?



If a colleague/ friend in your work place were to become upset and kick the table, how might you handle the situation?

If your child becomes upset and kicks the table, what do you do that is the same / different?

Flexibility within systems and processes is essential to respond to pupils who may be overwhelmed causing them to respond in unhelpful ways for the school/setting context.

Demonstrating and enacting routines consistently will be more helpful than enforcing routines

What can help? (At school)



Use Relational Techniques (in the moment)...

Children need to feel safe. This starts with their relationships:

- Trusted adults
- PACE model - (Dan Hughes) *Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity and Empathy.*
 - - Connection before Correction
 - Scripts
- Being kept in mind 'I was thinking of you yesterday as I remembered you said you were going to see your Grandma. How is she?' / 'Can you look after my pencil while I go and help Bob, I will be back in a minute'.
 - Name it to tame it - 'I can see you are angry...'
 - Being curious 'I wonder...'



What can help? (At school & home)



- Key adult(s) - **check-in** several times in the day
 - Kinder - Noticing **positives**
- Provide a **safe space** for the child to reflect and regulate
 - Physical activity - **daily mile**
- Sensory/soothing - quiet room, **sensory diet**, fidget toys, music
 - Relaxation - **mindfulness**
- Teaching children about their brains and the body's alarm system
- Teaching children about their emotions - **Zones of regulation**

Attachment Aware Schooling

- Whole school/setting culture of **emotional literacy** and relationship-based teaching and learning
 - Flexible application of a **differentiated behaviour policy** - **Kinder by design**
- Focus on reducing anxiety, rather than behaviour management. Avoid use of reward and sanctions systems, that embed feelings of individual shame and move towards building relationships
 - Relationship-based principles embedded throughout school setting
 - All school/setting staff are **Trauma aware** and curious in supporting children
- Systems to support setting staff to mitigate effects of secondary trauma/blocked care (blocked care = not being able to see the child through the behaviour / using negative language about a child).
 - Systems of **support for all staff and carers** to manage and cope with their own emotional responses and modulate to keep calm, model effective coping
 - **Respond not react!**



How does an F&B child know we are Trauma Aware?



Zones of Regulation

Processes in place to explore how children are doing...

Behaviour = Communication

Playground Spaces that cater for all needs

Check Ins

Adults who keep children 'in mind'

Hand of Support

The **language** we use

Focus on resilience

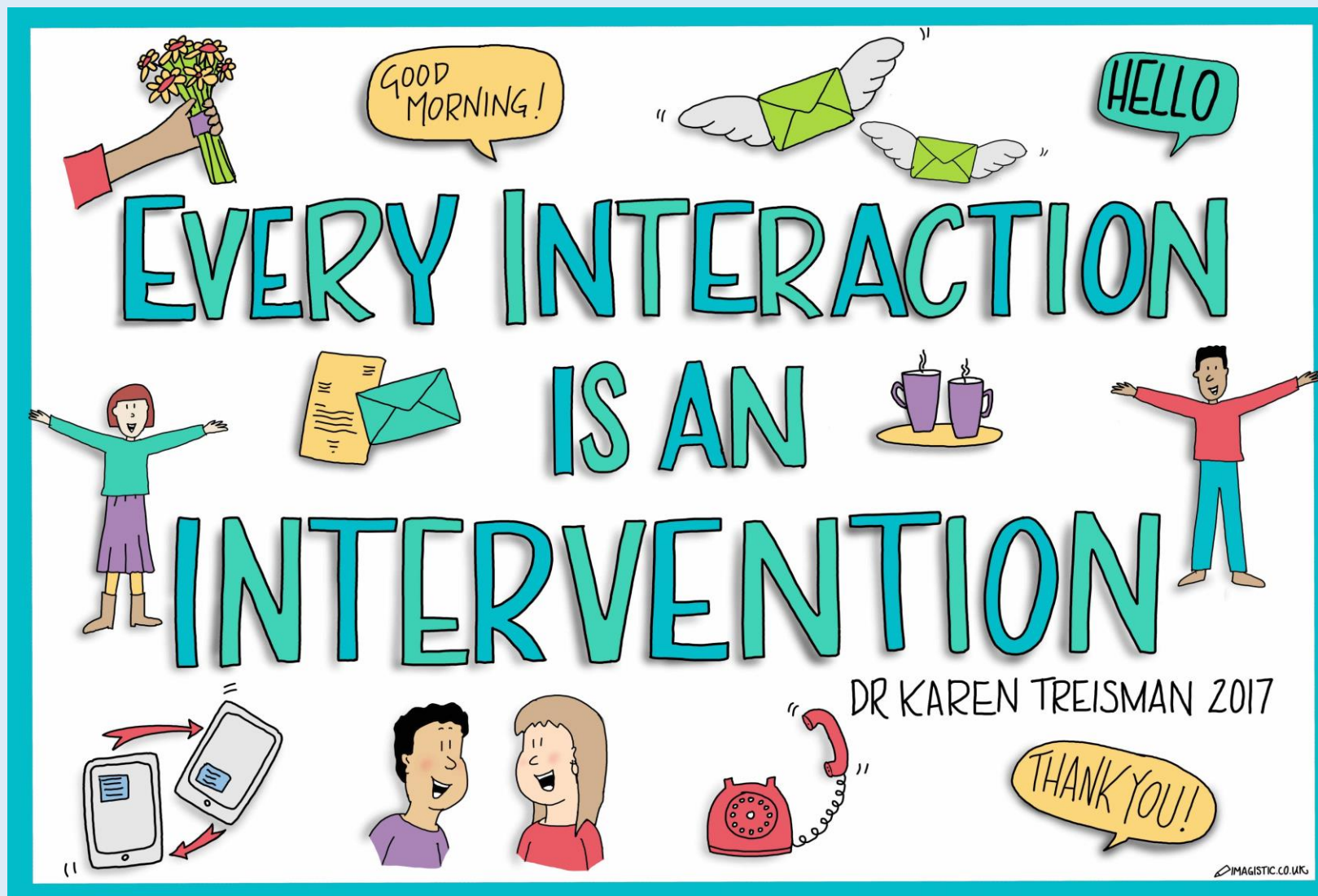
Mental Health & Wellbeing Team

Different approaches for different learners

Class mindfulness area

Adults who go 'off plan' to support children

Children are part of the choices



This doesn't have to be a formal intervention!
This is the provision that we offer at any given moment in time.

Sandbox



Body Image 

Anxiety 

Grief, Loss & Big Life Changes



The Holidays



Self Love 

Emotions & Mood



Sleep 

Parent Guides 

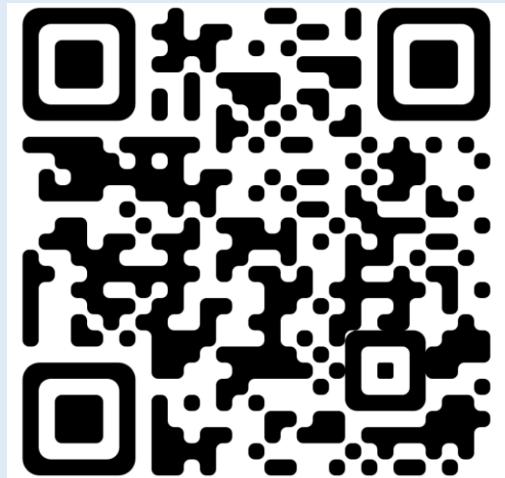
Self-Care 

Anger 

Where else can I go for support?



- [F&B Website](#)
- F&B Inclusion and Wellbeing Library
- [Sandbox](#)
- Inclusion Team - inco@fandb.herts.sch.uk - No question too small!



[Feedback:](#)

<https://forms.gle/qZHFucXtQMNamZK4A>