

ATTACHMENT AWARENESS IN SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

Dr Shabana Bashir, Senior Clinical Psychologist

shabana.bashir@phoenixpsychology.com

Jess Seddon (Trainee Clinical Psychologist)

Agenda

- Why understanding attachment and developmental trauma matters
- The rationale for moving from behaviour to a relational framework – what does this look like
- Building blocks: How trauma impacts on children's development and relationships (attachment and developmental trauma)
- The links between attachment and presentations in the classroom
- The impact of adversity on brain development and a model of the brain that you can apply when thinking about your pupils

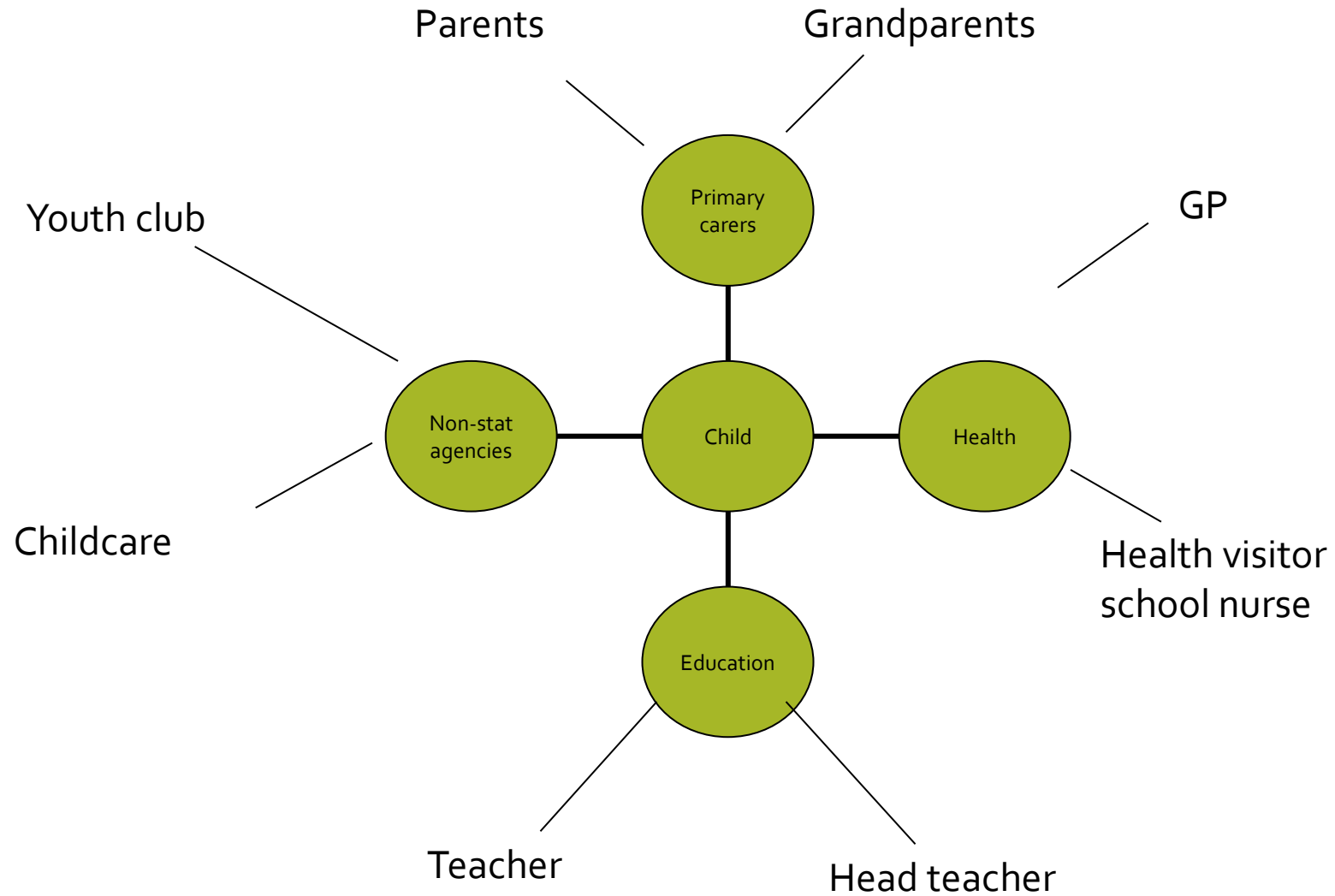
Who are we talking about today?

- Most children enjoy life and are successful in school and in relationships. But a significant minority struggle from an early stage and especially in adolescence.
- We call them **'at risk', 'vulnerable', 'in need', 'looked after', 'adopted'** – these children have something fundamental in common: the experience of developmental traumas and losses (e.g. witnessed or experienced among other things physical abuse, severe neglect, sexual abuse, domestic violence, multiple moves, emotional abuse, deprivation etc.)

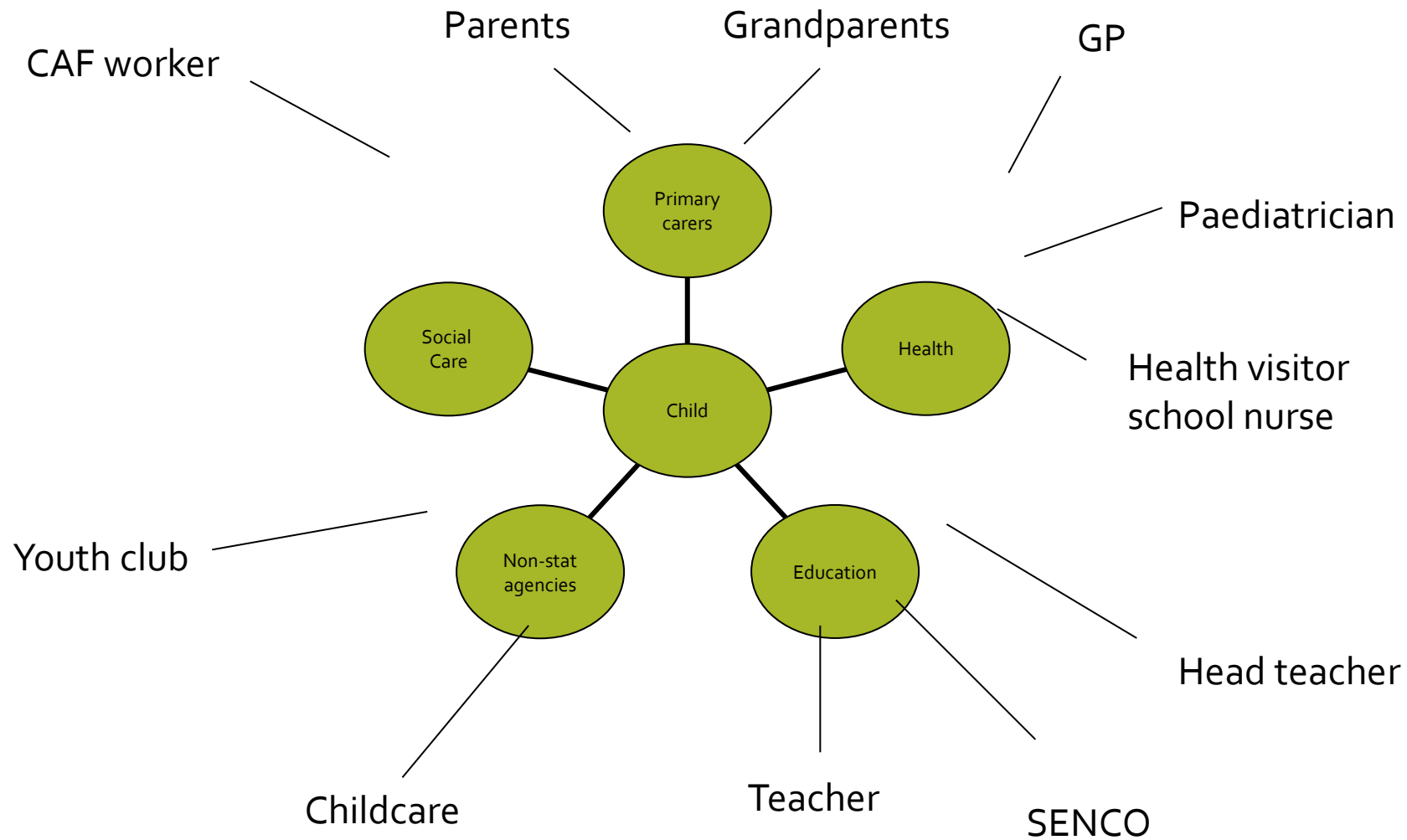
Context

- Loss (bereavement, abandonment).
- Separation (erratic and variable contact with family).
- Abuse
- Trauma (within family of origin).
- Adjustment to new family (difficulty trusting, attachment difficulties, longing for own family, conflict of loyalty).
- Multiple placements / effects of breakdowns on self worth

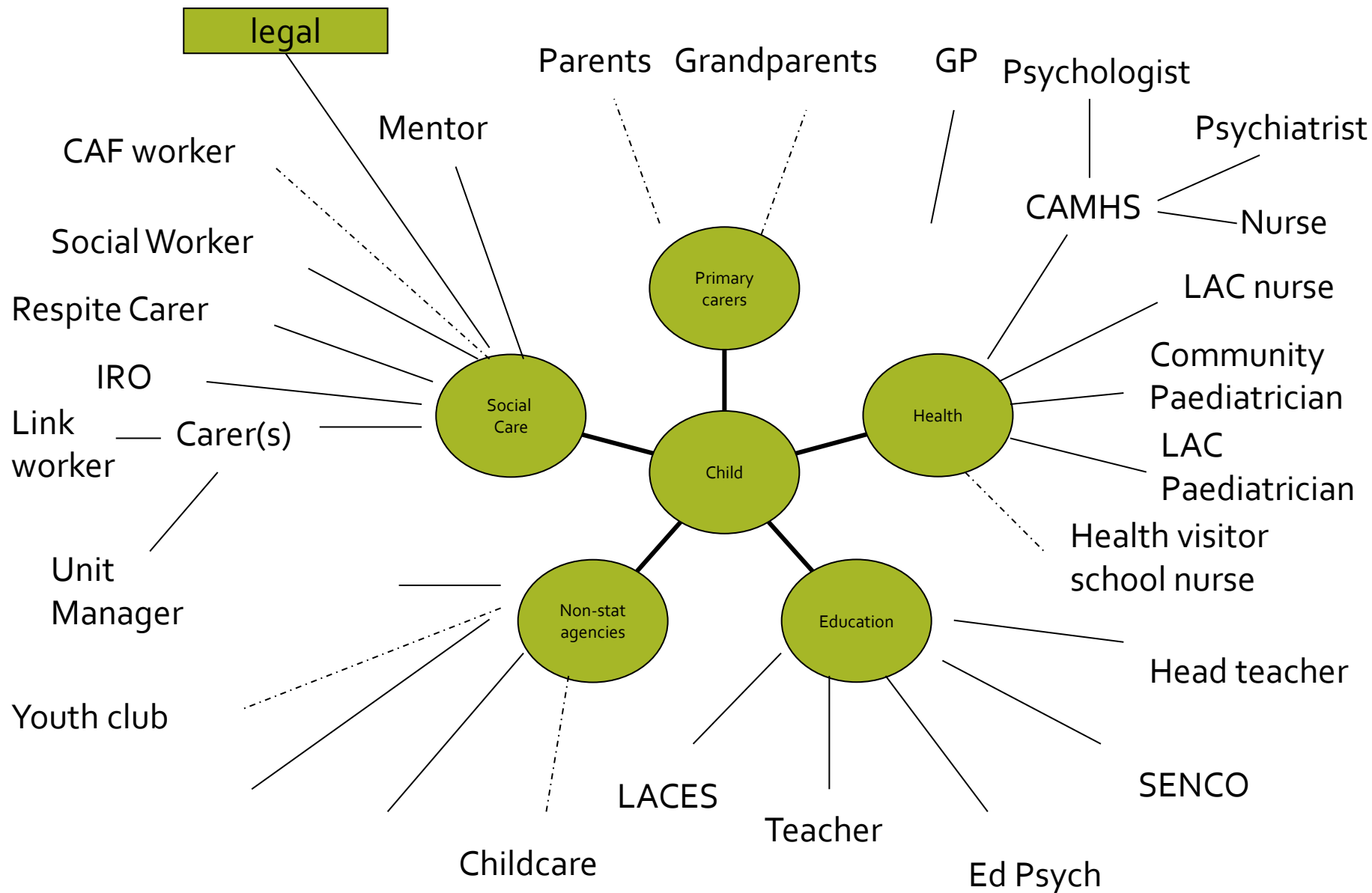
A non-LAC Child



Non-LAC Child with additional needs



LAC Child



Typical presentation

- Disruptions in affect regulation, rapid shifts in emotional states
- Behavioural regressions and 'time-holes'
- Aggressive behaviour against the self and others
- Developmental competencies disrupted – failure to master developmental tasks such as play
- Poor body regulation and sensation recognition – hunger, thirst, hot, cold, pain – poor self care
- Somatic problems – headaches, tummy aches
- Altered perceptions of the self, world, others – poor internal working model
- Hyper-vigilance to threat vs. lack of awareness of danger
- Disrupted attachment patterns

Why understanding attachment and developmental trauma matters

- Schools may be the optimum sites for buffering the impact of stress, building resilience and enhancing individual capacities for learning” (Nagel 2009).
- Secure attachment relationships correlate with higher achievement, better self-regulation, well-being and social skills (Bergin & Bergin, 2009)
- Educators themselves need to establish an attachment like relationship with pupils – you do this everyday.
- Nationally, Head Teachers report difficulties getting LAC into schools because of behaviour issues – typical behaviour strategies and approaches just don’t work!

"If relationships are where things go wrong, then relationships are where they are going to be put right."

(Howe, 2011)



Building blocks...



'Blocked Trust'

Group Activity

CONNECTION

Spending time with them

Understanding reasons for behaviour

Building relationship

PACE

Emotional coaching

CORRECTION

Ignoring

Consequences

Praise and rewards

Distraction; diversion

Positive activities

Guidance, Suggestions

Explaining (expectations/ how other people might feel)

Reasoning/rationalising

Using social stories

Exclusion/isolation/time-out

'Mistrust' to 'Blocked Trust'

- Early experiences can lead to the development of trust or mistrust
- This in turn leads to a sense of being loved unconditionally or conditionally
- This can lead to changes in brain function – adapts to experience – leading to blocked trust
- These expectations and adaptations move with child to new home or when they are at school.

Good Enough Parenting

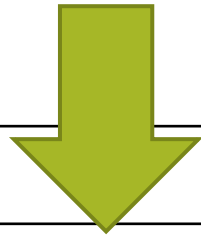
Connection

First Year of Life

Attuned parenting matched to emotional needs of young child.

Provide experience of intersubjective relationship

Offer attachment security by offering comfort and facilitating exploration as needed



Development of **Trust**

Experience of unconditional relationship – child is loved 'no matter what'.

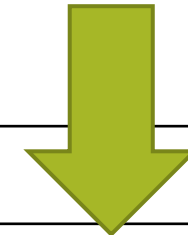
Correction

Second Year of Life and beyond

Child begins to develop autonomy and to assert independence

Structure and supervision become important

Parent also becomes rule maker and limit setter as boundaries are put in place: 'agent of socialization'



Trust allows child to believe in parents' good intentions and to know that the relationship remains unconditional.

Accepts limits on behaviour because knows loved no matter what

This foundation influences their responses at school.

Frightening Parenting

No Connection

First Year of Life

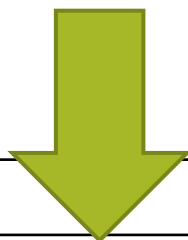
Poor and frightening parenting experience

Poor experience of attunement

Insecure/frightening attachment experience

Loss and separation

Multiple caregivers



Development of **Mistrust**

Relationship is conditional – child is loved 'only if'

Experience of shame

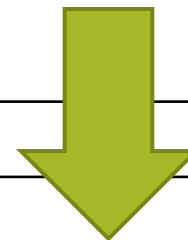
Different Parenting

Connection Plus Correction

Through Childhood (often at school age)

Child is provided with improved parenting via fostering, adoption, kinship care/ comes into a different environment (i.e., school)

Parent/carer/teacher tries to offer an unconditional relationship whilst also setting limits on the behaviour.



= **BLOCKED TRUST**

Child learns to resist authority and to oppose parental/others influence.

They do not trust in people's good intentions or in unconditional support and love.

They trust in themselves rather than others and thus are controlling in their behaviours.

Control means they are not open to reciprocity. They influence without being open to influence and this feels safer.

BLOCKED

TRUST

“When children block out the pain of rejection and the capacity to delight, in order to survive a world without comfort or joy”

(Hughes 2014)

'Fear of intersubjectivity'

Intersubjectivity

- The **attachment relationship** is **one directional** – *'I look to you for comfort and safety'*.
- Within the context of safety, intersubjective exploration becomes possible.
- The **intersubjective relationship** is **reciprocal** – *'I influence you. I am open to your influence'*.



Intersubjectivity

"An absorbed relationship in which each becomes totally focused on the other"

(Trevarthen, 2001)

A relationship is intersubjective when there is:

- **Joint attention** - important for learning to regulate attention
- **Matched affect** - important for the development of emotion recognition and regulation
- **Complementary intention** - important for learning to engage in co-operative behaviour

Intersubjectivity

Attunement

(Ingrained ability to tune into another persons physiological (physical or emotional) state.

+

Co-regulation

(parents responds to child's level of physical/emotional arousal and modulates it in ways that maintain/return to a comfortable level (aka window of tolerance).

Repeated experience of this lead to capacity to self-regulate.

=

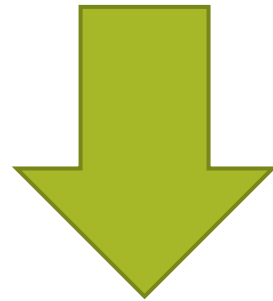
Intersubjectivity

Fear of Intersubjectivity

- Children need and instinctively seek primary intersubjectivity in early relationships – safe experience of being influenced and open to influence
- Foundation for secondary intersubjectivity – exploring the world from within connected relationship
- Being open to influence but receiving fear, pain, loss is frightening.
- Children learn to fear and avoid, disconnect – influence without being open to influence

Caring for children who fear intersubjectivity

Caring for children who are not open to connection within the relationship can have a negative impact on you.



If you can find ways to stay connected to the children, then you can help the children to become more open to the relationship. As intersubjectivity becomes possible the children experience a relationship within which they can heal.

"If relationships are where things go wrong, then relationships are where they are going to be put right."

(Howe, 2011)



'Hiding and Miscuing'

The Role of Shame

Shame

- Shame develops later than emotions such as anger, sadness or joy.
- Part of normal development during toddlerhood when we start to discipline & set limits.
- Shame is part of socialisation. It is a very uncomfortable emotion, so children learn to limit behaviours that make them feel shame.

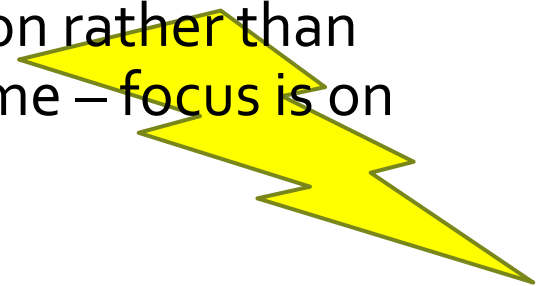


The development of 'Shame'

A complex internally focused, humiliating feeling of being worthless and/or bad

- **Rupture and Repair**: Good enough parenting - breaks in attunement are managed with interactive repair – brief experiences of shame are tolerated, integrated and managed – leads to development of guilt – more manageable emotion – focus is on behaviour “I did a bad thing”

Excessive rupture and little repair: When there is no repair or long delays in repair or punitive actions or words linked to the child as a person rather than their behaviour or event – can lead to the development of shame – focus is on self “I am bad”



The Shield against Shame

Unregulated shame > need to defend self

Golding and Hughes (2012)

Minimise:

It was only a joke!

Blame:

You made me do it!

Lie:

It wasn't me!



Rage:

It's so unfair; you're always
Picking on me!

Regulate the shame that the child is experiencing by:

- Providing emotional support for the child, with a focus on the relationship.
- A focus on behaviour will strengthen the shield.
- A focus on the child's experience will weaken the shield.

CONNECTION BEFORE CORRECTION

'Hidden and Expressed Needs'

Attachment Style as a Guide to Parenting

Attachment

Infants have a universal need to seek close proximity with their caregiver when under stress or threatened – evolution.



Harlow concluded that for a monkey to develop normally s/he must have some interaction with an object to which they can cling during the first months of life (critical period). Clinging is a natural response - in times of stress the monkey runs to the object to which it normally clings as if the clinging decreases the stress.

Back to basics

- **John Bowlby** (1969) - 3 chapters attachment loss and separation
- **Mary Ainsworth** - began categorising children's attachment patterns as: Avoidant (Type A), Secure (Type B) or Ambivalent (Type C), using the 'strange situation' procedure (Ainsworth et al. 1978) with children aged between 14 and 20 months.
- **Main and Solomon** (1990) - extended this classification to include the Disorganised-Disorientated category (Type D).

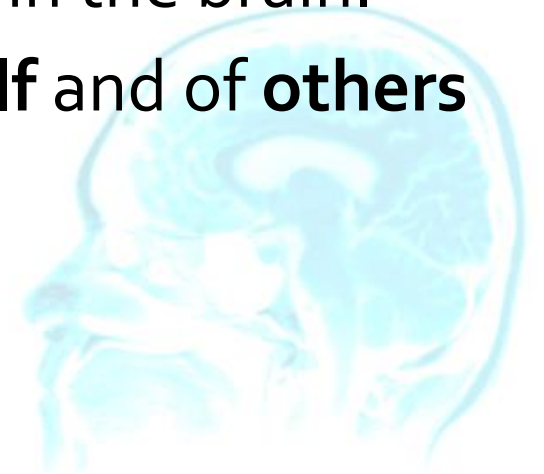
Internal working model



I am...
Others are...
The world is...

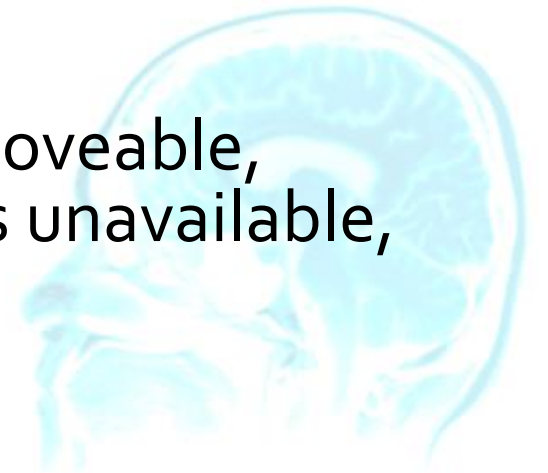
The Internal Working Model

- As infants mature early experiences of care-giving continue to influence them.
- Interactions that they have experienced become stored mentally as an **internal working model**.
- This is like a blueprint of their experience that is stored in the brain.
- It guides the child and adult's future expectations of **self** and of **others** and of the **world**.



The Internal Working Model

- This blueprint therefore reflects the child's experiences of relationships and leads to a complementary working model of the self and of the emotional availability of others.
- For example:
 - A child might hold a positive model that views the self as lovable and effective and others as available, loving, interested and responsive.
 - A child might hold a negative model of the self as unloveable, uninteresting, unvalued and ineffective and others as unavailable, neglectful, rejecting, unresponsive and hostile.

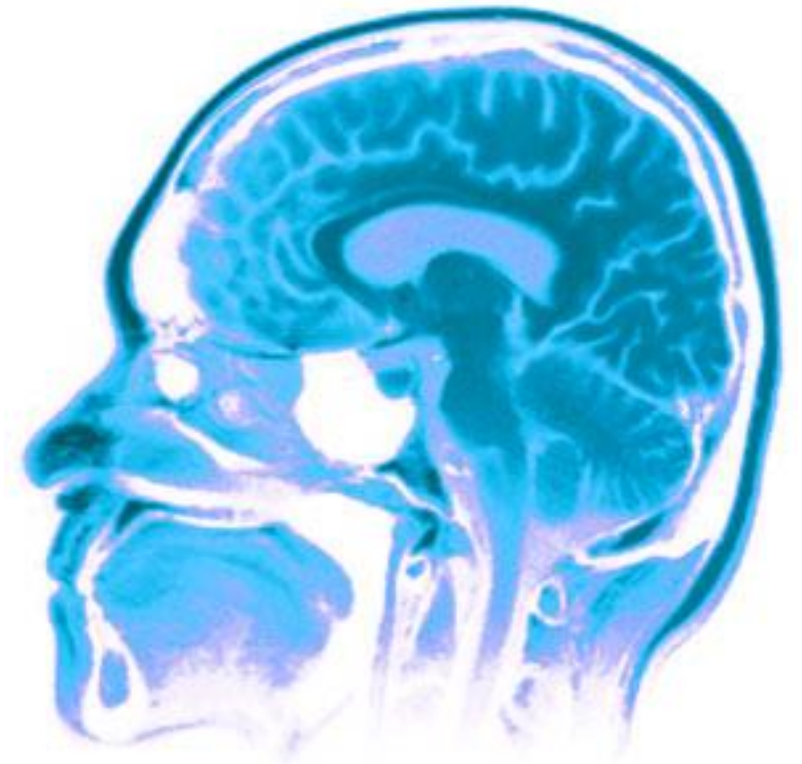


The Internal Working Model

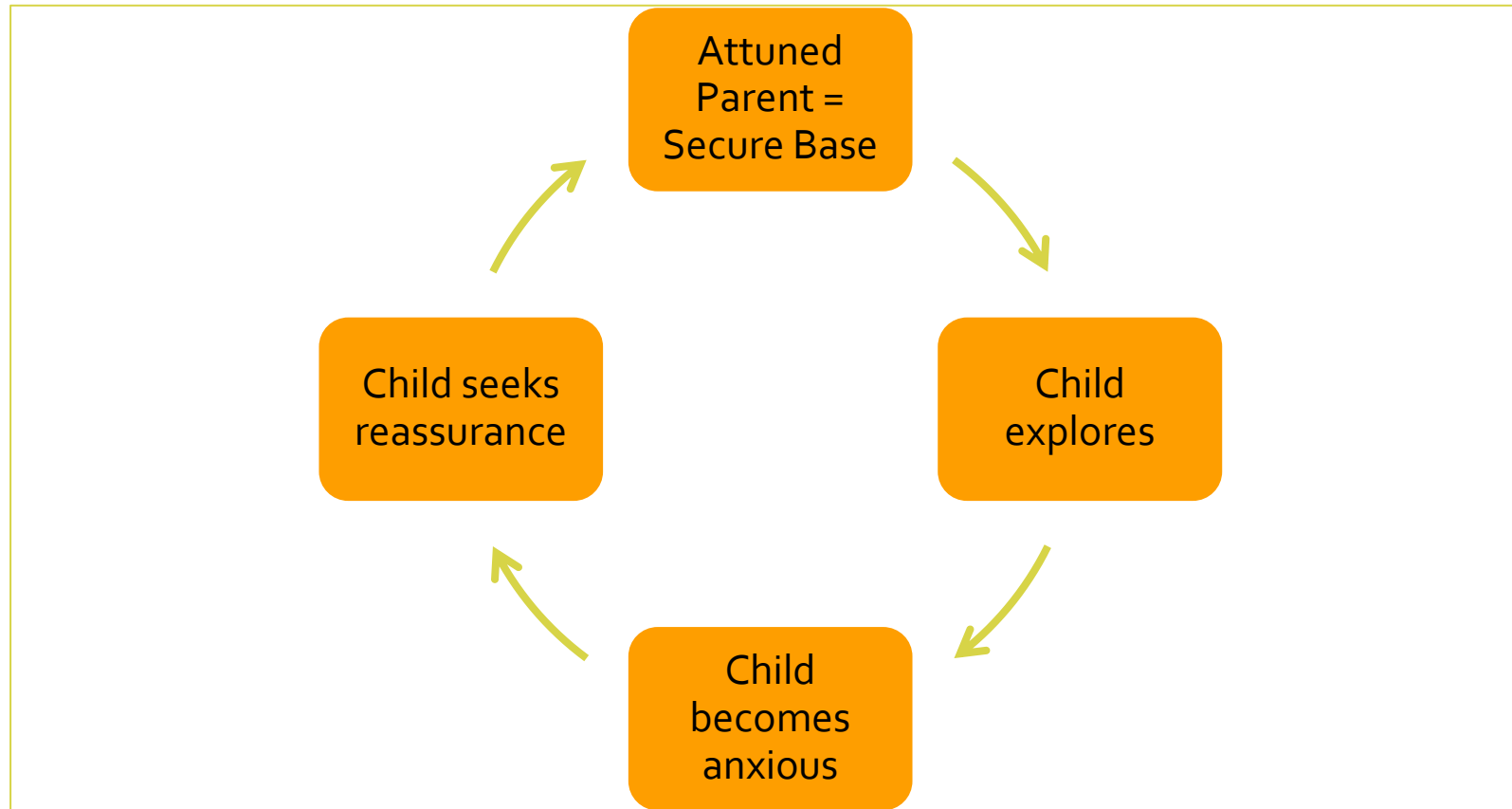
- The model of self and of others is linked.
- Taken together they represent both sides of the relationship that the child has experienced.
- This impacts on children's feelings of:
 - **Self-esteem**
 - **Self-efficacy**
 - **Social understanding**

and their ability to experience:

- **Empathy**
- **Autonomy**



Secure Attachment Type



Why are secure attachment so important

Ability to identify, label, regulate and control emotions

Use appropriate emotions for situations

Delay gratification / Control impulses

Develop complex emotions

Understand others emotions (empathy) and viewpoints (theory of mind)

Learn that distress can be managed, emotions can be shared

Manage experiences that induce shame (socialisation)

Internalise standards of conduct from others (moral development)

Develop sense of self, self esteem, personality, identity

Body awareness (hungry, thirsty, cold, hot, tired, unwell)

Sound mental health

Allows children to develop trust in others and self reliance in themselves – to approach the world with confidence

Learning profile – in the classroom

Securely attached children are more likely to be:

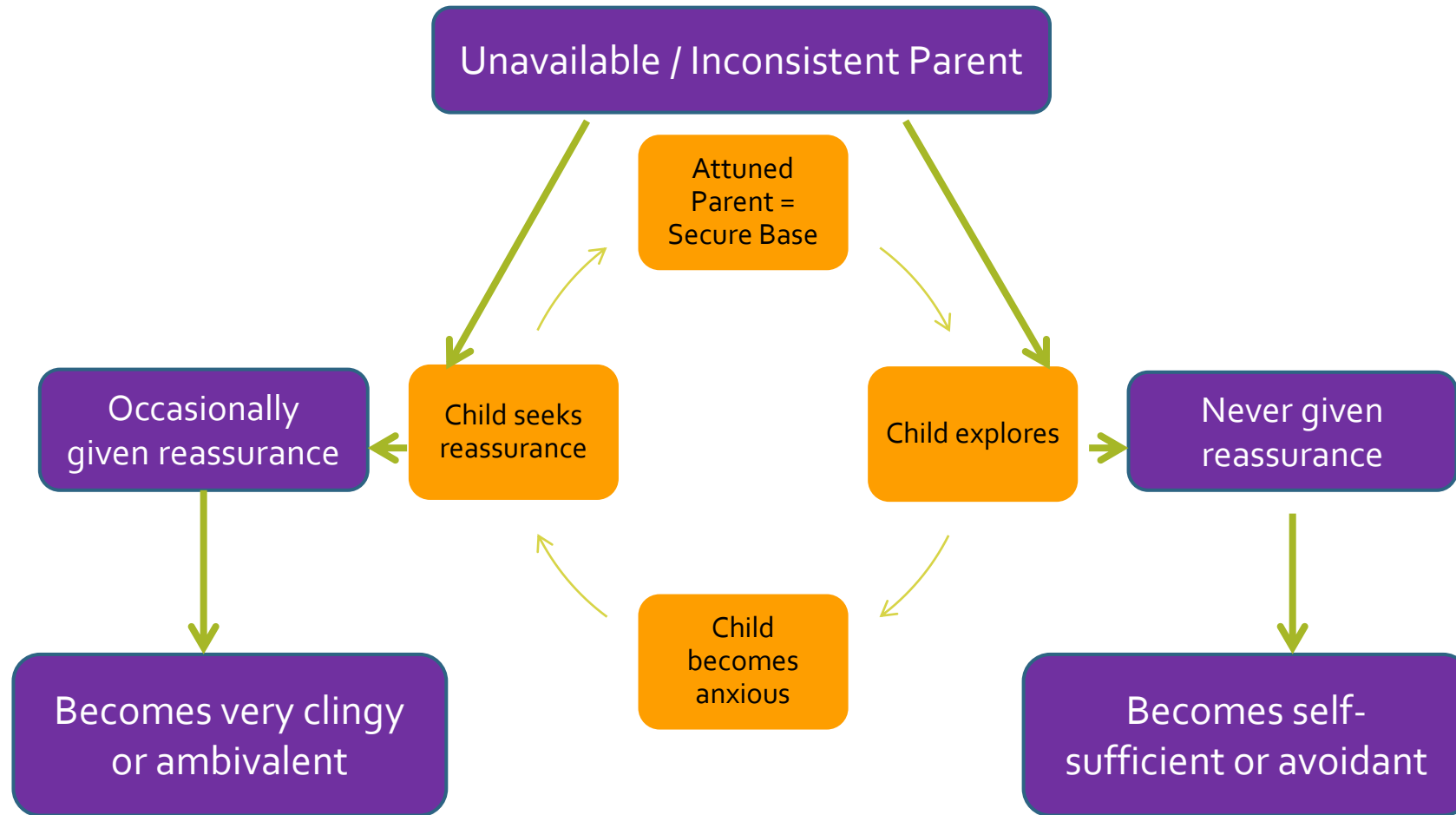
- better problem-solvers
- more curious
- have increased quality and duration of learning
- have higher academic achievement
- co-operative and self-regulative
- less likely to develop emotional and behavioural problems
- more socially empathetic and less biased in interpreting behaviour of others
- more self-aware (self-knowledge)

The impact of adverse early life experiences

Red Box analogy



Insecure or “Organised” Attachment



Insecure -Avoidant attached children- A

Self: unloved, self-reliant

Others: rejecting, controlling, intrusive

- Avoid intimacy, dependence and disclosure
- Hard to engage
- View relationships as not important
- Don't feel a huge need for other people
- Seen as “cold” –reported (often falsely) as lacking empathy and remorse
- Are indifferent to other's views –assume others dislike them
- Linked with higher incidence of physical illness (somatising)
- Rely strongly on cognitive information

Learning Profile: Avoidance in the classroom

- Show apparent indifference to the teacher
- Show limited use of communication and creative opportunities
- Do not like the teacher standing close
- Seem unable or unwilling to accept help and deny the need for support
- Rip up their work saying its rubbish before a teacher can comment
- Seem preoccupied – fiddling with items on table
- Take refuge in the same kind of task, quickly give up with any new or open ended task

Learning Profile: Avoidance in the classroom

Response to the teacher:

Denial of need for support and help Sensitivity to proximity of the teacher
Need to be seen as good boy/good girl

Response to the task:

Task operates as an emotional safety barrier between the pupil and the teacher May direct unexpressed anger towards task - task operates as a safety barrier

Insecure Avoidant Children



I don't need you

Hidden needs:

- Help to feel comfort and safety with you
- Support to accept nurture, touch, proximity, play
- Help to recognise, label, express & regulate emotions
- Help to trust emotion and know that emotions are acceptable to others

Insecure - Ambivalence in the classroom

Self: low value, ineffective, dependent

Others: insensitive, unpredictable, unreliable

- Disruptive, „attention seeking“ and difficult to manage; insecure and coercive E.g. Coercive-aggressive pattern
- Can alternate between friendly charm and hostile aggression.
- Display antisocial behaviour, impulsivity, poor concentration
- Feel a growing sense of unfairness and injustice –lots of complaining
- Overwhelming level of arousal that is difficult to self-regulate.
- Increased incidence of mood disorder and borderline personality disorder
- Cognitive information/skills discounted
- Driven by affect –it’s all about emotion and you get what you see! -**DYSREGULATED**
- ? At extremes + trauma = Mood disorders & dysregulated -BPD?

Learning Profile: Ambivalence in the classroom

- Find it hard to maintain suitable boundaries with staff, wanting to exchange personal information
- Able to use spoken language very quickly to gain teachers attention
- Labelled manipulative
- Refuse to go out at break times because they want to be with the teacher at all times
- Overly dependent
- Unable to take independent action
- Quick to become abusive and rude if they feel they are being ignored at any time
- VERY ANXIOUS

Learning Profile: Ambivalence in the classroom

- The behaviour and learning responses of a pupil who has experienced an Insecure Ambivalent attachment is likely to be led by separation anxiety.
- The attention of the teacher is the primary need and pre-occupation and the task can seem an intrusion and a threat. The teacher can experience this as relentless attention seeking and often they are given one to one support. This can be a form of collusion with their anxiety rather than achieving greater independence and autonomy.

(Geddes 2006)

Insecure Ambivalent Children

I can't trust you to be there for me

I need you to notice me/attend to me all the time

Hidden needs:

- Predictability, routine, consistency, structure, co-regulation of high emotions.
- Support to be apart & explore & reassurance that you will be there when needed
- Support to trust their knowledge of the world, not just to rely on feelings
- Help to trust that you will do as you say

Disorganised Attachment



Disorganised Attachment Style

I will not need you

I must be in control

Hidden needs:

- “I can’t seek comfort, I can’t explore the world, I am too afraid”
- Help to feel safe, need a low stress environment.
- Help to trust thinking and emotion
- Help to develop emotion regulation & reflective functioning.
- Help to develop trust in others ability to keep them safe & meet their needs.

Supporting children to meet hidden and expressed needs

- Need to be available, responsive and gently challenging. You are challenging hard-won beliefs.
- Help children to interpret the child's need for nurture and reassurance despite the miscues the child is giving.
- Need to connect with the hidden experience of the child whilst at the same time providing the boundaries needed to keep the child safe

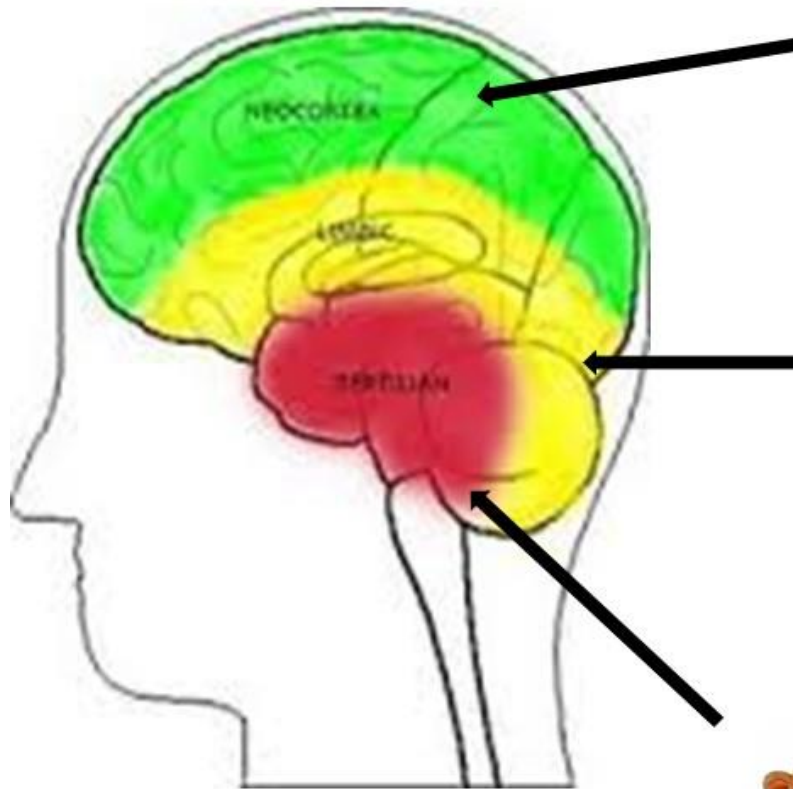
CONNECTION WITH CORRECTION

The Brain



Attachment & The Brain

Three brains in one



Neocortex

- “Higher brain”
- Problem solving, attention, reasoning, kindness
- Can manage emotional responses



Limbic System

- Emotional brain
- Triggers strong emotions that need to be managed by the higher brain



Reptilian brain

- Instinct and survival.
- Hard to think clearly when active.
- Associated with fight/flight/freeze.

Provide support from the Meerkat up!

3) Reasoning

Correction
Structure,
supervision

2) Relationship

Connection:
PACE

1) Regulate

Co-Regulation
Acceptance &
Empathy (maybe
some
playfulness?)

Based on Jane Evans

“Little Meerkat’s big panic”



Strategy : Rethinking Discipline

- Troubled pupils need to be in the right state so they can switch on their 'social engagement system' and hear what is said.

Delay use of discipline – (Meerkat up) COREGULATION & CONNECTION BEFORE CORRECTION

1) CO-REGULATE (calm, stabilise)

2) CONNECT – relationship

3) CORRECT – when pupil is in right state – problem solve, discuss, discipline

- Discipline - short phrases, succinct, low tone, gentle-firm – keep monkey online
- Discipline that involves a way of re-connecting – **REPAIR** – creative solutions
- Take responsibility, hold boundaries and use parts language rather than using sanctions and threats



Co-Regulation



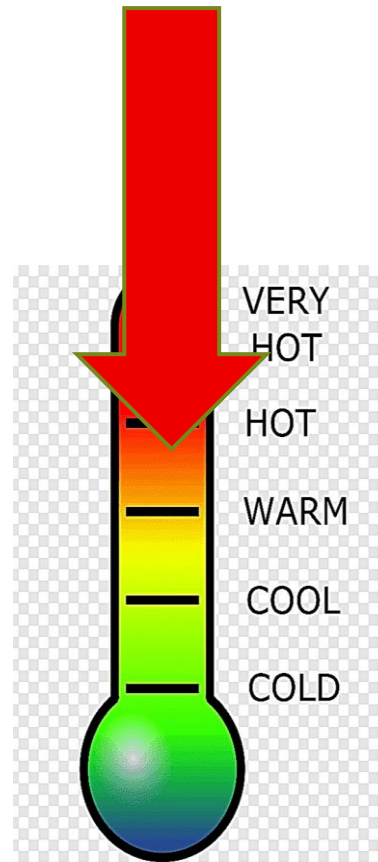
Regulation based behaviour management

- Staff need to understand the arousal level of the pupil and adjust their responses and strategies in line with this (don't expect the child to meet you)
- This will guide staff in using regulation and connection to support a pupil
- Some of the more traditional teaching strategies can be applied if these are adapted to take account of the need for regulation and connection.

SOME EXAMPLES!

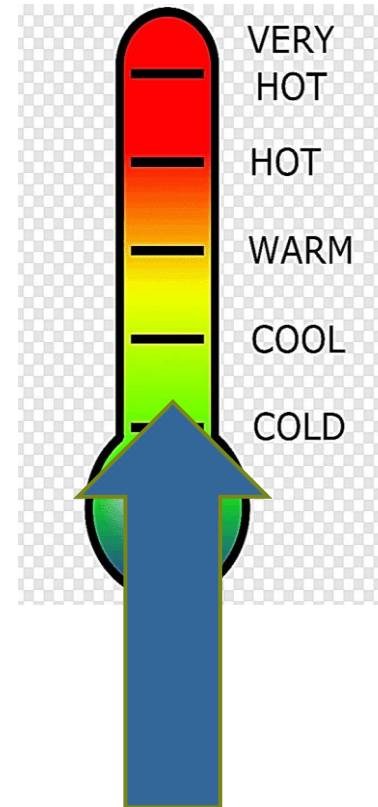
Calm down – down regulating

- Having a drink
 - Pets
- Trampoline
- Drums
- Breathing
- Tearing up newspaper
 - Bubble wrap
- Colouring / drawing
 - food
 - Stress balls
 - Music
- Going for a walk / fresh air
- Cuddles/physical nurture



Lift up – up regulating

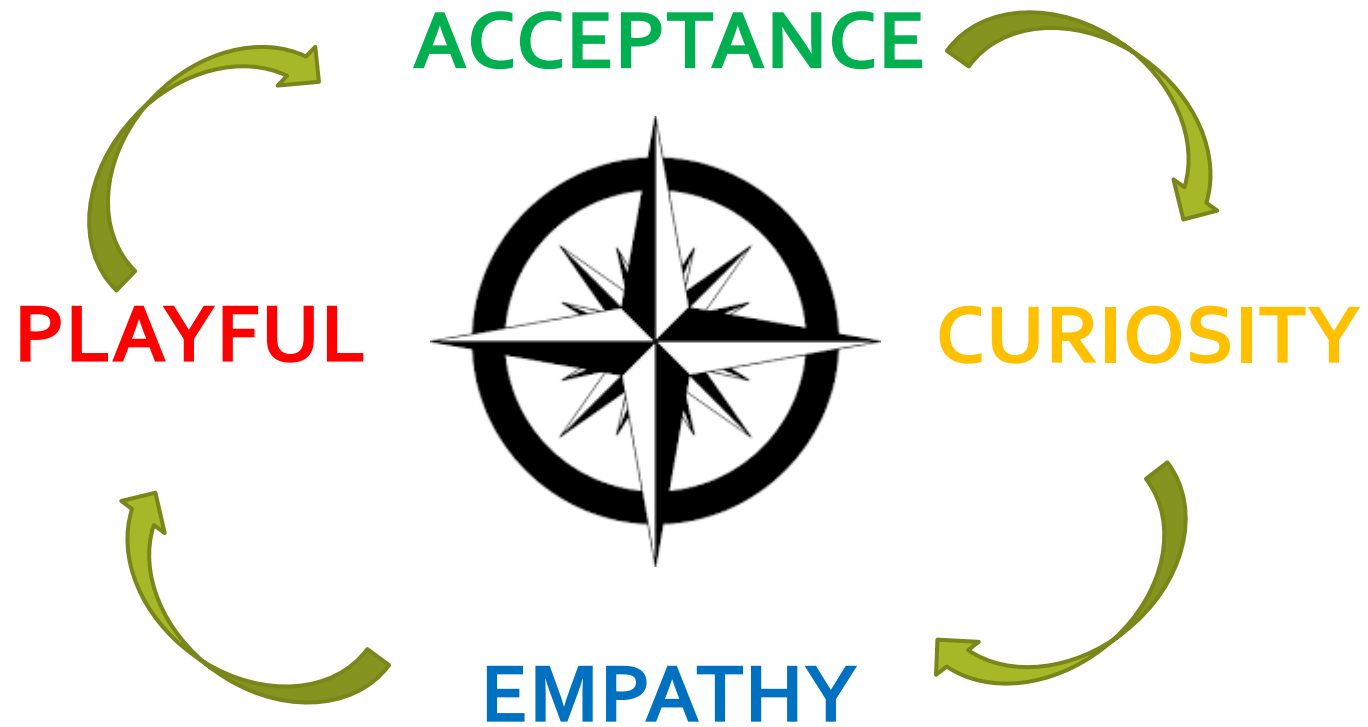
- Music
- Dancing / singing
- Playing games
- Having fun
- Walking outside
- Favourite food/snack
 - Sensory stuff
- Cuddles/physical nurture
 - Jokes
 - bubbles



Connection



Connecting With PACE



PACE

- The attitude of PACE (qualities of **[P]layfulness**, **[A]cceptance** of the child's inner world, **[C]uriosity** about the meaning underneath the behaviour and **[E]mpathy** for the child's emotional state) is a central therapeutic intention within DDP.
- Central in the development of attachment security and intersubjectivity in infant-parent relationships - so central to the development of these qualities in therapeutic parenting and in therapy.
- Within PACE the therapist and parent deepen the therapeutic alliance through their genuineness as they convey their intersubjective experience of the child, his strengths and vulnerabilities (Hughes, 2014)

Relational Interventions: PACE

- **Playfulness:** light, relaxed, exaggerated (affect/cognition), smile, do the unexpected
- **Acceptance:** of thoughts/ feelings/ beliefs/ wishes/ memories/ perceptions of events. Non-judgmental, unconditional
- **Curiosity:** not-knowing, open, interested, act of discovery, surprise, “a ha”.
- **Empathy:** feeling-felt, joined, in the world of the other. Giving expression to affect vitality



PACE: A way of being

An ethos to develop – not a 'strategy'

Playful

- Young people with attachment difficulties/ trauma experiences find it hard to regulate positive affect (i.e. to feel good without it 'tipping into' an overwhelming feeling).
- When laughing the part of the brain that triggers shame is not functioning.
- Being playful is a way of getting close and they are not aware of it.

Accepting

- I accept you as you are even if I judge behaviours.
- I won't accept behaviour but understand the motive.
- I won't use relationship as a discipline technique – don't use withdrawal of self.

PACE: A way of being

An ethos to develop – not a 'strategy'

Curiosity

- A constant openness to teach the young person who they are.
- Non-judgemental – so that the relationships can build and become more organised.
- Every time we figure something out together in this way we reduce shame – Pupil believes he is bad – we can give him a different reason and help them make sense of things
- Understand the world with them – take opportunities to teach them why they do the things they do

PACE: A way of being

An ethos to develop – not a 'strategy'

Empathy

- Feeling with them.
- If you feel it alone you don't feel. When you feel a baby's feeling with them you soothe them (as we do with our own babies).
- We can only learn to self-soothe when you have been soothed by someone else.
- Don't isolate a child if they can't self-soothe. We treat anger differently to fear and sadness – can we treat it the same way?

Problem solving (how can we work this out!) comes after empathy.

Examples

Teenager: You don't know anything! You're clueless!

Therapist:

- So it seems that I know nothing! How annoying that must be for you!
- What is that like, being with someone who you really think doesn't know you?
- If I could convince you that I do want to know you better, would you be willing to help me?
- Are you aware of any adults who you think understand you pretty well? What's that like?
- If there were one thing that you would want me to understand, what would that be?
- Have you felt that way for long? That no adult understands you at all?
- What is it like to feel no one really knows you?
- If I don't understand you, do you have a sense of what could be getting in the way?

(Hughes, 2011)

Combining Connection with Correction



**MANAGING BEHAVIOUR
(ALONGSIDE CONNECTION)**

A Two Handed Approach

Warmth & Nurture



Structure & Boundaries

- Connection Before Correction
- Mind-mindedness & PACE understanding before problem solving

Connection and Correction

Connection (Hand 1)

PACE

Open and engaged

Relationship, regulate, reason

Understanding reasons for behaviour

Meet hidden and expressed needs

Help child regulate shame

Connection first

Attuned relationship repair

Stories

Safety

Correction (Hand 2)

Time in

Help child understand cause and effect and consequences

Descriptive praise

Low key rewards

Distraction, diversion

Guidance, suggestions

Increased structure and supervision

Explaining and reasoning

The Sandwich

Discipline

Remain calm, warm and sympathetic, whilst being clear about the boundary (what isn't allowed) and the consequence (if – then). Avoid anger.



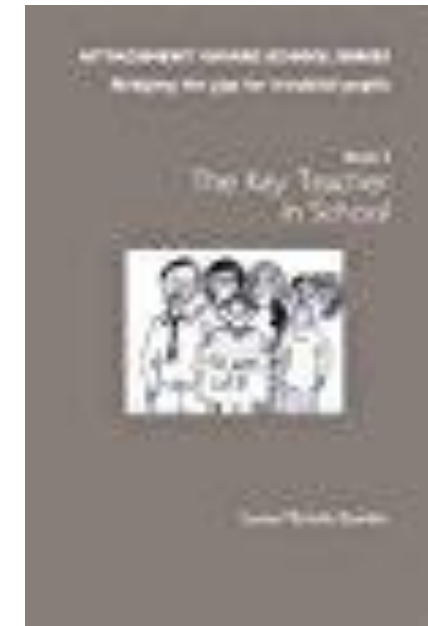
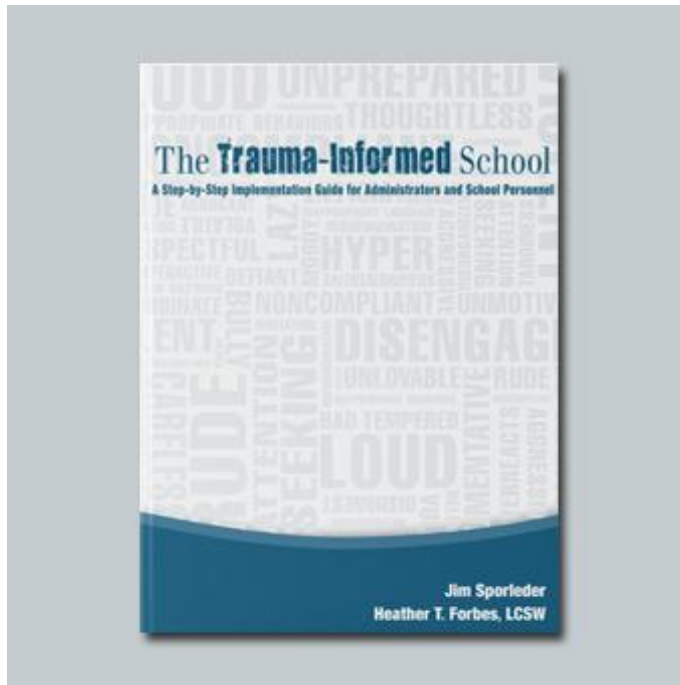
Relationship Repair

Help the pupil to know that the relationship is still there

Attunement

Use empathy to communicate your understanding and sympathy for how the pupil is feeling.

Let's not re-invent the wheel. Available Guides:



*Note: Much of this material is based upon literature by leading expert Louise Bomber's - **ATTACHMENT AWARE SCHOOL SERIES** – (www.theyellowkite.co.uk) and **THE TRAUMA INFORMED SCHOOL** (beyondconsequences.com) Jim Sporleder & Heather T. Forbes.*

Attachment Support Individual Development Plans

Bring together all the above strategies in to a personalised plan for pupils.

Consider...

- Meet and Greets
- Facilitating a secure base/ safe space
- Setting up protected space and time with Key Adult
- Sensory breaks
- Differentiating emotional & social tasks & expectations
- Allocation of an appropriate key adult, identifying the team around the child
- Engaging in preventative work/ practicing relative dependency



(see Louise Bomber; Attachment Aware School Series)

Key Adults in School



The Key Adult will help pupils:

1. Develop trust through consistent emotional / physical availability
2. Manage feelings by providing sensitive responses
3. Increase their self esteem by offering consistent acceptance
4. Feel effective by promoting their engagement with others at school



Experienced in working and relating to children with emotional and behavioural difficulties

Resilient ☆ Sense of humour ☆ Robust

Balanced approach to difficulties using both nurture and structure

Flexibility of thinking ☆ Not easily shocked

Able to work as a team with other education staff, other agencies and parents/carers

Positive sense of self ☆ Regulated ☆ Empathic

Able to listen to and act on advice

Imaginative ☆ Resourceful

Able to advocate for child within the wider school context and with allied professionals

Calm ☆ Tenacious

Available on a long-term basis in school - (not on a temporary contract or planning to leave shortly!)

Playful ☆ Accepting ☆ Curious

Knows own history, and when to ask for help or referral

(from Bombèr 2007, p.67)

Key Adults cont.

- Provide opportunities for rupture and repair
- Let the child know they are held in your mind – prove it
- Use transitional objects and connector phrases to support the pupil to know they can be 'kept in mind' in and out of school
- Co-modelling – be their stress and shame regulator – engage in dialogue about how they may have experienced an event
- Creating a 'parts of you' picture : angry parts, patient parts, happy parts, sad parts...



Strategy : Differentiation in Behaviour Policy

- Just as schools differentiate for academic attainment - differentiate for attachment!
- Distinguish emotional / social expectations in non-shaming way
- Stepping stones to learn what is appropriate and healthy
- One size fits all approach leads to increased exclusions
- The communication and meaning in behaviour is key and will guide the strategy → **Fact-Files** and **Individual Development Plan**



Strategy : Management & Senior Leadership

- Strategic role ensuring time and resources invested into facilitating relationally rich environment. Keeping attachment and trauma on the agenda – ethos
- Holding the overview and judging when external consultation and support is needed.
- Takes the lead in selecting/ forming the 'teams' around the troubled pupil (clear roles and boundaries) – make sure you all know who each other are (photos)
- Training and supervision: access to sufficient resources – shifting emphasis
- Monitoring school policies and practices to ensure they enable pupils who have experienced relational trauma – differentiation

(for more examples see Louise Bomber, The Senior Manager in School)

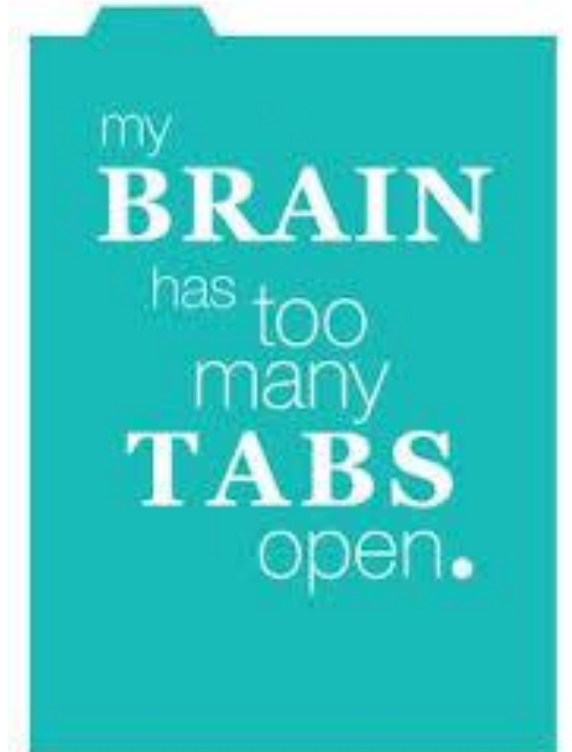
Strategy: Regulating Environments & Resources

- Increase sensory comfort in classrooms and school to support those who have experienced trauma and loss.
- Humans are designed to live in unfiltered sunlight with spectrum of lighting – Fluorescent lighting offers one colour and emits a flicker which can trigger sensitive nervous systems. Utilise sunlight and add low light lamps, fairy lights etc. (be playful!)
- What resources are available for you already? Crunchy and chewy snacks, sensory boxes / calm down purses, frozen water bottles, blankets, indoor tents, speakers, iPads?
- Safe spaces for pupils to use with help of their Key Adults for 'Time In' – designate down time in to a time table and exit / coping plans

(see Louise Bomber's Attachment Awareness Series)

Strategy: Sensory / Brain Breaks

- Watch the state continuum of the pupils and use appropriate state dependent interventions
- Encourage sensory breaks throughout the day to dampen stress. Help engage pupil's pre frontal cortex part of their brain and optimise learning
- Short (10-15 minute) activities with Key Adult
- **GoNoodle.com** - Heard of it?! A free resource for Schools to help develop self-regulatory skills and channel physical / emotional energy. Website offers short videos (3-5 minutes) that can be used to be used for 'classroom breaks'



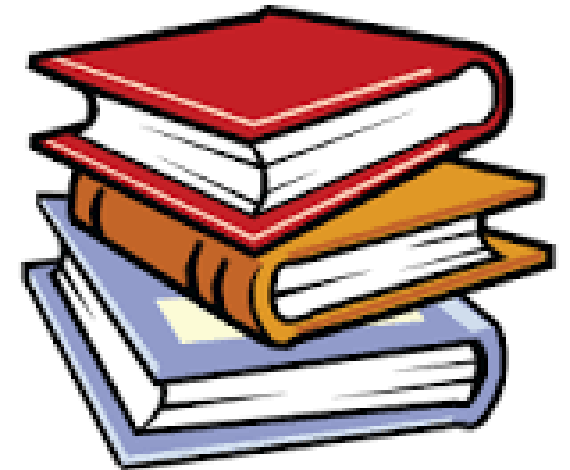
Beware: Triggers in Curriculum Content

- Many areas within curriculum that can trigger trauma (Goodnight Mr Tom), PSHE, baby photos
- Extreme reactions – try and see through an attachment and relational trauma lens (spot the meerkats!)
- However, don't exclude pupils from taking part (can be shaming). Instead have preparation time – Key adult can talk through feelings that might come first.



For more Information: Useful Books / References

1. Settling to Learn by Louise Bomber & Dan Hughes
2. What about me? By Louise Bomber
3. Attachment Aware School Series: Bridging the gap for troubled pupils by Louise Bomber
4. Attachment in Common Sense and Doodles by Miriam Silver
5. Why Can't my Child Behave? by Dr Amber Elliot
6. Why love matters by Sue Gerhardt (Kim Golding)
7. Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties by Dan Hughes
8. Lots and Lot of helpful free resources/strategies for school on the Beacon House website <https://beaconhouse.org.uk/resources/>



Look after yourselves!

- What systems are there in your school to help buffer the stress of working with troubled children?
- Are there additional things that could help/ that you need?
- What do you find helpful?
- How might you go about adding some of what you need?



THANK YOU!



QUESTIONS?