



Trauma & Attachment

- Raising awareness of how early trauma influences a young person's attachment style
- To explore practical strategies to best support young people who display attachment difficulties

Trauma is defined as an "event outside normal human experience". These events are generally emotionally painful and distressing, and overwhelm a person's ability to cope, leaving him/her powerless. Feeling powerless is an important concept when trying to understand trauma – especially as you apply it to trauma in children."

"Our aim is not to diagnose but notice patterns and behaviors which can be supported using specific strategies"



Try to plot when this happens and see whether you can identify any patterns



- **Adverse Child Experiences (ACEs)** are reasonably common – 18% of children are exposed to at least one. ACEs in children (0-17) can include: violence, sudden death, substance misuse, mental health or instability.
- The majority of such children will develop attachment difficulties



Abuse

- Physical
- Sexual
- Verbal

Neglect

- Emotional
- Physical

Growing up in a household where:

- There are adults with alcohol and drug use problems
- There are adults with mental health problems
- There is domestic violence
- There are adults who have spent time in prison
- Parents have separated

- As well as these 10 ACEs there are a range of other types of childhood adversity that can have similar negative long term effects. These include bereavement, bullying, poverty and community adversities such as living in a deprived area, neighbourhood violence etc.

Why ACE's matter:

Childhood adversity can create harmful levels of stress which impact healthy brain development. This can result in long-term effects on learning, behaviour and health. ACEs have been found to be associated with a range of poorer health and social outcomes in adulthood.

'BRAIN POWER – From Neurons to Networks'

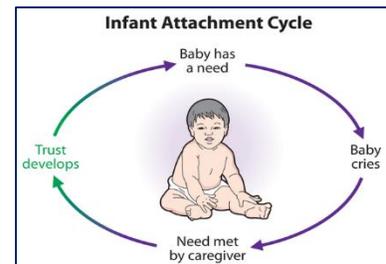
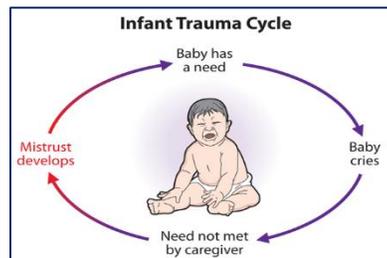
<https://youtu.be/zLp-edwiGUU>

Brain & amygdala hand model explains how thoughts and emotions interact

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3bKuoH8CkFc>

Attachment;
“a long lasting psychological connection with a meaningful person that causes pleasure whilst interacting and soothes in times of stress”
Bowlby's Theory of Attachment

“The quality of attachment has a critical effect on development and has been linked to various aspects of positive functioning such as psychological wellbeing”
Bowlby



Insecure Attachment styles:

- Avoidant
- Ambivalent/resistant (Ainsworth 1970)
- Disorganised (Main & Solomon 1990)

What can help?

- Understanding functions of behaviour
- Considering the Arousal Cycle
- Recognising 'Windows of Tolerance' and appropriate responses
- Be able to identify 'Energetic states'

Look at developing a **Proactive plan** which includes:

- Proactive & Reactive strategies
- Zones of Regulation
- Emotional coaching

TCARE

Tune in: Notice or become aware of your own and the child's emotions. Make sure you are calm enough to practice emotion coaching

Connect: Use this situation as an opportunity for you to practice and for the child to learn. State objectively (This is important!) what emotions you think the child is experiencing to help them connect their emotions to their behavior

Accept and Listen: Practice empathy. Put yourself in the child's shoes, think about a situation when you felt a similar emotion, and try to remember what it felt like

Reflect: Once everyone is calm, go back over what the child said or did, mentioning only what you saw, heard, or understand of the situation. Reflect on what happened and why it happened

End with Problem Solving/Choices/Setting Limits: Whenever possible, try to end the situation by guiding or involving the child in problem-solving (Somerset Children & Young People, n.d.)

References & resources:

BILD
 Beacon House
 Hertfordshire Virtual Schools
 Louise Michelle Bomber – 'Inside I'm hurting'
 National College for Teaching and Leadership, 2014
 Ainsworth 1970, Main & Solomon 1990, Bowlby – Model of Attachment
 Supporting the pupil who has experienced significant relational trauma and losses workshop by 'Touch Base' training
<https://www.gov.scot/publications/adverse-childhood-experiences/>
 Leah M. Kuypers - www.socialthinking.com
 Brain power
 Chimp Management – Professor Steve Peters

Recognition, Effective Management and Early Intervention

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