

Exclusion Prevention and Neurodivergence

Neuro-inclusion for de-escalating behaviours of concern and dysregulation



By Catrina Lowri

Who?

Catrina Lowri; experienced SENCO, qualified SEND teacher and founder of Neuroteachers. I am neurodivergent myself; dyslexic and bipolar.

What?

We will begin with introduction to neurodivergence, dysregulation and behaviour and how we can use this knowledge to de-escalate and prevent exclusion.

A Neuroteachers Perspective

- Define challenging, disruptive and distressed behaviour
- Explain dysregulation in neurodivergent pupils
- Define exclusion and explain why this is an issue
- Look at the Welsh context
- Understanding why behaviours of concern happen
- Work on Monitoring and de-escalating dysregulation
- Look at alternatives to exclusion

What we will cover
today

Spoiler Alert!

Preventing exclusion is simple
but not necessarily easy





Spoiler Alert 2!

Belonging



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What is behaviour?

- “The way in which one acts, especially in relation to other people.”
OED 2024



Activity 1

Which are challenging and which are disruptive?



- **Smashing up a computer**
- **Swearing**
- **Throwing a pen**
- **Jumping out of the window onto a flat roof**
- **Snatching a pair of scissors from a TA**
- **Spitting**
- **Biting**
- **Turning over a table**

Challenging behaviour

Royal Psychiatric Society-2007



- Behaviour can be described as challenging when it is of such an intensity ,frequency, or duration as to threaten the quality of life and/or the physical safety of the individual or others and it is likely to lead to responses that are restrictive, aversive or result in exclusion.*'

Disruptive Behaviour

- Disruptive behaviour is defined as any behaviours that hamper the ability of instructors to teach or students to learn. It is frequent and low level and sustained. University of Missouri 2014



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Dysregulation and distress



Now the good news!

- “6/10 incidences of challenging behaviour are triggered by an adult”
- Andy McDonnell 2020



Defining Exclusion

Data comes from Pupil Level Annual School Census

Exclusion can be fixed term or permanent

For 'serious breach of school policy and if allowing the pupil to stay would seriously effect the education or safety of self or others'

It is at the discretion of the head teacher only

All possibility of coercion or provocation should be examined and alternatives ruled out

Data refer to pupils in all settings including maintained schools, PRU, AP and EOTAS

Data is available by protected ethnicity, FSM and SEND/ALN

Exclusion can happen is a child misbehaves in or outside school.

This can be done for either challenging or 'persistently disruptive behaviour'



The numbers



The risks

- Excluded children cost the tax payer an extra £375000 per head (2018) due to increased risk of;
- Physical and mental health needs
- Under/ unemployment
- Drug/alcohol addiction
- Being the victim and all perpetrator of crime
- Grooming into exploitation



Risks

From the Timpson Tracker

30 recommendations

Only 9 have been implemented



More good news !

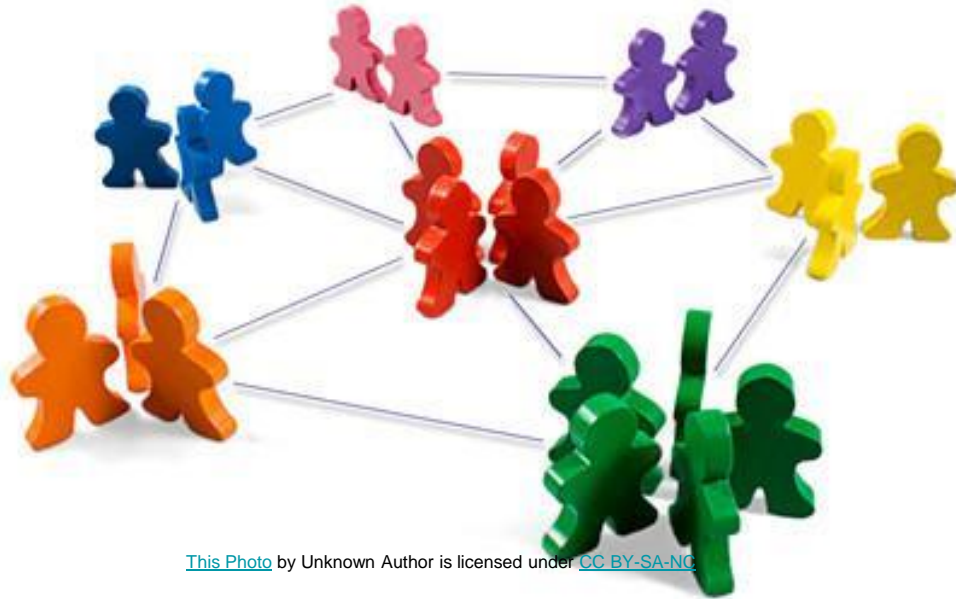
Relational
practice reduces
incidence

Trauma informed
approaches make
a significant
difference

Restorative
approaches can
be adapted



Relational Practice



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Access

Start by
accessing
need



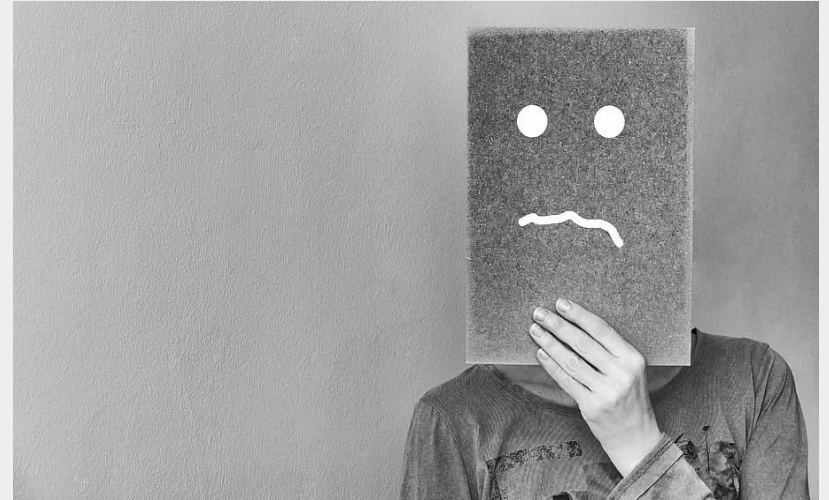


Your 'child in mind'



Activity 2

Which behaviours of concern do you notice in your child ?



Risk Assessments

Let things happen



This includes

*All hereditary conditions which cause a difference in neurology

*All hereditary mental health conditions

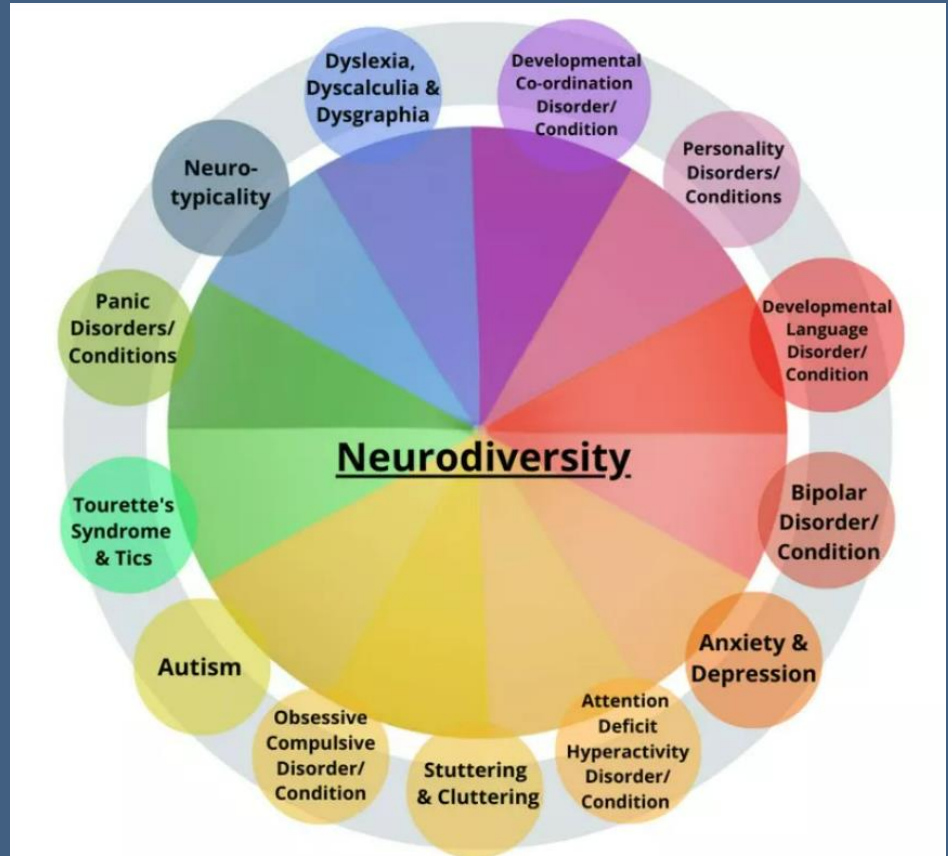
*All acquired neurological difference such as those caused by injury



Neurodivergence

Co-occurring Neurodivergent Conditions

These include common conditions such as Autism, ADHD, Dyspraxia (DCD), Dyslexia, Dyscalculia and Developmental Language Disorder (DLD)



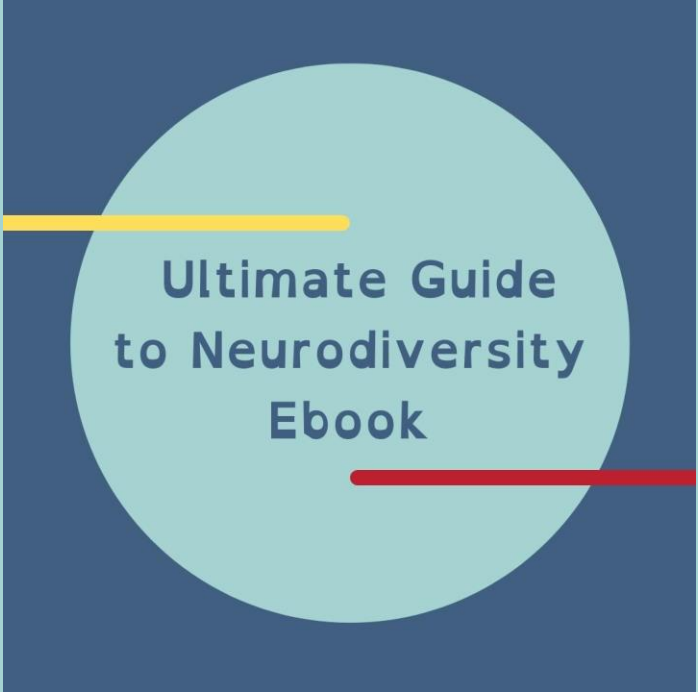
The Fruit Salad Approach



4 areas of difference

- All ND people have 4 areas of difference
- Processing
- Sensory difference
- Executive Function
- Social communication

- For more information visit www.neuroteachers.com/shop



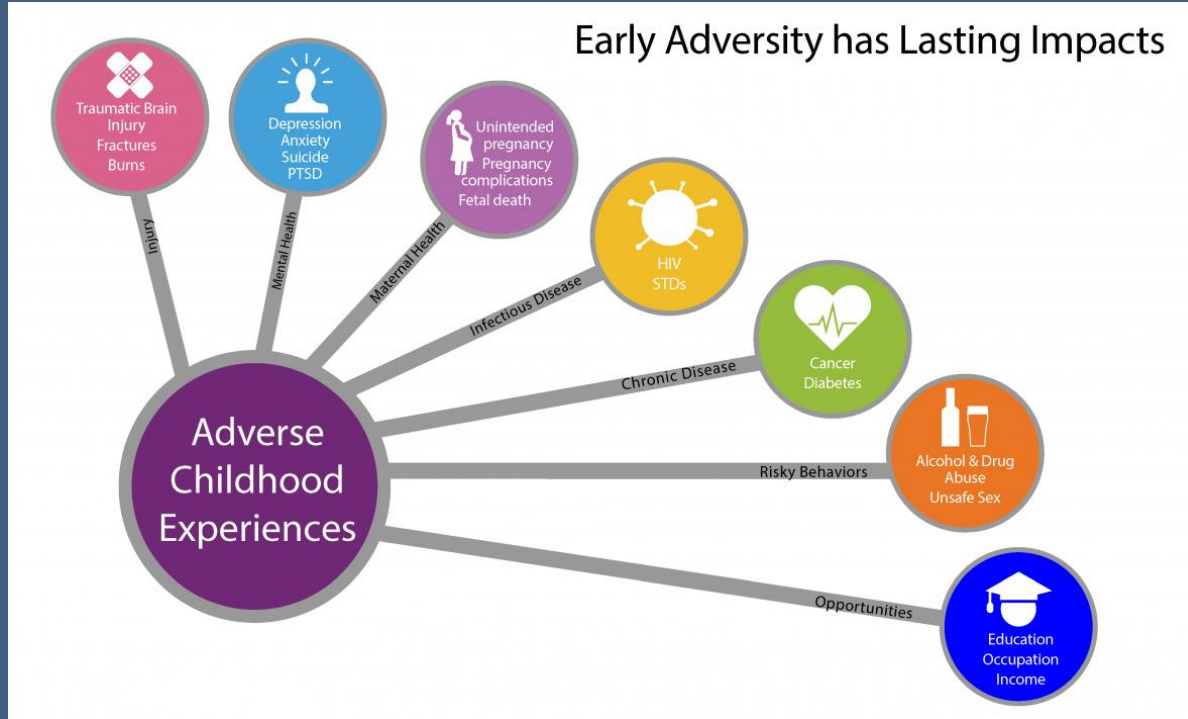
**Ultimate Guide
to Neurodiversity
Ebook**

Take a break



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Trauma



What is neurodivergent trauma?

Neurodivergent people are more likely to experience ACES because they often (but not always) have co-occurring physical or mental health issues, are more likely to live in poverty and are more vulnerable to grooming or coercion than neurotypical peers.

They also have the additional ACE of living in a neurotypical world and trying to fit in. This, in itself, can be traumatising. (Lowri 2024)

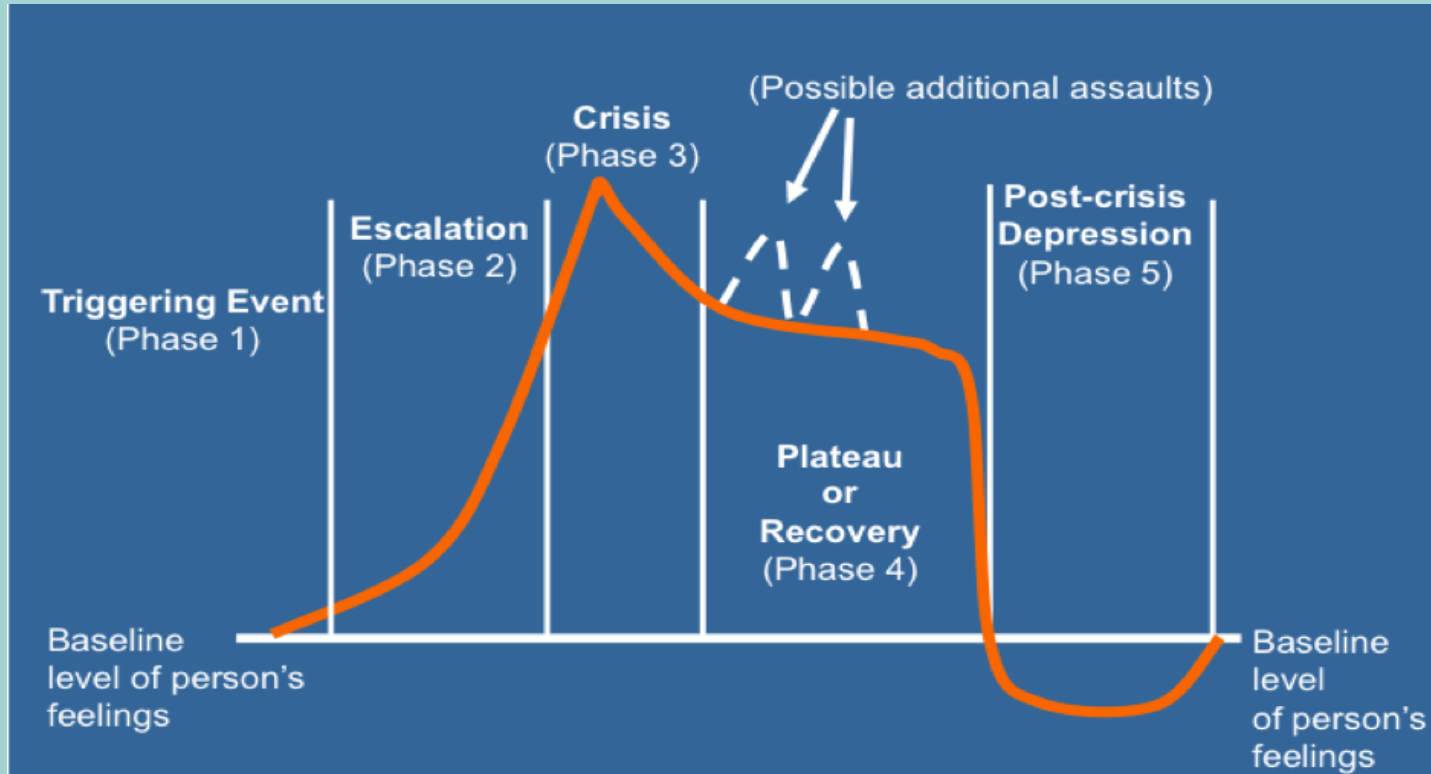


Reflection

- What did you know before that you now see differently ?



The Arousal Curve



Understanding the Red Zone



- Red zone behaviour is a sustained crisis which cannot be interrupted and where the child has lost all element of control

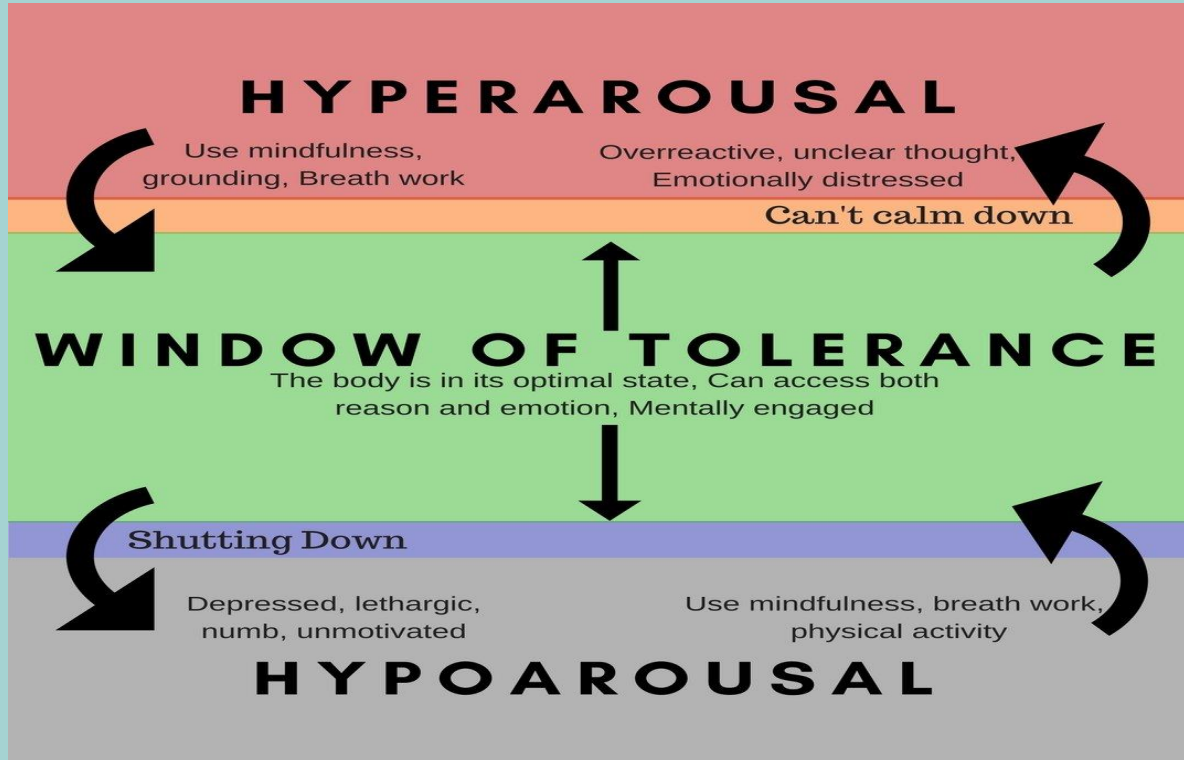
Meltdown, shutdown and fawning



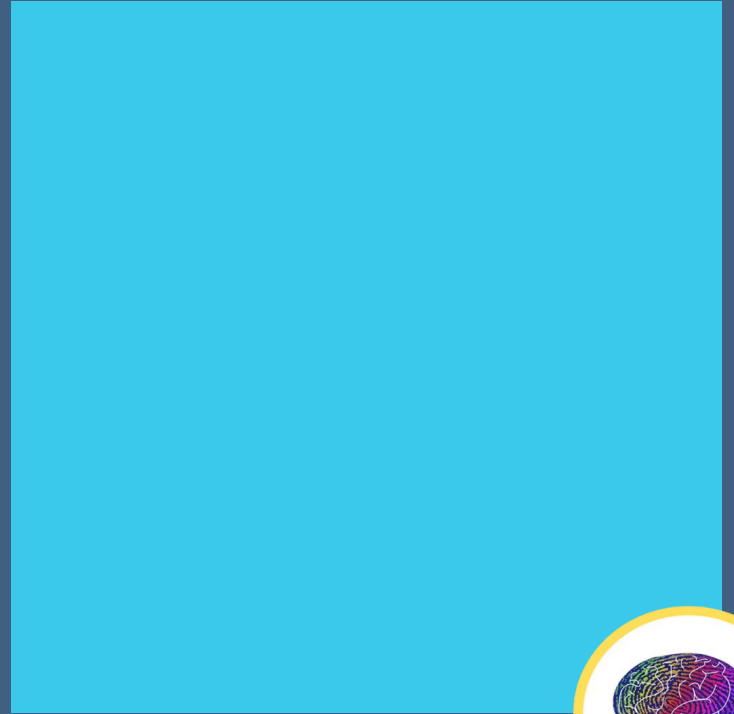
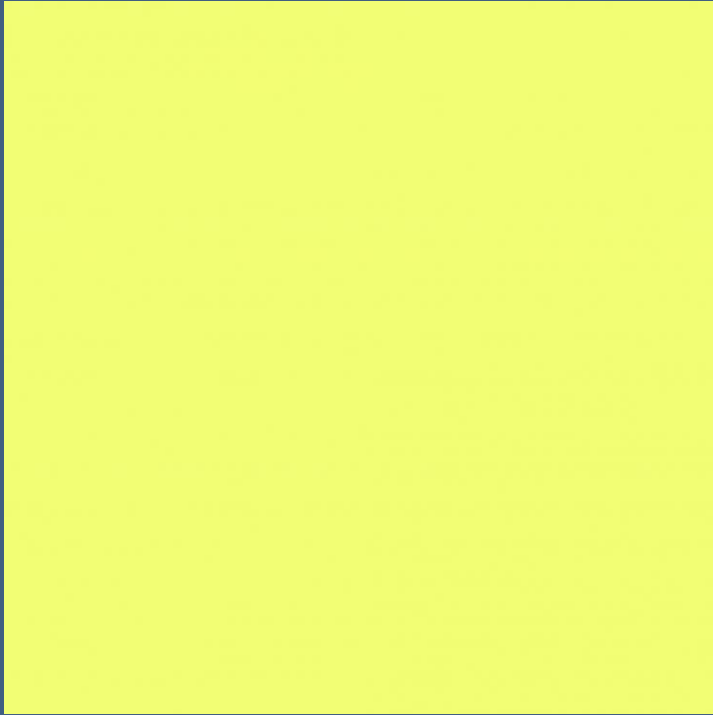
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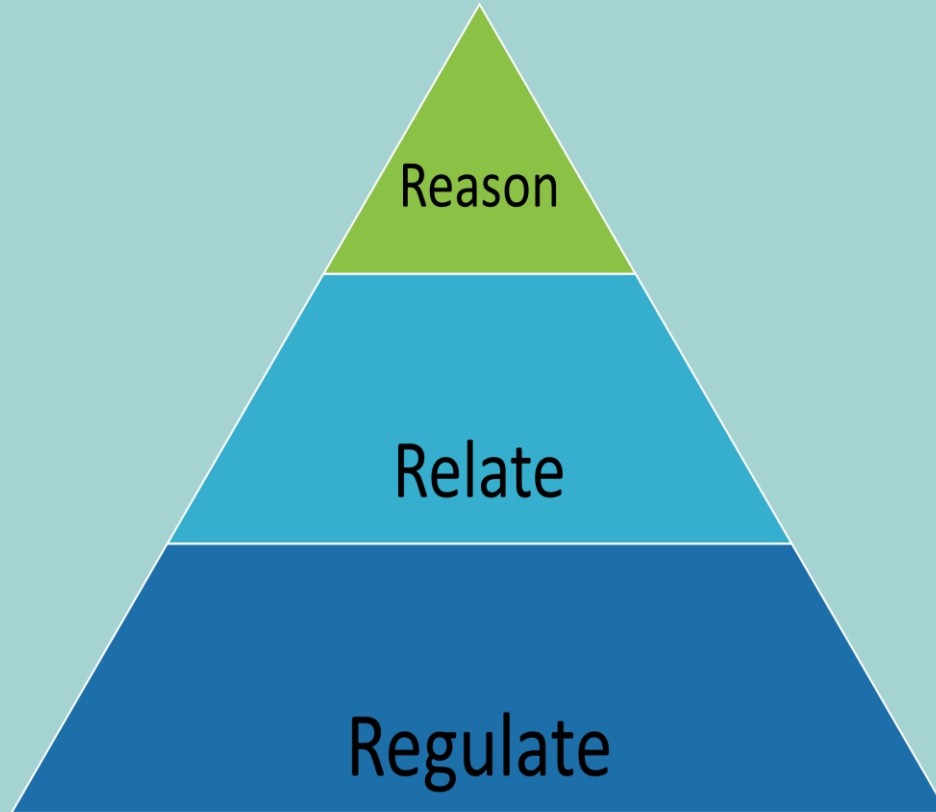
The window of tolerance



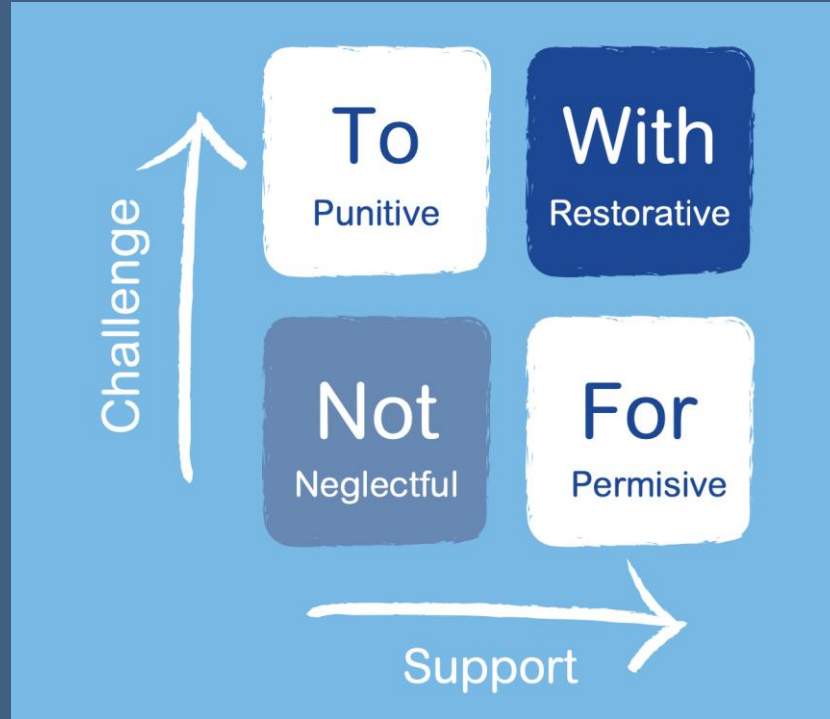
De-escalation – Work on yellow and blue



The 3 Rs



Working With Your Child



Plan



Make a plan based on strengths and needs

Plans



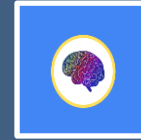
Consistent Behaviour
Support Plan



Staff debrief- see
exemplar



Individual Risk
Assessment



[https://neuroteachers.
com/individual-
support/](https://neuroteachers.com/individual-support/)



GREEN BEHAVIOURS- *Your child appears calm*

- BEHAVIOUR
 - Jack smiles
 - He may tell a joke
 - He hums the muppet theme show theme
- SUPPORT
 - Smile back at Jack
 - Encourage him to tell a joke.
 - Tell him one back
 - Join in with his



YELLOW BEHAVIOURS- Your child appears to be escalating

- BEHAVIOUR

- Jack will buzz like a bee
- Jack will begin to rock back and forth
- Jack say “ Not again!’ to any activity suggested by staff

- SUPPORT

- Courage Jack to buzz more slowly and quietly
- Let him use the swing in the junior play- ground
- Play Uno or snap with him until he is calm



RED BEHAVIOURS- Your child is exhibiting distressed behaviour and is in crisis

- BEHAVIOUR
- Jack may thump the desk with his hands
- Jack may bang his head on the wall
- SUPPORT
- Encourage Jack to hit the punch bag outside the classroom
- Encourage Jack to hit his head on the corrugated plastic wall by the green fence.
- Encourage Jack to do a head stand
- Take Jack to the junior quad



BLUE BEHAVIOUR- Your child is post crisis

- BEHAVIOUR

- Jack will make low helicopter noises
- Jack will hug his minion toy

- SUPPORT

- Offer him some crackers and a drink
- Sit in the quiet corner with him
- Read him Smartest Giant in Town



Do



Plan the plan live the plan



Review



Work on what's working well.
Improve things which need changing.



The importance of curiosity

- Could you...?
- Find an in reach or outreach project?
- Rotate staff?
- Provide more training to staff?
- Offer more PPA?
- Build relationships with parents and carers?
- Change the behaviour policy for a relationship policy?



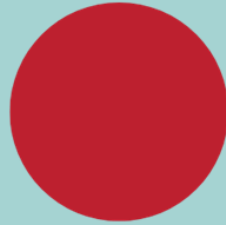
Next steps...

- Access- identify strength and needs in the 4 areas of ND need
- Plan- create an individual risk assessment and a consistent behaviour support plan
- Do – make sure all adults and the child in mind buy in to the process and carry it out for a specified timed period
- Review – strengthen what is working well, tweak what might work and change what doesn't

- Remember to stay curious



Questions ?





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