

A WHOLE CHILD APPROACH TO

Setting safe parameters for working with Young People's Mental Health

— Role Modeling for Success —

Learning outcomes

- Look at behaviour through a 'trauma-informed lens' supporting asking questions and not jumping to conclusions.
- Learn to use an assessment tool that identifies the children who need emotional support.
- Learn what the remit of school staff is when offering emotional support (who can we help / who needs to be referred on e.g. GP, CAMHS, specialist services NHS)



What are the stats

<https://www.centreformentalhealth.org.uk/sites/default/files/2021-02/CYP%20mental%20health%20fact%20sheet%202021.pdf>



Trauma

Safety

Belonging

Success

Masking

Risk of harm

Observed harm

Anger

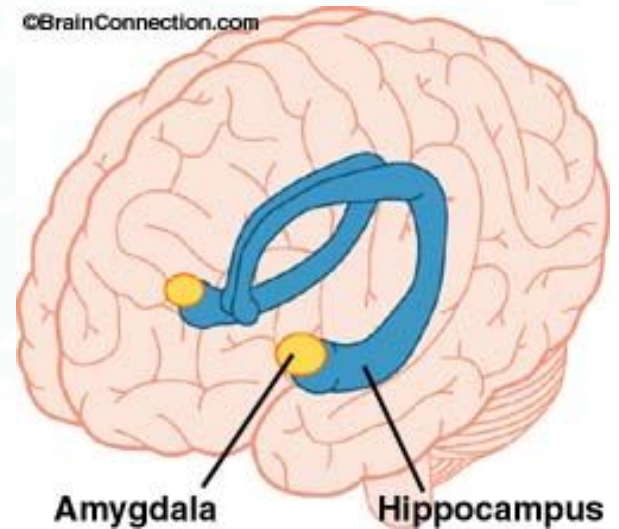
Frustration



Amygdala

Part of the limbic system (the small brain):

- Processes emotion
- Scans the environment for cues of threat
- Assigns value to sensory stimuli:
 - positive or negative
- Consolidates Memories
- Ensures Survival



Cortisol is addictive.

What is my known state of arousal?

- Repeated experiences of heightened anxiety increase cortisol production
- Cortisol is produced when we are scared, when we laugh, when we experience something exciting, during sex
- Like any drug addiction the person believes their 'best state' is their most common state
- I work better under stress, I am good in a disordered environment
- Being scared is my normal

Rejection Sensitive Dysphoria

Microaggressions cause
trauma

- Builds up over time
- Rejection does not have to be real, only perceived
- Repeated failures
- Not belonging or fitting in
- Missing simple social cues
- Not being able to self regulate well

<https://neuroclastic.com/living-with-rejection-sensitive-dysphoria/>



Trauma

Is not belonging

Not getting the cues/memos

Not knowing how to do better

Being harmed, hurt, isolated

FAILING

Disclaimer- not for young people's ears



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5IXbpgU9OWk>

Neurobiology

- Neurons start unspecialised, allowing flexibility of function
- In the first 3 years, the brain forms almost twice as many synapses as it will actually use
- Mirror Neurons - are contagious
- Adult Brain uses reasoning and experiences -hindsight
- Children seek exploration and novel activity to build the neurons into active highways

Internal and external motivating factors

A token

A reward

A threat

An expectation

A punishment

Makes me happy

Makes me laugh

Curiosity I want to try it and see
what it's like/does/feels like

I enjoy it

It makes me excited

You look at me/touch me/talk to
me/engage with me /you connect
to me

Goodman's Strength and Difficulties Questionnaire

A tool to identify emotional difficulties

Strength:

- Prosocial

Weaknesses:

- Hyperactivity
- Emotional
- Conduct
- Peer

[https://www.sdqinfo.org/py/sdqinfo/b3.py?language=Englishqz\(UK\)](https://www.sdqinfo.org/py/sdqinfo/b3.py?language=Englishqz(UK))

Parent/Carer

Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire

For each item, please mark the box for Not True, Somewhat True or Certainly True. It would help us if you answered all items as best you can even if you are not absolutely certain or the last answer only. Please give your answers on the basis of the last six months or this school year.

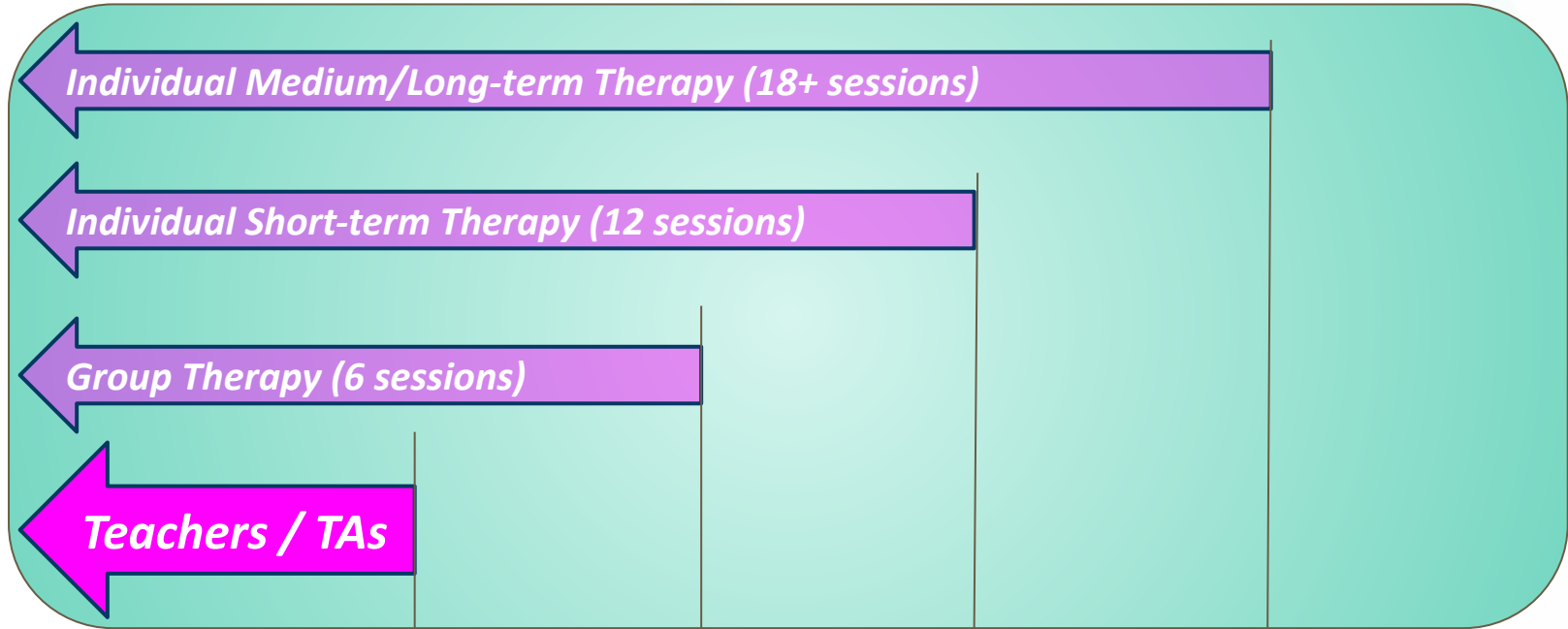
Male / Female

	Not True	Somewhat True	Certainly True
Often has temper tantrums or hot tempers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Often solitary, tends to play alone	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Generally obedient, usually does what adults request	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Many worries, often seems worried	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Helpful if someone is hurt, upset or feeling ill	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Constantly fidgeting or squirming	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has at least one good friend	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Often fights with other children or bullies them	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Often unhappy, down-hearted or tearful	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Generally liked by other children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Often inattentive, concentration wanders	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Often bullies others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Often in new situations, easily loses confidence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Often teased or bullied by other children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Easily distracted, concentration wanders	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nervous or shaky in new situations, easily loses confidence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kind to younger children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Often lies or cheats	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Picked on or bullied by other children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Often volunteers to help others (parents, teachers, other children)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Thinks things out before acting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Strays from home, school or elsewhere	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gets on better with adults than with other children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Many fears, easily scared	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sees tasks through to the end, good attention span	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Do you have any other comments or concerns?

Please turn over - there are a few more questions on the other side

SDQ Remit for Teaching Staff



SDQ Difficulty Score:

11

16

21

21+

Setting safe boundaries

We can see that we, as adults, need to know what is safe and boundaries for us to do for children's mental health

How do we manage Hannah's needs and supporting the structure of our class? - check in - why she is confused? Ask her to hold her question until the end

Predictable boundaries in the class, making sure we have resources for both ends of the learning spectrum

Feeling safe means knowing where the edges are - consistency is key

Introducing Andrew

How are we expecting
children to
communicate?



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=reJpo-GaopM&t=10s>

- **I am-** A sense of self, an innateness, uniqueness, this is me
- **I want-** to participate, belong, do, drive
- **Connection-** belong, roles, identity, predict others, regulate with others



WELLBEING

- **Communication-** engage, enjoy, participate, express, receive expression from others
- **To Value-** how I value myself, how I am of value to others, self activity and be valued experience, explore, productivity - DOING
- **I find Meaning-** worth, validity, importance, value, engagement, enjoyment, drive



Productivity - solid, tangible, end product

- A product made or earned
- Measurable and observable
- Tangible
- Of use to others

e.g. making someone a cup of tea, giving someone a picture, making something, making a profit

Tools for productivity

- **Clear what to do** sequencing steps, hand outs, aide mémoire
- **Tool kit for the job** pens, paper, calculator, visual aids
- **A good environment** a quiet workspace, ear defenders, visual prompts
- **Motivation for the task** an outcome or objective, why this helps the student, what the learning aim is
- **Something tangible** a photograph of the work, a take-home item, show and tell, a product to hold and show to others

Goal setting - belonging

Belonging and connection: how do I participate with the child?

- I am - how does the child **perceive** me?
- How do I **provide** a sense of self for the child?
- What is my own innateness and how am I **unique**?
- This is me - what is my **role** in the child's life?
- How do I promote **participation** for the child?
- How do I make the child feel that they **Belong**?
- **What do I do** for/with/on behalf of the child (what is my role)?
- How do I establish and support a child's **personal drive**?



Goal setting - communication

Communication:

- How does my communication support the child?
- What are my communication tools?
- How well do I use communication tools?
- How does my communication support a child to - engage, enjoy, participate, express, receive expression from others?
- Do I demonstrate mutual enjoyment of the child?
- Am I predictable?



Goal setting - Value and self worth

Value and self worth - how do I promote a child's value and self worth?

- How do I value myself - I am good at, I need help with?
- How am I of value to a child?
- How do I promote a child to - experience, explore, brave the DOING?



The reward is key:

- What do I find **meaningful in my relationship** with the child?
- How do I **value** the child's sense of worth?
- How do I **validate** the child?
- How do I let them know they are **important?**
- I **engage** with the child through...
- I demonstrate my **enjoyment** of the child by...
- I define our **roles** as...
- I let the child **predict** me and my values.
- My best **co-regulation** strategies are...



Self-Care Checklist

- **Physical:**
 - biological needs
 - time off
 - medical care
- **Psychological:**
 - Self-reflection
 - saying 'no'
 - inner experience
- **Emotional:**
 - tending to relationships
 - comfort activities
 - cry, laugh, play
- **Workplace:**
 - take lunch
 - find quiet time
 - exciting projects
- **Spiritual:**
 - time in nature
 - find inspiration (texts/talks/music)
 - contribute to important causes
 - pray, meditate
 - experience moments of awe



A WHOLE CHILD APPROACH TO Sensory Integration

To book more training with Nerys Hughes
please contact

ellie@speakingofbooks.co.uk

To discuss intervention and School Delivery
admin@wholechildtherapy.com



British Association
Of Occupational
Therapists

