



# EiH : Wellbeing part 2

Lorna Aitken [Lorna.Aitken@educationscotland.gov.scot](mailto:Lorna.Aitken@educationscotland.gov.scot)

@ESInclusionTeam

For Scotland's learners, with Scotland's educators



# Wellbeing : part 2

## Reflections from yesterday

- Signposts to resources to support mental health & wellbeing
- Consider strategic short, medium & long term actions relating to supporting staff and learner wellbeing
- Resources to help evidence impact of positive changes in wellbeing over time

## Plans for today

- How does trauma / impact of pandemic affect you, your staff and your learners?
- How do you ensure everyone keeps trauma in mind?
- Supporting difficult conversations around wellbeing

# Professional Values & Personal Commitment

GTCS standards for 2021 : Professional values have been expanded to ensure greater emphasis on inclusion, equality and diversity

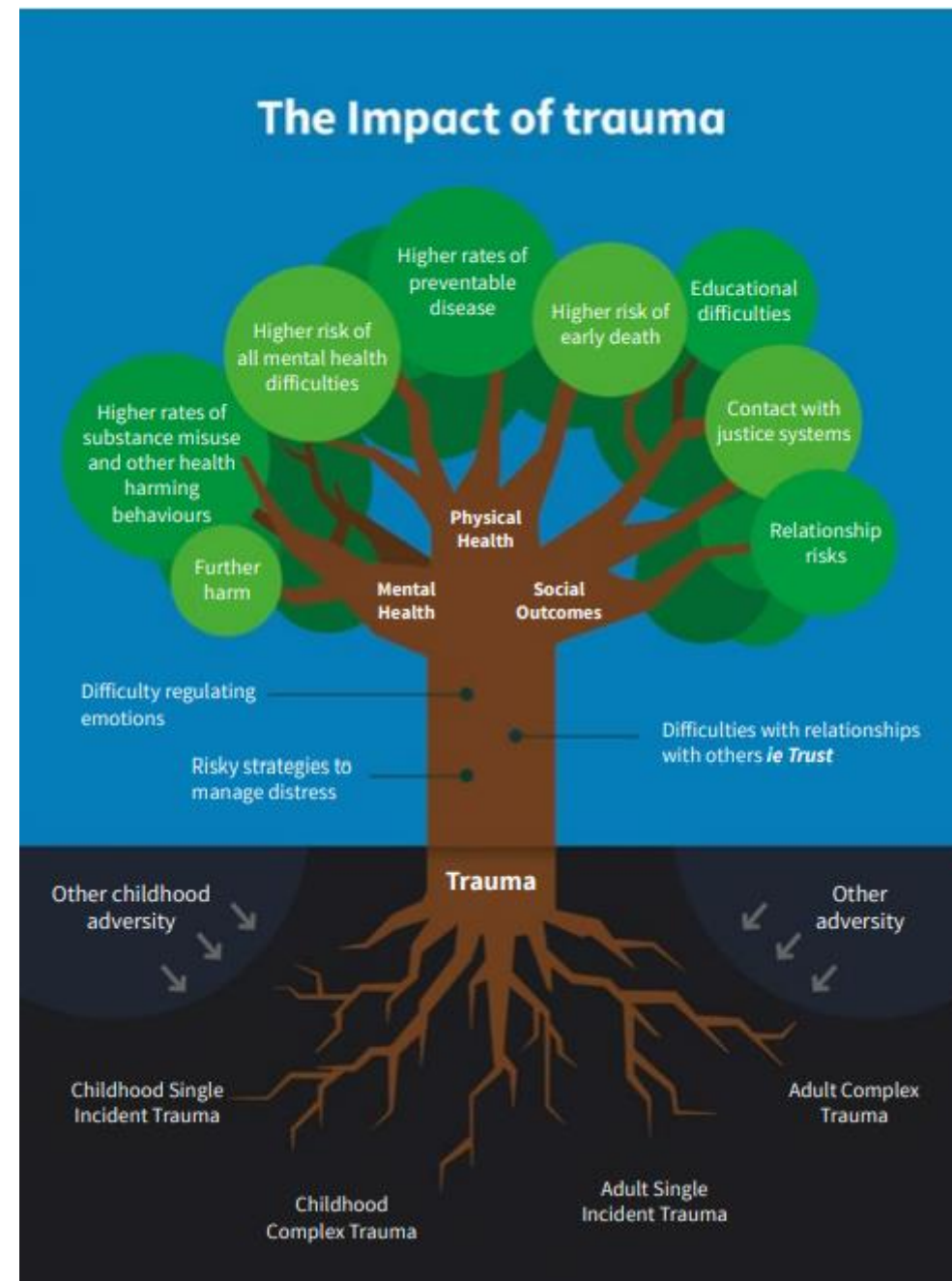
- **Social Justice**
- **Integrity**
- **Trust & Respect**

# You can't pour from an empty cup



# Trauma is everyone's business..

- 'The vision of a trauma informed and responsive nation that is capable of recognising where people are affected by trauma and adversity, and that responds in ways that prevent further harm, support recovery, address inequalities and improve life chances.'
- [NES Trauma Informed - National Trauma Training Programme Online Resources Summary \(transformingpsychologicaltrauma.scot\)](https://transformingpsychologicaltrauma.scot)

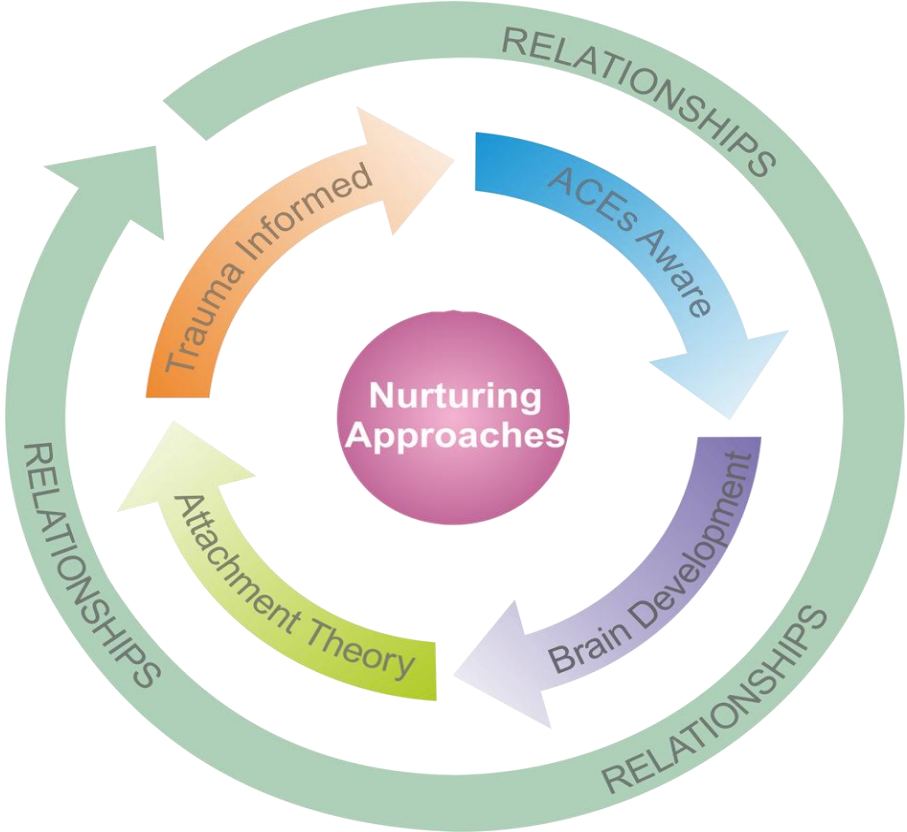


# Links: nurture, ACEs and trauma informed practice

Poor outcomes are not predetermined and can be ameliorated with appropriate support

Early intervention is required to prevent and mitigate against later negative outcomes

Psychologically informed and make use of research/evidence to inform practice



[Nurture, Adverse Childhood Experiences and Trauma informed practice: Making the links between these approaches | Self-evaluation | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](#)

All recognise the importance of early adverse experiences on developing brain and later outcomes

The central importance of relationships to buffer the negative impact of early adverse experiences  
Relationships are at the key to healing and support

The importance of practitioners having an understanding and awareness of underlying reasons for behaviour

# What is trauma?

“an event, a series of events or a set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or life threatening.” (SAMHSA, 2014)

(Trauma is) an exceptional experience in which powerful and dangerous stimuli overwhelm the child's capacity to regulate emotions.

(Early Trauma Treatment Network, ND)

Trauma is the unique individual experience of an event or enduring conditions in which the individual's ability to integrate his/her emotional experience is overwhelmed and the individual experiences (either objectively or subjectively) a threat to his/her life, bodily integrity, or that of a caregiver or family

(Saakvitne, K. et al, 2000).



# Types of trauma

**Single trauma** involves experiences of events that are life threatening and/or have the potential to cause serious injury, e.g. car accidents, fires

**Complex trauma** involves interpersonal threat, violence and violation. It may involve multiple incidents. Examples include child abuse, bullying, domestic violence, rape and war

**Collective trauma** the psychological reactions to a traumatic event that affects an entire society

# Developmental trauma

- Developmental trauma describes how complex trauma can impact on children and young people. It describes how their development can slow down or become impaired following trauma

Developmental trauma describes the impact of early, repeated abuse, neglect, separation and adverse experiences that happens within the child's important relationships

# When might adversity become trauma? (stressor continuum)

Stress responses or reactions to a traumatic/adverse event can be either positive, tolerable or toxic

## Positive

mild stress in the context of good attachment

- increased resilience and confidence
- development of coping skills

## Tolerable

serious, temporary stress buffeted by supportive relationships

- Adaption and recovery with some possibility for physical/emotional damage

## Toxic

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

- Lifelong impact on health and wellbeing

# Ages & stages

## Young children

What are the signs you might see displayed by Early Years and primary aged children?



## Older children

What are the signs you might see displayed by secondary aged young people?



[National Trauma Training Programme](#)  
Developing your trauma skilled practice  
2: Trauma in children and young people

# Keep trauma in mind

<https://beaconhouse.org.uk/useful-resources/>

## Young children

- Reluctance to separate from parent/carer
- Difficulty in calming and reassuring them
- Feelings of helplessness and difficulty describing in words what is bothering them
- Sleep issues
- Develop new fears
- Recreate trauma through play, drawings
- Change in appetite
- Complain of sore tummy/head
- Changes in behaviour
- Return to bed wetting

## Older children

- Persistent concern over safety
- Experience of guilt/shame
- Constant retelling of traumatic event
- Complain of sore tummy/head
- Sleep disturbances including nightmares
- Flashbacks
- Agitated, startles easily
- Mental health issues – anxiety, anger, depression, self harming
- Risk taking behaviour
- Develop eating disorders
- Changes in behaviour

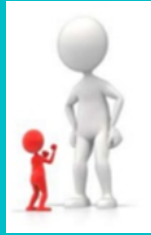
# Keep trauma in mind

[Sowing Seeds: Trauma Informed Practice for Anyone Working with Children and Young People on Vimeo](#)



# Responses to stress

## Fight



- Crying
- Hands in fists, desire to punch, rip
- Flexed/tight jaw, grinding teeth, snarl
- Fight in eyes, glaring, fight in voice
- Desire to kick, smash with legs, feet
- Feelings of anger/rage
- Homicidal/suicidal feelings
- Knotted stomach/nausea, burning stomach

## Flight



- Restless legs, feet /numbness in legs
- Anxiety/shallow breathing
- Leg/foot movement
- Reported or observed fidgety-ness, restlessness, feeling trapped, tense
- Sense of running in life- one activity-next
- Excessive exercise

## Freeze



- Feeling stuck in some part of body
- Feeling cold/frozen, numb, pale skin
- Sense of stiffness, heaviness
- Holding breath/restricted breathing
- Sense of dread, heart pounding
- Decreased heart rate (can sometimes increase)
- Orientation to threat

# Behaviour is like an iceberg

What we see  
(behaviours)

What we don't see  
(underlying causes)

Feelings  
Uncertainty  
Needs  
Thoughts  
Overload

Feeling loved/happy/satisfied  
Feeling detached/sad/angry  
Feeling safe/connected/relaxed  
Feeling confused/uncertain/anxious  
Am I in control? Can I do this?  
Am I valued? Am I included?  
Am I understood? Do I matter?  
Fears/perceived demands/threats  
Sensory/social/processing capacity



# Window of Tolerance

***Hyperarousal***

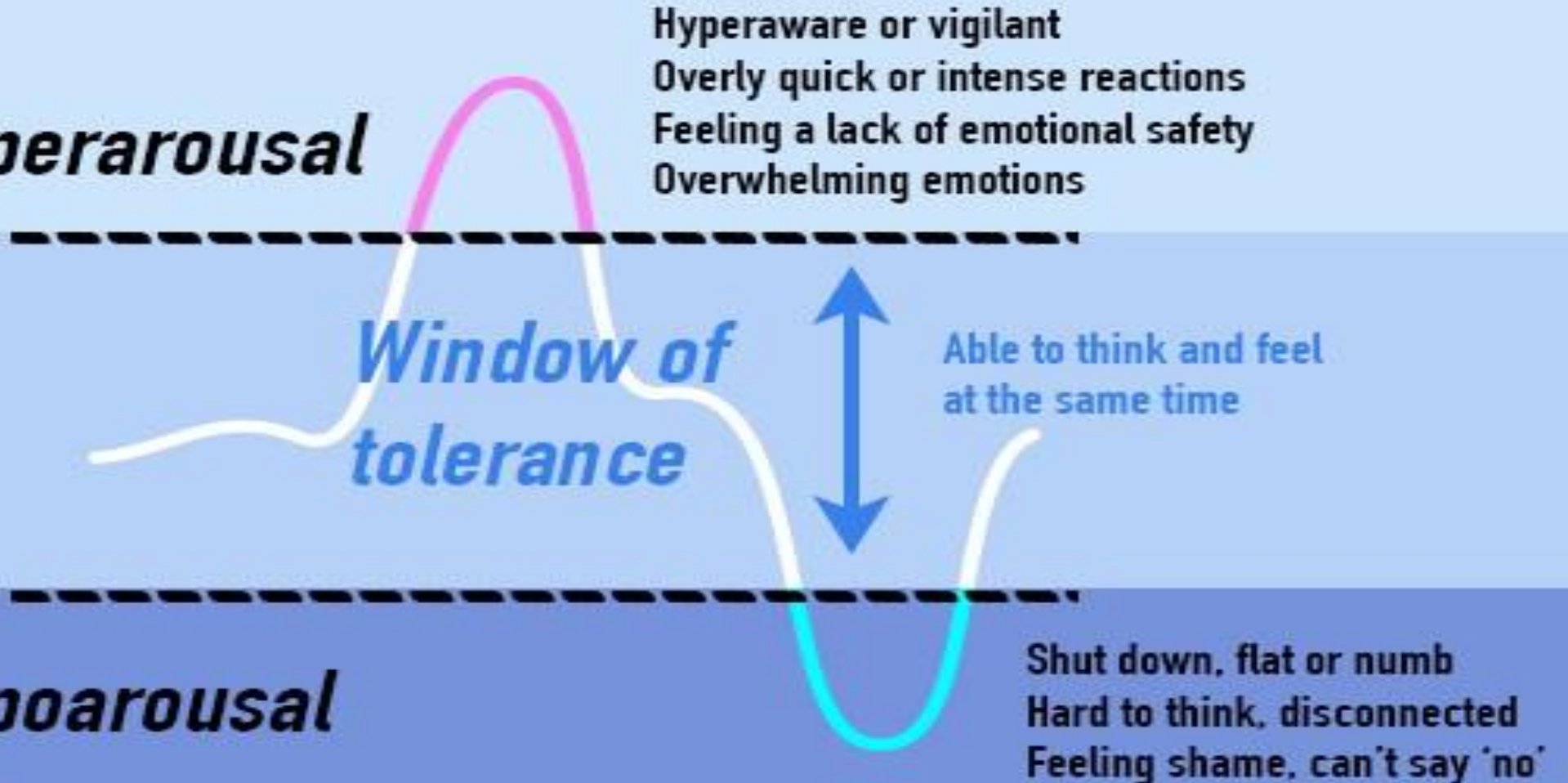
Hyperaware or vigilant  
Overly quick or intense reactions  
Feeling a lack of emotional safety  
Overwhelming emotions

***Window of tolerance***

Able to think and feel  
at the same time

***Hypoarousal***

Shut down, flat or numb  
Hard to think, disconnected  
Feeling shame, can't say 'no'

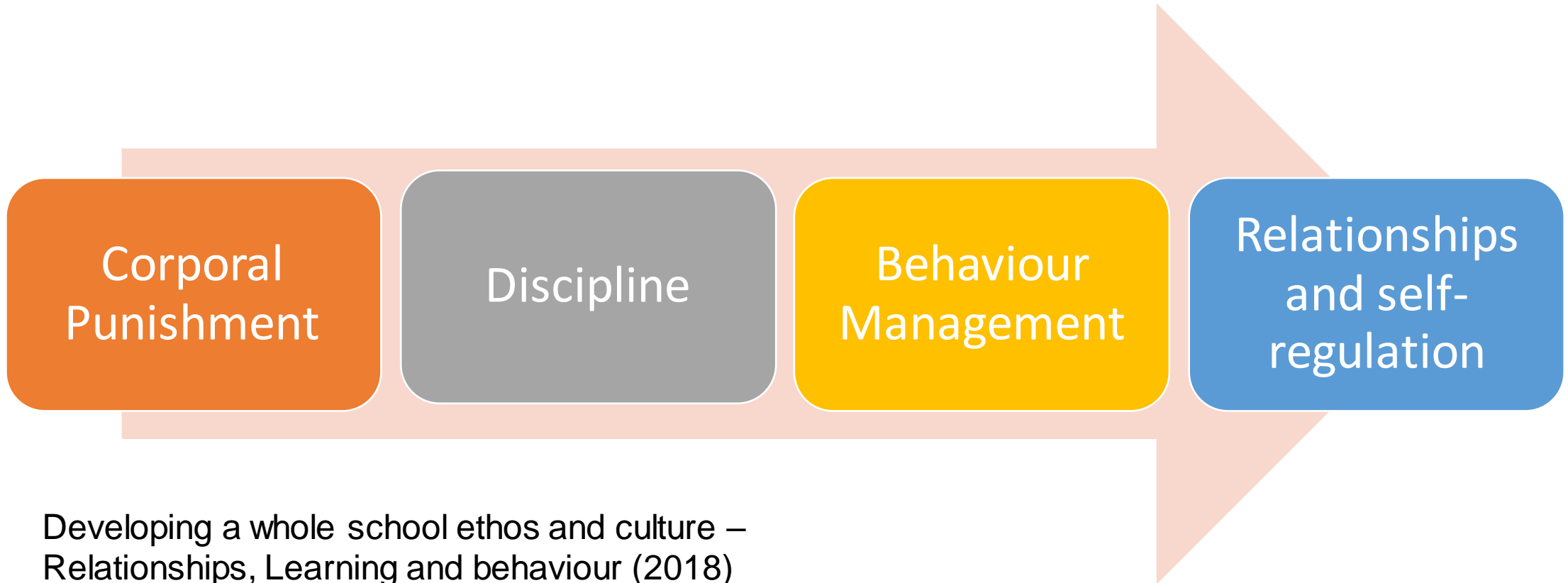


# School related outcomes of traumatic exposure

Perfect et al (2016) carried out a systematic review of 102 studies and found that exposure to trauma can impact on:

- Cognitive functioning
- Memory
- Attention
- Language/verbal ability
- Reduced academic performance
- School related behaviours e,g, behaviour, attendance

# What is the Scottish policy context?



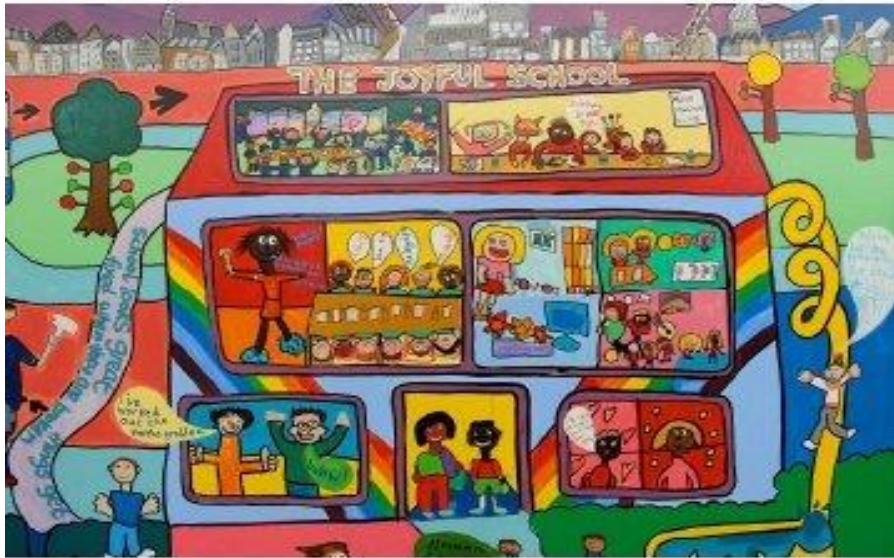
Developing a whole school ethos and culture –  
Relationships, Learning and behaviour (2018)

A positive school culture and ethos is essential to  
developing good relationships and positive behaviour

# It's all about rights .....

## **"School should be a joyful place"**

Learning and school life in Scotland  
A Children's Parliament Report



Children's  
Parliament  
giving voice to voice

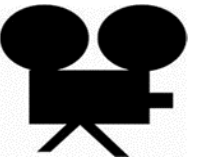
'A child's right to an education that is concerned with realising their fullest potential means getting alongside the child, valuing their lived experience, giving them love and care and using our best professional knowledge and skills to make a positive difference.

**It's all about relationships.'**

# Signposts for support

- [Trauma – national trauma training programme | NHS Education \(scot.nhs.uk\)](https://www.scot.nhs.uk/education/trauma-training-programme/)
- [Nurture and trauma-informed approaches: A summary of supports and resources | Learning resources | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](https://www.nationalimprovementhub.gov.scot/learning-resources/nurture-and-trauma-informed-approaches/)

# Film: Finding Mr Pigden



<https://youtu.be/eKTolrezxPw>

# Every Child Deserves a Champion

Consider someone special in your life who helped you feel confident about your future, without whom you might not be the person you are now.

<https://youtu.be/SFnMTHhKdkw>



## **Activity : Approaches in your own context**

- What has been the main approach to promoting positive relationships in your context?
- How effective has this approach been at supporting the development of positive relationships?
- What have been the challenges?



# Supporting difficult conversations regarding wellbeing

- Every interaction is an intervention
- Why we avoid difficult conversations
- Face the problem
- Psychological safety
- Where to find supports

# Why we avoid difficult conversations

<https://youtu.be/LpOYNbCKA5M>

## Face the problem

[Challenging conversations and how to manage them \(acas.org.uk\)](https://www.acas.org.uk)

[Supportive and Difficult Conversations Guide | NHS Scotland](#)

[What Is Emotional Resilience? \(+6 Proven Ways to Build It\) \(positivepsychology.com\)](#)

[Scaffolding a Difficult Conversation \(education.gov.scot\)](#)

# Where to find supports

- [How To Have Difficult Conversations At Work \(forbes.com\)](#)
- [Coaching and mentoring matters \(education.gov.scot\)](#)
- [What Is Emotional Resilience? \(+6 Proven Ways to Build It\) \(positivepsychology.com\)](#)
- [Scaffolding a Difficult Conversation \(education.gov.scot\)](#)