

## Newark Way - Trauma Informed Language



By using Trauma Informed Language, we can create a more compassionate, supportive and understanding learning environment for all children and young people as well as families who have been impacted by trauma.

Trauma is expressed through behaviours not language and can mask fear or shame. Stress responses are known as 'fight', 'flight', 'freeze' and 'fawn' can resemble anti-social behaviours

Negative language that blames children for their trauma is internalised and leads to negative labels

Trauma informed language is an ongoing learning process. It's important to be mindful of your language choices and be willing to adjust your approach based on the individual's needs and preferences.

**When reporting on a child or young person we should:**

- **Focus on the child's needs and experiences, not the behaviour** - *acknowledge that the child may be facing challenges due to past experiences, trauma or additional support need*
- **Avoid stigmatising language** - *refrain from using language or labels that can shame or stigmatise*
- **Emphasise strength and resilience** - *highlight the child's positive attributes, coping mechanisms and areas for growth*
- **Communicate collaboratively** - *Frame reports as a partnership between the school and parents, emphasising shared responsibility for the child's successes*
- **Offer support and resources** - *provide information about available support services for the child and family*

Instead of focusing on negative labels and judgmental language we can use more descriptive and objective language that focuses on the specific behaviour. For example, instead of saying "He's being defiant," we can say "He is struggling to follow the classroom charter." This type of language allows us to better understand the child's needs and develop effective strategies to support their development.

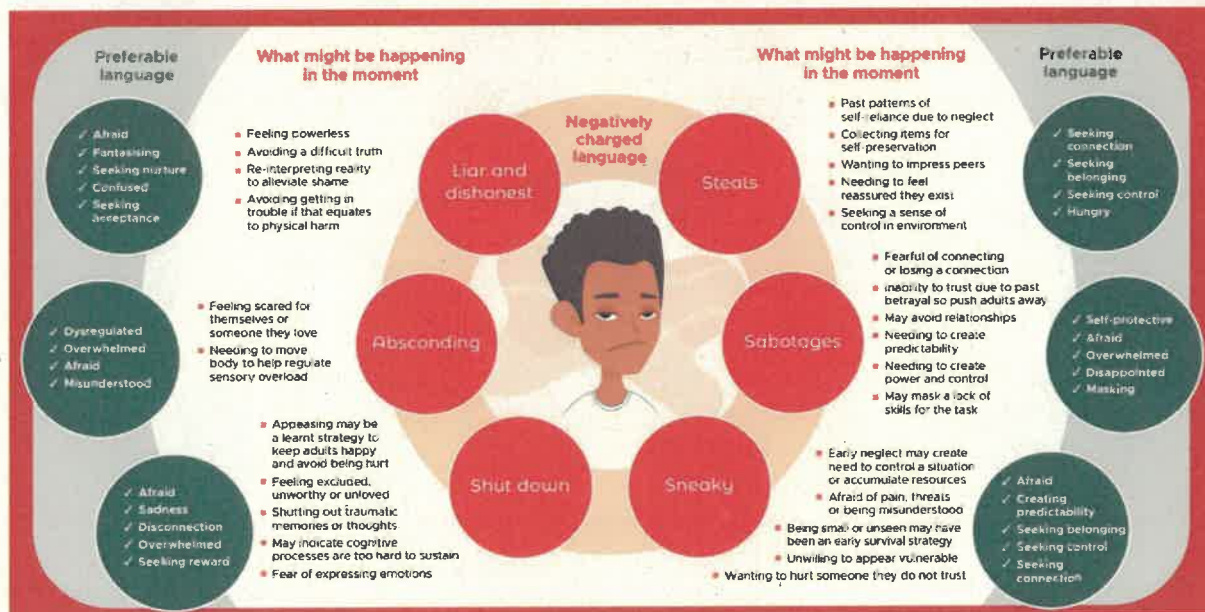
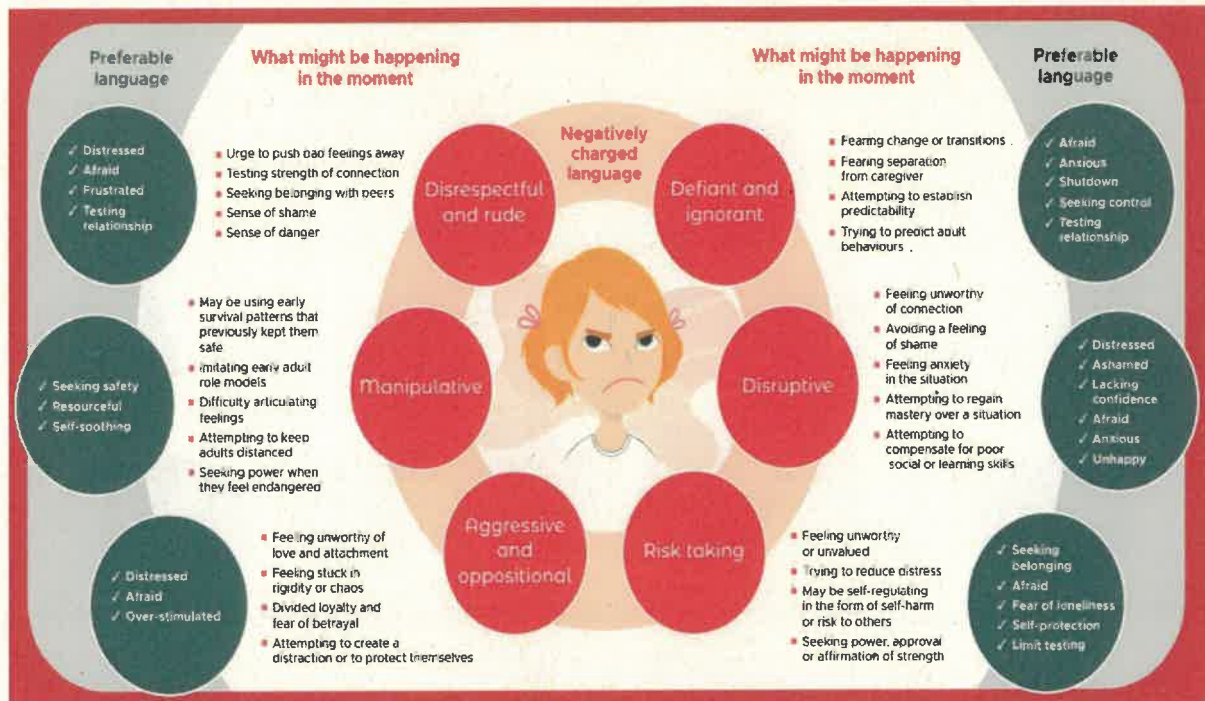
<u>Judgmental Language</u>	<u>Alternatives</u>	<u>Underlying Need</u>	<u>Person Centred</u>
Kicking off	Experiencing difficulty with emotional regulation  Demonstrating escalated behaviours  Struggling to cope/overwhelmed	A child who is "kicking off" may be feeling overwhelmed, anxious or frustrated	Instead of "kicking off", you could report, "(A) is having a difficult time regulating his emotions at the moment."





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## Newark Way - Trauma Informed Language Glossary



This resource has been produced by Adoption England. Accessed from <https://adoptionengland.co.uk/adoptive-parents-maintaining-relationships/words-matter-trauma-sensitive-language-children>





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