

UNDERSTANDING

Why trauma-informed practice matters in education

Brian lives in a unpredictable world. He is never sure how his caregivers will respond, each day is different. Brian has learned to be invisible when he needs to be and to fight when he has to stay safe. School is very different than his home environment. At school, Brian makes himself invisible or fights when he is afraid because that is what Brian has learned to do.

BRAIN DEVELOPMENT

Pre-frontal cortex

thinking brain
logic and reason
self-regulation



Limbic system

feeling brain
emotions and memories
sensory input

Brain Stem

instinct
fight, flight, freeze
instant



Trauma:

Any event that overwhelms the child's capacity to cope

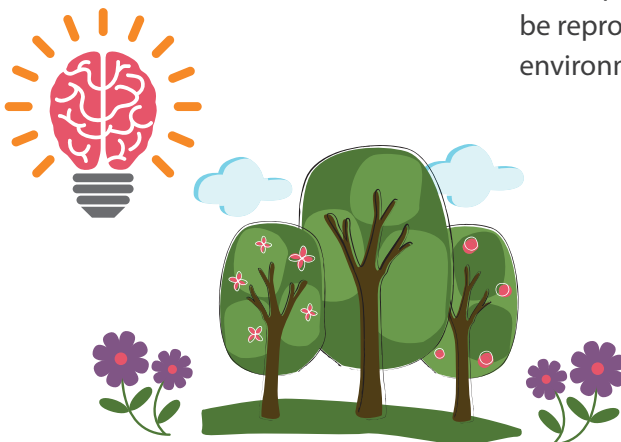
Behaviours you may observe:

- fear
- aggression
- shyness
- dissociation
- body symptoms
- hyperactivity

When children are triggered, they are using their instinct and emotion brain.

PROVIDING HOPE

Though early childhood experiences have long lasting effects on human development, the brain is very resilient. Its plasticity means the brain can be reprogrammed and old patterns changed. The first step is changing the environment and changing how the child feels.



Unpredictable



Needs predictability

Unstable



Needs stability

Punitive



Needs safe boundaries

Controlling



Needs choice

Not emotion focused

LOVE

Needs language of emotion

Did you know that just one safe adult in a child's life can begin to plant the seeds of safety, hope, connection, beauty, self-mattering, healthy relationships and love.



Ministry of Education