

Recognising and Reducing Stressors to Prevent Behaviours of Concern

April 29th 2024
INTO Teacher Professional Development
Programme



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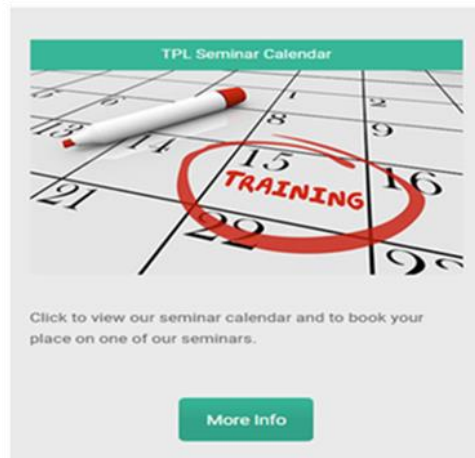
Behaviour for Learning and Wellbeing Advisors

facilitate professional learning for school management and teachers to build school capacity



School Support Portal

Individual online/ in-person meetings with teachers
Group online/in-person meetings
Croke Park Sessions



Teacher Professional Learning Seminars

Understanding Behaviour
Pathways to Prevention



Developing and Designing Resources For Schools

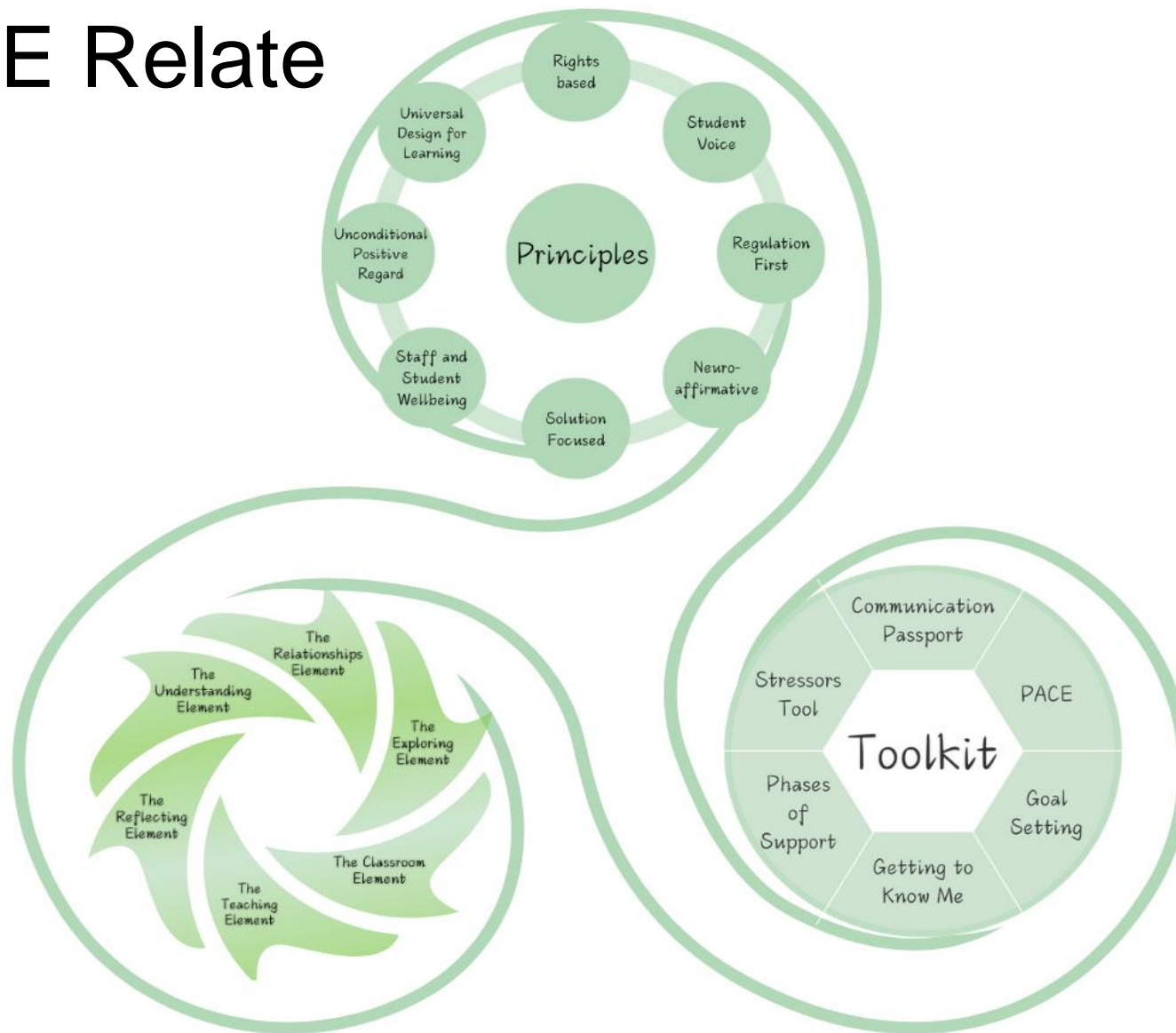
<https://ncse.ie/online-resources>

<https://ncse.ie>



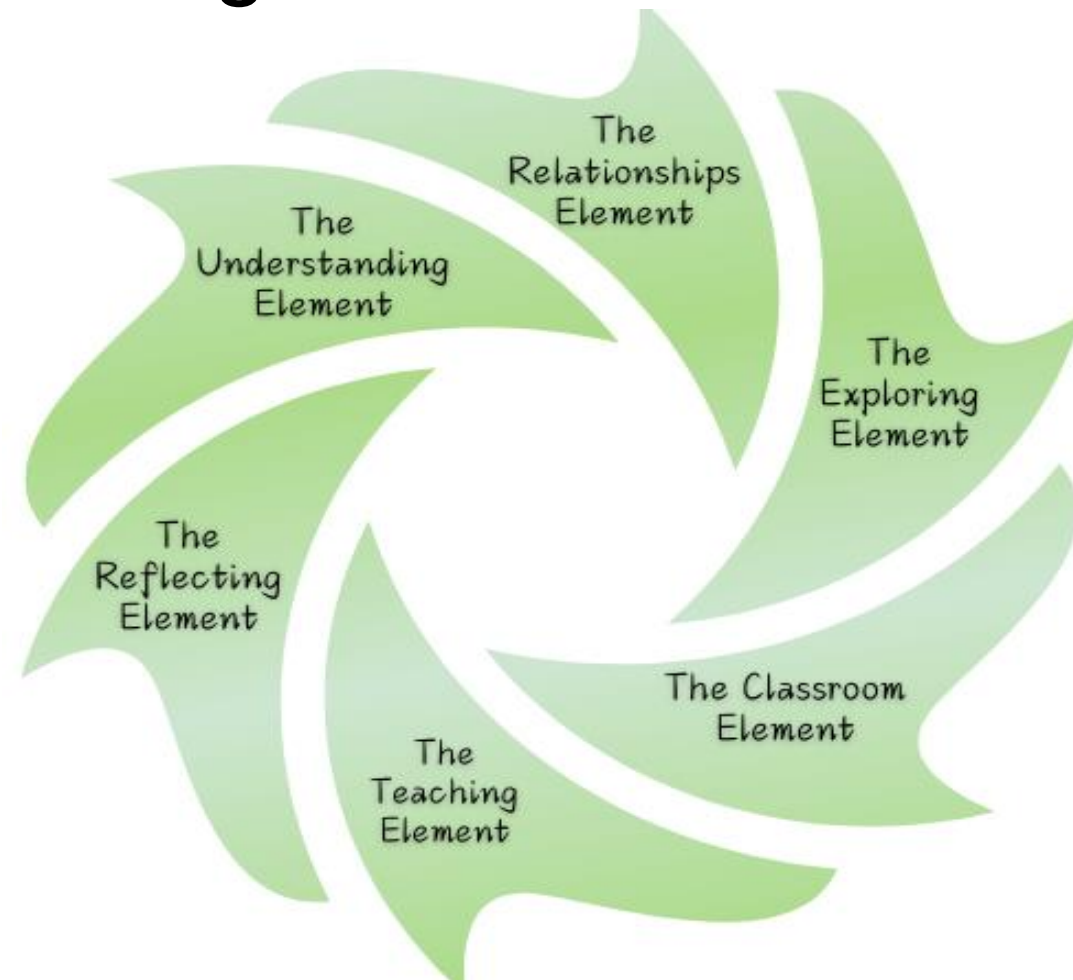
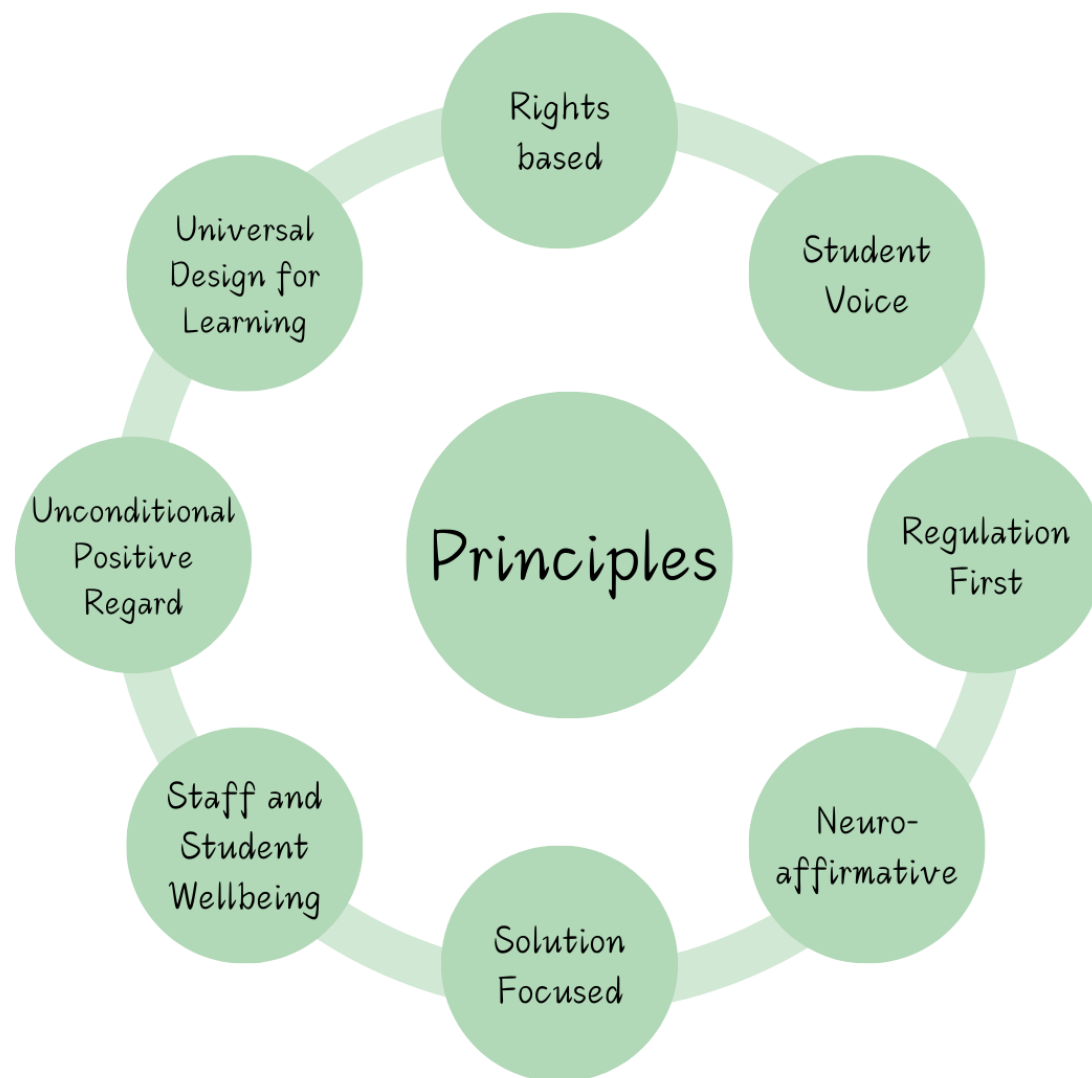
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What's important when supporting behaviour?



What is Self-regulation

Self-regulation is a complex higher level executive functioning skill.

It is the ability to manage your own energy levels, emotions, behaviours and attention, in ways that support you to establish and maintain good relationships, engage in learning and maintain wellbeing.

(Shanker 2010)

Matching your
energy level to the
environment and
task

Focusing on the task
at hand

Waiting for and
taking turns

Being able to
manage emotions in
social situations

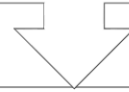
Maintaining a sense
of calm



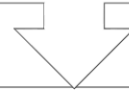
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Developmental Stages of Regulation

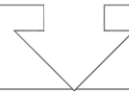
Child/Young person needs an adult to plan and provide regulation opportunities



Child/Young person can regulate with the adult helping (co-regulation)



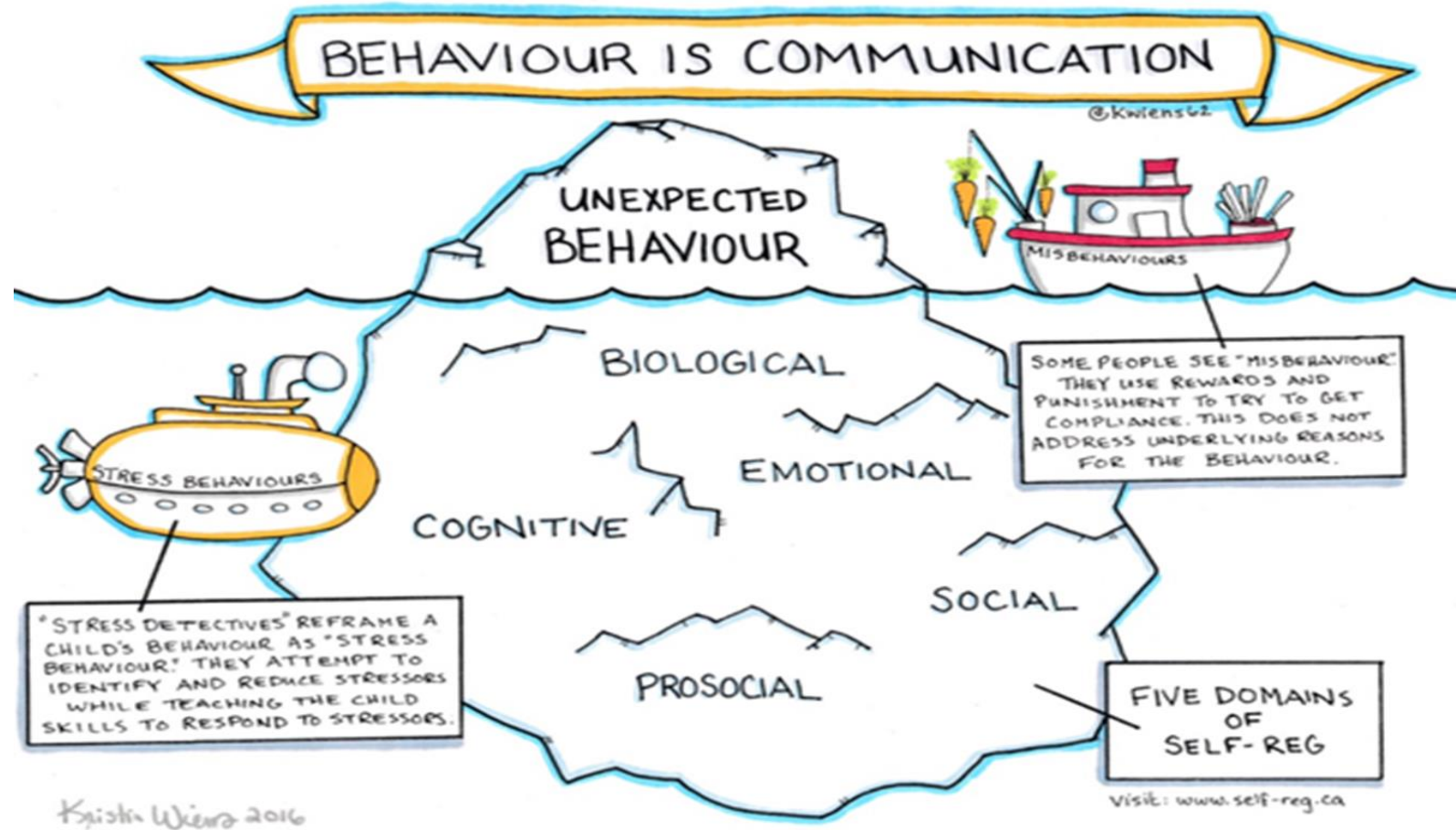
Child/Young person begins to show independent regulation skills at times



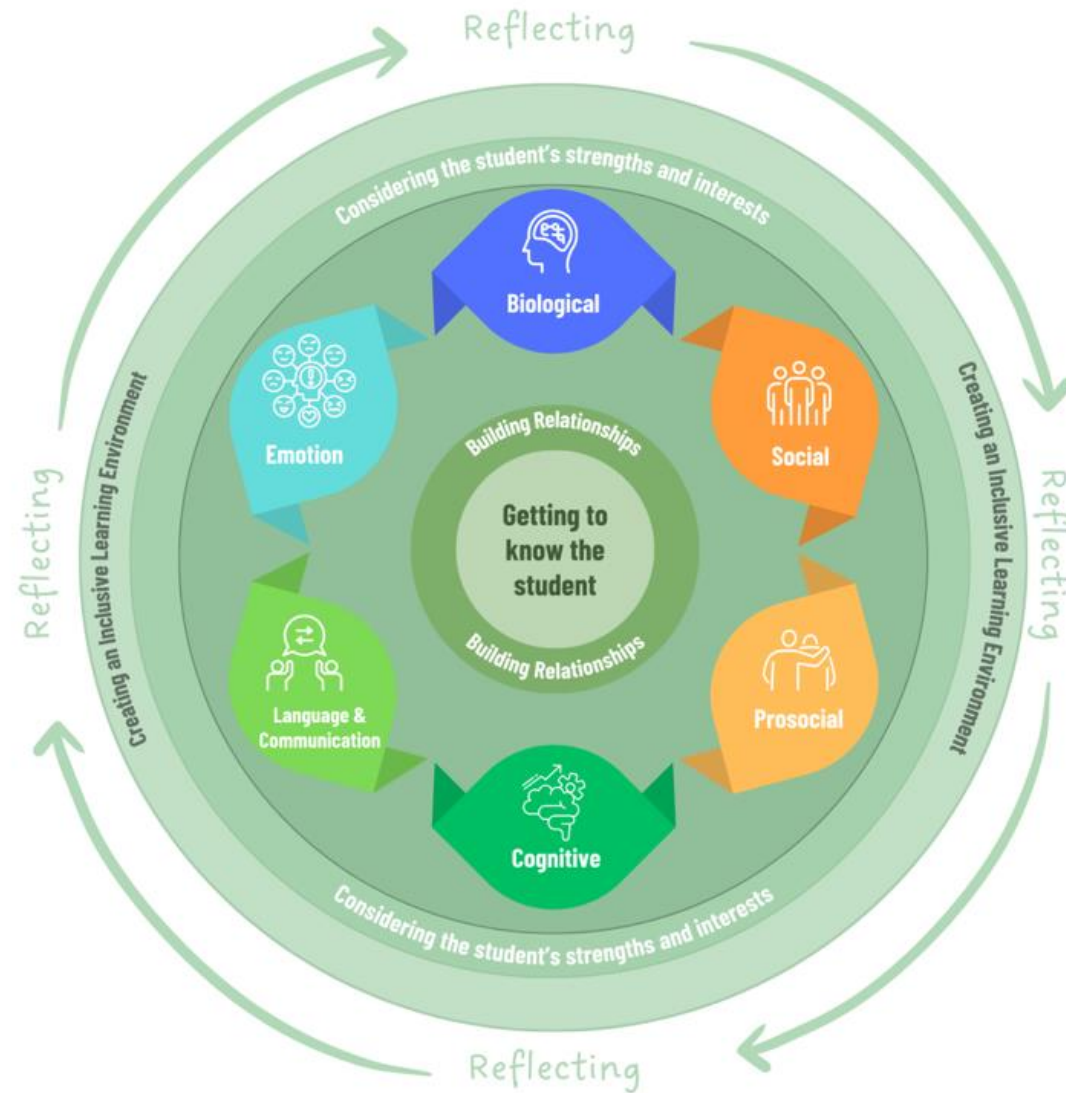
Understanding when to regulate independently vs when to co-regulate.
(approximately 23-25 years old by the time this part of the brain develops)



Stuart Shanker's Self-Reg Framework



Recognising and reducing stressors



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The biological domain comprises of the basic physiological needs we need to successfully function in life such as physical health, sleep, nutrition, exercise including the role that the nervous system plays in regulating energy levels.

Medical needs, being unwell or in pain

Hunger or thirst

Poor sleep

Temperature, bright lights, loud spaces

Hearing difficulty or impairment

Limited exercise and movement



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Social

The social domain recognises stressors that impact the student in relation to social engagement.

Putting on a social face
when your 'social
battery' feels low

Not having anyone to
play with/chat with at
break times

One to one interactions
that feel intense

Not being understood
by friends or
classmates

Expectation to fit into
different cultural social
norms

Working within a
group, participating in
circle time or public
speaking



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The pro-social domain includes the energy and emotions we take on from others. This includes empathy, relating to others, social approval and ‘fitting in’.

Conflict or changes in the family

Digital technology and social media

World events

Bullying

Academic pressure

Socio-economic stressors



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In the emotion domain, a regulated student can monitor, cope with and adapt their responses to any strong emotion, such as intense feelings of happiness, curiosity, excitement, frustration, fear or worry.

An intense surprise,
over-excitement,
anticipation during build
up to events

Feeling or being
responsible for other
people

Not feeling safe, not
feeling that they belong,
falling out with peers

A grief/loss of a
significant person or
relationship

Changes in family
circumstances

Experiencing
disappointments or
frustrations



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The cognitive domain focuses on the processes of memory, attention, the acquisition and retention of information and problem solving

Slower processing in a speedy world

Too much inferring no clearly stated expectations

Information presented too quickly or slowly

Making decisions

Working memory

Constant new learning that doesn't fit with what you already know



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The Language and Communication domain recognises that students with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) can have difficulties in understanding what others say to them and may have expressive language difficulties

Difficulties understanding curriculum and a wide variety of texts

Using increasingly complex language (oral and written) to engage with learning

Having the language skills to seek clarification or help

Using language to problem solve and resolve conflicts

Unable to name the emotion and express how they are feeling

Difficulties explaining their actions clearly



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We must ask ourselves....

WHY this
student?



WHY now?



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Stressors Tool



STRESSOR TOOL



Recognising and reducing stressors is an important part of reframing behaviour. Start with the student's strengths and interests. Then fill out the potential stressors that you recognise through your own observations or what you have learned from the student, their parent/caregiver or other supporting adults. When you have recognised the stressors, consider how you might reduce some of them with consideration to the student's strengths and interests. Some will be outside of your control.

Student Name:

Student's Strengths and interests:

Date:

Recognising Stressors	Reducing Stressors	Recognising Stressors	Reducing Stressors



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Stressors Tool



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Student Name:

Student's Strengths and interests:

Date:

Recognising Stressors

Poor Sleep

Transition: from the
yard to the classroom –
sensory processing



Reducing Stressors

Meet and Greet
Quieter workspace
Teaching a morning routine
to all
Sensory/Environmental audit
and adapt

Recognising Stressors



Reducing Stressors

Recognising Stressors



Reducing Stressors

Recognising Stressors

Transitions:
verbal
instruction



Reducing Stressors

Visuals:
Timer end of first task
Write it down
Hold up the book/
materials needed

Recognising Stressors



Reducing Stressors

Recognising Stressors

A grief/loss of a
significant
person or
relationship



Reducing Stressors

Allow time
Predictable and
consistent at school
Key adult
PACE approach,

Padlet of Resources

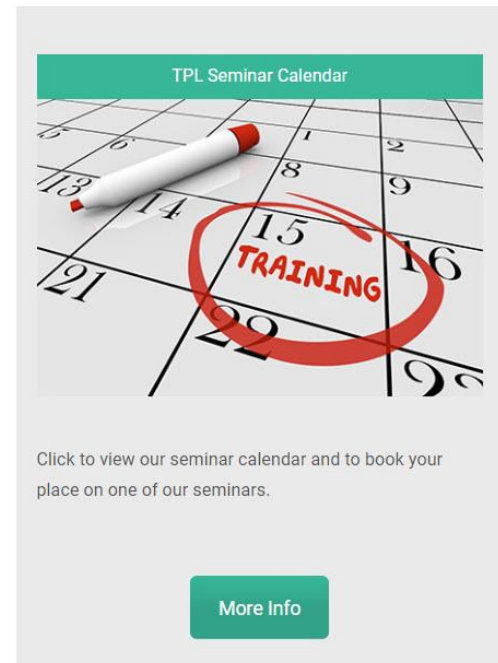


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Teacher Professional Learning: <https://ncse.ie/tpl>

Pathways to Prevention - A 3 day comprehensive seminar designed for teachers to support students with behaviours of concern. It focuses on trauma informed and preventative approaches with a regulation first lens.

- Primary Teachers
- Post-primary Teachers
- Special School Teachers
- Special Education Teachers
- Behaviour for Learning Teachers



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