

# CREATING PLACES THAT ARE EMOTIONALLY SAFE IS VITAL

HERE ARE A FEW VITAL SIGNS OF A HEALTHY HOME, SCHOOL OR COMMUNITY:

## EMOTIONS

are RESPECTED and VALIDATED and ARE NOT SILENCED. They are viewed as natural and can be less powerful when there is less fear involved in feeling or expressing them.

Adults recognize that children need our

## NURTURE AND CARE

to be predictable and repetitive to reform neural pathways that can tolerate and then enjoy relationships.

A child will not be able to learn, focus, concentrate, play or relax until their

## BASIC NEEDS ARE MET

and they know they will be continually met. Are they hungry, tired, needing comfort?

## SHOUTING AND SHAMING ARE NOT HELPFUL

and can cause negative fear driven behaviour to escalate. Any fear driven behaviour that results from us not being regulated is our responsibility and we cannot blame the child.

All adults need to be aware that we **nurture** by our **facial expressions, tone of voice, body posture, words and actions.**

We need to be consistent and predictable and 'wonder out loud' if we feel pain etc to de-personalize it.

# CREATING ENVIRONMENTS THAT ARE EMOTIONALLY SAFE

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We recognize that

## BEHAVIOUR IS COMMUNICATION

and as such will try and find out what the child is needing and help them reflect and articulate those needs when they feel calmer.

We recognize that children do not always have matching **BIOLOGICAL AGES AND EMOTIONAL AGES** and we will help them at the stage they present with, in that moment.

We as adults will remain as adults and as such will provide positive, definite, strong boundaries that enable a child to feel safe and not have to take on the role of being protector or provider.

## REPETITIVE KIND DE-ESCALATION

We offer continual validation of emotions and gentle curiosity to help the child when they are emotionally reactive become regulated.

We as adults will be

## CAREFUL WITH OUR WORDS

and reflect on the impact of them. We will use words such as 'I wonder if...' and other phrases that enable a child to have an opinion so that they are not more powerless. We are intentional in using our words to build children up and encourage them.

## TINY SUCCESSES WILL BE CELEBRATED

as we journey together and every change and progression is enjoyed together.

As adults we will look after ourselves and look out for each other to **OFFER LISTENING, EMPATHY AND KINDNESS.** Little acts of kindness to ourselves and other adults can **HELP HEAL AND STRENGTHEN** us as we work with traumatised children.

'Children who have been traumatised in relationship will only recover and heal in the context of a healthy, nurturing, consistent, repetitive, rewarding, persevering, emotionally, literate relationship which enables co-regulation so that self-regulation can develop' ©Betsy de Thierry